

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 6 April 1982

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

EDUCATION: FREMANTLE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Arts Department: Petition

MR PARKER (Fremantle) [4.33 p.m.]: I wish to present a petition which is addressed to the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. It states—

We, the undersigned, object to the proposed 20 per cent cut in funding to the Art Department of the Fremantle Technical College and appeal for funds to be maintained at 1981 levels to cope with increasing enrolments and to provide adequate amenities and sufficient teaching staff.

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

The petition bears 172 signatures, and I certify that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the House.

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

(See petition No. 5.)

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR RUSHTON (Dale—Deputy Premier) [4.37 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The proposed amendment is to remove a minor anomaly from the legislation in relation to land that is used for forestry purposes.

Presently, the Act provides an exemption, under certain conditions, for most types of primary producing businesses, but forestry businesses are excluded.

There is no valid reason that forestry activities should be denied the exemption which, incidentally, is available to landowners in most of the other States.

The Bill now before members proposes to rectify this inequity.

Although the present legislation does provide a concession for forestry owners in the form of a rebate amounting to 50 per cent of the tax assessed on the land, there is no real justification for a forestry enterprise to be treated any differently from that of any other primary producing business.

Furthermore, the conditions imposed on the taxpayer by the present legislation in order for him to obtain that rebate are such that it is virtually impossible for any of the landowners involved in this type of business to comply with the requirements of the Act.

As stated already, exemption from tax for land used for primary producing purposes is allowed only provided the taxpayer meets certain conditions. These are—

Where the land is located within the metropolitan region or within the boundary of a country town planning scheme and is zoned other than rural, it must be used solely or principally for that business;
the person using the land is to be the owner; and the owner is to derive in excess of one-third of his total net income from the business.

Land outside the metropolitan region or a country town planning scheme site normally is exempt from tax.

The first two conditions are both reasonable and realistic and need no further explanation.

The third condition—the income test—was specifically included in the legislation some years ago to ensure that the concession would apply only to landowners in the metropolitan region or a country town planning scheme area who were genuine primary producers and, at the same time, to make certain that the provisions of the Act could not be used as a means of avoiding lawful payment of the tax.

In a normal situation, there is no problem with administering this condition.

However, as there could well be some instances—and this has actually occurred—when, for one reason or another, but mainly economics, a genuine primary producer could not meet the statutory requirement, provision was made in the law to enable the Commissioner of State Taxation to consider, and if justified, to allow a taxpayer's claim for exemption.

If a claim should be disallowed, the taxpayer has the right of appeal to the Treasurer.

I have recited these facts so that members may be made aware not only of the circumstances under which the exemption provision operates, but also of the reason that this condition must be varied for owners of forestry businesses.

As members will readily appreciate, the owner of a forestry business may have to wait many years before any income eventuates. Therefore, it would not be possible, nor could it be considered appropriate, for him to have to meet the income test prescribed for those other taxpayers.

As an acceptable alternative, the Bill proposes that the area under cultivation must be at least 100 hectares fully stocked if the land is located within the metropolitan region or within a country town planning scheme site and is not zoned rural.

For land outside those regions, there will be no area restriction, as is presently the case with those other activities already enjoying the exemption.

This limiting factor was set on the advice of the Conservator of Forests who regards 100 hectares of fully stocked land as being the minimum area necessary for the business to be a viable proposition.

The Bill in its present form will enable genuine forestry businesses to obtain the same concessions as other primary producing businesses.

I therefore commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Brian Burke (Leader of the Opposition).

GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Precedence: Standing Orders Suspension

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [4.42 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable other business on the notice paper to be entered upon and dealt with prior to the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

MR BRIAN BURKE: I should say at the outset that earlier this afternoon the Premier informed me he had been invited to a formal function with the King of Sweden and that he presumed I would be attending also. I explained to him that I would not, but that I would be represented by another member. Because of that, I caused the Premier to be informed at about 2.20 p.m., prior to the 4.30 p.m. commencement of the function with the King of Sweden, that it was my intention soon after the House commenced business this

afternoon to move in the manner I have just moved.

I am surprised the Premier chose not to be here, because I consider it is probably true to say the place of members, especially Ministers and the Premier, is in the Chamber, and particularly so—

Mr MacKinnon: Wouldn't you say other people can represent Ministers and the Premier at functions?

Mr Old: You are very presumptuous!

Mr MacKinnon: Get out of the gutter!

MR BRIAN BURKE: —when after two weeks it has become very clear that a motion such as I have just moved is appropriate and necessary, because you, Sir, will know that in the past two weeks we have been scheduled to sit for six days. We have been occupied on parliamentary business for just 4½ of those six days, and the reason has not been one of gamesmanship—

Mr Old: Not much!

Mr Herzfeld: You could have fooled me!

An Opposition member: Anyone could fool you!

MR BRIAN BURKE: —but simply that the business of the House has been managed poorly. It has been managed poorly because the Government has refused to grapple with a tradition that has become quite cumbersome in this place and which requires the Parliament to despatch the Address-in-Reply before entering upon and dealing with other more important and sometimes more urgent business.

Today the Opposition seeks to get into the right perspective the range of business upon which we are called to deliberate.

Mr Old: Big deal!

MR BRIAN BURKE: We simply are saying that it is more intelligent and efficient to drop the Address-in-Reply down the notice paper and then, if the Government wishes to deal with that matter by having one or two speakers each day while we proceed to deal with other pieces of legislation the Government or the Opposition have listed for debate on the notice paper, it may do so. Now, who would argue with that? Had we adopted that procedure, it would not have been necessary, on the second day the Parliament met, for the Premier to decide to adjourn the House at teatime and to justify his adjournment, firstly, with the excuse that he was giving members a chance to spend time at home with their families and, secondly, when that failed to wash, with the excuse that he was giving members the opportunity to prepare their speeches for the next day.

Mr Pearce: Homework time!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Neither of those two excuses will satisfy a public who expect members of Parliament to be engaged upon earning their wages by deliberating in this Chamber when Parliament is in session.

Mr MacKinnon: Why don't you pass on that message to the member for Perth. That would be very interesting!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: There simply is no excuse for a Parliament that meets, and within two days of its being called together, being adjourned several hours prior to the appropriate time. If that is not bad enough, it is passing strange the following week suddenly to be confronted with the spectre of, as the Premier put it, "a day off". I should hasten to assure members that it is accepted by parliamentary traditionalists that the Government, not the Opposition, controls the business of the House, and the Premier's excuse that, firstly, the Opposition has not moved enough amendments to the Address-in-Reply and, secondly, that the Opposition has not shown a willingness to speak, are arrant nonsense.

It is not the Opposition's job to take its orders from the Government in respect of amendments to the Address-in-Reply or in relation to speakers to the Address-in-Reply itself or amendments moved to it. It is the Government's job to schedule the business of the House so that it is occupied in doing what it is paid to do, and that is to deliberate upon legislation and to make and pass laws.

Under this new regime, it has become difficult to know just how long we are going to be asked to be here. We have sat for 4½ days out of six days and, in that time, we have been adjourned twice unexpectedly for reasons that really do not bear much consideration.

Let us just put to rest the claim that the Opposition does not want to speak on the Address-in-Reply. In the first 4½ days of this session, the Opposition moved two amendments to the Address-in-Reply. Last session when we moved more than that number, we were accused of time-wasting and of being irresponsible. On those two amendments we have moved this session the Opposition had eight speakers, and on the Address-in-Reply that preceded, interceded, and succeeded them, the Opposition had 13 speakers. I emphasise we have had 13 speakers on the Address-in-Reply in 4½ days and we moved two amendments also on which there were eight speakers from the Opposition benches. How much more does the Government expect the Opposition to contribute to debates in this place?

How much less are those figures an excuse for the Premier's action on Wednesday, in the first week, of adjourning the House several hours before it was due to rise and, on Wednesday of last week, announcing with some pride that we would have a day off?

I do not care if the Premier wants to call it "gamesmanship" and if the Press wants to report it that way, it is up to them. Members in this place know the truth. They are aware it is not the Opposition's job to maintain the programme of the House nor is it its job, at the whim of the Premier or the Government, to provide speakers or amendments to the Address-in-Reply. We are now proposing a sensible move.

Mr Old: Ha, ha!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Minister for Agriculture can snigger. He is fairly good at doing that. However, we would much prefer to see the Minister speak from his feet than from his backside—

Mr Old: That's all right.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —because the Minister is rapidly assuming the proportions of being the sniggerer of the House.

Mr Old: Well, there is something to snigger at when the king-sized empty vessel gets up and sounds off.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Is not the Minister very close to the surface?

Mr Old: Of course I am. I have my head above water.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is all right for the Minister to snigger and he sniggered 10 or 12 times before I stopped to comment on it; but when he is challenged, we have the nasty little Minister slinging personal insults across the Chamber.

Mr Old: Little! You giant!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: He is continuing. If that is the way the Government wants its Ministers of the Crown to carry on, that is a matter for the Government, but as far as I am concerned I am trying simply to make the point that the adoption of the proposition put forward by the Opposition makes good sense. The Address-in-Reply carries no compulsion with it; it can be dropped to the bottom of the notice paper and proceeded with at the Government's leisure. In that way room will be made for important legislation to be considered, legislation which has been proposed by the Opposition and the Government.

As we are proceeding now, with the Premier already having informed the Opposition that he intends the House to rise on 13 May, we will finish the Address-in-Reply in two or three weeks

and have no time whatsoever for legislation. Who is satisfied on the Government side of the House with that sort of situation? We did not meet simply to complete the Address-in-Reply. It is not surprising that Government members do not want to comment.

Mr Pearce: They've gone very quite now.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: When one says it is feasible to drop the Address-in-Reply to the bottom of the notice paper one is not making a political point and it is not a question of gamesmanship.

Mr Old: Not much!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Mr Speaker, I am prepared to accommodate the Minister for Agriculture—

Mr Old: Go on.

Mr BRIAN BURKE:—and allow him to tell us why the Opposition proposal is not sensible.

Mr Old: You say it's not gamesmanship. You've been indulging in that ever since this House met.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let me simply put to the Minister for Agriculture that he can by way of interjection tell the House why it is senseless or not sensible to drop the Address-in-Reply to the bottom of the notice paper.

Mr Old: The Address-in-Reply position will be decided by the Government. The Government will decide what will go on the notice paper, not you.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Minister is inexplicable. The precise problem with our proposition as he sees it is that the Government is here to decide what happens. We are saying it is not satisfactory for that to involve the Parliament during its first week in rising several hours before it was due to do so, and, in the second week, not meeting on a day it was scheduled to meet. We are putting forward in the light of that unsatisfactory situation a proposition we think will overcome the problem. The Minister merely says in answer to our proposition that it is the Government's job to determine what happens.

Mr Old: We haven't got a problem; you have a problem.

Mr Wilson: You've decided to do nothing.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I lay down to the Minister a challenge to tell us why it is not sensible to drop the Address-in-Reply to the bottom of the notice paper. There is nothing political in that suggestion. It is a suggestion aimed simply at making sure the House is in a position to debate legislation and not to go home at 6.00 p.m. when it is due to sit until 10.00 p.m.

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.53 p.m.]: I support the proposition put to the House by the Leader of the Opposition in my endeavour to further express the concern of members on this side of the House since the change of leadership on the Government side. We could be forgiven for thinking that a picnic-like atmosphere has descended upon this House of Parliament.

The Government is behaving like a Government which has run out of steam or fallen to sleep at the wheel. It would be reasonable for one to assume from the Premier's comments of last week, when he was explaining away the Government's actions to the main arms of the media for adjourning the House early, that the Premier had called the Parliament together without any real purpose. The Premier discovered after the event that his Government did not have a legislative programme with which to proceed. The first indicator of that was the Governor's Speech on the occasion of this opening. It was probably the most superficial of such Speeches delivered during the last 10 years.

Mr Laurance: It was brim full of goodies.

Mr BRYCE: The member for Gascoyne, who I understand will take the unusual step of exercising his prerogative as a local member to speak on the Address-in-Reply, might take that opportunity to explain to us and elaborate slightly upon the details of that list of goodies—but he knows it does not exist.

The Address-in-Reply is a non-legislative debate. It is a quite senseless and worn-out tradition that this Parliament should be tied up for four or five weeks at the beginning of each year while members exercise their minds day after day on matters to raise during the Address-in-Reply, while important legislation languishes at the other end of the notice paper—until this indulgence of ours is finished. No justification can be given for our continuing that practice. In fact, as far as we are concerned, we believe many good reasons are available for our changing the practice.

It is good common sense that the Address-in-Reply be dropped to the bottom of the notice paper to allow us to discuss valuable, useful, and important pieces of legislation. I indicate to the Deputy Premier that if the Government is without a legislative programme, the Opposition is not. The alternative Government in Western Australia would be happy to fill the vacuum created by this Government's sitting on its butt since the Parliament rose in December last year—the

Government has done nothing to prepare a legislative programme.

We have heard in detail from the Public Service that public servants have been brought back from country holiday resorts on a minute's notice to get the Government out of this particular hole. The Government's minor legislative programme is nothing to speak of, but it is not ready, and the Government is embarrassed. Presumably as a result of its embarrassment it will reject the logic and good sense from this side of the House in suggesting that the Address-in-Reply be dropped to the bottom of the notice paper.

I will touch on another important element of this Parliament's procedure; that is, the committee system, which in this place is a disgrace.

Mr Blaikie: Fair go!

Mr BRYCE: It is probably the most ineffectual and pathetic committee system of any of the eight Parliaments in Australia. A mountain of legislation by regulation is rolled through this House of Parliament undetected year in and year out because we lack any mechanism or interest in this place to establish the machinery to supervise subordinate legislation.

Mr Blaikie: What about the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee?

Mr BRYCE: The Government's action in closing down this place for a day's rest, and enabling members to spend a night with their families only two days after it resumed following five months off, is unforgivable and deliberately directed to reducing the status of the Parliament.

Mr Blaikie: Can I—

Mr BRYCE: During the brief break last week many civil servants were required to burn the midnight oil in an endeavour to bring forward legislation to a point where it could be introduced by the Government. Now the member for Vasse may speak.

Mr Blaikie: You have all of a sudden become extremely provocative. Would that be as a result of what happened in Victoria last Saturday? Up until now we have never heard from him.

Mr Tonkin: Rubbish! He has spoken several times this year.

Mr Blaikie: We have had a vacuum.

Mr BRYCE: Mr Speaker, I hope you will grant me the indulgence to direct a question to this quite experienced back-bencher.

Can the member for Vasse indicate what is fundamentally wrong with our dropping the

Address-in-Reply to the bottom of the notice paper? What is wrong with that proposition?

Mr Blaikie: If the member puts it on the notice paper I will give him a considered reply.

Mr BRYCE: Despite the fact that the Opposition has outlined, over the last 25 to 30 minutes, its proposition and the rationale for doing so, the member for Vasse has been unable to think of one cogent reason for rejecting the proposition.

Mr Wilson: He has been trying very hard.

Mr BRYCE: We should be forgiven if we were to assume that this Legislative Assembly were on the point of reverting to the lazy, crazy, old days of the Brand Government which was accustomed to sitting for one session only every year.

This autumn session of Parliament was introduced towards the end of that Government's time, after sustained criticism from the members of the Australian Labor Party which drew the attention of the Government to the inappropriateness of having a Parliament, paid for by the taxpayers, which opened for superficial reasons on a minimum number of days of one session each year. Given the days on which this Premier and this Government are working this Legislative Chamber, we could be forgiven for imagining we were reverting to those days.

I wish to conclude my remarks by drawing the attention of the members of this House to the fact that at the moment our community is facing some of the most complicated and difficult social and economic problems with which it has been confronted since World War II. However, the way this Government is treating this Parliament, and those problems, suggests to the people of Western Australia that the members of Parliament are turning their backs on those problems and are no longer looking for solutions.

The Government is indicating that it does not intend to participate, in any way, in the formulation of decisions which must be made to find the solutions to so many of those problems.

MR RUSHTON (Dale—Deputy Premier) [5.03 p.m.]: I wish to make the Opposition well aware of the situation, and that is that the Government does not intend to have the business of the House taken out of its hands by blatant gimmicks.

Several members interjected.

Mr RUSHTON: I think it is very discourteous of the Opposition to attempt to take the opportunity of the Premier's absence—

Several members interjected.

Mr Brian Burke: The Premier was told 2½ hours ago.

Mr Laurance: Do you want the King of Sweden to go home?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr RUSHTON: The interjections of the rabble are typical of a light weight Opposition which is continuing to show disinterest in the well-being of this State.

Seven speakers are listed for the Address-in-Reply debate and this motion brought forward by the Opposition is a gimmick, a blatant attempt to take the business of the House from the Government. That action indicates the sort of Opposition we have.

Mr Pearce: Have you been studying Phillip Lynch's example?

Point of Order

Mr STEPHENS: On a point of order, I am sorry to interrupt the Deputy Premier, but could I get you, Mr Speaker, to ask him to speak up or have the fan turned off so that I might hear what he is saying?

The SPEAKER: Order! I will do both. Turn the fan off. Will the Deputy Premier raise his voice?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The rest of the members of the House can assist by remaining silent.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Mr RUSHTON: I do not intend to engage in the type of disruption to the House which is being perpetuated by the Opposition. As far as I am concerned the Opposition has brought forward a procedural motion to which we will address ourselves.

I have indicated to the House the reason that this motion should fail and the reason that we should continue with the Address-in-Reply; that is, we have seven members listed to speak.

Mr Brian Burke: Don't you understand that the motion does not preclude you from having the Address-in-Reply as you wish. It just means that if you have trouble getting the speakers, as you did last week, we can get on with something else.

Mr RUSHTON: We do not need lessons from the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has very little thought for law and order and he does not believe in tradition. Therefore, he does not wish to have a reply to the motion he moved, but we will reply. The Leader of the Opposition has not made a case. He made the comment that the

Opposition's business was more important than the business of the Address-in-Reply.

I suggest that it is traditional that members are able to air their points of view relating to their electorates and to Government administration. This motion is showing up the Opposition tremendously. It shows up the way that the Opposition is attending in this House and the way its members are presenting themselves to the motion before the House. They have shown a great reluctance to find anything wrong with the Government's administration. They have shown themselves for the lightweight Opposition that they are.

The Government's business is to pay respect to the Parliament, and that is what this Government does; it holds this Parliament in the highest esteem.

The main task of the Government is to present legislation and receive approval for that legislation, in the course of its management, and that is what this Government will do.

We have heard no case made by the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition which indicates that we should not continue with the business of the House, as it is listed. We have seven speakers listed to address themselves to the Address-in-Reply debate. The Opposition has attempted to belittle this Government by way of this motion. The Government opposes the motion.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [5.07 p.m.]: That was a very strange reply from a heavyweight in size, but a lightweight of a political Deputy Premier.

Several members interjected.

Mr DAVIES: The Deputy Premier seemed to concern himself with calling the Opposition lightweight and then proceeded to say that to do anything else but adopt the normal business of the House would be discourteous, and if we did anything but that we would be breaking from tradition and falling for gimmicks.

He should know something about gimmicks if anybody should, because if we look at what happened during the last autumn session of Parliament when the then esteemed leader wished to gain some political mileage from a situation which existed at that time, we will see that the Government engaged in gimmicks. I refer to *Hansard*, page 419 of 1 April 1981 when the then Premier (Sir Charles Court) moved as follows—

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the motion of the bauxite alumina class action to

be proceeded with before the Address-in-Reply is completed.

If we wished to see the height of gimmickry we could see it on that occasion when the then Premier was quite prepared, for political expediency, to move the Address-in-Reply further down the notice paper so that he could gain some political advantage. Now this Deputy Premier has the gall to stand up in this House and say that the Opposition is concerned only with gimmicks, when the Government was not able to supply speakers to keep the debate going in the first six days of Parliament this session.

During my speech on the Address-in-Reply last Wednesday I said that it was unusual to see Ministers speaking in this debate and that the Government was using Ministers to pad out the Address-in-Reply because it did not have any speakers, despite the fact that there are many back-benchers who would be expected to extol the virtues of the Government.

Two Ministers were used to pad out the Address-in-Reply debate last week—the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning, who spoke for something like 11 minutes, and the Minister for Police and Prisons who gave the House a discourse on various matters which had occurred and meetings which he had attended since the Parliament last sat. His speech extended over the full 45 minutes—46 minutes, if the recording in *Hansard* is correct.

If we wish to do so, we can compare what occurred last year with what has occurred this year and note the Premier's gimmick on 1 April 1981, when he thought he was going to secure a point on the class action and embarrass the Opposition at that time. We all know the outcome. At the beginning of the first session of Parliament in 1981—that is, the first six days—three amendments were moved and seven speakers from each side of the House contributed to the debate. This year, in four sitting days, two amendments have been moved and 11 Government members have spoken. I will include the National Party members amongst the Government speakers. Also, 13 Opposition members have spoken this year, so we have been more than keeping up with the speakers provided by the Government.

Because the Government does not have a legislative programme—and I drew attention to the content of the Governor's Speech when I spoke last Wednesday—it is prepared to abandon Parliament early. There should be no need for that because this motion simply says that at such times when the Government or the

Opposition—we will take our share of the blame if members want to apportion blame—does not have speakers to continue with the Address-in-Reply debate, or for any reason whatsoever, the House can proceed with other business. The House need not go home or "have a day off", as the Premier likes to put it. We can proceed with other business because at the end of the year, no matter how well the House tries to work, we always have the disgusting spectacle of business being left on the notice paper.

Despite the fact that it is traditional for the Address-in-Reply to be completed before any other business is proceeded with, we are offering a way out. We are not seeking to amend Standing Orders because that has already been done. We amended Standing Orders several years ago so that Ministers could introduce Bills to the second reading stage. That was done so that when the Address-in-Reply was finished we would have something with which to proceed. I thought that was an admirable move, but never did I think we would get to the stage where with 50-odd members in the House we could not find enough speakers to continue with the Address-in-Reply debate.

When we note what we did last year, we realise that we have done more than we had in the same time last year, relatively speaking.

Now we have this spectacle of a likely collapse of the debate. We are prepared to make allowances for people on the Government side when they are not ready to speak on the Address-in-Reply debate. We will help the Government for a few days until it is ready to continue to deal with the business of the House, and the business of the House is the legislative programme which is on the notice paper. Has the Premier any legislation?

The Deputy Premier referred to the Opposition as being lightweight, but when we consider the content of the Governor's Speech we note that it is indeed true to that label. I mentioned it myself last week, and I have already mentioned it in this debate.

One would think the Premier would come forward and say, "We have a very good legislative programme. Apart from what is in the Governor's Speech, we have a lot of other Bills to present to the Parliament, because there are things that need to be done in this State, and we want to make this State a better place in which to live." But what has been the comment of the Premier? He has said, "I am not introducing legislation for legislation's sake." If ever the two preceding Premiers received a smack in the eye it was from

that comment, with its implication that they introduced legislation for legislation's sake. I know that, from time to time, legislation which seems insignificant goes through this place. However, the legislation has become necessary because of some flaw which has been found in an Act. Often an Act can operate for years before a flaw is found. However, never have I seen a piece of legislation introduced into this House just for the sake of legislation being introduced. The Premier's comment only highlights his incapacity and his inability to produce a legislative programme. He has lost touch with his department, his Ministers or with the Cabinet as a whole; he has certainly lost touch with the Parliament, because we cannot see anything coming forward.

Mr Rushton: I can assure you he has not. He is in full flight, and doing it well.

Mr DAVIES: If I am permitted to criticise the Deputy Premier, I say that one of his principal faults is that he kids himself. The Deputy Premier and all Ministers of this Government believe that if they tell themselves long enough that they are God, in the end they will come to believe what they are saying.

Members opposite will not face up to the fact that, despite what they are saying, no legislative programme of any consequence is coming forward. Let members look at the Governor's Speech and see whether it foreshadows any piece of major legislation. What piece of legislation is foreshadowed which will make Western Australia a significantly better place in which to live?

Mr Rushton: I can tell you that the amendment to the Government Railway Act will do that, for a start.

Mr DAVIES: If anything, the Minister's amendments will make Western Australia a far worse place in which to live for most people, particularly those living in the country.

Mr Rushton: That just shows how wrong you are, and how you do not understand.

Mr DAVIES: Perhaps the Deputy Premier is trying to emulate the Prime Minister, by waving his glasses around and looking as though he knows what is going on. If that is the case, he is failing dismally. If he went out into the country and heard what people are saying about the proposed joint venture he would know that if ever the Opposition is likely to pick up votes in the country, it is over this issue. One has only to ask the member for Warren and the member for Geraldton about that.

Mr Stephens: You are not taking into account that the National Party will pick up those votes.

Mr Carr: Ask your own country members.

Mr DAVIES: The Deputy Premier seems to believe it will be a major piece of legislation which will have the result of making this State a better place in which to live; however, once again, he has failed dismally.

If we are to do our job in this place, which is to be a viable Opposition which criticises when criticism is necessary and which supports when there is reason to support, we must have legislation coming forward so that it can be debated. We cannot debate legislation from our loungerooms or offices, or in clubs or hotels; the only place we can debate legislation is in the Parliament. To date, the Premier has adjourned the House and not given the Opposition the opportunity to do that, simply because of his inefficiency and his inability to bring forward a legislative programme. This motion gives the Premier the opportunity to deal with everything that is on the notice paper for as long as he cares to sit, without his having to adjourn the House with feeble excuses.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [5.20 p.m.]: The motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition runs counter to at least two Standing Orders of which I am aware. For a start, we have a Standing Order which states, in effect, that the Address-in-Reply debate must be concluded before Government business is proceeded with. Obviously, the motion seeks to circumvent that Standing Order.

The second point I make is that the Leader of the Opposition has moved his motion on a day normally set aside for Government business. Surely the business of the House should remain in the hands of the Government.

Mr Tonkin: That is not a Standing Order—it is a sessional order.

Mr Davies: Every day is Government business.

Mr Tonkin: There is nothing in the Standing Orders which states that; it is a sessional order.

Mr COWAN: A sessional order has been passed by this House, and we have Government business on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Mr Tonkin: Yes, but only after the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

Mr COWAN: The Address-in-Reply has not been adopted.

Mr Tonkin: That is right; so, it does not operate until then.

Mr COWAN: If the member for Morley wants to be technical, he is perfectly correct: The Address-in-Reply debate has not concluded;

therefore the sessional order does not come into effect.

However, I maintain there are two very good reasons that it is inappropriate for such a motion to be moved today. First, if we stand by the sessional order—as the member for Morley calls it—which has been passed by this House, we accept that we deal only with Government business on Tuesdays and Thursdays, notwithstanding that the Address-in-Reply must conclude before the sessional order comes into effect. That being the case, it is no business of the Opposition to move such a motion.

Mr Tonkin: Any member has a right to move a motion, just as the House has a right to reject it.

Mr COWAN: That is precisely what is going to happen.

Mr Brian Burke: Do you have a copy of my motion?

Mr COWAN: No I have not. Generally, the Leader of the Opposition sends over copies of his motions, but on this occasion he has not.

Mr Brian Burke: I apologise. If you read my motion you will appreciate that it will remain entirely up to the Government as to whether it proceeds with the Address-in-Reply debate.

Mr COWAN: Yes, and the Leader of the Opposition will accept, as the member for Victoria Park pointed out, that a similar motion was moved not once, but twice last year. On the first occasion, it was moved so that debate on the jarrah class action could proceed. Members may recall that last year the Address-in-Reply debate continued into the spring sitting. It was the Government's right to make such a decision.

Mr Parker: On the basis of the argument used by the Deputy Premier that it is discourteous to the Governor not to proceed with the Address-in-Reply debate, was that not very discourteous to the Governor?

Mr COWAN: I do not intend to argue with the member for Fremantle about what the Deputy Premier said. Wednesdays being the traditional day for private members' business, one could accept the Opposition's moving of such a motion on that day; that would be a little closer to the Opposition's right.

Mr Brian Burke: You have not read my motion. It leaves it up to the Government whether or not to proceed with the Address-in-Reply. I am not seeking to force the Government to debate other business. After my motion is passed, the business remains in the hands of the Government.

Mr COWAN: That is right, but it is not the responsibility of the Opposition to move such a

motion; it is the responsibility of the Government to control the business of the House. I accept that any member of Parliament has a right to move a motion; however, he does not have the responsibility of moving a motion such as this. If we are to place any credence on the traditions built up in this place over a period of time, we should accept that principle.

Mr Brian Burke: I can see the point you are making, but it would be just as invalid for me to move my motion tomorrow. However, you seem to think everything would be in order tomorrow.

Mr COWAN: The point I am making is that it is not the responsibility of the Opposition to move such a motion; it may be the Opposition's right, but it is not its responsibility. If the Government believes it does not have enough speakers on the Address-in-Reply and if it believes it has enough business to go on with, it can suspend Standing Orders to allow Government business to be proceeded with. I agree it is the responsibility of the Opposition to point out to the Parliament and the public exactly where the Government is failing. The Opposition is entitled to do so; however, members opposite should not expect members of the National Party to support them.

Mr Brian Burke: We do not.

Mr COWAN: The Leader of the Opposition should understand it is the Government's responsibility in this situation.

Mr Brian Burke: I do understand.

Mr Tonkin: We adjourned the second day we came back.

Mr Brian Burke: Do you agree with the closing down of the Parliament?

Mr COWAN: The Parliament will not close down.

Mr Tonkin: It has been closed down.

Mr COWAN: Parliament has been adjourned, not closed down. Earlier, the member for Morley interjected to the effect that we did not have a Standing Order in relation to a particular matter, but that a sessional order had been passed by the House. If he wants to be technical about the meaning of words—

Mr Tonkin: It is not being technical.

Mr COWAN: Find another word, and I will use it.

Mr Brian Burke: We suggest you find your own words.

Mr COWAN: The member for Morley must accept there is a difference between the meaning of the word "adjournment" and the words

"closing down". The Parliament was adjourned, which is the responsibility of the Government.

Mr Tonkin: It is not; it is the responsibility of the Parliament.

Mr COWAN: If the Government has no Government business to bring forward, and does not want the Address-in-Reply debate to fold up, it is the Government's responsibility.

Mr Wilson: And you condone that, do you?

Mr COWAN: I do not intend to comment one way or the other; it is the Government's responsibility. That was the point I wished to make. In this debate, we are discussing something which is a Government responsibility. While I accept that the Opposition—and, in particular, the Leader of the Opposition—has a right under Standing Orders to move a motion such as this, I emphasise that it is not its responsibility. I reject the motion.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [5.28 p.m.]: The Leader of the National Party said it was the responsibility of the Government to run Parliament. That is absolute nonsense. The Government, by definition, has a majority in the Parliament; therefore it generally has its way. However, every member of Parliament is equal in this place; therefore every member of Parliament has a right and a duty to move any motion he thinks fit. If the Government, through its numbers, rejects such motions, that is fair enough. However, we should not start talking as though it is a hallowed tradition of Westminster that the Government runs Parliament. I thought part of the platform of members of the National Party related to the fact that Parliament was not operating effectively and that we should re-examine the role of the Executive. Members of the National Party should not then say that the Executive has a right to run Parliament.

Mr Cowan: I did not say that; I said that the Government had responsibility for Government business.

Mr TONKIN: Perhaps, but it is not responsible for running Parliament; do not let us have that. The point is that Parliament is responsible for itself, and any member of Parliament has a right—not just under Standing Orders, but also in order to represent the people who elected him here—to move motions in this place. If the Government wants to use its numbers to defeat such motions, that is its responsibility. However, there is no sacred or traditional right for the Government to run the affairs of this Parliament.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 19

Mr Barnett	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bryce	Mr Parker
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Carr	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Evans	Mr Tonkin
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Bateman
Mr Hodge	

(Teller)

Noes 27

Mr Blaikie	Mr McPharlin
Mr Clarko	Mr Mensaros
Mr Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushon
Mr Coyne	Mr Shalders
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Stephens
Mr Grayden	Mr Trethowan
Mr Grewar	Mr Tubby
Mr Hassell	Mr Watt
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Williams
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Young
Mr Laurance	Mr Nanovich
Mr MacKinnon	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr McIver	Mr Sodeman
Mr Terry Burke	Mr O'Connor
Mr Harman	Dr Dadour
Mr Bridge	Mr Spriggs

Question thus negatived.

ACTS AMENDMENT (MISUSE OF DRUGS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Minister for Police and Prisons) [5.33 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is introduced to rectify an anomaly that occurred during the last session of Parliament. The Misuse of Drugs Bill was introduced into this House and at the same time an Acts Amendment (Misuse of Drugs) Bill was introduced for the purpose of facilitating the operation of the Misuse of Drugs Bill.

The latter Bill intended, in part, to extend the jurisdiction of the District Court Act to criminal matters specified in schedule 11 to the District Court Act by allowing that court to deal with drug offences that were punishable with 25 years' imprisonment. Section 42 of the District Court Act was amended to achieve that objective. Prior to the amendment, the jurisdiction of the District Court was confined to offences punishable by 14 years' imprisonment or less.

At a later date, and as quite a separate exercise, the Attorney General sponsored the Acts Amendment (Jurisdiction of Courts) Bill 1981, which also changed the provisions of section 42 of

the District Court Act so that the District Court had jurisdiction to try all offences other than those punishable by death or life imprisonment. This later amendment removed entirely the necessity for the amendment contained within the Acts Amendment (Misuse of Drugs) Act.

The Acts Amendment (Misuse of Drugs) Act is now awaiting proclamation and the Acts Amendment (Jurisdiction of Courts) Act was proclaimed and came into operation on 1 February 1982. This Bill, if enacted, will repeal the Acts Amendment (Misuse of Drugs) Act amendment to section 42 of the District Courts Act. It will allow the jurisdiction of courts amendment to have full effect, as intended.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Carr.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 31 March.

MR LAURANCE (Carnarvon—Minister for Lands) [5.35 p.m.]: I welcome the opportunity to enter this debate, and to support the Address-in-Reply.

Mr Davies: Another Minister propping up the debate.

Mr LAURANCE: I take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Nedlands on his election. I am sure he will enjoy a long and colourful career in the Parliament, in the tradition of the previous member for Nedlands. I congratulate also the member for Swan on his election to this Parliament.

I place on record my appreciation of the tremendous contribution made to this State by the previous Premier (Sir Charles Court), because of his magnificent effort over a long political career and the many benefits that he gave to this State, and his personal example. Personally I am appreciative of the support Sir Charles gave to me. He became the Premier of this State in 1974, when I was first elected to the Parliament. During my first campaign, and subsequently, I appreciated a number of things that he did personally for me and for the electorate that I represent.

I am proud to be part of the Government behind the new Premier (the Hon. Ray O'Connor); I am sure that he will have a very long and successful career as Premier of this State.

Mr Pearce: He won't be in Parliament much, though.

Mr LAURANCE: If the member was faced with the choice the Premier had this afternoon—being with the King of Sweden or facing the member for Gosnells—which way would he have chosen?

Mr Pearce: It depends which way he sees his job. He is employed by the people of this State to come to the Parliament, not to entertain the King of Sweden.

Mr LAURANCE: I welcome the opportunity to outline to the Parliament and to the people of this State the State Government's commitment to and support of the Year of the Tree, which begins on 5 June and, incidentally, that date coincides with World Environment Day. The Government's initiative and involvement in the Year of the Tree will be channelled primarily through the Forests Department and the Department of Conservation and Environment, two of my responsibilities.

Mr Pearce: The Year of the Tree must be a reversal of the Chinese calendar.

Mr LAURANCE: The year will involve also other Government departments—

Mr Young: What about the cynical attitude of the member for Gosnells? The next time he is talking about salinity, we will remember that. What has he got against trees?

Mr LAURANCE: Apart from the major involvement of the Forests Department and the Department of Conservation and Environment, the Education Department will have a strong involvement, as will the Department of Agriculture. Other departments will participate as well.

The idea for an Australian Year of the Tree was first put forward by the United Nations Association of Australia, which association endeavoured to make it an international year. However, as we had just completed the extremely popular and well-supported International Year of Disabled Persons 1981, the idea of an international Year of the Tree did not get off the ground. Perhaps the United Nations Association did not start early enough. These international years need—

Mr Hodge: You might say it was ringbarked!

Mr LAURANCE: —a gestation period of about 10 years. In fact, it is hoped that towards the end of this decade we will have an international Year of the Tree.

Nevertheless, the United Nations Association wanted to proceed with the Australian Year of the Tree; and in that desire it has been supported by many other community bodies—

Mr Pearce: Another dictate from Canberra.

Mr Parker: It might think that trees are more under threat in Australia than anywhere else; and that is probably true.

Mr LAURANCE: I do not think that is the case.

Some confusion has been expressed about when the Year of the Tree would begin. The State Government hopes that by making this commitment and by indicating that it supports the Year of the Tree, some of the confusion will be cleared up. Many people had thought that the Year of the Tree would run during the calendar year of 1982; but a number of bodies have agreed amongst themselves that the Year of the Tree should run from 5 June 1982 to 1 July 1983. A number of States have been included in that agreement.

Mr Parker: How did you pick those dates?

Mr LAURANCE: We have very good reasons for them. If the member likes to give me more time—I am sure he would like to move an extension of time in the Address-in-Reply—

Mr Pearce: We would rather move a reduction, anyway.

Mr LAURANCE: I will be happy to consult with him and advise him how those dates were chosen.

The basic idea of the Year of the Tree is to promote knowledge of and interest in the role of trees in our environment, and to encourage public participation in the propagation and protection of trees. In announcing the Government's firm commitment to the Year of the Tree, I emphasise that it is naturally an extension of the Government's existing work in promoting environmental understanding and, in particular, better understanding of this State's forests.

Mr Wilson: Are you reading this from a Press release?

Mr LAURANCE: He is very astute.

Historically, the idea of Arbor Day was first introduced under the Forests Act in 1918, and at the time, it was discussed in this House. It was written into the Forests Act, and every year since the Act was proclaimed in 1918, Western Australia has celebrated Arbor Day. I have no doubt that many members in this Chamber have been involved in local Arbor Days—perhaps in their own school days and since they have been involved in their local communities. Arbor Day has become a regular feature of the school year; and the community has set aside Arbor Day for the remembrance of trees, and for the planting of trees.

Mr Pearce: We particularly remember those trees that gave their lives for our country!

Mr LAURANCE: Members opposite are very cynical about this exercise. I suppose that reflects their general attitude to the things that are desirable in the community. Anyway, let them be judged by their attitudes. Of course, most of the trees grow in the rural environment, and that is something that Opposition members would have read about only in books.

I have little doubt that the Forests Department's promotion of Arbor Day since the proclamation of the Act in 1918 has assisted thousands of Western Australians to obtain a better understanding of the role of trees in our environment. More recently, we have introduced a Day of Trees during Western Australia Week. This year it has been agreed that Arbor Day should be advanced a few days in order to make it coincide with Arbor Day—

Mr Pearce: That is a good idea. If you had Arbor Day on a different day from Arbor Day, there would be a lot of confusion.

Mr LAURANCE: It is intended that the Day of Trees in Western Australia Week and Arbor Day should be one and the same day. Arbor Day and the Day of Trees will be celebrated on 11 June this year.

Mr Pearce: Is the Day of Trees related to the Year of the Tree?

Mr LAURANCE: The observance on 11 June will be a follow-up to the launching of the Year of the Tree on 5 June. World Environment Day is also observed on 5 June. That indicates good organisation on the part of the Government and a whole range of community groups involved in this most worthwhile exercise that has been criticised so roundly by members opposite.

It is proposed that both those bodies will organise a considerable number of activities in order to properly launch the Year of the Tree.

Another focal point of the Year of the Tree will occur during this year's Royal Show. A number of organisations have agreed that the Royal Show will provide an ideal opportunity to promote further this idea of the Year of the Tree. I refer especially to the Department of Conservation and Environment. Its stand will be devoted to this theme, and other groups will co-operate.

As I have said, this sort of activity is not new to the Government; rather, it should be understood as a natural extension into further community involvement. It is an ongoing thing.

As an illustration of the Government's prior commitment to the ideals associated with the

Year of the Tree, I remind members of an important conference that took place late last year entitled "Trees in the Rural Landscape". It was held last October and was organised by the Forests Department, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Conservation and Environment. This conference spelt out to hundreds of farmers the importance of trees in our rural landscape, and the interrelationship between trees, salinity, erosion, and productivity. Similar conferences will be held in regional centres during the year, and this will be a further extension of the work commenced with the October conference. In the last few days, conferences have been held at Esperance and Hyden. They were not a direct follow-up to the "Trees in the Rural Landscape" conference, but were related to it. These activities should encourage farmers in different areas of the State to protect the land against salinity, erosion, and soil degradation.

A different point, but based on a similar principle, concerns the Forests Department's effort to make forests more accessible and interesting to the public. A good example is the Bibbulmun track, which stretches from the metropolitan area to Albany. That track gives members of the public outstanding opportunities to enjoy and to understand our forests. It can be walked for its entire length, or in parts, and it is to be hoped that this year we can encourage more people to make use of at least part of the track in an endeavour to get them involved in the Year of the Tree.

The Forests Department's self-guided tours in the Manjimup forest area are another outstanding example of this type of contribution to public knowledge and enjoyment. The tours are so organised that they guide people through the forest and, at appropriate points, give them information about what to look for and what it means.

The Education Department and the Forests Department will continue their involvement in the field study centres at Jarrahdale and Mundaring. These centres were first established by the Forests Department, and are run by the Education Department with assistance from the foresters with material for programmes. The centres this year will put special emphasis on the theme of the Year of the Tree.

I mention these sorts of things to emphasise that in our view the Year of the Tree is not merely an exercise in tree planting. Our objective is to develop public appreciation and understanding of the role of trees in the forests and in our environment as a whole. Obviously

there is an ongoing role in the maintenance and protection of trees once they have been planted.

It is only through the growth of interest, knowledge, and general community awareness that the long-term goals of our conservation strategy can be achieved. The people ultimately are the protectors of their own environment and they will do this more effectively if they have accurate knowledge and a deeper understanding of what their environment really means to them.

That is the objective of the Government's commitment to support the Year of the Tree as a valuable extension of the work it is already undertaking in this field.

The Government's view has been expressed well by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources which defines "conservation" as—

The management of human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to present generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations. Thus, conservation is positive, embracing preservation, maintenance, sustainable utilisation, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment.

That is the most universally accepted definition of "conservation" and I point out that it underlies the work of the Department of Conservation and Environment and provides the philosophical basis for the Forests Department's general working plan for the next five years which I tabled in Parliament recently.

It is fortunate in many ways that the production of the new working plan virtually coincides with the Year of the Tree, because few things could give anyone a more precise understanding of the sound day-to-day management of a huge and diverse forest area than does this document, which is available to members and the public. I am not suggesting that many will read and digest all that it contains, but it does provide an outstanding source of material for anyone wishing to look at any particular aspect of practical forest management. Both the philosophy and the science of the general working plan provide excellent support for the promotion of the ideals of the Year of the Tree.

There are many features of that five-year plan which highlight the fact that it is very appropriate that the plan was adopted by the Government and made public in the last few days in the lead-up to the Year of the Tree. I will outline some of those features as follows—

Management priority areas for flora, fauna, and landscape; wood production; water production; protection of catchments and of general forest values; scientific study and education; and recreation have now been allocated over the whole of the forest area of the State.

Management priority areas for flora, fauna and landscape cover almost one-fifth of State forests.

The hardwood sawlog cut will be progressively reduced and at the end of the five-year period will be 61 000 cubic metres less than at present.

Pine production is expected to increase by 44 000 cubic metres in the same period.

Mr Blaikie: That is a very significant increase.

Mr LAURANCE: It indicates a substantial change in emphasis between softwoods and hardwoods.

Mr Blaikie: It also indicates a change in the use of timber and—

Several members interjected.

Mr Blaikie: This is a pretty important subject. Even if it does not mean anything to members opposite, it means something to us.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Vasse takes an interest in this very important subject.

Mr Parker: Is the Minister for Health going to take us on a tour through all the hospitals?

Mr LAURANCE: Just wait; the member may be rewarded.

The softwood plantation programme will be maintained at 3 000 hectares a year, and it is hoped that private plantations will add a further 500 hectares a year.

Mr Blaikie: Would you indicate where the bulk of the pinewood planting is to take place?

Mr LAURANCE: This will occur in the Vasse electorate. It will account for a considerable proportion of the new softwood planting.

Mr Bryce: How does it go on top of monazite tailings?

Mr LAURANCE: To continue—

Hardwood planting will continue for a variety of purposes including such things as maintaining supplies of poles for the SEC.

Towards the end of the five-year period new timber ventures are expected to be introduced to make use of small logs from forest clearing or silvicultural treatments. This will add between 30 000 and 50 000 cubic metres to the amount of hardwood available without increasing the area of

forest used, and clearly represents a more efficient use of forest products and better forest management.

Another very important aspect of the department's work which is outlined in that working plan will be the work of the department's nurseries. They will produce eight million trees a year during this five-year period, including supplies for private tree planting in rural areas. Some three million seedlings will be made available this year.

Mr Bryce: Tremendous!

Mr LAURANCE: I am pleased to have the support of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Davies: One in four will grow.

Mr LAURANCE: Quite obviously the department's nurseries will play an important role in the Year of the Tree.

There will be a vigorous research and development programme to ensure that management techniques meet the special needs created by local variation in climate species and soil. Research will focus on jarrah dieback disease, including silvicultural treatment of jarrah forests, agroforestry, catchment salinity, site rehabilitation, and evaluation of public priorities for forest use. Emphasis will be placed on improved information services for the public covering all aspects of urban and rural forestry. This, too, will play a part in our commitment to the Year of the Tree.

An additional initiative developed by the Forests Department is an educational brochure which will be made available to children. We are hoping to launch the brochure on 5 June, the commencement day for the Year of the Tree. The brochure's theme will be the development in our schools particularly of an understanding of what is meant by the Year of the Tree. Hopefully, this will encourage an involvement by the children. The year will not be successful unless there is an involvement by the public.

Mr Parker: Have you got the support of the Minister for Education?

Mr LAURANCE: Yes.

Mr Parker: What about the previous Minister?

Mr LAURANCE: I did not ask him.

In the brief time I have had available to me, I have tried to outline some of the major inputs by the Government in this Year of the Tree. Naturally, it is only part of the programme. As the year unfolds other initiatives will be outlined by the Government and various departments which will be involved in the Government's initiative.

Most people love trees, and this is very desirable. I am sure members of the community generally will get behind this initiative by the Government and a number of other organisations. The Year of the Tree is getting strong support from the Government. We have a real commitment to this programme starting on 5 June and continuing for the following 12 months. It will be supported by many organisations in the community, as I said earlier.

Point of Order

Mr PARKER: Mr Acting Speaker, as I recall there is a Standing Order which refers to tedious repetition, and I think the Minister has now read the same Press statement about four times. I suggest you bring his attention to that Standing Order and ask him to move on to some new material.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister should resume his speech.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Fremantle raised a very facetious point of order.

Mr Pearce: It was straight from the heart of us all.

Mr LAURANCE: It was another example of what Opposition members have been doing throughout my speech. They have been knocking the whole way, which is their traditional attitude to anything good and worthwhile in our community. Members opposite will be judged by the public for what they are, particularly on those subjects which have a big impact in rural areas, where we know the Opposition has virtually no following. I am sure when it comes to the ballot box the public will know what to do about the Opposition, which is always knocking matters which are worthwhile to the community. Members opposite have been saying that there is not enough business to go on with. They should pay more attention to the Address-in-Reply. I have been outlining a very worthwhile objective for everyone in the State, something in which everyone can be involved; but all we have had is this cynical exercise by members opposite.

Mr Parker: You have had a grin on your face all the time. You know you have been speaking with tongue in cheek.

Mr Pearce: You are only doing it to avoid debating the Mining Act regulations and preventing them from coming on tomorrow.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): Order!

Mr LAURANCE: I reject all the cheap cynicism and, with the Acting Speaker's indulgence, I want to continue. I will read out a list of organisations which have already indicated interest in and support for the idea of the Year of the Tree. The Men of Trees is one of the organisations.

Mr Pearce: What?

Mr LAURANCE: Also the Nurserymen's Association of WA, a number of timber industry organisations and the National Trust have been involved, together with academic institutions. Many of these organisations had a meeting that was chaired by the United Nations Association of this State last Wednesday in an effort to bring in all people who are showing an interest in the co-ordination of the Year of the Tree. With the early support that has been shown and the State Government giving a clear commitment to the Year of the Tree, and the fact that we have identified those organisations which, hopefully, will support us when the year starts on 5 June, it should be a success. Many different activities have been organised for that day. The next week is Western Australia Week. There will be other occasions during the year when opportunities will present themselves.

I am sure a tremendous number of organisations will stand behind the Year of the Tree and support those bodies which have indicated an interest. The State Government is giving strong support in this matter.

The Shire of Kalamunda has indicated its interest in planting a tree for every child that is born in the local authority area during that year. This is just one example of what local authorities will do when they see an opportunity to get involved with this programme.

Mr Herzfeld: You will get wonderful responses from the schools, too.

Mr LAURANCE: Particularly when they are given a lead up. Promotional brochures will go out to highlight the Year of the Tree for schoolchildren.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Who will supply the trees?

Mr LAURANCE: Three million trees are going out from Forests Department nurseries already. That is a good point the member raised. The member might be able to donate some trees to his own local authority and the schools in his electorate. This is an excellent way in which he could be personally involved. This initiative is open to members of this House.

Mr Grill: There has been only one before, the dust abatement committee programme and you people have just knocked it on the head.

Mr LAURANCE: That is one example of something that could be reactivated by the member with his interest in the Year of the Tree.

Mr Pearce: You talk about growing trees in Kalamunda when there are about a million there already!

Mr LAURANCE: If the member would like to criticise that local authority, by all means let him do so.

Mr Pearce: You are saying that we should have a good tree planting scheme in Kalamunda. It would be more appropriate to have it somewhere that is practically a desert.

Mr LAURANCE: There goes the member with his cynical approach again! That was only an example of a local authority which has indicated its support. I am sure it applies to many other local authorities around the State that will also want to be involved. The member for Yilgarn-Dundas could come up with initiatives for his own area. A local community has come together to solve the problem of lack of trees, and I think it has been very successful.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Excellent chairmanship, that's the whole thing!

Mr LAURANCE: In my own electorate a committee has been formed similar to the one in Kalgoorlie.

Mr Davies: The Kalgoorlie one was started by a Labor Government!

Mr LAURANCE: The dust abatement programme was started during the term of this Government, by the Department of Conservation and Environment.

Mr Parker: Are you going to donate some trees to your electorate?

Mr LAURANCE: I am giving very serious thought to that.

Mr Parker: How many?

Mr LAURANCE: I also promote a number of things such as the bougainvillea competition in Carnarvon for which I give prizemoney each year. That has the strong support of the local community and the general public.

Mr Parker: How many trees?

Mr Davies: I have a bougainvillea in my garden. Can I enter?

Mr LAURANCE: There go the Opposition members again! I think it is worthwhile.

Mr Parker: Take it seriously for a moment. If you could listen to your speech—

Mr LAURANCE: I am asking members to listen to me.

Mr Parker: You are treating it very lightheartedly.

Mr LAURANCE: I certainly am not! It is a most sincere topic.

Mr Davies: The topic is sincere, but it is not being handled with sincerity.

Mr Shalders: There is the cynical approach of members opposite again!

Mr Davies: You are just padding, and it is obvious!

Mr LAURANCE: The Forests Department will also set up activities this year in the north of the State because we want the Year of the Tree to have impact across the whole of Western Australia.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Is the Forests Department going to sell these trees?

Mr LAURANCE: It will extend from the new land areas in the south of the State around Esperance right through to Wyndham and Kununurra in the north. We hope that the Forests Department will promote the north-west tree scheme in those areas and I hope it will lead to an expanded operation of the initiative that was supported by the Brand Government in 1959 which has had a wonderful impact on the north of the State. That is just one of the things that could happen, but I wanted to acknowledge it because it involves the forest areas in the south of the State and I want the Year of the Tree to have great impact across the whole of the State.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Is the Forests Department going to sell the trees or give them away?

Mr LAURANCE: The programme I outlined makes trees available at a small charge.

Mr Pearce: "Sell" is the term!

Mr LAURANCE: Would the member not want it that way? They are mainly going to farmers. Trees have tremendous value to farm properties and are seen as an investment by farmers. I think it is a fine thing.

Mr I. F. Taylor: What about a local community situation where a school wants a couple of hundred trees? Would it have to buy them or would it be given them?

Mr LAURANCE: The Government will give commitment in a variety of ways. If the member wants me to repeat the ways I have already stated, I will be happy to accommodate him and

outline them again. I suggest the member goes through *Hansard* and reads for himself.

Mr Grill: Just give him a Press release!

Mr Davies: You have a packed Press gallery on the edge of their seats up there!

Mr Blaikie: When one remembers the speeches that took place in relation to bauxite mining, the contribution by the Minister to the Address-in-Reply tonight is a very important address. Remember those speeches!

Mr Davies: It is a very important piece of padding!

Several members interjected.

Mr Parker: Read the *Daily News* tomorrow!

Mr Young: Disgraceful! No feeling for trees!

Mr Parker: Can't you control it a bit better than this?

Mr LAURANCE: I am sure there are many institutions within the community that will make their facilities available: in fact, many local authorities already have. It gives people an opportunity to give support to something in which they believe. For the Forests Department, of course every year is a Year of the Tree. What we hope to do is get greater public involvement and this is already happening. The Minister for Health would be the first to acknowledge that. Perhaps the members opposite would acknowledge it too, but they have been so cynical in this exercise.

The International Year of Disabled Persons 1981 focused a lot of attention on those people in our communities who are less fortunate than ourselves. What happened last year was wonderful.

Mr Parker: You couldn't even build a ramp at Parliament House! I asked a question, remember?

Mr Pearce: The Minister for Health would be very interested if you could!

Mr LAURANCE: The Australian Year of the Tree will receive the same support here as in other States. It will give people an opportunity to think about their environment more than they usually do. I remind the member for Kalgoorlie that there are many organisations in our community which are only too glad to make trees and shrubs available if there are people who are prepared to plant them. They look after them as well. I am sure the member has seen this in his own electorate. I mentioned one local authority being very keen about this and indicating it is prepared to support the Year of the Tree.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Is that Kalamunda?

Mr LAURANCE: Yes.

Mr I. F. Taylor: You did not mention that before.

Mr LAURANCE: There could be others already. One local authority in the north has indicated its support.

I indicated earlier the confusion that has existed over the commencement date of the Year of the Tree. One of the reasons for my contributing to this debate was my desire to clarify when the year will commence.

Mr Parker: About this collection of trees of which you spoke, perhaps you and the Minister for Community Welfare could get together and have a foster-a-tree programme or an adopt-a-tree programme.

Mr LAURANCE: I welcome that suggestion; it is the first positive suggestion made from the other side of the House during this debate. I am glad members opposite realise that taking the attitude they have has done them absolutely no good. It would be good to hear them come forward with more of these wonderful ideas to support this Year of the Tree.

Mr Pearce: Make some affectionate comments to the trees in Harvest Terrace.

Mr LAURANCE: When the Year of the Tree gets under way and it receives popular support, Opposition members will be its greatest supporters. I will then have to show how cynical and facetious were the comments by Opposition members when I was indicating the Government's support for the programme.

Mr Rushton: They might be moving for an extension of time.

Mr LAURANCE: The Shire of Port Hedland believed that the commencement date was 1 January, and it started a community tree programme which involved tree planting, with input from young people. Hopefully when the Year of the Tree commences on 5 June the council will again start its programme. I hope all people put on their thinking caps to come up with a number of wonderful ideas for this Year of the Tree.

I am sure school children everywhere will be given an opportunity to become involved. The Education Department has worked up a programme to promote the year of the tree, and this programme will involve school children.

Mr Clarko: Don't you think the important thing is not what is done this year, but what is done in years to come?

Mr LAURANCE: The Forests Department has a five-year plan for tree planting. Certainly I take the point of the Honorary Minister Assisting the

Minister for Education, and I hope the programmes initiated this year will be ongoing. The International Year of Disabled Persons 1981 did not finish on 31 December last. That year was the commencement of so many things to assist the disabled.

Mr Carr: It did stop on 31 December.

Mr Young: It has been ongoing.

Mr LAURANCE: Disabled people will receive the benefit of that year for many years to come. I am sure that in the same way when this Year of the Tree is over a number of ongoing programmes will have been established, and the level of understanding of trees by our community will be much higher.

When the year commences on 5 June—

Mr Davies: Why is it starting on a Saturday? I thought Arbor Day was usually a Friday.

Mr LAURANCE: I will again go over that point if the member so desires.

Mr Davies: We are trying to help you.

Mr LAURANCE: I have outlined the Government's support for this Year of the Tree to commence on 5 June. I commend the concept to all members of the House and hope that they give it the support it deserves.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Bryce (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [8.02 p.m.]: During the course of their contributions to this debate, several of the members who sit opposite have made some reference to the improved communications between the leadership of the ALP and the business community in our fair city. They have indicated they have a sense of anxiety in this respect and I thought that, in the early stages of my contribution to this debate this evening, I would allay their anxiety and point out some rationale.

The visits by the Leader of the Opposition and me to a considerable number of leading and important mining companies and other leaders of

the business community, and our decision to produce and distribute the periodic document *Economic Outlook* has been a very conscious attempt on our part to improve the communications between the ALP and the business community.

Might I indicate to you, Sir, that the next Government of Western Australia will be a Government comprising members of the ALP. It will be very determined to improve the level of communication between Government, the business community, and the union movement.

Mr Rushton: They have never been able to do it before.

Mr BRYCE: I would venture to suggest this Government has never at any stage considered it was part of its responsibility to improve relationships in this community between business people and the Government itself, or the trade union movement.

Mr Rushton: There is a special portfolio which does that.

Mr BRYCE: For a considerable period of time this Government and its Ministers have specialised in heaping scorn and abuse on one side of the industrial relations problem in our State. I indicate to the House that it is our intention to rectify this matter immediately the Government changes hands about this time next year.

Mr Clarko: 1996!

Mr Rushton: You will not have any choice. You will be told what to do.

Mr BRYCE: It has been very much part of a two-way process. The leaders of the business community anticipate a change of Government and they are very keen indeed to establish effective channels of communication with the spokesmen of our party who are responsible for the areas which concern them.

We have been delighted to accept their invitations and we look forward to continuing a meaningful dialogue. During the course of these meetings we have taken the opportunity to explain there are a number of important and interesting differences between the ALP and the conservatives in this community approach to the economy.

Mr P. V. Jones: There is no doubt about that.

Mr MacKinnon: You could have fooled me. You have been going around trying to tell people how like the conservatives you are.

Mr BRYCE: What I am saying must be getting under the skin of my good friend and colleague opposite. I shall point out to him where he and his ministerial colleagues have been making some

major blunders and bringing the economy of this State to the edge of disaster as a result of their preoccupation with pouring oil on the industrial fires.

Mr MacKinnon: I hope you will explain how you will do exactly as your colleagues in New South Wales have done with their wonderful industrial relations record.

Mr BRYCE: I have a particular place for the Minister in my comments and at a later stage I shall have a special message for him.

Mr MacKinnon: Good!

Mr BRYCE: If the Minister will allow me to wait until then, I hope he will draw my attention to that fact before I resume my seat.

Mr MacKinnon: Ten minutes to go!

Mr BRYCE: Two rather important differences exist in the way we approach the economy compared with the approach adopted by our conservative friends opposite. Traditionally we have rejected the law of the jungle. It is our view that *laissez-faire* economic thinking has produced and exaggerated inequalities in our society and we are also of the view that it has wasted an inexcusable amount of human, physical, and financial resources over the last several centuries, particularly with the extremes in cyclical fluctuations. Therefore, we recognise and insist the Government has a positive role to play in the economic process.

It is our view also that always there has been and always there will be a legitimate and socially important role for the public sector. As far as we are concerned, to a Labor Government, the essential ingredients of a vigorous, mixed economy are a thriving and prosperous private sector and a well-motivated and efficient public sector. There lies the basic difference between us and the members who sit opposite who spend so much time urging the destruction of the public sector.

Mr Old: He has lost his place!

Mr BRYCE: What did the Minister say?

Mr Old: I thought you had lost your place. I was only trying to help.

Mr BRYCE: Every member of this Chamber will know that it is a long time since the Minister for Agriculture participated in a debate outside the notes written for him by his department which he reads when he introduces Bills into the House. I suggest it ill-becomes him---

Mr Old: You aren't right.

Mr BRYCE: —to interject on someone and suggest that, if he refers to a note once in a while, he is reading a speech.

Mr Old: Not much you aren't!

Mr BRYCE: As far as we are concerned, in an economy which has a 75:25 mix in favour of the private sector, it is virtually axiomatic that the well-being of the private sector dictates the well-being of the economy as a whole. Much of the condemnation, scorn, and denigration that has been heaped on the public sector by members opposite, including the Minister for Agriculture—

Mr Old: Too much public sector!

Mr BRYCE: —is based upon a rather deep-seated sense of paranoia or the desire to find a scapegoat. Might I suggest to those members it is a lot more logical to argue that both the public and private sectors must adapt and change with changing circumstances, rather than simply set about the process of dismantling the public sector which has a particularly important and fundamental role to play. That public sector in this State has been an element of stability since the process of government was begun nearly a century ago.

Governments like the Government which sits opposite, that follow the dictates of Milton Friedman and set themselves about the task of dismantling the public sector, do so in the knowledge that they are dismantling an element of stability which they, as Ministers and members, will look to during times of economic downturn.

By its very nature, the private sector is subjected to cyclical fluctuations much more so than the public sector. By virtue of the pressure of the market, private enterprise is forced to contract during periods of downturn. Ministers, like those who sit opposite, then turn to the public sector to provide the stability and, in many instances, the basis of economic recovery.

To a large extent in this respect the public sector is immune from the cyclical fluctuations caused by the market system. Too frequently as a matter of convenience Ministers in this Government and some backbenchers overlook the fact that the performance of the public sector, both directly and indirectly, impinges upon the performance of the private sector. I suggest to the members who occupy the Treasury benches that part and parcel of responsible economic management of this community is a recognition of those areas where the public and private sectors interact.

Mr Rushton: What do you think we have been doing?

Mr BRYCE: The Government has been condemning the public sector and setting itself about the task of dismantling it.

Mr Rushton: Look at land development.

Mr BRYCE: The Government has dismantled some parts of the public sector to the extent that it will be unable to respond to the directions of Government to assist it and its friends to get out of the quagmire into which it has sunk.

Mr Rushton: They are just platitudes. You don't even believe them.

Mr BRYCE: What do I not believe?

Mr Rushton: The stuff you are dishing out there. You are professing to support private enterprise. You don't know what private enterprise is all about.

Mr BRYCE: It is fascinating that the Deputy Premier thinks he and his friends have a mortgage on the understanding of what private enterprise or the private sector is all about.

Mr Rushton: You support State direction. You espouse those thoughts, but when you get there you start putting the boots in. You want to take over everything.

Mr BRYCE: Does the Deputy Premier concede he and his colleagues, both here and in Canberra, have been putting the boots into the public sector over the past five years to the extent that they have virtually rendered it impotent?

Mr Rushton: The public sector is not impotent. Railways are very healthy indeed.

Mr BRYCE: The railways in this community are nearly dead and their condition will be a lasting political memorial to the current Minister for Transport.

Almost without exception, the leaders of the business community have reflected in their discussions with us the same concern that is to be found in the community abroad. There are two basic issues. The first is the havoc that has been caused by Fraser's economic policies, and the second relates specifically to the impact on the community of deteriorating industrial relations.

It is not possible to engage in a serious discussion with these people without traversing both those issues at great length and in considerable detail.

I should like to return to the question of the havoc that has been caused by Fraser's economic policies. Right now I shall touch briefly on the question of deteriorating industrial relations in Western Australia. It is my view, and this view is shared by many of my colleagues, that Western Australia is slipping into an industrial relations

quagmire to a large extent because Liberal politicians prefer the politics of confrontation.

Many of those Liberal politicians sit in this Chamber as Ministers charged with the responsibilities of administering the public sector. These Ministers have proven to be disasters as administrators. It just so happens that in this community the greatest level of unrest existing outside the Pilbara is to be found in the public sector in which a great deal of direct industrial provocation and trouble is instigated, inflamed, and then mishandled by many of the politicians who sit opposite as Ministers of the Crown. They have proven that they simply cannot manage their responsibilities in regard to the administration of the public sector.

I suggest in all seriousness that Western Australia no longer can afford the luxury of what has developed in recent years as the Liberal Party's principal form of entertainment; that is, the use of industrial relations as a political plaything. Liberal Party members of this Parliament have derived a great deal of fun and an enormous number of kicks from inflaming and provoking industrial disputation in Western Australia. This point touches on my message to the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce and his colleague, the Minister for Resources Development. Well may they kid themselves that this State has a secure supply of energy, and well may they try to kid industrialists from New South Wales that this State is not looking down the barrel at precisely the same problems NSW has experienced with the supply of energy. Arbitrary staff ceilings are producing inside our State Energy Commission the same trauma as those which have been produced in its counterpart in NSW. We are, in fact, looking down the barrel at the same situation which has occurred in NSW.

I will leave that point for a moment and remind the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce that this State experiences the highest prices and charges for energy in Australia. With that background, he is content to induce industrialists from NSW to establish their industries in this state. I wonder whether he intends to tell them about his attitude and the attitude of this Government towards industrial relations. I feel inclined to write to any NSW industrialists thinking of accepting the invitation from these two worthy Ministers to remind them that whilst in the immediate short term they might have slightly more secure supplies of energy in this State, they could expect a much higher degree of downtime in the longer term as a result of this Government's attitude towards industrial

relations. I feel inclined to indicate to such leaders of industry that this Government is the sort of Government that will ignore totally the welfare of their companies if it suits it politically to pull on an industrial blue on the eve of an election and thereby produce the downtime these industrialists are so concerned about in NSW.

Mr MacKinnon: Can you give us some examples?

Mr BRYCE: I can give examples of involvement and provocation—

Mr MacKinnon: Can you give examples involving the Ministers you mentioned?

Mr BRYCE: Is the Minister trying to extricate himself?

Mr MacKinnon: I am not trying to extricate anybody. You say two Ministers have inflamed industrial disputes. I want you to back up that statement.

Mr BRYCE: The Minister backs out of his responsibilities.

Mr MacKinnon: You are backing out of it.

Mr BRYCE: I will give examples, with chapter and verse, relating to his colleague who is responsible for industrial relations, and then give examples relating to some of his other party colleagues.

I re-emphasise that Western Australian industries no longer can afford the luxury of the Liberal Party using industrial relations as a political plaything. In the Governor's Speech, 49 words were devoted to industrial relations, in which there was a brief reference to the number of work man days lost. No indication whatsoever was given of the Government's plans to address seriously the question of industrial relations related to the number of man days lost. Those 49 words merely included a couple of throw-away lines, and they were a measure of this Government's recognition of that which constitutes one of the most serious problems in our community; that is, industrial relations. This Government seems to be impaled upon the hallmarks of its own opportunism.

A basic duty of a State Government is to accept its responsibilities in the field of industrial relations, particularly when it comes to the establishment of a proper climate for industrial relations. State Governments have particular powers and responsibilities in a number of areas of industrial relations. State Governments have a responsibility to make representations to national arbitration authorities which, in turn, make decisions on major national industrial cases. State Governments have a responsibility to help set and

establish the ground rules for State determinations. Most importantly, State Governments are major employers, and in this State this Government is a very major employer. It employs more than 120 000 Western Australians, and therefore it has a responsibility to set an example and to establish the correct climate for economic growth and prosperity.

The political confrontationists sitting opposite, who have had so much fun, are about to witness a period in our political development which will see the present phenomena rebound on the Liberal Party. People in this community are sick and tired of industrial disputes which grow out of all proportion and which are extended beyond reason as a result of incompetent ministerial representatives making deliberately designed inflammatory statements, and in many cases doing so when the problems causing the industrial dispute are about to be resolved.

Mr Rushton: That's unreal!

Mr BRYCE: For a start I will take the laundry workers' dispute which occurred recently. The new Minister for Labour and Industry shortly after he was appointed announced publicly that he was proud to have driven a truck through a picket line, and he encouraged others to do so. If that statement was not designed to establish a provocative reputation, I do not know what would be. I will leave the matter at that and go on to another point.

Mr P. V. Jones: Wasn't the picket line provocative?

Mr BRYCE: The Minister does not understand industrial relations.

Mr P. V. Jones: Wasn't it provocative?

Mr BRYCE: If the Minister says picket lines are provocative, he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr P. V. Jones: I am talking about the one with the laundry workers; wasn't that provocative?

Mr BRYCE: Through which picket line did the Minister for Labour and Industry drive?

Mr P. V. Jones: That's not my point.

Mr BRYCE: I will refer to an objective analysis of this Government's performance in the field of industrial relations after being in office only a couple of weeks and coming across the laundry workers' dispute. That dispute was inflamed and extended by this Government.

Mr Rushton: That's rubbish!

Mr BRYCE: It was extended as a result of political confrontation by this Liberal

Government's Ministers. I am not the first to suggest that description of events. I will refer to the objectivity of the Editor of *The West Australian*. On 6 February he had this to say about the laundry workers' dispute—

Mr O'Connor's new administration has made an inauspicious start in the field of industrial relations with its handling of the laundry workers' dispute. Scenes of women being dragged from a picket line by policemen have given the two-week-old administration a heavy-handed image that it will find hard to live down.

Mr Rushton: The public gave the Government great credit.

Mr BRYCE: The source of this information is a person who normally would not be described as someone in support of the Labor movement. To continue—

Irrespective of the merits of either side's case—

To interject on myself, I make the point that the problem with this Government is that it never has considered that there are two sides to an industrial dispute—that it takes two to tango.

Mr Rushton: Do you think the union leaders are always right?

Mr BRYCE: No, I do not, but I think this Government should accept that there are two sides to a story. To continue—

—the Government's handling of the dispute was clumsy. By declaring constantly that drastic action was about to be taken it fostered an atmosphere of violence and confrontation. That, in the end, was what it got.

There is no question but that the deliberate intention of the Government with regard to its handling of the dispute was as stated by the editor.

The Hamersley Iron dispute, which lasted for 10 or 11 weeks on the eve of the 1980 election, is another classic example. It involved the intervention of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister of this nation threatening the complete shut down of the iron ore industry as a reprisal to one section of the work force. That action deliberately was calculated to extend the length of the dispute. The fascinating view we have found in discussions with leaders of industry is that they wish to God Ministers of this Government would pull their heads in and leave industrial relations to be solved by the representatives of capital and labour, because those leaders accept that there never will be a

complete solution to industrial relations. They accept that on so many occasions the intervention of Government Ministers has been for political purposes only and has worsened situations.

I re-emphasise that in times of economic downturn we can ill afford this intervention. It well may be something members opposite think we can afford during periods of economic boom, but when nearly 50 000 Western Australians are out of work and the economy is entering the most severe downturn it has experienced since the war, we can ill afford to have Liberals use industrial relations as a political plaything.

Always there are two sides to an industrial dispute, but I have yet to hear a member of the Government back bench or front bench concede that mistakes have been made by managements as well as by unions.

Mr Watt: The member for Nedlands did in his maiden speech.

Mr BRYCE: I will not do the member for Nedlands the discourtesy of ripping apart his maiden speech.

Mr Watt: He conceded the point.

Mr BRYCE: My recollection of the maiden speech of the member for Nedlands is that he trotted out the well worn phrase that it was the organised and militant unions which caused the disputes. I would not know where he got that phrase from!

Mr Pearce: I could guess.

Mr BRYCE: The member for Nedlands said that the militant left wing unions were responsible for all the real problems we have in industrial relations.

Mr Watt: I think you had better read his speech.

Mr BRYCE: I draw the attention of the House to the fact that it does take two to tango, and both sides have made errors and caused industrial difficulties.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics figures for the September quarter of last year suggest that 32.2 per cent of industrial disputes in Western Australia for that period were as a result of managerial policies; 16.3 per cent as a result of physical working environment conditions; 32 per cent as a result of wage claims; and 13.4 per cent as a result of pensions, compensation, hours of work, and others. If we bulk those figures together, we can see that the answer suggests approximately half the number of industrial stoppages in this community are caused by management, and half are caused by organised labour. We are waiting for members opposite to

decide to adopt a slightly less confrontationalist attitude towards industrial relations, and to recognise that a vastly improved attitude in this community is necessary if we are to control this most serious problem of industrial relations.

Mr Coyne: Do you think the Government should have a hands-off attitude?

Mr BRYCE: No. The Government ought to cease its intervention, in these areas, when that intervention is for political purposes alone. If the Government can bring the adversaries to the table and solve a dispute, well and good; but time and time again the Government plans to use the media to denigrate the labour movement.

Mr MacKinnon: Give me two examples.

Mr BRYCE: The member was not present when I referred to the Hamersley Iron dispute of 1979. If he wishes me to do a Ph.D thesis on it I will be happy to take the time off.

Mr P. V. Jones: Do you agree with the present Hamersley dispute?

Mr BRYCE: If the Minister is asking me about every single current industrial dispute, I indicate I do not know all the details of the disputes which are either just below or above the surface.

Mr P. V. Jones: I am talking about the dispute at the moment, because the Industrial Commission disagrees with what the shop stewards want. The shop stewards want access to the plant during their own time and on their own terms.

Mr BRYCE: If the Minister thinks I will accept his parameters as the basis of the industrial dispute, he is wrong. When I get hold of that information and when I have at my disposal the same sort of facts that he has, I might be able to comment.

Mr P. V. Jones: It is public knowledge.

Mr Brian Burke: I think he is saying something about believing what you have told him.

Mr BRYCE: I suggest to members opposite that it is a great deal of nonsense to suggest that industrial disputes in this community are ideologically motivated. It is time members opposite began to relinquish their parade of some of those well worn phrases they have used to discover subversive elements that wish to overthrow the system. I have evidence to suggest that industrial relations in this community would be less ideological now than at any other time in our history. We could probably put all the Trotskyites and Communists in this community in one telephone box.

Mr Pearce: If you could find them.

Mr Nanovich: They are around.

Mr Pearce: In your bed in telephone boxes.

Mr Nanovich: You go to bed with them.

Mr BRYCE: Another matter to which I wish to refer and which has been expressed to us by the leaders of the business community, and our own constituents who represent a vast cross-section of the community, concerns the havoc that has been caused by the Fraser Government's economic policies at a national level. Liberal Party dogma is wreaking havoc in this community. We are suffering from the effects of a situation caused by the "dries" in the Liberal Party.

The free marketeers have had their day and some of them have detected that they may be asked to pay some of the price, in political terms, with the latest leadership struggle. The Friedmanites have had their day. Fraser's commitment to these economic policies has destroyed a whole range of social institutions. They have been destroyed because of the financial starvation which has resulted from those policies. Even the private sector is disillusioned; it has had its confidence destroyed.

The public sector, which once formed a very sound and stable element in this economy, has been rendered virtually impotent. The part which has not been dismantled effectively has been demoralised; yet, it is at times of economic recession that Governments and communities like ourselves turn to that public sector as a source and base for economic recovery because it is the natural phenomenon that the private sector contracts during those periods.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to a number of economic indicators that will testify to and give evidence of the suggestion that our economy is in trouble as a result of Fraser's economic policies.

Mr Coyne: It is right throughout the world, not only this country.

Mr BRYCE: The party to which the honorable member belongs does not believe worldwide economic factors have caused it. Fraser has never conceded that worldwide economic trends have caused the economic problems of this nation. He denies it.

The member for Murchison-Eyre obviously is disagreeing with his Prime Minister.

Mr Rushton: The Prime Minister said things different from those you are saying now.

Mr BRYCE: What did he say?

Mr Rushton: Many things.

Mr BRYCE: Is the Minister suggesting that Fraser does not deny that the excuse for our economic troubles can be attributed to world economic trends?

Mr Rushton: That is not so.

Mr BRYCE: I will quote the Prime Minister. In the Federal *Hansard* of 9 March, page 664, the Prime Minister quoted his speech to the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science meeting of January 1975. I wonder whether he has changed his tune. The Prime Minister said—

When political leaders say the present situation cannot be helped, it is part of a world situation, they are expressing the futility of their own leadership when if they were men of real stature, they would be saying "we can overcome".

Fraser states that it is not international macro factors that have caused our problems. Fraser's policies have caused no end of problems to this State. We have an interest rate crisis, we have escalating inflation, we have a declining growth rate so far as investment is concerned, and we have high, and rising, unemployment.

Mr Coyne: So has every other country.

Mr BRYCE: That is not so.

Mr Coyne: Apart from Japan.

Mr BRYCE: We have rising taxation and Government charges, in return for a declining range of standard and essential community services. I wish to highlight a number of these indicators.

If we consider interest rates, we note that since the Fraser Government took office home buyers have found that their interest rates have skyrocketed to 13.5 per cent, if they are lucky enough to obtain a bank loan, and 14.5 per cent for a building society loan. Any business that has obtained a loan in excess of \$100 000 is paying up to 17.5 per cent as a standard rate of interest, and we expect another percentage increase before the end of this year.

Our escalating rate of inflation in the 12 months ending December 1981 is at 12.6 per cent and is again slipping behind our OECD counterparts. We are losing the edge we were told we would have by sacrificing, for the purpose of achieving.

When the Fraser Government came to office 25 000 people were out of work in WA and members opposite scoffed when we suggested that if Friedman's economic policies were embraced we would finish up with 50 000 to 60 000 Western Australians out of work. Today 47 000 Western

Australians are out of work and that should concern every member of this Assembly. What should concern members more is that 21 per cent of Western Australia's teenagers are out of work.

If we consider small businesses in Western Australia, in the year ended June 1980—those are the most current statistics I can locate—we find 581 businesses faced bankruptcy and that was a 42 per cent increase on the previous year. I understand those figures have become worse, especially this year.

A few days ago I referred to the matter of our share of the cake from the national Government tax returns and financial grants. Since Fraser has been in office—six years—Western Australia has been deprived of more than \$300 million for recurrent and capital purposes. How can members opposite begin to suggest that we have not been punished seriously as a result of the fact that the Australian people overlooked Fraser's act of treachery in 1975 and elected him to office and re-elected him into office, just as he was implementing the crazy notion of Friedman economic policy?

In the first five to seven years, members opposite and their colleagues around the country sought to blame Whitlam for their own economic mismanagement and bungling.

Mr Coyne: Not only us, but also the rest of Australia.

Mr BRYCE: Western Australian Liberal MP's were doing their fair share. Now, even the most pathological, single-minded supporter of the Liberal Party concedes that the Fraser Government has created an economic mess and we will probably take a decade to recover from it.

Mr Clarko: We are still recovering from the Whitlam era.

Mr BRYCE: Most Liberals have begun to concede publicly that Fraser has now led us into the darkest financial crisis the nation has ever seen.

Mr Clarko: Since 1930.

Mr BRYCE: Since the war. I certainly hope we do not reach the stage reached in 1930. There have been a number of warnings to the Liberals. One was the Lowe by-election precipitated by the resignation of a former Prime Minister, himself an economic expert in his own right, who resigned because he was disgusted with the Federal Government's financial irresponsibility. That was a seat that the national Government had held since it was created in 1948.

With the by-election there was a 10 or 11 per cent swing against the Fraser Government which

swept the Labor Party into that seat for the first time ever. The massive landslide in Victoria last week indicated that it was part and parcel of a reaction against the national Liberal Party's economic policy.

Let us look at our own by-elections. There was a swing of between 4.5 per cent and 11 per cent against the Government. I do not have time to detail that matter now, but I guess the most significant warning that the Federal Government faces is the current leadership crisis in Canberra.

A few days ago Andrew Peacock indicated his challenge to Fraser for the leadership because the Liberal Party had lost the support of a broad section of the Australian community and therefore needed a change of direction.

We were all astounded to hear on the ABC radio and to read in the newspaper today that the Premier of this State came out with unequivocal support for the Prime Minister of this nation and his disastrous policies. Members can understand my appreciation of this opportunity to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply to enable members on this side of the House to express their concern about this Premier's unequivocal support for the Prime Minister's disastrous economic policies.

Amendment to Motion

Mr BRYCE: Therefore, I move an amendment—

But we regret to advise Your Excellency that the Premier's detailed, unnecessary and ill-timed expression of support this morning for Prime Minister Fraser and his policies has compromised the best interests of Western Australia.

In doing so the Premier has—

- (a) demonstrated his support for the basic economic strategies adopted by the Fraser Government;
- (b) put party politics before the opportunity to highlight the need for far reaching changes to policies that have seriously disadvantaged Western Australia;
- (c) revealed his lack of concern, or inability to comprehend, the extent of the economic dislocation and suffering imposed upon West Australians by the Federal Liberal Government's mismanagement of the economy;
- (d) illustrated his lack of determination to defend the interests of West Australians as his first and foremost responsibility.

Mr Davies: Hear, hear!

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [8.46 p.m.]: I second the amendment; and to cater for the Premier's previously expressed desire to be given some notice and time in respect of amendments, I propose to speak for a few minutes.

I do not intend to weary the House unnecessarily, because I am sure that Government members were as surprised as members on the Opposition benches were to hear the fulsome support that the Premier gave to the Prime Minister. It was unnecessary, and as far as we are concerned, the Premier was probably best advised not to take a position on the internal conflict within the Federal Liberal Party.

It certainly appears that the Premier's position is out of step with the position held by most people in this State; I am sure that he would agree that, publicly, the Prime Minister's political fortunes have waned considerably.

Mr Coyne: Nonsense. You will find out on Thursday.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: For the benefit of the member for Murchison-Eyre, I will repeat what I said: The public perception of the Prime Minister's popularity has waned considerably. I made no mention about what the members of the Federal Liberal Party thought of him.

Mr Clarko: It is nonsense to say "the public perception of his popularity" because "public perception" and "popularity" are synonymous.

Mr Wilson: Smart fellow!

Mr Pearce: No wonder they got you out of the schools.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Certainly the member for Karrinyup might be more agile than the member for Murchison-Eyre; but I was saying that, publicly, Mr Fraser has the sweet smell of death about him.

Mr Clarko: It is a redundancy, what you just said—a gross redundancy.

Mr Wilson: So are you.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I was amazed, and members of the Opposition were surprised, to hear the Premier taking such a vivid stance in support of the Prime Minister—a stance that did not appear to be warranted. It did not appear to be in step with the public perception of the Prime Minister's position or popularity. It certainly appeared to run contrary to the State's interests in this matter.

I suppose we can say now that we have serious doubts about the Premier's ability to stand up to Canberra because he has compromised this State by expressing, in the strongest possible terms, public support for the Prime Minister. Implicit in his support for the Prime Minister is support for the financial policies to which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has referred, and which have served the State so poorly.

We have explained previously that if the Prime Minister proceeds with the financial line on which he has embarked, this State will be more than \$80 million worse off after the next Premiers' Conference. If the recommendations of the Grants Commission's consideration of the 1980 tax-sharing report proceed, the State will be worse off to the tune of in excess of \$200 million.

I would like the Premier to clarify whether his support for the Prime Minister includes support for the financial policies that are causing such harm to this State. He did not make that clear; he gives us every reason to believe that gone are the days when we can rely on the Premier of this State to champion the State's interests. The Premier has compromised his position by committing himself, his party, and his Government to the support of Malcolm Fraser.

Our proposition is that it would have been far more appropriate for the Premier to say nothing. Had he been asked a question about the leadership of the Federal Liberal Party, he could have said simply that it was a question to be decided by the members of that party, meeting constitutionally and according to the rules governing the Federal Liberal Party. But what did the Premier say? The Premier said, without equivocation, that Malcolm Fraser is by far the best man for the job.

Legitimately we are entitled to draw from that the inference that if Malcolm Fraser is the best man for the job, what he is doing to the States financially is supported by the Premier.

Mr Coyne: And he speaks for me when he says that, anyway.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: As far as the member for Murchison-Eyre is concerned, the financial machinations of the Federal Government are perfectly acceptable.

Mr Clarko: He did not say that.

Mr Coyne: I said he was the best man for the job.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is not difficult to understand the Premier's position on these matters because I can tell members something that will surprise them. I think I am justified in

saying that this Premier is the first Premier ever to have offered to the Prime Minister to cut back on capital works borrowings for this State.

Mr Tonkin: Shame!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: This Premier has done that.

Mr O'Connor: I have not.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier said he has not, so I will quote from page 113 of the transcript of the Premiers' Conference as follows—

If need be, I will be prepared to pull back in my own borrowing in this way, if this will assist.

Mr P. V. Jones: "In that way".

Mr O'Connor: That was conditional; and I will explain what it was about when I speak in the debate.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: As I indicated to the House, this is the first Premier to my recollection who has offered to cut back on the borrowings used by this State to build schools, hospitals, law enforcement institutions, and other public facilities. Now in admitting that he is prepared to cut back on borrowings, the Premier is saying that the threadbare capital works programme is capable of being cut still further. That is not our contention.

Whether the Premier is prepared to authorise cutbacks in borrowings on the basis of the acceptance of his home savings bond scheme is not the point. The point is that the Premier cannot be relied upon to fight for both things. We know he went to the Premiers' Conference and put a feeble case for the home savings bond scheme. Now we find that, at the same time, he offered to cut back on his borrowings for schools and hospitals if the Prime Minister would agree—

Mr O'Connor: I did not say for schools and hospitals. Quote facts.

Mr Parker: What were you going to cut back on?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Loan Council borrowings are used to fund the schools, hospitals, public institutions, goals, and those sorts of things.

Mr Clarko: All of the public borrowings.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is the whole point. The Premier offered to cut back on those borrowings if the Prime Minister would agree to the home savings bond scheme. That is not our position. As far as we are concerned—

Mr Court: You could be a big spender.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —the decision of the Premier to go to the Commonwealth and

relinquish to it the ability to borrow funds and starve areas, the financial deprivation of which the Minister for Health complains about so often, is not acceptable to the Opposition. As far as we are concerned, the Premier should not make concessions that sell the State up the river. He should not agree to cutting back on borrowings of the sort already financing our threadbare capital works programme, on the basis that the Prime Minister will agree to some savings bond scheme.

If members want to hear just what happened to the savings bond scheme, and how assiduous the Premier was in putting it, let us have another look at the transcript of the same conference. The following is what happened when the Premier put his proposal to the Ministers, the Premiers, and the Prime Minister—

MR MALCOLM FRASER—We are looking at these issues. Ray, we would like your views on the proposal you put forward. Could you try to trace out the implications as you see them for the building societies and savings banks?

MR O'CONNOR—I have all this done and I can give it to you fairly quickly.

MR MALCOLM FRASER—There may be some other action that can be taken with building societies and savings banks that would enable them still to compete.

Mr O'Connor: This is the best part of your speech.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The transcript continues—

MR O'CONNOR—This money could go out through those areas.

MR MALCOLM FRASER—Getting the money out would be easy but there is not much point if you are getting the same money through a different route. We have to get additional money.

MR O'CONNOR—I will get the information I can.

Mr Pearce: It was the best bit, after all.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The State has the right to expect more than that from its Premier. On the one hand, there has been no publicity about the Premier's agreement to cut back on capital borrowings; and I am sure, had the fulsome publicity on the housing bond scheme included details of how the Premier would agree to cut back on vitally needed funds, it would not have received even the scant appreciation that it found in the public mind.

I ask members on the Government side whether they knew that their Premier was doing this sort

of deal in an attempt to put through his housing bond scheme. How many of them knew that the Premier was offering to cut back on capital works borrowings? It is clear that none of them knew. Of course, the public did not know, and we would not have known had it not been for the transcript which has been made available.

Mr MacKinnon: By whom?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: There is no secret about that. Many Premiers go to the Premiers' Conference. If the Minister wants to deal with that sort of aspect, let us hear—

Mr MacKinnon: I just said "by whom".

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let me just put it to the Minister and to his colleagues that had he and had we been informed of this two-timing sort of arrangement, we would not have accepted it.

Mr MacKinnon: Previous Leaders of the Opposition could answer simple questions.

Mr Tonkin: Shut up!

Mr Young: You would admit it is a fair question.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have tried, Mr Acting Speaker, to indicate to the Minister and his colleague that more than one Premier attends these conferences.

Mr Young: But will you tell us who gave it to you?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Why should I tell—

Mr Young: We just want to know.

Mr BRIAN BURKE:—which of the Premiers provided the information? Let the Minister deny it.

Mr Tonkin: That is the important thing.

Mr Clarko: Scrabbling around in the dustbin.

Mr Pearce: What you are hoping is to get away with these disgusting things in secrecy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Gosnells will keep order. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he address the Chair; and while I am here, he should refer to me as "the Deputy Speaker".

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am sorry. Many of us think you should have been promoted still further.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Flattery will not help you in your speech. I suggest you make progress.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let me confirm the two points I have tried to make. The first is that the transcript of the conference shows clearly that the Premier was ill-prepared to put the case for this State in respect of the housing bonds; secondly, and more importantly, it shows that the Premier,

in putting the case, said to the Prime Minister, "If you give me the housing bonds, I'll cut back on borrowings." The Opposition says that the capital works programme is already threadbare, and if we were to cut back further on borrowings, we would deprive schools, hospitals, and other public institutions and facilities of the funds of which they are already desperately short.

Now, that is not the sort of leadership we expect from the Premier of this State. It will not be tolerated by the Opposition. We will take every step available to us to publicise the way in which the Premier carries on in secret, and contrast his carryings-on with his public statements about the housing bonds that did not mention borrowings or capital works programmes.

The other thing I wanted to mention briefly relates to the amendment and touches on the Premier's answers tonight to questions about Australian savings bonds.

Mr Young: A couple of months ago you were trying to give the people of this State the impression that the thing that was of paramount importance to you and your colleagues was housing loan interests. You tried to give the impression that, above all else, you wanted that problem solved.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will answer the point, provided the Minister for Health does not labour it. Two aspects are involved. The first is whether it is honest to put forward a housing bond scheme without giving the ugly side as well to the people to whom the Government is trying to explain it, and our attitude does not impinge on that. It is of dubious honesty to put forward a scheme which involves things that a Government does not explain to the public.

Mr O'Connor: You have taken it out of context, as you well know.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not think so. As far as we are concerned, if the Premier had said he had a housing bond scheme to implement, and to do so he would be prepared to cut back on major borrowings, there would be no challenge on that point.

The second aspect is the one to which the Minister for Health has referred: that is, whether or not the Opposition said previously that it would, to the detriment of any other spending, fulfil assistance to home owners. We believe assistance to home owners is the most pressing problem facing Governments today. But we have never been confronted with a proposition as precisely as this one is put: That we should be reducing our general purpose borrowings to finance the assistance.

Mr Young: Would you not be prepared to concede anything at all to achieve an objective?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the Minister for Health went to the extreme of saying would we cut out unemployment benefits completely to finance home ownership assistance, we would reject that even though we would still see assistance for beleaguered home owners as of paramount importance.

Mr Young: Would you give anything away to achieve that?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We would be prepared to concede very little to a Federal Government that has already taken far more than its share.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr Young: Would you be prepared to concede anything?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If our Premier goes to a conference prepared to concede that, he is adopting the wrong attitude for the State. The Federal Government already is ripping off the people of this State by a tax system that is penalising the initiative about which people on the other side of the House so often are willing to speak; a tax system that cripples small business and enterprise and is, through its regressive nature, penalising those families least able to pay. At the same time as the Federal Government has allowed the onerous tax system to bear down on the people of this country, it has created a major multi-million dollar tax avoidance industry.

Mr Young: Would you be prepared to concede anything for assistance to home owners?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not prepared to concede any more time to the Minister for Health.

Mr Young: Now you have not answered at least three times.

Mr Tonkin: He has answered you.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Minister for Health is not even a passing pain.

Mr Young: You are.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I can appreciate that happening.

The amendment states very clearly that the Premier would have been best to stay out of the leadership controversy of the Federal Liberal Party. He should not have committed himself in the way that he did by supporting the Prime Minister. What position does that put us in if Mr Peacock wins? Because the Premier was prepared to commit himself in that way he has put party politics before the need and the opportunity to highlight the stringencies of the financial deal the

Commonwealth is handing to us. The Premier could have said that, because of the financial arrangements the Prime Minister has foisted upon the States, he was losing public support. The Premier could have said that the Lowe by-election was far from acceptable. Unfortunately he did not take advantage of the opportunity to put the point of view I have put.

As far as we are concerned the Premier's lack of determination to defend this State is something we do not accept. I hope the Premier appreciates that we have given him ample opportunity to read the amendment in order to answer the arguments that have been put. We hope he will try seriously and sincerely to tell us why he found it necessary to come out in such fulsome praise of Prime Minister Fraser.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [9.05 p.m.]: I do appreciate the time the Opposition has given me to consider this amendment. I also understand the lack of depth and the immature opposition we have. Members opposite obviously have not thought out what they have done. They have presented this amendment on the spur of the moment without any justification at all.

They have criticised me for suggesting that Malcolm Fraser is the best person to be Prime Minister of Australia. I believe he is—Hayden and all taken in. He is the best person to run this country at this stage. I am not saying he is perfect; he certainly is not that. He has taken the country through some difficult times and has kept the finances of this country in much better state than a few years back when other people were in charge.

The motion states that I have demonstrated my support for the basic economic strategy adopted by the Fraser Government. That is totally untrue. While I do believe Malcolm Fraser is the best person at this stage to run the country, I do not necessarily support all his policies and nor have I always done that. As a matter of fact I have told him so on a number of occasions.

Mr Parker: When did you say that?

Mr O'CONNOR: In the Press and elsewhere. I have indicated in front of him on a number of occasions that I have not supported policies he has put forward. If the member for Fremantle were to read the balance of the document from which his leader was quoting, he would see that.

The Leader of the Opposition quoted out of context things that I have said. When I was at the Premiers' Conference I made it very clear that I was concerned for the people of this country, who were facing high interest rates. I am concerned.

Mr Wilson: You agreed to an increase after that.

Mr O'CONNOR: On what?

Mr Wilson: On Australian savings bond interest rates.

Mr O'CONNOR: The member got it right.

I said I was very concerned about the interest rates in this country—and I am. I thought the Opposition would have known that part of the reason for these high interest rates is the large amount of borrowings by the Federal and State Governments throughout Australia. There is only so much money available in the country, and when 50 per cent of it is borrowed by Governments it obviously affects the amount of money available for home building and other purposes. It affects the money available for small business people. It does worry me considerably.

State Governments and the Commonwealth Government would do better if they looked to see where they can cut back on their borrowings in the interests of maintaining interest rates at a reasonable level, one that people can afford. Members should consider the borrowings by Telecom and the energy commissions in Victoria and New South Wales, and other bodies. The NSW Government borrowed an enormous sum for the Eraring project.

Mr Parker: The vast majority of money for the Eraring project was borrowed overseas.

Mr O'CONNOR: Some was.

Nevertheless, the enormous amount of borrowings in this country does have an effect on interest rates.

Mr Brian Burke: What about cash management trusts?

Mr O'CONNOR: They have a great effect, and something ought to be done about them. The cash management funds do nothing for this country. About \$700 million going into that area has been drawn from other areas in recent months. This has had an effect on money available to building societies and other institutions.

Mr Wilson: Are not the cash management funds controlled by the States?

Mr O'CONNOR: There were arguments about this subject at the Premiers' Conference, and it is believed that the Commonwealth could act for the whole of Australia.

Mr Wilson: The Prime Minister said the States could do something.

Mr O'CONNOR: The States disagreed with that.

Quite frankly, if all the State Governments and the Federal Government looked at their borrowing programmes and endeavoured to cut back on them, no harm would be done to the community. It would provide cheaper money to home builders and small businessmen.

We did agree to a one per cent increase in the Australian savings bonds interest rate. The Australian savings bonds go towards our capital works. Had we not done that, the only other likely place from which we could have got the money for capital works was from Commonwealth bonds, and the interest on them is higher. If we had not done what we did we would be paying more in interest rates on borrowings for capital works. Members opposite would not want that.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned my "ill-conceived housing bond scheme". When I took it up and discussed it with members of the Labor Party and Labor Government Premiers, they agreed to support it at the Premiers' Conference. They indicated that it was a good scheme. So the Leader of the Opposition here is offbeat again.

Further, I took the scheme to the leading banks in NSW who put it through their computers. They said that it was a great idea that would work. Of course, the Leader of the Opposition would know more than the leading banks, with his financial brain.

The idea was not ill-conceived. It was put up following a scheme we had proposed in September last year involving tax concessions for home purchasers which we thought would help them. When that scheme was rejected by the Commonwealth at least we went forward with a constructive idea to do the right thing by home builders. The bond scheme I put forward would be attractive in many ways to investors. We believe a lot of the money that would become available would come from under carpets and from pensioners. It would be money that pensioners would not normally invest because it could affect the pension they receive. We believe many people would benefit from the scheme.

There was to be an upper limit on tax concessions so that people on higher incomes would be disadvantaged. We believed there was great benefit to home purchasers because they would get loans at 10.9 per cent. What the Opposition is doing in opposing this scheme is to preclude people from getting money at 10.9 per cent. I would have expected support from the Opposition on such a move. This is the sort of money that we wanted to get; the sort of money we believed we could get quite easily without

affecting the community. We put a limit of \$100 million on the amount that could be borrowed. One of the things we want to do is to get people into homes with interest rates they can afford.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr Brian Burke: It might work by giving pensioners and others interest on money they own. There could be concessions on State Government services like the SEC and the Metropolitan Water Board. It may work that way but it will not work the other way and Mr Sorensen, the ex-President of the West Australian Permanent Building Societies Association, told you in no uncertain terms.

Mr O'CONNOR: He said the scheme was a good idea. He wrote and gave other suggestions which he preferred, but which I did not. I had people who could equal Mr Sorensen's capabilities go into the scheme. They said that it was a good idea and that it would work.

I did not go into it willy-nilly, but on the basis of trying to help the Western Australian people and of letting Treasury look at it, and see the ideas, and get the support of leading banks of New South Wales before we put the proposal to the conference and gained the support of Premiers, including Labor Premiers of other States. The member says it is ill conceived. He has not thought about what he is saying.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you confident that the Prime Minister will not cut back to the maximum extent the State funds we get from the next conference?

Mr O'CONNOR: I can tell the member clearly that I will be in there fighting for every dollar we can get for this State and I am not prepared to accept the sort of deal that was given to us last time. Probably more than any other State in Australia, we need money for development. We make our contribution of 20 per cent of our State's export income.

Mr Parker: That includes extra borrowings.

Mr O'CONNOR: I have answered a lot of interjections on the way through. I will be fighting for every dollar I can get. The statement that I support all the ideas and demands of the Prime Minister is totally untrue. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition went on to say that this motion has revealed my lack of concern or inability to comprehend. I can assure him that I have great concern.

I would have thought that members opposite would consider that other States had to cut their borrowings to a degree also and hoped to get the interest rate down. Governments of recent times

have given borrowing great emphasis and what they ought to be doing is leaving some of the things a little longer.

Mr Parker: What would you suggest in WA?

Mr O'CONNOR: We could see which ones we could put back for a while.

Mr Parker: Which hospital? Which school?

Mr O'CONNOR: I did not say a hospital or school. The North-West Shelf is eight or nine months behind schedule. There are areas like this that we could look at. The member mentions hospitals and schools because he wants to chop them around or let people think we want to chop them around. As far as we are concerned, our hospitals and schools are being well looked after. Last year we put an additional 12½ per cent into them and we will give them a fair increase this year in accordance with the amount of money we receive.

I look around and see the insincerity of members opposite in putting forward this motion which is untrue and not factual in some ways.

Mr Parker: What do you mean by "some ways"?

Mr O'CONNOR: When it is said that I support the Prime Minister and his policies, I never said that. I did say that I think he is the best Prime Minister at this stage in Australia, and he is.

Mr Bryce: It is his policies which will be under attack in the party room on Thursday and he will pay the price.

Mr O'CONNOR: What the member said is untrue and he knows it. I did not make the statement.

Mr Bryce: Look at the ABC transcript.

Mr O'CONNOR: I do not care what the ABC said. I said that I believe he is the best person to lead this country, and I do. I did not say he is without fault. He has some faults. I hope he can rectify those faults and some of the things that have occurred recently will sort themselves out. This is in relation to the problems some States have. I think I have said enough at this stage and I indicate that I oppose the amendment.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [9.18 pm.]: The Premier has said that cutbacks in Government borrowing are desirable.

Mr O'CONNOR: I did not say they were desirable.

Mr TONKIN: Under the present circumstances.

Mr O'CONNOR: Come on!

Mr TONKIN: I believe the Premier said they were.

Mr O'CONNOR: I did not say that either.

Mr TONKIN: Under present circumstances.

Mr O'CONNOR: I did not say that.

Mr TONKIN: In order to obtain a quick—

Mr O'CONNOR: Tell the truth, please.

Mr TONKIN: I thought I was telling the Premier what he said. Will he tell me how I am wrong in that respect?

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes, I will. I said that in the interests of trying to keep the interest rate at a reasonable level in this country, if the other States agreed to cut back in their borrowings, together with the Commonwealth, I would be prepared to do so.

Mr TONKIN: I do not see how that is very different from what I just said about its being acceptable to cut back in the light of present circumstances.

Mr O'CONNOR: The other States in the Commonwealth are doing the same.

Mr Pearce: Say we do need a school here, but it is all right because they are doing the same thing in New South Wales?

Mr O'CONNOR: The member can make a speech.

Mr TONKIN: Once again, I ask the Premier: Where would he cut back? Would he be prepared to cut back on additions to Parliament House, which immediately come to mind? These additions have been made only because twice in the last few years he has created more parliamentarians than we need. More additions will be made to Parliament House soon, which is a completely unnecessary use of capital funds which could be generated into the housing interest area.

Mr O'CONNOR: Where are these additions going?

Mr TONKIN: The ones that were already added some years back, and the new ones on the other end.

Mr O'CONNOR: What end?

Mr TONKIN: The northern end. If I am wrong, I could be corrected.

Mr Brian Burke: They are planning to do the same thing up that end as was done this end.

Mr TONKIN: That immediately springs to mind. That could be cut back. The only reason more additions were made was that the Government decided to create extra parliamentarians in order to maintain the gerrymander and remain in power itself. The Act was altered in that way unnecessarily when Western Australians knew we did not need more

parliamentarians and certainly would not need additions to Parliament House. This is one area where the Premier could have cut back, but it is an area where he did not. We certainly would not have created extra parliamentarians and therefore would not have needed to increase the building at Parliament House, and that money would be available to go into home borrowings.

The Minister seemed most concerned at the source of the Premiers' Conference transcript. It always amazes me in this place that a Minister can tell lies, but we are not allowed to call him a liar, and the Premier is allowed to keep facts from the public.

Mr O'Connor: They were not secret documents. The member could see them. He has a copy of them.

Mr TONKIN: Is the Premier saying that the bargaining that was quoted by the Leader of the Opposition was a matter of public knowledge?

Mr O'Connor: It obviously is. The member has disclosed it in this House.

Mr TONKIN: It is now, because of the Leader of the Opposition, but it certainly was not before. The important thing appears to be not what the Premier does behind people's backs, but his being caught out. We hear people say, "Where did you get the document?" as though that is the important aspect.

We think it is far more important to have open government.

Mr O'Connor: I never kept that statement secret.

Mr TONKIN: I am talking about comments by the Premier's Ministers who seemed most concerned to know where we got the document from rather than being concerned about this deal being made behind the people's backs. If the people are to hear of this home bond scheme, as the Leader of the Opposition said, they certainly need to know what will be foregone in place of it. Secrecy just reeks right through this place.

A Minister of the Crown the other day told a blatant lie and yet he was able to get away with it. If I had risen to my feet and called him a liar, I would have been asked to withdraw. It does not matter if he tells lies—that is quite acceptable, apparently, in this Parliament, though it would not be in the community. We talk about the hallowed traditions of this place: "Thou shalt tell lies", but one cannot say that another is a liar. I will deal with the matter of the lie later on and will prove conclusively that it was a lie, though of course I would not call the Minister a liar without later withdrawing it!

The Premier said that at the next Premier's Conference—I hope I am not misquoting him—he would not be prepared to accept the same deal from the Commonwealth as we got this time. I am wondering what he will do, and would be fascinated to know what he would do about it if he is given the kind of deal he got from the Fraser Government, or whatever the Government will be at the time. It will be very interesting to see.

Mr O'Connor: If the member can tell me what will happen there, I will tell him what I will do about it!

Mr TONKIN: The Premier has made very brave statements after the event, but this State is more interested in concrete action against the Federal Government in order to solve its problems.

In the last six years or so interest rates generally have increased by 3 per cent and we are in for another bout of it. People are being forced to sell their homes and to go to other accommodation such as that supplied by the State Housing Commission, which accommodation is becoming less and less available. As a consequence we have a housing crisis in this State and no concrete action has been taken by this Government or by the Federal Government in this respect. We have seen cosmetic statements, but have seen nothing that will solve the problem.

The Leader of the Opposition several times put forward solutions which were rejected by the Government here and in Canberra. We believe that those solutions will be tried when there is a change of Government in Australia as a whole.

At a time when disposable income is decreasing and the family is being put under increasing pressure, we note that the Liberal Party says that it believes in the family. It has these glossy documents that it seems to bring out only before election time. In the last policy statement of Sir Charles Court—or the one before—

Mr Pearce: Probably both!

Mr TONKIN:—in accordance with the merits and traditions of his party, he said, "and we believe in the family." He said it with such feeling as he looked into the camera that one would have thought that the Australian Labor Party had promised to abolish the family altogether if it were elected to Government. It was a corny type of comment. This is probably why we have had a series of Liberal Governments—because their propaganda is believed by the people.

Increasingly, people will need to study the action of Governments rather than the words of politicians. What is needed is a real defence

of the family rather than a defence of big business and of people being able to make the quick dollar, which is the way Australia is going now due to the *laissez-faire* attitude of this Government which says it believes in free enterprise, but which, in fact, allows large corporations—the sharks—to swallow the other fish. That *laissez-faire* policy is resulting in an enormous rate of bankruptcy of small businessmen and is causing great problems to the home owner who has to sell his house. That policy will result increasingly in the family being put under pressure.

One of the most brilliant although simple sayings I have ever heard is, "Freedom for the shark is death for the minnow," and I think that sums up the Government's *laissez-faire* attitude.

If unfettered freedom exists, quite obviously, the powerful people will prey upon those who are weak. This happens in the physical field and of course, we have laws—with which we all agree—to protect the physically weak from the physically strong. This also is true in the case of economic management—that the weak will be preyed upon—and this is happening now.

We have already raised the matter of service station proprietors who are going to the wall, and who will do so increasingly in the months ahead because of the way this Government refuses to act to ensure there is some kind of fair deal for businessmen. That is only one sector of the business community. We also have all other sectors of the small business community being preyed upon increasingly by giant corporations. It is not good enough for a Government to say it believes in freedom, because freedom will result in the strong preying upon the weak. One has a great deal of freedom in the jungle, but I would have thought we had progressed from that stage. We can see the disadvantages of living in a jungle-type situation, but, economically, Australia is still a jungle where the strong prey upon the weak and one of the consequences of this is the pressure upon the family which will cause tremendous social problems for young people and children. It will impinge upon our education system and upon our observance of the law. It will cut like a rotten canker throughout our society.

We believe the family is the cornerstone of our society. It is not good enough for people merely to say that. What we must do is devise policies to ensure that the family is protected. That is why we place such a high emphasis on interest rate levels. It is not good enough for the sophists on the Government benches to say to us, "Do you mean you are not prepared to give up anything at all for lower interest rates?" Of course we are prepared to give up some things, but we are not

necessarily prepared to give up everything. It would depend upon the kind of bargaining involved. I thought the Leader of the Opposition answered that question very well when he said that the Fraser Government already had taken so much from the ordinary man and woman of this country, and that a Labor Premier would not go to a Premiers' Conference prepared to concede very much at all, because, already, so much had been taken from our living standards; in particular, we refer to the matter of interest rates.

At present in Australia we have a situation of monetarism gone mad. We are seeing a transfer of funds from the public sector to certain parts of the private sector and also from certain parts of the private sector to some privileged parts of the private sector. We see a Government in front of us and a *laissez-faire* Government in Canberra which believe in unfettered freedom which means that those who are economically weak will be destroyed. We will see the fabric of Australian society destroyed. That is why we need a Government which is prepared to interfere in the economy and in the legal system and to ensure the economy and society are regulated so that those who are not able to defend themselves—whether they be small businessmen, struggling farmers, or wage earners—will be protected in order that the essential fabric of Australian society—the essential freedom of enterprise in the true sense of the word—will be defended and will continue.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [9.33 p.m.]: The Premier tonight has shown us the two faces of liberalism in Western Australia and has demonstrated in a fairly unsubtle and unsophisticated way the manner in which he deals with these issues. He has said, "I am fighting against Canberra cutting back on our expenditure," whereas, according to the Premiers' Conference transcript, the reality is quite different. The Premier has tried to take up the line frequently used—successfully, to some extent—by the previous Premier that Canberra needs to be fought and resisted because, "We cannot have a centralist Government, with people 2 000 miles away making all sorts of decisions for us." We hear talk of the "financial disaster"—again, to use the words of the previous Premier—which the present regime in Canberra is for Western Australia.

However, as soon as the crunch comes—that is, as soon as there is a move to remove the man who is the architect of that financial disaster—what do we find? The second face of liberalism in this State suddenly comes to the fore, and Fraser becomes the best man to lead Australia. The man who was the architect of the disastrous

Commonwealth-State financial policy suddenly becomes—in the words of our Premier, who will fight for Western Australia against Canberra's centralism—the best man to lead Australia. That is not a view shared even by Western Australian Liberal voters. For the most part, they believe the man who should be Liberal Prime Minister is Andrew Peacock.

Mr P. V. Jones: Cut it out!

Mr PEARCE: That is what the polls have shown consistently over the last 18 months.

Mr O'Connor: Perhaps your Labor colleagues are supporting Andrew Peacock because they believe he will help them get into Government.

Mr Bryce: We hope like hell that Fraser wins on Thursday. He is our greatest single asset, and will be for a long time.

Mr Rushton: You speak with two tongues.

Mr PEARCE: I do not speak with two tongues.

Mr Rushton: You have more than two tongues; you have at least six tongues.

Mr PEARCE: That is a classic statement, because the Premier himself has spoken with two tongues. The way in which he has clearly demonstrated the two-tonguedness of his approach in these matters is worth repeating. Let us try to nail the Premier quite specifically on what he means. He does not deny what is contained in the transcript of the last Premiers' Conference when he said, "If need be, I will be prepared to pull back on my own borrowing in this way, if that will assist." However, the Premier went on tonight to say that he intended to go across to Canberra and fight for every dollar for Western Australia. How can he be fighting for every dollar for Western Australia, if at the same time he is agreeing to cut back on the level of Western Australia's borrowings?

Mr O'Connor: Are you not interested in interest rates?

Mr PEARCE: Of course I am, but the Premier's two statements are contradictory.

Mr Court: He said "relative to borrowings".

Mr PEARCE: His master's voice! I wondered when we would hear from the member for Nedlands.

Mr Court: It is the second time I have said something.

Mr PEARCE: I was not here on the first occasion. I look forward with anxious hopefulness to the next occasion. I hope the member for Nedlands will not emulate the example of the person who sits on his immediate right, who is rarely heard from—

Mr MacKinnon: Unlike you.

Mr PEARCE: Thankfully, in his case, but not so thankfully in the case of someone like me. The point at issue has very little attraction for Western Australia, because what less borrowings mean is, "Let us have a couple less schools in Western Australia. Despite the fact that our classrooms are already overcrowded, we can carry on, because we know the same problems are being experienced in New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania." What matters to Western Australia is the absolute amount of money we receive. The Premier must say to Western Australians, "I will not go across there fighting for every dollar this year; in fact, I will go across there fighting for fewer dollars, and—"

Mr Sibson: That simply is not true.

Mr PEARCE: "—the net result will be to bring your heavy interest rates down." However, the Premier is trying to pretend he will go across to Canberra to do the best possible job, and stand up for Western Australians when in fact, according to documents and secret transcripts, he is saying the reverse. We all noticed the desperation on the Government side when the document was quoted; members opposite did not want the matter raised in public.

Mr O'Connor: There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr PEARCE: The Premier's colleagues seemed desperately anxious to avoid the release of the document.

Mr O'Connor: We knew you would have received a copy of the transcript from one of your Labor Premiers.

Mr PEARCE: We concede that; we do not even regard it as a point about which we should argue.

Mr O'Connor: You cannot say it is a secret document when you know it was freely made available to you.

Mr PEARCE: The Premier must decide where he stands on this matter. Either Canberra's financial policies are disastrous for Western Australia—a point on which the Opposition could well agree—or they are not. If they are, something should be done about them. In fact, the Liberal Party itself is moving to do something about those policies; namely, it is trying to remove the architect. It seems a rather expeditious way to go about it. They have the possibility of a more reasonable financial policy stemming from Canberra if they install a different leader and a different architect; that is to say, if Andrew Peacock comes up with the numbers on Thursday. It is certainly a view that Liberal voting Western

Australians would share, because Western Australians no matter how they may vote understand the disaster that Malcolm Fraser has been for this State.

Mr Davies: On whose side is the toe cutter?

Mr PEARCE: He is not saying at the moment. However, I can tell the House—it may be news to members opposite—that the Western Australian Federal members are divided evenly on the leadership question. In fact, the Western Australian contingent of Andrew Peacock supporters is the biggest single State bloc of voters in favour of Andrew Peacock outside his own State of Victoria.

Mr MacKinnon: Who actually will vote for Peacock?

Mr PEARCE: I could give the Minister a list of names.

Mr MacKinnon: Will you?

Mr PEARCE: No, I will not.

Mr Sibson: You are wasting the time of the House with all this waffling. This is a matter for Liberal Party members to decide at their meeting. Get on with the business of the House.

Mr PEARCE: The subject under discussion is the Premier's buying into it. He does not have a vote in the matter.

Mr Sibson: He did not buy into it in this House.

Mr PEARCE: But he made comments on the radio and television, and was reported in the Press.

Mr Sibson: So he should.

Mr O'Connor: If you were asked whether your leader was the best man to lead your party, would you comment on the matter?

Mr PEARCE: It is not a clear analogy. If, for example, a Labor Government was in office in Canberra and it seemed to us—I am speaking very hypothetically now—that the leader was producing a financial policy which was disastrous for Western Australia and a better man was available who was vying for the leadership and had a strong backing amongst his own Federal colleagues, I would not be rushing into print, trying to prop up a failing leader who had a financial policy disastrous to Western Australia. That is exactly what the Premier has done.

What we are saying is that it is totally two-faced and hypocritical for a person to spend half his life attacking Malcolm Fraser and saying what a dreadful, irresponsible, economic policy he is following, and how bad it is for Western Australia and, when it looks as though the axe is

about to fall on Fraser, for that person then to rush around supporting him. Our Premier was reported in the Press recently as saying that he had always supported Malcolm Fraser.

Mr O'Connor: As a leader.

Mr Bryce: How can you support him as a leader, with his economic policies?

Mr Davies: Would the member for Gosnells tell us whether the vote of Federal members was taken before or after they received their lecture from the Premier last week?

Mr PEARCE: The head count of which I am cognizant was taken after the lecture. Perhaps he was successful in pulling some of them away from Peacock and back to Fraser; I am not able to say.

Mr Parker: Did they take any notice of him?

Mr PEARCE: I suppose not; I suppose he is the same laughing stock amongst Federal members as he is amongst his own back-benchers.

Mr Sibson: Did you give your opinion before the knives were drawn in the recent incident on your side?

Mr PEARCE: The member for Bunbury is unbelievable.

The point the House is discussing is not whether Malcolm Fraser or Andrew Peacock should be Prime Minister of Australia, or leader of the Federal Liberal Party. The point we are discussing is the attitude of the Premier, which is clearly hypocritical when, on the one hand, he is trying to prop up a failing and declining Prime Minister who is under strong pressure from his own party colleagues—a man who has produced a financial policy which has been a disaster for Australia and, particularly, for Western Australia; indeed, all the signs point to the fact that the policy will be even more disastrous for Western Australia after the forthcoming Federal Budget—while, on the other hand, he condemns the Prime Minister for his disastrous financial policies.

No suggestion is contained in the transcript that any other State Premier voluntarily agreed to cut back on State borrowings. Apparently, it was a Western Australian initiative. The Premier said, "We will take less." However, when he returned to Western Australia the story was, "I will go across to Canberra and fight for every dollar." The Premier cannot tell both stories; they are mutually exclusive. The Premier's hope was that the story he told in Canberra and the completely different story he told in Western Australia would never get together so that people could see the falsity of what he was saying.

Mr Bryce: Political schizophrenia.

Mr PEARCE: The mistake he made was going into print to support the man who was the architect of that disastrous financial policy. In political terms my deputy leader and my leader are quite right. What the Premier should have done was to keep his mouth shut, but unfortunately, whenever a microphone goes under his nose, the Premier's lips start flapping.

Mr O'Connor: That is starting to worry you, isn't it? You are the fastest mouth in the west.

Mr PEARCE: He says the first thing that comes into his mind.

Mr Rushton: You are still talking when you are asleep.

Mr PEARCE: In this case it was a mistake for him to say this, but the benefit is that his hypocrisy has now been revealed fully.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch—Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce) [9.45 p.m.]: Firstly, I reject the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The best way to speak to the amendment is to focus on the last few words of the member for Gosnells. He is not a man of few words, but he was talking of hypocritical attitudes. I would like members to reflect on that statement when we talk this evening about the Australian Labor Party and its representatives in this House.

Firstly we heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition professing to understand what business is all about, professing to say that business is disillusioned by this Government and by its attitudes to industrial relations, management, and small business generally.

I deal with industrialists small and large regularly, and I have not heard that kind of comment during my time as the Minister.

Mr Pearce: You should hear what they say about you when we meet with them.

Mr MacKINNON: I have also heard comments from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition concerning industrial relations. He said that we were being inflammatory in our statements.

Mr Bryce: Provocative.

Mr MacKINNON: He says that we are a Government of confrontation, and that we do not have any respect for any view other than that of the employers. That is not true. Firstly, I do not think he demonstrated by example that we are a Government of that ilk.

Mr Bryce: What about the hospital linen dispute?

Mr MacKINNON: He used the dispute at the Hospital Laundry and Linen Service as the only example.

Mr Bryce: That is the latest one.

Mr MacKINNON: Anyone who examined the details of that dispute would agree with me that the Government was in the right. The result of that conflict proved the Government to be right.

Mr Pearce: At \$100 a day.

Mr MacKINNON: Additionally, we now have a Minister for Labour and Industry who understands both sides of the picture. This Government does not believe that all industrial disputes are caused by labour.

Mr Bryce: I did not say that.

Mr MacKINNON: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition implied that to be the case.

Mr Bryce: I said both sides were wrong.

Mr MacKINNON: That is correct, but the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that the Government looked at one side only.

Mr Bryce: That is dead right.

Mr MacKINNON: The companies which set good examples of industrial relations are those where the employers are close to the employees. I am pleased to say that in most companies in Western Australia there is a good relationship between management and staff. It is hypocritical for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to imply that we look at only one side of the argument, and this is especially so if one looks at the record of his colleagues in NSW. The ALP in NSW claims to be the good friends of the unions, but the only time it attempts to bring about industrial peace is when it wants to win an election. I must say they do this successfully.

Mr Pearce: This has nothing to do with the amendment.

Mr MacKINNON: Then after the election, the NSW Government finds itself in a diabolical situation. This will continue to be so while it has its present administration which kowtows to the Labor movement. All the Labor States kowtow to the Labor movement.

I refer to another example of the hypocritical attitude of the Opposition. I am aware of the activities of its members in talking to the Chamber of Commerce and to other business people in the community. At no time during these discussions has the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, or any other member of the Opposition outlined clearly to the business community the Opposition's socialist platform.

Point of Order

Mr PEARCE: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I am quite happy to stay here all night to listen to the Minister but we are discussing the amendment to the Address-in-Reply which was moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition towards the end of his speech. We have allowed the Minister four minutes' latitude in discussing the earlier sections of the speech of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but as he is now approximately one-third of the way through the time allocated to him—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order?

Mr PEARCE: My point of order is that the Minister has been speaking for approximately four minutes and he has not even attempted to refer to the matters contained in the amendment which deals with State-Commonwealth relations and the Premier's attitude to the leadership position of the Federal Liberal Party.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have listened carefully and intently to the Minister since he commenced his speech. I believe the Minister's comments are in line with those of other members who spoke earlier in this debate. In that case I do not see that the member for Gosnells has a point of order. I call on the Minister.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr MacKINNON: Thank you, Sir. I was referring to the remark of the member for Gosnells about hypocritical attitudes. I would like to point out the hypocrisy on the part of the Opposition. I draw to the attention of members, the public generally, and business people, the fact that this Opposition is trying to profess that it is the bastion of free enterprise.

Mr Bryce: No we are not.

Mr MacKINNON: The Opposition has tried to suggest that it represents the free enterprise ethic and the free enterprise community better than we.

Mr Bryce: No, just that we are responsible economic managers.

Mr MacKINNON: To illustrate what a Labor Government would do I will quote from a book from which I quote often—the platform of the Australian Labor Party: "A Labor Government would create a number of corporations which would be State owned".

Point of Order

Mr PEARCE: I am sure, Sir, that you have continued to listen with attention to the Minister's speech. I have in front of me the amendment moved to the Address-in-Reply motion and which

is currently before the Chair. I wonder whether you could amplify your previous ruling that the Minister is speaking to the point by suggesting which part of the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition deals with the socialist policy of the ALP. The amendment commences by regretting to advise the Governor that—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the member sits down, I will indicate that to him. Again I have listened very carefully to the Minister. The amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition relates to Prime Minister Fraser and the fact that his policies have compromised the best interests of Western Australia. The Minister's comments relate to the different policies of respective parties, and as such, there is no point of order. I call on the Minister to continue his remarks.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr MacKINNON: Thank you, Sir. I know it must be embarrassing to members of the Opposition to have it pointed out that they belong to a socialist party.

Mr Bryce: Why don't you post a copy of that to all your friends and see whether it makes any difference?

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: I challenge the Opposition to have, as one of the key platforms in the policy of the ALP for the next election, that it will create a number of corporations which will be State owned and that it will develop appropriate industry—

Mr Parker called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr Pearce: The rest of the members voted with their feet. They did not think it was relevant either. Perhaps the Minister could read the amendment and pick out a few relevant points.

Mr MacKINNON: As I have said before, it must be of acute embarrassment to Opposition members to have this pointed out to them. I seek the assurance of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that he will point this out to people in private industry with whom he talks. The platform of the ALP then says that a Labor Government would develop appropriate industry and that such a Government would set up new enterprise, not only to compete with existing private enterprise, but also to supplement it and to ensure that living standards in the community are

improved as far as possible. Improved as far as possible by control and ownership!

Mr Bryce: Do you know when the first corporation was set up?

Mr MacKINNON: The member for Morley spoke about the strong preying on the weak.

Mr Bryce: That is a pathetic excuse.

Mr MacKINNON: The strong of course being the Government and the weak being small business. However, it would be small business people who would be put out of business as a consequence of the implementation of the ALP's policy.

I do not intend to answer any of the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition because he made no points about the amendment itself.

Mr Pearce: You have not.

Mr MacKINNON: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke about many other matters, but I believe the Premier rebutted his argument quite clearly and succinctly. The Leader of the Opposition stated that he believed, as did the member for Gosnells and other members of the Opposition—

Mr Pearce: Both of us spoke exactly to the point.

Mr MacKINNON: —that the Premier should not have made a comment today to the Press when asked about his attitude towards the leadership of the Federal Liberal Government. The Premier should be commended on giving an honest answer—something that is patently lacking in members of the Opposition. From their own comments they admitted that if asked the same question, they would not give a direct answer—they are not capable of giving a direct answer. I put it to the member for Gosnells: Does he believe that Mr Hayden is the correct person to lead the Labor Party at the present time?

Mr Pearce: Yes, but he is not creating a financial disaster.

Mr MacKINNON: Lurking in the wings is Mr Bob Hawke and he would have Mr Hayden's guts for garters at any time.

Mr Bryce: That sounds like real MacKinnon stuff!

Mr MacKINNON: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also indicated his lack of decision with respect to the debate on housing. Our Premier was the leading Australian Premier on that matter. He took our case to Canberra, and he did achieve a result. It may not have been the result we wanted, but certainly it is a result for which

the people of this State and of this country will be thankful.

Mr Carr: Higher interest rates.

Mr MacKINNON: The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Gosnells, and the member for Morley indicated that if they were in Government and went to Canberra they would have a totally inflexible attitude. If they went to Canberra they would not be in a position to negotiate. But then, having two bob each way, the member for Morley indicated that perhaps they could give up something, although he did not specify what that something would be. However, his leader says, "No, we have given up enough already." So they are not sure of their attitude and the amendment should be totally rejected.

The member for Morley referred also to interest rates. If members study the history of home ownership in Australia since the second world war, they will see that we are a nation with a high percentage of home ownership and, for the greater part of that period we have had a Liberal Government.

Mr Parker: What about the Chifley Government?

Mr MacKINNON: It is a fact also that Western Australia has probably the lowest building costs of any Australian State. That situation has come about through the policies of Liberal Party Governments.

The member for Gosnells said that the Premier must decide where he stands. The Opposition must decide where it stands in regard to socialism. It must decide whether it would go to Canberra with an attitude of non-negotiability or whether it would go there, as our Premier did, to try to get every dollar it could. I reject the amendment.

MR PARKER (Fremantle) [10.00 p.m.]: I support the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is very good to know that at least some members of the Government, if only two, still believe that the Government and the Premier of the day are doing the job for Western Australia. They would probably be the only two people in the whole of the State who believe that.

It used to be said of the retired Premier that he was not a Treasurer, he was an accountant, and that was the problem of his limitations. However, at least one had to say about the previous Premier that he could add up which is one of the characteristics accountants generally have. Unfortunately, it has become very obvious, both tonight and on various occasions since 25

January, that the current Premier finds that very difficult indeed.

We have the situation now where, instead of a Premier who, at the very least, came here and complained vigorously about many of the policies and constraints put on him by the Commonwealth Government, we have a Premier who comes back from his first Premiers' Conference and tells us we will have to cop it sweet—that we will have to cop Howard's line, for example, on public sector borrowing.

In my short time in this place, I can remember the previous Premier returning to the House and telling it, the Press, and anyone else who would listen—

Mr O'Connor: What is the alternative?

Mr PARKER: —of the need for public sector borrowing and the extreme need for it in Western Australia, because of the resource development of which he was so proud in this State and also because of the infrastructure costs created by it and the power houses, roads, and towns that were needed.

The previous Premier would return from the Premiers' Conference and say that we needed more money not just in grants—although he said that as well—but also the ability to borrow for infrastructure borrowing and capital expenditure by the Government. That was the previous Premier's line when he came back from the Premiers' Conference. I am not sure whether he pushed it as strongly in Canberra as he did here.

Mr O'Connor: What was the alternative?

Mr PARKER: However, in the current Premier's mind, the alternative appears to be what he has come back from the Premiers' Conference with, because the first remark the new Premier made when he returned was, "It is really a problem. We can't borrow too much money. We have to put things off."

Mr O'Connor: You don't know the alternative, do you?

Mr PARKER: Tonight the Premier said we would have to put off borrowing for the North-West Shelf and we would have to cut into the funds made available for that project. Shortly after the present Premier returned from the Premiers' Conference, I heard him talking at a reception in Fremantle and he referred to the fact that the power houses might be postponed. In any event, whatever suggestion was made—

Mr MacKinnon: It is a matter of judgment.

Mr PARKER: The Minister may be right and it may be a matter of judgment, but the Premier returned from the conference and, instead of

fighting to allow Western Australia to borrow the money it needs to fund the development of this State, he agreed with the Federal Government's position that we should stop borrowing money—that we should not borrow the money we need and which was fought for so hard previously.

We have a Premier now who is prepared to kowtow to Howard who, if the pundits are right, is about to become the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party in Canberra.

Howard is a man who has no social compassion whatsoever and who is interested only in his own monetarist economic theories. He is the man who for years has been telling people without impressing them that they need to cut back on public sector borrowing and stop funding through it. However, the new boy arrives in Canberra—the John Maynard Keynes of Western Australia—and immediately he is impressed by the arguments put to him by the Treasurer, arguments which have not impressed anyone before. Finally, the Treasurer (Mr Howard) has found a convert for his policies which are ripping off this State. Maybe the Premier is partly responsible for the fact that Sir Phillip Lynch will stand aside so the arch proponent of monetarism in this country can become the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party on Thursday, if the pundits are right.

This Premier is not fighting for this State. He is kowtowing to the views of a right-wing, monetarist economist—

Mr I. F. Taylor: An economist?

Mr PARKER: He is kowtowing to a man who proclaims himself to be an economist, and who happens to hold the position of Treasurer of Australia.

Mr MacKinnon: Are you saying the previous Premier defended the position of this State?

Mr PARKER: All I am saying is there has been a complete change of line from one in which the Government, as represented by the leader of the day, used to argue strongly for the need—

Mr MacKinnon: I have never heard you patting him on the back before.

Mr PARKER: I am just telling the Minister the position. The previous Premier argued for the need for this State to be able to borrow such money as it required to fund its development. I shall return to some of the other things he did, because some of them have landed us in the mess we are in at the moment.

However, at least the previous Premier argued for the need for this State to be able to borrow capital funds for the programmes involved. Now

we have a Premier who returns to this State from the Premiers' Conference, converted by the rhetoric of Howard who I would not have thought was the most convincing speaker one has ever heard in any circumstances. However, evidently Howard is good enough to convince the new Premier of Western Australia that we should not fund these programmes and should cut back on expenditure. He was good enough to convince the Premier we should increase interest rates, even though other Premiers, including conservative Premiers, refused to agree to those increases. He is good enough to have the Premier of this State in his pocket and that is the position: The current Western Australian Government is in the pocket of the Federal Government. It is preaching Federal Liberalism and it is not standing up for the State of Western Australia. The new Premier is in the pockets of John Howard and Malcolm Fraser.

I am no great advocate of Liberal Governments anywhere in this country, as would be well known, but let me contrast the position here with that which obtains in Queensland where the Treasurer (Dr Edwards) who is the Leader of the Liberal Party and also the Deputy Premier, said that the Commonwealth Government should have across-the-board Government control of interest rates and who accused the Fraser Government of abrogating its responsibility to the market place for economic development.

Mr MacKinnon: What did he propose with respect to housing interest rates?

Mr PARKER: Here is what he is saying about housing interest rates.

Mr MacKinnon: Do you believe he is right? Are you saying his policies are right?

Mr PARKER: Dr Edwards said—

Mr MacKinnon: Are you saying he is right?

Mr PARKER: I will come to that in a minute if the Minister will be quiet. I just wanted to do justice to the comments of the Minister's Liberal Party colleague in Queensland. I would hate not to be able to do justice to them. A Press report on Dr Edwards' comments reads as follows—

"Interest rates must come under the control of both State and Federal Governments.

"I reject completely the Federal Government philosophy in this regard, that these should be free of all control and set by the marketplace.

"I feel that sometimes the Federal Government is inclined to promote high

interest rates, particularly in view of its action of the last few weeks," he said.

He pointed to the recent Treasury Note tender for \$550 million, "in a period of tight liquidity" and said the "public tender system is putting the Government security rate completely in the hands of the marketplace."

That is what Dr Edwards had to say.

The Treasurer of Queensland—which, by the way, has been notably more successful in deriving amounts of money from such areas as the mining industry in that State than we have been in this State by virtue of such matters as rail freight charges, and so on—is prepared to fight the Liberal Government in Canberra. Our Treasurer and Premier is not similarly prepared to do that.

The Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce has asked about housing interest rates. It is not as if this policy has resulted in a boom in the amount of money available for housing. On the contrary, in *The Australian Financial Review* it is indicated a shortage of housing finance caused a slump in private housing approvals in November as the housing industry faced a downturn. It goes on to point out that those were the lowest figures since August 1978.

Therefore, there is not a great rush of people who are being attracted by high interest rates, wanting to lend money for housing. Less and less money is being lent for housing. The truth of the matter is, in this country, 50 per cent of capital accumulation is formed in the household sector. That is one of the reasons the household sector has always been treated specially, particularly—

Mr MacKinnon: Especially by Liberal Governments.

Mr PARKER: I am very glad the Minister raised that matter, because I shall turn to it in a minute.

It has been treated particularly and specially by Australian Governments to ensure that people can own their own homes. Who were the architects of that system? Which Government set up the system to ensure that 60 per cent or 70 per cent of Australians could own their own homes? It was the Curtin Government and then the Chifley Government. In 1945 banking legislation was enacted to establish that system, and in subsequent years amendments were made to consolidate that system. The Curtin Government first established the system and then the Chifley Government consolidated the position so that people could obtain home loans at rates of interest lower than the going rates.

The Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce asked me earlier whether I believed in the regulation of interest rates. My unequivocal answer is "Yes"; I believe it is possible to regulate interest rates even given the problems in the international economy.

Mr MacKinnon: Is that irrespective of the rate of inflation?

Mr PARKER: The Government's policy on interest rates has a marked effect on the rate of inflation.

Mr MacKinnon: Go back to school and do economics.

Mr PARKER: If the Minister were to resile a little from his adherence to "Friedmania" he might realise that if we were to hold down interest rates we might make a considerable contribution to holding down inflation. For example, interest rates in Japan, a free enterprise country, are regulated to a great extent, and the prime rate of interest in that country is between 6.75 per cent and 7.25 per cent. Of course, the rate of inflation in Japan is considerably lower than that in Australia.

Mr MacKinnon: What is the level of home ownership in that country?

Mr PARKER: My comment relates also to many Western European countries in which interest rates are carefully regulated and the inflation rate is considerably lower than it is in this country. It is true that inevitably international interest rates, particularly those in the United States and Britain, have an effect on interest rates in Australia, but only eight per cent of capital formulation in Australia is made up of international capital. The corollary of that is that 92 per cent of capital formulation in Australia is from Australian capital. It is not all that difficult a task to isolate to a considerable degree Australian interest rates from international interest rates. Of course, that has been done for many years. The question is not whether it is possible to isolate our interest rates from international pressures; it is whether the Government has the will to do so. This Government not only does not have the will to do so, but also wants to drive up interest rates.

Private business in this country is saying openly that it believes the Government is driving up interest rates. The Government is doing so because it believes increased interest rates will make it more difficult for private industry to expand by using more money, a course which would lead to wage increases. Businessmen are required to pay rates of interest from 16 per cent to 20 per cent, and the Government knows that

because liquidity will be so tight—the businesses will have to repay loans at these high rates—the businesses will not be able to expand at the moment. The Government does not want businesses to expand and employees to receive higher wages. The Government has not taken into account that the employees also pay increased interest rates for everything. These increased rates are driving up the cost of living and causing employees to bring pressure to bear on employers for higher wages. That has been forgotten by this State Government and the Commonwealth Government in their adopting a confrontationist attitude towards unions. They have not considered the option to keep inflation down and wage claims within realistic levels, and that is the option of a conciliatory approach through a prices and income control policy.

It is true to say any country with a successful economic management history has had an effective system of price and income control. Such control does not mean merely controlling the price of sugar at supermarkets, or the level of income received by the check-out operators at supermarkets; it means the price of money because all people are affected by that price when they purchase consumer durables, run cheque accounts, or whatever. All those things are affected directly by the price of money.

The Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce had the gall to say that this Premier is the leading Premier in Australia with respect to the housing loans interest rates question. What an extraordinary statement. I wonder how Mr Thompson of Victoria, Mr Wran of New South Wales, Mr Bjelke-Petersen of Queensland, or Mr Tonkin of South Australia would view that statement.

Mr O'Connor: We took the lead, and you know it.

Mr PARKER: The Premier said he led the way with the so-called "granny" bonds scheme. Mr Thompson and Mr Kennett of Victoria claim responsibility for that scheme. If one reads *The Age* or *The Herald* of Melbourne one would not think that Mr O'Connor even existed. Indeed, ignoring whether the scheme is good or bad, it was first proposed not by Mr O'Connor, but by Mr Kennett, and we all know what happened to him. His electorate pronounced judgment on him, presumably indicating what his electorate thought of the scheme. If anyone is to take credit for the scheme, it is not Mr O'Connor but Mr Kennett, the previous Minister for Housing in Victoria. Is that not true?

Mr O'Connor: The scheme I put up had not been put up before.

Mr PARKER: It may not have been the same in its detail, but the broad brush of it, as I understand, was the same.

Mr O'Connor: Not at all.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you sure it wasn't put up last October?

Mr O'Connor: Not to my knowledge.

Mr PARKER: The Premier may as well be saying that Mr Kennett and Mr Thompson lied to their electorates when they put forward their policies before the last Victorian election. I am quite prepared to believe our Premier, but for better or for worse, Mr Kennett and Mr Thompson put up a similar scheme.

Mr Hodge: You should have copyrighted it.

Mr PARKER: This Government is out of touch with international financial thinking on the question of interest rates. The John Maynard Keynes of Western Australia thinks he has the answers to national questions. Indeed, the monetarist economic theories promoted by his Federal colleagues—theories against which he is not fighting—have been deplored not only by socialist and progressive parties such as ours and others throughout the world, but also by the very people who initially promoted those policies; namely, industrialists. I will quote from an article written by Christopher Johnson, the Group Economic Adviser for Lloyds Bank, and published in *The Times* of London of 20 January 1982 on behalf of the council of the Confederation of British Industry. The heading is, "Why Britain needs a New Deal." It states—

Fifty years ago Keynes opposed Treasury orthodoxy by advocating public works as a way out of the Depression. With hindsight, it looks obvious good sense. Yet when similar proposals are put forward for a public works programme in Britain today, the objections of the 1930s are still advanced as though Keynes had never lived.

It was Keynes's disciple, John Kenneth Galbraith, who coined the phrase "private affluence and public squalor" to remind the capitalist economies in the 1950s of the need for public investment on social as well as economic grounds. "Capital spending should not take the lion's share of cuts simply because it is the easy option"

Mr Howard, our Federal Treasurer, is saying that capital expenditure should suffer the cuts, and our Premier is agreeing with him. The article refers to one study commissioned from the *Economist*

intelligence unit. Anyone who knows the *Economist* knows that it is a fairly conservative journal. It indicates that the Government should give priority to public investment. It goes on—

The Confederation of British Industry is expected to endorse similar proposals at its council meeting today.

... Because capital such as motorways and council houses either makes no charge to the public, or a subsidized charge, it should not be assumed that it does not bring a good rate of return.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Trethowan): The member's time has expired.

MR GORDON HILL (Swan) [10.20 p.m.]: I wish to speak on the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and address myself to an issue which is of great concern to the people of Australia. We have seen in by-elections around the country and State elections in Victoria that this issue is of enormous concern. Others before me have spoken about the question of housing interest rates and the housing sector generally.

One of the overwhelming issues that has come to my notice since my election to Parliament is that of housing. The people of the electorate of Swan are coming to me almost in droves to discuss this issue that concerns not only the people of Swan, but also hundreds of thousands of people around Australia. Next to unemployment, housing is the most serious social problem in this country.

The housing sector suffers very high interest rates and also suffers enormously from cutbacks in Commonwealth funds for State housing. The Federal Government must be shown that it must have some regard for the social and economic importance of stable investments both private and public, in the housing sector and this Government has failed to do that. The economic effects have had an enormous impact, have created overwhelming losses in relation to building approvals, and have resulted in an increase in unemployment and bankruptcies of building companies generally. These effects have been felt throughout the community.

One of the effects is reflected in the figures of the indicative planning council of the housing industry. That council recently said that the Western Australian housing industry had a capacity of 20 000 dwellings in 1981-82, but in fact was operating well below that capacity. The projected number of dwellings built in 1981-82 is 15 500 which in fact is 23 per cent below the State's capacity.

There is a remarkable parallel with the situation in Victoria. In Victoria the indicative planning council of the housing industry suggested that the housing industry in that State is operating 24 per cent below capacity. The Victorian people recently indicated to the Federal Government that they will not tolerate that situation, or the policies of the Fraser Government, and issued a warning to the Fraser Government to take heed; the Federal Government has lost the "jewel", and, before long, the people of Western Australia will indicate to the Federal Government that they are going to lose the "Rocky".

The Bureau of Industry Economics suggested recently that the value added multiplier for the housing sector is 2.4 and the employment multiplier is two; in other words, for every \$100 paid out in the housing sector, production to the value of \$240 is generated elsewhere. Of course, that is largely in the manufacturing sector. In fact, 70 per cent of that is generated in the manufacturing sector. For every single person employed in the housing industry people will be employed elsewhere in the economy.

On the 1981-82 figures, Federal Government spending is one-third lower than that which was spent seven years ago in the last year of the ALP Federal Government in 1973-74. On today's prices, taking into account inflation, the ALP Government spending was \$789 million on public housing whereas this year it is as low as \$225 million—a drop of \$564 million.

Clearly a need exists to stimulate the building industry, to create employment, and to give stability and security to the building industry and to the people of Australia, and for Governments to stand up to the Federal Government and the policies of Malcolm Fraser and John Howard, not simply to go along with them as the Premier has done today by coming out in public and supporting Malcolm Fraser. It was very much like a mouse tackling an elephant when the Premier tackled the Fraser Government on various issues at different times and it is no wonder that the Federal Minister for Housing and the Prime Minister have rejected totally the policies that the Premier has been putting to that Government.

Under the leadership of Andrew Peacock, the sort of policies that I have mentioned tonight would not have developed. By supporting

Malcolm Fraser, clearly the Premier is not acting in the best interests of Western Australia and the hundreds of thousands of people who are in need of assistance which has been denied them in this State and elsewhere in Australia.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 18

Mr Bridge	Mr Hodge
Mr Bryce	Mr Jamieson
Mr Brian Burke	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Carr	Mr Parker
Mr Davies	Mr Pearce
Mr Evans	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Grill	Mr Tonkin
Mr Harman	Mr Wilson
Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Noes 26

Mr Blaikie	Mr MacKinnon
Mr Clarko	Mr McPharlin
Mr Court	Mr O'Connor
Mr Cowan	Mr Old
Mr Coyne	Mr Rushton
Mrs Craig	Mr Shalders
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Stephens
Mr Grewar	Mr Trethowan
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Watt
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Williams
Mr Laurance	Mr Nanovich

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr McIver	Mr Sodeman
Mr A. D. Taylor	Mr Mensaros
Mr Bertram	Dr Dadour
Mr Barnett	Mr Young
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Spriggs

Amendment thus negated.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tubby.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Sitting of the House: Easter Thursday

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [10.32 p.m.]: Prior to moving the adjournment I would like to advise members that on Easter Thursday we will follow the procedure of last year and sit from 10 a.m. until 1.00 p.m. when we will take questions. Then we will adjourn.

I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Charges: Variation

284. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Will he give reasons why the rate of 6.29c per unit is charged for home usage power and electricity, as against the business usage for power and electricity rate of 9.34c per unit for the first 2 000 units used, 9.05c per unit for the next 8 000 units used, and 7.34c per unit thereafter?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The price of electricity to Energy Commission customers is determined by detailed cost-of-supply studies. These studies take into account the quantity of electricity used, and the way in which that usage is distributed across the day and year. Since sufficient generating, transmission, and distribution facilities must be provided to meet peaks of demand, prices must reflect the use of these facilities.

The patterns of use of electricity in domestic residences and businesses are quite different, which require that the prices charged to each sector be different, and this is reflected in the tariffs.

The tariffs quoted in the question are in error. Non-domestic users pay 9.34c for the first 1 000 units, 9.05c for the next 4 000 units, and 7.34c for the next 4 500 units.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: FABRICATION PLANT

Kewdale

288. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the Government spent \$1.5 million on a fabrication plant at Kewdale?
- (2) Has any of the work done at the plant recently been passed out to private enterprise?
- (3) If so, to whom has the work been given and what value are the contracts?

(4) If "Yes" to (3), what is the effect on employment levels at the plant?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

(1) to (4) The commission has spent approximately \$1.5 million on a construction workshop depot at Kewdale.

Currently plans exist to re-organise and rationalise the commission's workshop and construction activity. It is not anticipated that this activity will result in any retrenchment of the existing work force.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Power Stations: Bunbury, Kwinana, and Muja

290. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Are the maintenance programmes for the Muja, Kwinana, and Bunbury power stations behind schedule?
- (2) If so, by what length of time in each case?
- (3) Why are the programmes behind schedule in each case?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

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

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Power Stations: Cost per Kilowatt-hour

292. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What is the average cost of producing a kilowatt hour of power at coal-fired stations and also the cost of producing power at the Kwinana oil-fired station?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I am advised that the average cost of producing a kilowatt hour of power at coal-fired stations is 1.9c/kilowatt hour.

The cost of producing power at the Kwinana oil-fired station at February 1982 was 6.62c/kilowatt hour.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

North-West Shelf: Conversion of Generating Units

307. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the State Energy Commission estimated the capital cost of switching some of its current generating units to use gas in the event of there being a significant excess of supply over demand for North-West Shelf gas?
- (2) If so, will he provide details?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) All of the generating units at Kwinana power station are designed to utilise natural gas, and the 120 MW Unit No. 3 is already fitted for gas firing. It burned gas in 1972-73 when the Dongara field was developed. It is only necessary to fit gas burners to the remaining generating units, and the capital cost involved is small. Detailed costing estimates will be carried out much closer to the actual installation time in 1983 or early 1984.

FUEL AND ENERGY:
STATE ENERGY COMMISSION*Indebtedness*

308. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What is the current level of the State Energy Commission's indebtedness?
- (2) What is the projected level of the State Energy Commission's indebtedness for the following financial years—
 - (a) 1982-83;
 - (b) 1983-84; and
 - (c) 1984-85?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) The purport of the question is not known or understood. If the member will clarify the context in which he is seeking the information, I will provide details.

To assist in clarifying the information, the annual report of the State Energy Commission for 1980-81 gives indebtedness and details of total funds employed.

FUEL AND ENERGY:
GAS*North-West Shelf: Contract with Woodside Petroleum Development Pty. Ltd.*

309. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

With respect to the contract between the State Energy Commission and Woodside for the supply of North-West Shelf gas, can the contract be renegotiated if Western Australia's energy requirements alter significantly?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The existing contract does provide for some flexibility, and also ensures that the natural gas must be able to be commercially marketed into a mixed energy market in Western Australia.

FUEL AND ENERGY

Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. and Western Collieries Ltd.

310. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) (a) Is it a fact that the State Energy Commission has a contract with Griffin Coal Mining Company which guarantees a particular and/or minimum rate of return on investment for the company;
- (b) if so, will he indicate what that rate of return is?

- (2) Does the State Energy Commission have a similar contract with Western Collieries?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) (a) No;
- (b) not applicable.
- (2) No.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

New Industries: Energy Prices

311. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) What evidence does he have to suggest that Western Australia has abundant resources of energy for firms to tap if those firms decide to relocate their operations from the Eastern States to Western Australia?

- (2) Does the State Government propose to attract Eastern States firms by offering discounted energy prices?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The Collic coal resources will permit at least a doubling of current production levels for a 50 year life, there are significant commercial coal resources at Eneabba, there are massive long-term brown coal resources near Esperance, we have surplus natural gas available from the North-West Shelf as well as several promising gas finds off and on-shore as yet untapped and a record level of petroleum and coal exploration.
- (2) If the member is implying subsidised prices the answer is "No".

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY, GAS, AND PETROL

Prices: Comparison with Eastern States

312. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

How do the prices paid for gas, electricity, and petroleum by Western Australian consumers compare with prices paid for those commodities in—

- (a) Victoria;
- (b) New South Wales;
- (c) South Australia;
- (d) Queensland—
 - (i) for industrial purposes; and
 - (ii) for non-industrial purposes?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (a) to (d) Comparison of energy prices at different locations and between different users is difficult to make because of the complexity of energy pricing structures—prices vary with the quantity of energy used, the location, the time of use, and the way in which the energy is used. The Energy Commission has prepared a general comparison of electricity and gas prices, and I seek leave to table this document.

It must be recognised that electricity tariffs in other States will increase, as will tariffs in Western Australia, but it is not assumed that tariffs in Victoria, New South Wales, and possibly Queensland, may escalate faster than those in this State because of operation and maintenance difficulties.

The gas price comparisons refer to domestic use of gas—in most States industrial users take gas under commercially negotiated confidential contracts.

The maximum wholesale price for petroleum products is set by the Petroleum Products Pricing Authority, and applies nationwide. Industrial supplies are subject to widespread and varying discounts for volume and are kept in commercial confidence.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 147.)

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

North-West Shelf: "Take and Pay" Contracts

313. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the State Energy Commission committed itself to "take and pay" contracts for North-West Shelf gas?
- (2) In the event of the State Energy Commission being unable to sell all of the gas which it has contracted to purchase from the North-West Shelf, what options are available to the State Energy Commission to utilise/dispose of the surplus gas?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) The contract for gas purchases by the State Energy Commission from the North-West Shelf Joint Venturers includes "take or pay" provisions. The provisions for use are similar to the introduction of Dongara gas in 1972, when gas burned at Kwinana power station rose rapidly to a peak and then reduced to zero over some 18 months as new customers were progressively connected. Additionally, the Government is pursuing several other projects which promise to consume significant gas quantities and is confident that the flexible pricing arrangements in the North-West Shelf contract will prove attractive to major industry.

It has always been assumed that unsold gas would be consumed for power generation, with such gas being progressively allocated to sales as and when new customers or expanded use by existing customers permit.

As the member seems unfamiliar with the details involved in the pricing and contractual details, I have provided a copy of a published article giving the information.

COURTS: DISTRICT, FAMILY, PERTH LOCAL, AND SUPREME

Cases

326. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) How many cases have been heard in the Family Court in each year since its inception?
- (2) From what number and on what dates have the number of Supreme Court-District Court and Family Court judges been increased?
- (3) Has every appropriate step been taken to reduce the work load of the judges of the Supreme Court?
- (4) How many cases were heard in the Perth Local Court and in the District Court, Civil and Criminal, respectively in each of the last three years?
- (5) How many criminal cases were heard in the Supreme Court in each of the years 1970 and 1975 to 1981?
- (6) On what dates did—
 - (a) the Family Court;
 - (b) the District Court;commence business?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Family Court—Dissolutions of marriage—figures do not include ancillary applications—

1976	2 861	—including
1977	3 761	transfers from Supreme Court
1978	3 327	
1979	3 590	
1980	3 059	
1981	3 895	
- (2) Supreme Court—The Supreme Court Act was amended in 1960 to increase the number of judges from five to seven. As a consequence Mr Justice Hale was appointed in 1960 and Mr Justice Negus was appointed in 1962. In addition, the master became a constituent member of the court in 1980.

District Court—Four judges were appointed when the court was established in 1970.

The number of judges was subsequently increased to—

five on 7.3.72
six on 19.3.74
seven on 16.11.81
eight on 15.2.82

Family Court—Three judges were appointed when this court was first established in 1976, with another appointment being made shortly thereafter. A fifth judge was appointed on 27 June 1977.

- (3) Yes. The situation is constantly under review.

The establishment of the District Court, with the enlargement of the jurisdiction of that court on three occasions since, the establishment of the Family Court, and the appointment of the master as a constituent member of the court have all been steps designed to reduce the work load of the judges of the Supreme Court. A Bill has been introduced into Parliament to amend the Supreme Court Act to enable an appointment of an additional Supreme Court judge to be made.

(4) Local Court	District Court	
	Civil	Criminal
1979	2 683	223 152*
1980	2 479	259 208*
1981	2 142	291 203*

*excluding
Commonwealth
prosecutions.

- (5) Supreme Court—trials with juries—in Perth

1970	Not available
1975	45
1976	52
1977	40
1978	51
1979	67
1980	55
1981	65

- (6) (a) 1 June 1976;
(b) 1 April 1970.

**FUEL AND ENERGY:
GAS AND PETROLEUM**

Exploration: Exmouth Plateau

355. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister Assisting the Minister Co-ordinating Economic and Regional Development:

- (1) Is it a fact that the ESSO-BHP group have failed to carry out their obligations under the terms of their permit to explore for oil and gas on the Exmouth plateau?
- (2) If that is correct, what steps is the Government taking to ensure that permit conditions are carried out by ESSO-BHP?
- (3) If nothing is being done to ensure compliance with the terms of the permit, why not?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) In view of the lack of encouragement from Exmouth plateau exploration, ESSO-BHP was granted a deferment of work commitments for its Exmouth plateau permits in March 1981 in order to allow for a major reassessment of all exploration data before further work proceeded. At this time, the permits remain in good standing under the provisions of the offshore petroleum legislation.

As a result of the reassessment, ESSO-BHP wish to reduce the permit work obligations. The matter has not yet been resolved, although I have met with the parties concerned and discussed their programme and obligations.

Contrary to Press reports, this matter falls within the administration of the Minister for Mines, as the designated authority under the legislation. The concurrence of the Federal Minister will be sought to any agreed and amended programme.

**PUBLIC SERVICE:
PUBLIC SERVANTS**

Early Retirement: Categories

356. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Which categories of State Government employees will be affected by the Government's proposals for earlier retirement?

- (2) What will the proposed earlier retirement ages be?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) All categories of Government employees.
- (2) Voluntary retirement at age 55.

PUBLIC BODIES

Members: Declaration of Interest

357. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

Are part-time members of public bodies in Western Australia subject to declaration of interest requirements?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Generally no, but all particular Statutes have not been researched in view of the magnitude of such a task, and some specific provisions may exist.

It is expected that an individual member would declare an interest on any specific matter under discussion by the body of which he is a member, and to refrain from participating in the discussion or consequent decision.

PUBLIC BODIES

Accounting Procedures

358. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Has a standard form of accounting procedures been applied to all public bodies in Western Australia?
- (2) If not, what guidelines are provided for newly established public bodies in Western Australia?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) Generally standard accounting procedures have been adopted for the receipt and payment of moneys in

compliance with the provisions of the Audit Act and Treasury regulations, and prudent commercial practice. Annual statements of account vary according to the nature of the public body. In the case of business undertakings, the format of final accounts have regard to commercial practice and appropriate standards laid down by the professional accounting body. A working group comprising officers of Treasury and the Auditor General's Department is currently reviewing reporting standards and guidelines for all statutory authorities. The review will take account of the Commonwealth exposure draft—"Proposed guidelines for format and standards of financial statements of Commonwealth Undertakings".

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Introduction

359. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

In support of the Government's commitment to open Government, is it the Government's intention to introduce a Freedom of Information Act in Western Australia?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The State Government has consistently stated that it will gauge the effectiveness of freedom of information legislation when introduced in other jurisdictions before taking major and costly action here.

The situation after 1 October, when the new Commonwealth Act comes into operation, will be closely monitored so that the State Government can carry out its undertaking.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Appeal Tribunal

360. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of legislation in New South Wales which enables members of the public who are adversely affected by

particular administrative decisions of Government departments and bodies to seek reasons for such decisions and, if necessary, to appeal against such decisions to a special tribunal?

- (2) Will he investigate the feasibility of introducing similar legislation in Western Australia?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No, unless the member is referring to the work done by the Administrative Law Division of the New South Wales Supreme Court.
- (2) The subject of administrative appeals is under consideration by the Government at present. The Law Reform Commission of Western Australia recently released a report titled "Review of Administrative Decisions: Appeals" and this was tabled in Parliament on 18 March 1982.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN: CABINET

Committee System

361. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he provide details of the Cabinet committee system which has developed in Western Australia as a means of integrating and expediting decisions of Cabinet?
- (2) Which Ministers are members of the respective committees?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) Cabinet occasionally resolves that a particular matter be examined by a small number of Ministers who are subject to the authority of Cabinet and are required to report back to Cabinet. Ministers involved vary according to the circumstances and topic in each case and when the subject is finalised by Cabinet the arrangement lapses.

The assignment of tasks in order to assist in decision making is the Government's prerogative.

I am not prepared to give such details of Cabinet's deliberations to the member.

PUBLIC SECTOR

Assessment of Assets

362. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government of Western Australia ever conducted a comprehensive assessment of the value of the State's public sector assets?
- (2) Is he aware that Governments elsewhere in Australia have undertaken this task to enable them to identify the extent of underutilised and underused property assets?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No. However, the Government has embarked on the development of a land information system for Western Australia. A subsystem, the Crown reserves register, is operational and data take up for another, the freehold ownership system, is 75 per cent complete. From these subsystems a register of Government land will be available towards the middle of the year. A subsequent development is the Government property management system. Work on this system has commenced.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Bunbury Power Station: Environmental Impact Statement

363. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Was an environmental impact statement or some similar study on the proposed new Bunbury power station on the shores of the Leschenault Inlet completed for the State Energy Commission last year by Dr Tim Meagher?
- (2) If so, when was the report completed and what has been done with it since its completion?
- (3) Will he table a copy of the report?
- (4) If he will not table a copy of the report, why not?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (4) A preliminary review of environmental matters relating to expansion of Bunbury power station was undertaken by Dr Meagher, and his report was available to the State Energy Commission in March 1981.

This was used in early planning studies, and it would be quite inappropriate to table, in view of its preliminary nature, and the lack of relevance to the more detailed matters which will form part of an ERMP. This document will be made public.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Boyup Brook Shire Council

364. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the additional cost which will be sustained by the Boyup Brook Shire Council in maintaining roads in its area as a direct consequence of the closure of the Katanning-Boyup Brook railway line and the opening of the adjacent area to road traffic, does the Government propose to give financial assistance to this shire council to overcome this disability?
- (2) If "Yes", what level of aid can be expected?
- (3) If "No" to (1), why not?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) to (3) It is expected that there will not be any substantial increase in traffic or additional costs to the shire council in maintaining roads as a result of railway closure. However, the situation will be kept under review and any submission based on experience after a reasonable period, by the council will be given consideration.

WASTE DISPOSAL: RUBBISH

Mandurah

365. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware that there is grave concern at the delays in approving a new rubbish deposition site for Mandurah?
- (2) What is occasioning the delays?
- (3) When can a decision be expected?
- (4) Will he take all steps in his power to expedite the matter?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Following communication from the Honourable Richard Shalders, member for Murray, and subsequent advice from my department I became aware that the Mandurah council precipitated a problem by closing the old disposal site before making plans for the provision of alternative means of disposal. I am advised that the council is now transporting its rubbish to the Caddadup site and that this arrangement is operating satisfactorily as a short-term measure.
- (2) A long-term waste disposal proposal is now being evaluated by my department. Some delay in commenting on the proposal can be expected, as the requirements of other relevant authorities such as the Departments of Conservation and Environment, Town Planning, Public Works, need to be considered before making a final decision on the suitability of the proposal.
- (3) The comments of these authorities are now being collated and a decision can be expected within the next two weeks.
- (4) Yes.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: ACT

Consolidated and Reprinted Copies

366. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

When will consolidated and reprinted copies of the Local Government Act be available?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

I understand that a reprinted version of the Local Government Act should be available within the next few months.

TRAFFIC: LIGHTS

Craig Street and Great Eastern Highway Intersection

367. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is there a problem with the traffic control signals at the intersection of Great Eastern Highway and Craig Street, Victoria Park?

- (2) Have complaints been received at the Main Roads Department, or at any other Government agency, about the situation?

- (3) Will he investigate the matter so as to see whether a dangerous situation exists?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) I am advised that a small percentage of the intersection users may be having difficulty in assessing acceptable gaps in the oncoming traffic stream.

- (2) Yes.

- (3) Yes.

TRANSPORT: BUS BAYS

Infant Jesus School

368. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the Government received requests from the principal of the Infant Jesus School in Russell Street, Morley, or from its parents and friends association, requesting that "No Standing" signs be erected in bus bays at the Russell Street entrance to the school?

- (2) Is he aware that the Metropolitan Transport Trust has threatened to withdraw its services to the school because of the use of bus bays by private motor vehicles?

- (3) Will he investigate the matter so that a remedy may be devised?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) I understand a request has been made to the Bayswater Shire.

- (2) The MTT has not considered withdrawing services to the school.

- (3) Suitable arrangements are being made to resolve the matter.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Vereko Dinner Sets

369. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

What has been the result of the reference of Vereko dinner sets to the consumer products safety committee which was made in December?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

The matter is still under reference to the consumer products safety committee.

BIRDS: BROLGAS

Extinction

370. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Is there concern at the possible extinction of brolgas in the north-east Kimberley?
- (2) If so, what is the cause of the problem?
- (3) What steps has the Government taken to avert the danger?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) to (3) The possible extinction of any species of animal is of concern. However, there is no indication that brolgas in the north-east Kimberley are in danger of extinction.

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Groundwater: Advisory Committee

371. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Adverting to question 2621 of 17 November 1981 relevant to the Swan groundwater advisory committee, has a representative of the Swan Shire Council been appointed to this committee?
- (2) Who are the other members of the committee?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The committee members are as follows—

R. Green—Public	Works
Department	
B. Swan—Department	of
Agriculture	
J. Beros—Nominated by Grape	
Growers Association of	
WA	
L. Pasalich—Nominated by Swan	
Valley and Regional	
Winemakers	
A. Rosher—Nominated by Shire of	
Swan.	

RECREATION

Government Assistance: Proposed Reduction

372. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) I refer to the Minister's statements shortly after his appointment in which he complained about community groups depending on Government handouts for sport and recreation, and ask: What particular groups did he have in mind when making this statement?
- (2) As the only recurring grants made by his department are for State sporting associations, youth organisations and bodies such as the Youth Affairs Council and the WA Council on the Ageing, which of these grants is he proposing to phase out?
- (3) Does the Minister regard other grants made by the department for travel subsidies to national championships, coaching courses, or equipment grants and subsidies as handouts to be phased out?
- (4) If "No" to (2) and (3), what were the handouts he referred to in his statement?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The thrust of the statement made at that time was that the Minister would look at ways in which community groups could be helped towards greater self-sufficiency and independence. It was stressed that many of the services of the Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation, such as courses for voluntary administrators and sports coaches or the training of youth leaders, are aims to self-help and have long-term value. Similarly, expert advice on planning, design, and management of sporting and recreation facilities can produce considerable savings in expenditure and increase community participation. The Minister for Recreation's statement included the fact that he was looking to extend this educational and advisory role of his department, but would also be looking to

discourage any hand-out expectation which may exist or develop, with no particular groups in mind.

- (2) None.
- (3) No.
- (4) The statement was intended to indicate a general philosophy and did not refer to any specific funding programmes.

RECREATION: COMMUNITY RECREATION ADVISERS

Government Assistance: Reduction

373. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) How does the Minister explain his recent reported statement that he intends to expand his department's advisory role in country areas in the light of the Government's decision to halve its contribution towards providing community recreation advisers for local authorities?
- (2) Can the Minister confirm the community recreation advisers' scheme has been of great value and extremely cost effective?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), why is the Government proposing to withdraw support for this valuable community service?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The State recreation advisory service already has regional offices established in the south-west, great southern, Greenough, goldfields, and Pilbara regions. It is intended to augment this operation by redeployment of staff currently placed directly with local authorities. At least one additional regional office will be established in the country, which will facilitate a more equitable spread of State resources throughout the entire State.
- (2) Yes.

- (3) The difficult economic times being experienced by the State have come at the end of a period of continuous growth in services and rising expectations as to the standard of public and private provision in all spheres. The introduction of the recreation advisor services as a direct subsidy to local government was undertaken in the spirit of demonstrating the benefits of having such a service in a local community. It is now thought that as the service is aimed at the local community level, local government should be prepared to make a bigger commitment towards the support and maintenance of these officers whose worth has been demonstrated so patently.

This does not mean a State withdrawal from the scene. The State will now concentrate on extending the service to those areas where due to distance, spread of population, and similar factors, the employment of recreation specialists by local government is less feasible.

HOUSING: FLATS

Wandana

374. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

Referring to the answers given by his predecessor to my questions 2135 and 2136 of 1981 regarding rubbish disposal problems and access problems for aged and invalid tenants of Wandana Flats and to an article entitled "Rubbish a Daily Battle for Disabled, Elderly" which appeared in the *Daily News* of 9 December 1981, and in view of the apparent change of attitude evident in the Ministry spokesman's comments in the newspaper article when compared with the complete lack of sympathy shown by the former Minister's answers to my questions, what action is he now prepared to take to alleviate the rubbish disposal and access problems for aged and invalid tenants in these flats, particularly when several hundred tenants had made their views on these matters plain to a former Minister by way of petition?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

The commission is not aware of particular difficulties for aged and invalid tenants at Wandana Flats in disposal of rubbish; and, in fact, there have not been any recent approaches to the resident manager by tenants on this matter.

If any tenant has a particular difficulty he/she should approach the resident manager and the particular situation will be considered.

HEALTH: RADIATION

Capel: Tailings

375. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he any reason to suspect that mineral sands tailings may have been used in the foundations of any buildings in Capel other than the private homes discovered to date?
- (2) Is he aware if mineral sands tailings have been used on building sites or as landfill at Bunbury or any other location in the State apart from Capel?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) A comprehensive survey was carried out in the town of Capel. Mineral sands tailings were found to have been used as landfill at a number of locations other than private homes.
- (2) As was announced in 1979 mineral sands tailings had been used as landfill in the Geraldton area. The tailings were subsequently removed or other remedial action taken. The mining company operating at Bunbury has given an assurance that mineral sands tailings have not been released from its plant for use as landfill. Further inquiries are being made into the possibility of the tailings having been used at Bunbury and other locations.

It should be understood that the great bulk of tailings resulting from the processing of mineral sands do not produce increased radiation levels. It is only certain residual sands from the extraction process comprising a small proportion of the total tailings which contain a small concentration of monazite and which has given rise to the present concern.

HEALTH

Urea Formaldehyde

376. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has a standard been set by the standards association, or by any other body, for urea formaldehyde?
- (2) What are the uses for which urea formaldehyde have been—
 - (a) recommended;
 - (b) not recommended;
 by the CSIRO?
- (3) What are the main uses to which urea formaldehyde is put in Western Australia?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) There are draft SAA standards. The National Health and Medical Research Council has set a ceiling standard for occupational exposure to formaldehyde of 2ppm—3 mg/m³. The Western Australian Public Health Department has set a tentative level of .07 ppm (0.1 mg/m³) for domestic exposure pending National Health and Medical Research Council recommendations. A rigid code of professional practice has been prepared by the Australian Urea Formaldehyde Foam Insulation Council, which operates under the aegis of the Plastics Institute of Australia. Some European countries have determined maximum permissible home concentrations of urea formaldehyde gas, e.g. the Netherlands and West Germany 0.1 ppm, Sweden 0.3 ppm for existing buildings and 0.1 ppm for new buildings.
- (2) (a) The CSIRO division of building research in Victoria recommend urea formaldehyde foam only as a retrofit material for existing buildings and then only in cavity brick walls. They believe that it is also probably suitable in brick veneer, although there is a possibility of timber decay. The risk of water crossing to the inner leaf is small—0.1-0.3 per cent probability in Britain.
- (b) CSIRO considers other materials are more suitable for ceilings and installation during construction of new buildings based on economic reasons and insulating characteristics.

- This advice has been obtained in a telephone conversation with the CSIRO.
- (3) Principally for plywood and chipboard binders and glues, then foam insulation. It has, of course, long been used by medical schools, teaching institutions, and research laboratories as a specimen preservative and continues to be used for this purpose.

TRANSPORT: FREMANTLE-PERTH

Railway and Road Reserves

377. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

According to a Government document entitled *Urban Public Transport for Perth Rail and Bus Policy, April, 1979* the Government announced on 3 October 1977 it had accepted the need for an integrated major transport route in the Perth-Fremantle corridor using the railway reserves and the adjacent road reserves. Is it fact that this decision supported spreading north-south traffic over several routes which are similar to the proposal set out in the Nelson English report?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Planning for a new highway through the western suburbs does not preclude the use of existing roads in the short term. The advantages of having a single major route is that it allows for the gradual introduction of such a route rather than the downgrading of the environment in a multitude of existing residential streets.

TRANSPORT: FREMANTLE-PERTH

Closure of Railway Line

378. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

In the Government's document *Urban Public Transport for Perth Rail and Bus Policy, April, 1979* it was argued that significant road planning benefits result from the decision to close the Perth-Fremantle railway line. Benefits include the avoidance of land resumption, the spreading of north-south traffic over several routes, and downgrading the importance of Servetus Street. Is it fact

that in 1974 the Government claimed no north-south route was planned through this area, and then when in 1977 it stated it wanted a north-south route through the area it used the concept of developing the arterial network and distributing traffic over several routes and now it has again changed its mind with a proposal for a highway-freeway through settled residential areas?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The question of a new highway through the western suburbs has been under consideration for many years. Cabinet's recent decision to proceed with the statutory planning processes for this route is based on the careful consideration of the previous history, as well as the predictions of the future urban growth and the travel needs arising out of that growth.

379 to 382. *These questions were postponed.*

SUPERANNUATION

Collection of Information

383. Mr I. F. TAYLOR, to the Treasurer:

- (1) With reference to his answer to question 55 of 1982 relevant to superannuation schemes, in order to ensure full and proper Government knowledge and understanding of the activities of the considerable number of small superannuation schemes in the public sector, is it intended to regularly collect relevant information as to investments and assets from the controllers of each of the schemes?

- (2) If not, why not?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) As I mentioned in my reply to question 55, most of the smaller schemes are based upon endowment insurance policy or, more recently, managed funds where the manager is a life insurance policy. I see no purpose in instituting regular collections of information about investments and assets in these cases.

**FUEL AND ENERGY:
ELECTRICITY**

*Bunbury Power Station: Aluminium Smelter
Proposal*

384. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What talks has the Government had with Alcoa and the South Korean group, International Construction Corporation, about the possibility of a power station-aluminium smelter development near Bunbury?
- (2) What is the current status of those talks and when can a decision be expected?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) There have been several talks with ICC and Kukje Corporation in Korea and Perth, involving the State Energy Commission, Department of Resources Development, and myself. These talks are at a formative stage, and it is too early to predict with certainty when a definitive development proposal could be announced.

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Details of the studies of the Pilbara-south-west inter-connection that have been carried out were provided in answer to question 1824 on 15 September 1981. Further planning of an inter-connection from the Pilbara region to the State Energy Commission's system in the south-west of the State have been suspended for the time being, pending a more definite indication of the prospect for future development of mining activities in the area necessary to provide the level of power demand needed to justify the capital investment involved in the inter-connection.
- (2) The investigation of the Eneabba coal prospect by Renison Goldfields Consolidated Limited has been proceeding for some time, but has not yet reached any firm conclusion in respect of the economics of the coal resource as a prospect for the future. The State Energy Commission is maintaining a close watching brief on developments, with a view to consideration of the value of the Eneabba coal resource as a source of fuel for longer term future power generation in the State.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Geraldton District

386. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Transport:

**FUEL AND ENERGY:
PILBARA**

Grid

385. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What is the current status of proposals to connect the Pilbara to the State Energy Commission power grid?
- (2) What stage has been reached in considering Eneabba coal supplies as the basis of a power station to feed into that power supply to the Pilbara?

- (1) Referring to the concern expressed by the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce about the joint venture proposal in that the chamber fears that Geraldton businesses will lose their traditional regional markets in the same way that they lost their traditional Murchison markets with the closure of the Mullewa-Meekatharra line, what guarantee is the Government able to give that there will be a transport service provided from Geraldton to surrounding towns?
- (2) What guarantee is there that the frequency of any such service will be comparable with present rail services?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) It is not possible to predict precisely what transport patterns will evolve when the general freight market is deregulated. However, in view of the size of Geraldton, its distance from Perth and the freight volumes flowing through the centre, it could be expected that major freight forwarders would take the opportunity to operate depots in the town for the purpose of distributing goods to surrounding areas.

Frequency of services to any particular town will depend upon freight volumes. The Government's transport policy provides that where a community cannot generate sufficient traffic to support a satisfactory level of service a franchised service will operate, subsidised if necessary.

FISHERIES

Rock Lobster

387. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) With reference to the decision of the Government to close the rock lobster season on 30 June instead of 15 August, was it indicated that this would be for a trial period?
- (2) If "Yes", when does that trial period end, or has the decision already been converted to an indefinite decision?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) and (2) The closing date for the rock lobster season is determined each year by the Minister prior to the commencement of the season and after having received advice from the rock lobster industry advisory committee.

TRAFFIC

Driver Education Programme

388. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

- (1) Further to his answer to question 187 of 1982 concerning driver education, which departments are involved in planning for a replacement scheme?
- (2) When can a decision be expected concerning a replacement scheme?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Police Department, Crown Law Department, National Safety Council of Western Australia and the Education Department.
- (2) The time of an expected decision concerning a replacement scheme cannot be determined at this stage.

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Smoking: Aircraft

389. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Did he see a recent Press article to the effect that the Federal Minister for Transport had promised to examine the possibility of banning smoking on aircraft services under his control?
- (2) In the interests of the large percentage of long suffering air travellers who do not smoke, will he please examine whether any action is available to him to prohibit smoking on intrastate air services which come under his jurisdiction?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes, this is a Commonwealth responsibility.
- (2) I do not have the power to prohibit smoking on intrastate air services. However, I know that on Airlines of Western Australia F28 aircraft, 31 of the 60 seats are allocated for non-smoking passengers. In addition, smoking is not allowed on Skywest Airline services.

ELECTORAL: ENROLMENTS

Drives

390. Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is the Government undertaking door-to-door electoral enrolment drives?
- (2) If "Yes"—
- (a) how many officers are involved;
 - (b) what areas have been door-knocked;
 - (c) what areas are being door-knocked at present; and
 - (d) what areas are proposed to be door-knocked before the next State election?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) and (2) Door-to-door canvassing was undertaken by the State Electoral Department between 28 September 1981 and 12 November 1981. Three officers were used in each locality visited.

The localities were—

Forrestfield
Booragoon
Edgewater
Dianella
Kardinya
Kallaroo
Hillarys
Churchlands
Ballajura.

Canvassing has been discontinued and it may not be possible to initiate further visits for several months. This is because the staff of the Electoral Department are preoccupied with the implementation of the redistribution. A new street index is being prepared, after which the creation of new rolls can commence.

ELECTORAL: ENROLMENTS

Districts and Provinces

391. Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What is the current enrolment for each of the 57 proposed Legislative Assembly seats and the proposed 17 Legislative Council provinces?
- (2) What is the quota for each category of Assembly seat?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Rolls have not yet been prepared on the basis of districts to come into force under the redistribution. It is hoped that they will be prepared and published in September of this year.
- (2) This information was published in the *Government Gazette*—No. 3 of 1982—which was published on 20 January 1982.

MINING: MINERAL SANDS

Eneabba and Geraldton: Safety Procedures

392. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Health:

Will he please detail all monitoring and/or safety procedures taken to ensure that workers involved in the mineral sands industry based at Eneabba and Geraldton are protected against any possible risk of radioactivity?

Mr YOUNG replied:

Radiation surveys are carried out periodically by company personnel and independently by officers of the Radiological Council. Where the surveys reveal working areas with increased radiation levels which could result in workers being exposed to unacceptable amounts of radiation, restrictions on occupancy or changes in working procedures may be introduced. Workers who could be exposed to radiation in these areas are monitored with film badges or thermoluminescent dose meters. The results of this monitoring are forwarded to the companies which may be asked for an explanation for any doses considered excessive.

EDUCATION: GERALDTON REGIONAL EDUCATION OFFICE

Relocation

393. Mr CARR, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) Referring to the Government's decision to relocate the Geraldton regional education office from its present location adjacent to and in co-operation with the Geraldton community education centre, and in view of the fact that the education centre has recently acquired extra land which would have enabled development to bring all regional education support services onto the one site, how does the Government justify its decision to separate these resources?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of its new facility at Bluff Point?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) Although the townsite is central it is too restricted and offers little opportunity for future expansion. The Education Department has made a firm commitment to move and consolidate its resources at Bluff Point where there is adequate land in a quiet area with unlimited parking. The site offers many bonuses with its proximity to the camp school, and other facilities such as large halls which can be used for conferences. Another advantage of the Bluff Point site is that children and teachers attending the camp school will be able to use regional office facilities.
- (2) The Public Works Department is currently preparing design and cost estimates, but have yet to be finalised.

RAILWAYS

Collie

394. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

Has a decision been made regarding the future of the Collie goods shed?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Westrail advises me that the future of this building depends largely upon the new land freight transport policy and its effect on the requirement for goods handling facilities at Collie.

At this stage of the policy it is not possible to say when the goods shed can be removed and this situation is not expected to change for at least 12 months.

HOUSING

Collie

395. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

What is the commission's building programme for Collie?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

Four three-bedroomed single detached under the Commonwealth-State housing agreement for the 1981-82 building programme.

BEEKEEPING

American Foul Brood

396. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Primary Industry:

- (1) When was the Department of Agriculture first notified of the recent outbreak of American foul brood in the Manjimup area?
- (2) On what date did officers of the department actually examine the reported apiaries?
- (3) Why did the delay between the reporting and the examining occur?
- (4) What is the present amount contained in the compensation fund?
- (5) Is an increase in fund levy contemplated and what amount of increase is anticipated?
- (6) (a) How often should hives be inspected by departmental officers; and
(b) is this mandatory?
- (7) How often are hives being inspected at the present time?
- (8) How many officers are on inspection staff at the present time?
- (9) How many officers were on inspection staff in each of the following years:
 - (a) 1970;
 - (b) 1974;
 - (c) 1978?
- (10) When was the last inspection of hives in the Manjimup area carried out prior to the recent outbreak of American foul brood?
- (11) When will the next inspection be carried out?
- (12) (a) Are there any importations of honey from the Eastern States into Western Australia at this time; and
(b) if so, what quantities of—
 - (i) honey;
 - (ii) secondhand equipment;
 - (iii) queen bees,
 have come into Western Australia in each of the past six months?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Wednesday, 17 February 1982.
- (2) Examination commenced Wednesday, 24 February.
- (3) Time necessary for laboratory confirmation of disease.

- (4) The compensation fund is currently overspent. Compensation payments are being met by Treasury against the fees to be collected in January 1983.
- (5) Yes. The beekeepers' compensation fund committee met on 5 April and discussed an increase in levy. I understand a recommendation will be made to me in the near future.
- (6) (a) and (b) There is no mandatory requirement for departmental officers to inspect hives unless a quarantine order has been issued.
- (7) Hives in quarantine are required to be inspected at six-weekly intervals.
- (8) Four.
- (9) (a) Three;
(b) three;
(c) four.
- (10) 30 April 1979.
- (11) 15 and 16 April 1982.
- (12) (a) Yes;
(b) (i) 46 407 kgs;
(ii) Nil;
(iii) Nil.

HEALTH

Urea Formaldehyde

397. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) On 16 September 1981 in reply to question 1868 of 1981 he advised me that many discussions and evaluations had taken place regarding the use of urea formaldehyde foam insulation and that the matter was being kept under review pending National Health and Medical Research Council advice: has any decision yet been reached, or any progress been made towards reaching a decision, on the continued use of this product in Western Australia?
- (2) Is it a fact, as claimed by a spokesman for the Australian Urea Formaldehyde Foam Insulation Council, that the products available on the Australian market are considerably modified and adapted for Australian conditions and should not be compared with the American and Canadian product?
- (3) Has his attention been drawn to a recent article published by the Australian Consumers Association in *Choice* magazine calling for a ban on the use of urea formaldehyde?

- (4) Can he confirm the accuracy of the claims made in the *Choice* magazine article?
- (5) What advice can he give to people who are worried about the possibility of a threat to their health by urea formaldehyde insulation in their home or work place?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) The National Health and Medical Research Council has not yet issued a report and the present policy in Western Australia is to continue the use of the foam by methods which comply with the Plastics Institute of Australia's approved code.
- (2) I believe so and have sought written confirmation.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No, there are other reports reaching a contrary conclusion and the report in *Choice* magazine is based on overseas experience which, because of product modification, types of buildings and weather conditions, may have less relevance to Australian conditions.
- (5) Firstly to confirm that it is in fact urea formaldehyde insulation and to contact the Occupational Health Branch of the Public Health Department for advice. It is important too to remember that, as *Choice* magazine comments, the long-term risk for humans is unproved. The evidence that it causes cancer is based on animal experiments. There has been a recent statement in The Proprietary Association of Australia's Newsletter of March, 1982 which refers to a technical memo released by the US Environmental Protection Agency. The document concludes that available evidence does not support a need for the Environmental Protection Agency to ban or restrict use of urea formaldehyde.

AGED PERSONS

Extended Care Programmes

398. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he received a report on the study conducted by his department and the public hospitals on the implementation

of extended care programmes throughout the State, including the provision of hostels for the frail aged on a subsidised basis?

- (2) When was the report received, and what action has he taken as a result of the report's finding?
- (3) Can I have a copy of the report?
- (4) Will he provide details of what progress has been made on implementing a special programme to cope with an expected doubling of aged persons in the Western Australian community over the next two decades as outlined in the 1980 Liberal Party election policy?
- (5) What steps have been taken to date to shape the Government's programme, as far as possible, to enable ageing persons to remain active and independent?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) No. However, negotiations are taking place with Charles M. Campbell and Associates Pty. Ltd. to undertake a study of extended care services and facility requirements.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).
- (4) The Government's programme is aimed at maintaining aged persons in their own homes as long as is possible by providing a range of supportive services.

Extended care services are provided by Royal Perth Hospital, Fremantle Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital, Osborne Park Hospital, Swan District Hospital and from 46 country hospitals under the supervision of the Extended Care Service of the Department of Hospital and Allied Services.

The Government subsidises the Silver Chain Nursing Association to operate a domiciliary nursing service and a home help service. In some country areas these services are provided from the local hospital. The home help programme has recently been substantially expanded and a new trial programme of appointing "care aides" to supply a much more extensive range of domiciliary services has been introduced.

New day hospitals or day centres have been established at Northam, Carnarvon, and Geraldton, and plans are in hand to establish similar units at Swan District Hospital and Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital. Other areas will follow when funds permit.

As it is not possible to maintain all persons in their own homes, the Government conducts permanent care units at Sunset, Mt. Henry, and Hawthorn Hospitals in the metropolitan area and in a number of country areas. Advice and support is given by the Extended Care Service to persons operating nursing homes or hostels. Educational programmes in the care of the aged or disabled are also conducted. The Government has recently funded a trial palliative care programme to care for the terminally ill in their own homes.

(5) Answered by (4).

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Health Education Curriculum

399. Mr HODGE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

What progress has been made in developing and introducing into all schools the recommendations of the advisory health education committee on the K-10 health education curriculum?

Mr CLARKO replied:

The Curriculum Branch has been provided with resources for the development of a State-wide K-10 health education programme. This programme is now being prepared under the guidance of the health education advisory committee and a health education syllabus committee. When developed the draft syllabus will be tried in schools before general introduction.

HOSPITAL: SUNSET

Closure

400. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

On Tuesday, 4 August 1981, in reply to question 1301, he stated that his department was investigating the

possibility of disposing of Sunset Hospital. Is the investigation completed yet, and if so, what decision has been reached?

Mr YOUNG replied:

The investigation is not completed.

HOUSING

Retirement Villages and Units: Exploitation

401. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has the Government received any reports of individuals acting as agents or developers of accommodation for retirees and pensioners approaching widows with old homes on large blocks and offering them accommodation in retirement villages or retirement units as "swaps" with cash difference a lot less than true market value for the old property and, reputedly high values on the new unit accommodation?

(2) In view of such reports does he see any need for the introduction of legislation to provide for a cooling off period in relation to the sale of retirement units to protect elderly people in a very vulnerable situation against potential exploitation?

(3) If "No" to (2), why not?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

(1) to (3) Neither the State Housing Commission, the Bureau of Consumer Affairs, nor the Department for Community Welfare has received any reports of the practice referred to in the member's question.

HOUSING: RETIREMENT UNITS

Private

402. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

(1) In view of the increasing number of private retirement home units coming onto the market associated with

financial systems tied to life tenure and the lack of any independent agency from which retired people including pensioners can obtain informed advice on such schemes, has the Government given any consideration to the establishment of a home purchase advisory service such as that which operates under the auspices of the Housing Commission in New South Wales?

(2) If "No", why not?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

(1) and (2) No. It is considered that sufficient avenues already exist, in addition to publicity in the media, to assist potential home purchasers and retired persons seeking retirement home units.

For obvious reasons it would not be advisable to give "informed advice" of the retirement schemes that are operative and, at the best, any bureau service could only be in the nature of a directory.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Two-bedroomed and Four-bedroomed Accommodation: Units Constructed

403. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

Referring to his answer to question 267 of 1982 in which he advised that the stock of two-bedroomed and four-bedroomed accommodation had increased by 77 units in the past 12 months, in which suburbs or country areas were these new units constructed and in each case, which of these units were for general State Housing Commission and Aboriginal Housing Board allocation respectively?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

Details of two bedroomed and four bedroomed accommodation increase in the past 12 months are—

Locality	Commonwealth State Agreement		Aboriginal Housing Board	
	2 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
Metropolitan				
Hamilton Hill	—	2	—	—
Country				
Albany	4	—	—	1
Bunbury	—	—	—	2
Collic	4	—	—	—
Esperance	4	—	—	—
Harvey	2	—	—	—
Mandurah	10	—	—	—
Narrogin	—	—	—	5
Northam	2	—	—	1
Wiluna	—	—	—	5
North-West				
Carnarvon	7	—	3	3
Karratha	10	1	—	—
Roebourne	2	1	2	—
South Hedland	5	1	—	—
SUB TOTAL	\$0	5	5	17
TOTAL	77			

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH, SPORT AND RECREATION

Portfolios: Amalgamation

404. Mr WILSON, to the Premier:

- (1) In view of the fact that decisions affecting young people in Western Australia are made by a number of different Ministers and that youth affairs comes under the ambit of all these portfolios, has any consideration been given to removing the area of youth affairs from the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation and placing it within a separate portfolio under his responsibility as Premier, to allow co-ordination of inter-departmental policy making?
- (2) If "Yes", what has been the outcome of such consideration?
- (3) What consideration, if any, has been given to establishing a consultative process with a non-Government body such as the Youth Affairs Council of WA on issues affecting young people in Western Australia to allow workers in the field the chance to assist in the decision-making process?
- (4) What consideration, if any, has been given to establishing a comprehensive, Government initiated youth workers training course and with what result?
- (5) What has his response been to the invitation from the Youth Affairs

Council of WA to meet with him and his colleagues to discuss youth affairs?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government's aim is to provide a wide range of services to youth and all other groups within the community. This can best be achieved through the broad spectrum of specialist services currently provided by the Government. There is already a wide range of formal and informal links within the service which permit the co-ordination and flexibility so necessary for the provision of effective services. It is not intended to change the existing structure at this stage but the situation will be kept under review and improvements implemented if considered appropriate.
- (3) The Youth Affairs Council and other agencies and organisations have access to Ministers and Government officers for consultation. Experience in other parts of Australia and overseas has shown that formalised consulting bodies are expensive, do not represent all segments of young people and tend to direct resources into areas other than services to young people.
- (4) The market for a tertiary youth workers' training programme has been explored in Western Australia, but there is not the potential clientele to warrant it at present.
- (5) The Minister for Recreation has already met with members of the Youth Affairs Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: WANNEROO SHIRE COUNCIL

Crown Law Department Opinion

405. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Can she explain how a legal opinion from the Crown Law Department on land deals by the Shire of Wanneroo, which she would not make available to the shire council, was made available to dissident ratepayers, some of whom were prominent members of the Liberal Party?
- (2) Who made this legal opinion available?
- (3) To whom was it made available?
- (4) Has the opinion since been made available to the Shire of Wanneroo?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (4) I have ascertained that on 11 December 1981, a minute was written by one of the Assistant Crown Solicitors to the Town Planning Commissioner in regard to the disposition of land under the Shire of Wanneroo town planning scheme No. 1. This minute was essentially a comment on earlier advice in this matter given to the shire by a private firm of solicitors.

The Acting Minister for Local Government during my absence supplied a copy of that minute to the member for Whitford.

The Shire of Wanneroo has never requested a copy.

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

Relocation

406. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has the Government done an assessment of the desirability and cost of re-locating the Perth Zoo?
- (2) If so—
- (a) what is the estimated cost of re-establishing and re-locating the zoo;
- (b) what is the current estimated value of the land occupied by the zoo?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) Yes, on 2 October 1981, Cabinet considered the desirability of relocating the Perth Zoo. Cabinet affirmed that there is a continuing need for a zoo and that the present site can continue to satisfactorily fill the needs well into the next century.
- (2) (a) Costs of relocation of the Perth Zoo have not been assessed. However, on the basis of costs of setting up other recently constructed zoos, about \$20 million.
- (b) Not known.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY AND GAS

Fixed Charges

407. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) When was the fixed charge for gas and electricity introduced by the State Energy Commission?

- (2) Why was it introduced?
- (3) How is it currently calculated?
- (4) On how many occasions has it been increased?
- (5) What would be the current loss of revenue to the State Energy Commission—
- (a) if the fixed charge was eliminated for all pensioners in Western Australia;
- (b) if the fixed charge was eliminated altogether?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) The present form of fixed charge was first introduced in the domestic electricity tariff of 1963. It replaced the earlier basic lighting charge, which was related to the size of a house. The fixed charge in the gas tariff was introduced in 1965.
- (2) The fixed charge represents an attempt to specifically recover part of the fixed costs of electricity and gas supply. These costs arise mainly from the need to service capital expenditure on fixed plant; power stations, transmission and distribution systems, buildings, and the like. The current fixed charge is somewhat below the charge that would apply if part of these fixed costs were not recovered through energy charges.
- (3) In recent years the fixed charge has been increased at the same rate as general tariff increases.
- (4) The fixed charge has been increased 10 times since 1963.
- (5) The current loss of revenue to the State Energy Commission would be—
- (a) As the number of pensioner-occupied premises is unknown to the commission, the loss of revenue figure is unable to be provided.
- (b) On current figures, approximately \$19.5 million per annum, or \$1.62 million per month.

PENSIONERS

Concessions and Rebates

408. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

Will he provide details of all rebate systems and concessions granted to pensioners in Western Australia by departments and other governmental agencies under his control?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

A booklet produced by the Government of Western Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Social Security sets out full details of pensioner benefits available in Western Australia. On 24 March, a copy of that booklet was tabled as paper No. 108 in response to the member's question 66.

The member will find full details of the information requested in this question on pages 24 and 29 of that booklet, under the headings "Rates/Charges" and "Transport/Travel".

HEALTH: WITTENOOM

Asbestos Fibres: Monitoring

409. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Health:

Further to part (11) of question 70, of 24 March 1982, relevant to the monitoring of asbestos fibres, what was the total estimated number of employees who worked in the asbestos mines at Wittenoom during the period such mines were in operation?

Mr YOUNG replied:

6 200.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Processing and Marketing: Mogha Precious Stone Wholesalers and Exporters

410. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Resources Development:

(1) Has the State Government received an approach from Mogha precious stone wholesalers and exporters of New Delhi in which that company expresses its interest in participating in the processing and marketing of Western Australian diamonds?

(2) What was the Government's response to this company?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

(1) and (2) There has been an approach from Mr Mogha, and it would be intended to seek further details on Mr Mogha's capabilities in the areas of diamond marketing, cutting and polishing.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Microcomputers

411. Mr BRYCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

Further to my question 152 of 25 March 1982 concerning the introduction of microcomputers into primary schools—

- (1) when will the decision be made;
- (2) what is causing the delay in making the decision?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) The decision as to which microcomputer will be designated as approved for purchase by primary schools will be made in the near future.
- (2) The process of preparing specifications, calling for submissions, scrutinising them, examining demonstrations of short-listed equipment and then making a final recommendation requires careful and thoughtful management. This process has taken slightly longer than was originally expected because of the advent of a new range of technology. The decision, when made, will need to be ratified by the W.A. Government computing policy committee.

HEALTH: WOMEN'S REFUGE CENTRES

Number and Funding

412. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Health:

Further to my question 154 of 25 March 1982 relevant to women's refuges—

- (a) Will he provide location details of the ten women's refuges in the metropolitan area;
- (b) in respect of women's refuges which are approved for funding what is the amount of State Government financial assistance provided for—
 - (i) establishment costs;
 - (ii) recurrent costs?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (a) No. For security reasons details regarding the location of individual women's refuges are not usually released without the permission of the refuges concerned;
- (b) in the current financial year the State Government expects to provide the following funds—

- (i) \$70 000 for establishment costs of a new women's refuge at Karratha;
- (ii) \$641 000 has been allocated for the reimbursement of recurring costs associated with the 14 refuges established in previous years.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Employees: New Town

413. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Resources Development:

- (1) Will a new town be established at or near the vicinity of the Argyle diamond deposit or will employees be flown in as required?
- (2) When the mine is in full operation, what is the estimated number and classification of employees who will be required?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Clause 7 of the diamond (Ashton Joint Venture) agreement provides—subject to the provisions of clause 26—for the joint venturers to submit proposals for the development of a township. The joint venturers have, as yet, submitted no proposals covering their township requirements.
- (2) It is understood that approximately 400 persons will be employed at the minesite. No details are available on the classification of employees.

DEFENCE AND SMUGGLING

Coastal Surveillance

414. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) With reference to his answer to question 155 of 25 March 1982 concerning coastal surveillance, how many Australian Navy patrol boats are permanently stationed in Western Australia?
- (2) How many nautical miles are covered by these patrol boats in a normal year of operations?
- (3) (a) Are more Navy patrol boats to be permanently stationed on the Western Australian coast;
- (b) if so, how many and when?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) I am advised that one patrol boat is permanently stationed in Western Australia. Four are stationed in Darwin and undertake from time to time, patrols in Western Australian waters.
- (2) I am advised that the patrol boat covers approximately 35 000 nautical miles per annum.
- (3) (a) and (b) This information is not currently available.

HOSPITALS: LAUNDRY AND LINEN SERVICE

Construction, Employees, and Industrial Disputes

415. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When was the Hospital Laundry and Linen Service built?
- (2) What was the capital cost of establishing the laundry?
- (3) What is the capacity of the laundry?
- (4) How many people are employed at the laundry?
- (5) What are the classifications of the employees at the laundry?
- (6) How many man days of work have been lost at the laundry as a result of strike action in each of the last five years?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) The Hospital Laundry and Linen Service was declared open on 22 February 1974. The first day of operation was 22 March 1974.
- (2) Capital cost (1975 figures)—

buildings—	\$2 259 789
equipment—	\$3 383 987
linen stocks—	\$2 809 148
	<hr/>
	\$8 452 924
- (3) 175 000 kg per week using full day shift only.
- (4) 289.
- (5)

Dispatch	24
Production	191
Sewing Room	17
Transport	10
Maintenance workers	19
Canteen, General and Security	10
Administration	18
- (6)

1978	60
1979	713
1980	89
1981	756
1982	2 844

HOSPITALS: LAUNDRY AND LINEN SERVICE

Strike: Use of Strike-breakers

416. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In respect of the strike at the Hospital Laundry and Linen Service in February of this year—

- (a) how many days were employees on strike;
- (b) how many employees were on strike;
- (c) how many strike breakers were employed to break the strike;
- (d) what was the total cost of employing strike breakers;
- (e) who was responsible for the conduct of the laundry's negotiations during the strike;
- (f) who was given the specific responsibility to organise the strike breaking employees;
- (g) how many of the strike breakers are currently employed at the laundry?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (a) 15 working days.
- (b) 266 at one time.
- (c) The number of people in the emergency workforce was sufficient to get the laundry into operation to deal with the massive pile of soiled and rotting linen which had accumulated as a result of the strike: total 50.
- (d) One day's pay of \$100 per person was paid to the public-spirited volunteers.
- (e) The Minister for Labour and Industry.
- (f) Various persons were given specific tasks at the direction of the Minister for Labour and Industry.

It is emphasised that those persons used were concerned members of the public who came forward not for the purpose of strike breaking but in the interests of protecting public property.

Another very important reason for the urgent action taken was that hundreds of people—men, women and children—were being subjected to the trauma of postponed operations, many of them of an urgent nature.

(g) Nil.

SEWERAGE

Halls Head, Mandurah

417. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Relevant to the waste water treatment at Halls Head, Mandurah, will the plant, when it is enlarged, be sufficient to meet requirements for 28 000 people?
- (2) What stage will the effluent be treated to?
- (3) Where will the treated sewage effluent water be discharged?
- (4) Is it the long term plan to pump the treated effluent into the ocean?
- (5) Would he please provide complete details of any proposed pipeline into the ocean?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The effluent will receive secondary treatment.
- (3) In the early stages of development it is expected that most of the effluent will be used by the shire for the irrigation of recreational areas on the western side of the coastal ridge. The balance of the effluent will be disposed within the site.
- (4) This matter is currently under study but it appears that in the longer term some effluent will need to be discharged to the ocean.
- (5) This matter is under investigation and no details are available nor will be for quite some time.

BRIDGE

Gascoyne River

418. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When is it expected that the bridge over the Gascoyne River at Carnarvon will be replaced by a bridge of the standard now constructed over the many other rivers on the coastal highway to Port Hedland?
- (2) When was the present bridge constructed?
- (3) What locality is proposed for the new bridge?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) to (3) The replacement of the Gascoyne River Bridge with a more serviceable structure will be warranted in the future.

The present bridge over the Gascoyne River, built in 1934, is a sound structure but only one lane wide and subject to closure when a major flood occurs. There are other rivers and creeks on the highway to Port Hedland which are not bridged or where the bridges are of equivalent or lower standard.

A recent study by consulting engineers of flooding in the Gascoyne River at Carnarvon has been extended to an examination of a suitable alignment for a new crossing of the Gascoyne River.

The consultant's report has recently been received by the Main Roads Department and needs consideration before a firm proposal is adopted. The alignment being examined is for the highway to continue northwards from the Carnarvon Road junction instead of turning eastward as at present.

419. *This question was postponed.*

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Narrows Bridge Congestion

420. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

Given that private transport has a debilitating effect on public transport and that public transport possesses huge, under-utilised energy conservation and emissions abatement potential, what studies have been conducted on using a public transport solution to resolving the Narrows Bridge projected congestion?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Public transport can serve only a limited number of multitude of trips generated by a large urban area. Methods of encouraging the use of public transport are constantly under review and a report on this topic is planned for publication later this year.

421. *This question was postponed.*

BRIDGE: STIRLING

Duplication

422. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When is the duplication of the Stirling Bridge planned?
- (2) What are the estimated costs of constructing the western suburbs highway from Karrinyup to the Stirling Bridge, the cost of duplicating Stirling Bridge, and the cost of resumptions and construction of the Fremantle eastern by-pass?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) No date has been set.
- (2) Detailed costs have not been produced for these projects.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Security Firm

423. Mr COWAN, to the Speaker:

- (1) Is a security firm contracted to maintain security of Parliament House?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) which firm has the contract;
 - (b) are security officers authorised to enter the parliamentary buildings;
 - (c) have they been instructed to take the names of all persons present in the building;
 - (d) who gave them authority to do so;
 - (e) why have members of Parliament and all officers of the Parliament not been advised of these security measures;
 - (f) what authority does any security officer have to invite police officers into the parliamentary building; and
 - (g) under what circumstances can he do so?

The SPEAKER replied:

- (1) and (2). The security of Parliament House comes under the control of the Joint House Committee. I have forwarded copy of the member's question to the chairman of that Committee and requested that a reply be forwarded direct to the member.

COURTS: JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES

Nationality

424. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Are any of the judges or magistrates in this State not British subjects?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

No.

425. *This question was postponed.*

HEALTH: RADIATION

Capel: Mrs Barbara Miller

426. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has his attention been drawn to a letter to the editor published in the 11 March edition of the *South Western Times* from a Mrs Barbara Miller of James Road, Capel?
- (2) Has the Public Health Department inspected Mrs Miller's house or conducted radiation measurements on it?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Mrs Miller's house has been visited but Mrs Miller was not at home at the time. Radiation measurements around the house were within the acceptable limits for dwellings.

HOSPITALS: TEACHING

Bad Debts

427. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Further to question 38 of 1982 relating to bad debts at teaching hospitals, will he provide the following information:
 - (a) When was the decision made to employ the services of Mercantile Collection Association and College Mercantile Agency Pty. Ltd.;
 - (b) on what basis has the arrangement been entered into with the abovementioned organisations?
- (2) (a) What policy directives, if any, have been issued regarding the level of debts that will be written off;

(b) is the decision to write off a debt made by the debt collector or the hospital?

- (3) Has the Government instructed the debt collectors to see that a reasonable level of available funds should be left untouched in the hands of the debtor so as to ensure that no hardship occurs?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) (a) 14 January 1982.
- (b) The arrangements provide for the individual hospitals to determine which accounts are to be referred to the agencies and the type and extent of recovery action to be taken.
- (2) (a) Write-off action is considered by hospitals on the basis of a debtor's ability to pay and not the level of the debt. Hospitals have been directed to carefully examine each account to try to identify persons who would suffer genuine financial hardship if required to pay an account immediately. In such cases appropriate action is taken to allow the debt to be paid off by instalments, or to have the amount reduced or written off.
- (b) Hospital.
- (3) Further to the answer to (2) (a), debtors are encouraged to approach the hospital for remission of the debt in the event of genuine financial hardship.

HEALTH: MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

Doctor-patient Ratio

428. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

Further to question 230 of 1982 regarding the doctor/population ratio in Western Australia, can he inform me how the situation in this State compares with the doctor/population ratio of other States, and the national average?

Mr YOUNG replied:

Based on the Committee of Officials report "Medical Manpower Supply" (Australian Government Publishing Service May, 1980), the stated doctor/population ratio for Australia in 1979 was 1:574.

Comparable ratios to that previously supplied for Western Australia are

generally not available for the other States individually. Unofficial estimates, however, range from 1:500 to 1:700.

MINING: GOLD

Cyanide Treatment Plant

429. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Did he or his department give approval for the construction of a cyanide treatment plant by Argosy Gold Mines at Meekatharra?
- (2) Will he detail the steps that were taken in order to acquire the necessary authority to construct this plant and indicate when each step took place?

Mr P. V. JONES

- (1) No approval is required for such construction.
- (2) Answered by (1) above.

MINING: GOLD

Cyanide Treatment Plant

430. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Public Health Department conducted an inquiry into the effects on—

- (a) the townspeople generally;
- (b) the people living at the Aboriginal reserve,

of the recently completed cyanide treatment plant of Argosy Gold Mines at Meekatharra?

- (2) If "Yes", when, and what were the results and will he table the report?
- (3) If "No" why not?
- (4) Were public health questions and the location of the plant taken into account before its construction so close to the Aboriginal reserve?
- (5) Is the department aware of the recent heavy incidence of conjunctivitis amongst—

- (a) the townspeople generally;
- (b) the people living at the Aboriginal reserve,

and to what does it attribute it?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) No, but after an approach to the Meekatharra Shire Clerk by the Aboriginal Advancement Council approximately one month ago, a Public Health Department officer visited the Argosy plant and made an inspection. This followed an alleged discharge of clear water from a holding pond of the Argosy treatment plant into a creek running through the town of Meekatharra, on one occasion. This water, being town water, would not normally contain cyanide because it is held there prior to use in cyanide treatment. A further inquiry about possible air borne irritants has only just been received and will be investigated.

- (2) Yes—tabled herewith. (Paper No. 146.)

- (3) Not applicable.

- (4) Yes. The Mines Lease conditions under which the plant was constructed required that provision be made to prevent the discharge of tailings, sludges, slimes, pollutants or overburden into the surrounding country water courses or lakes. It follows that pollutants includes airborne gaseous or particulate pollutants. It should be pointed out that the State Battery, which has operated since 1903, uses the same treatment process and also lies upwind (in relation to prevailing easterlies) of the town and the reserve.

- (5) No.

- (a) About three or four weeks ago I believe there was some seasonal increase in conjunctivitis amongst the towns people.

- (b) There are two families living on the reserve; four pre-school children, four young adults, four elderly persons, and I am advised that none of these have had an eye problem in the past three or four weeks. One Aboriginal elder was seen for conjunctivitis recently.

The cause of the conjunctivitis is likely to be infection or allergy.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 146).

431 and 432. These questions were postponed.

ROAD: WESTERN SUBURBS FREEWAY

Nelson English Report

433. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it a fact that according to the Nelson English Report, which uses Main Roads Department figures, in 2 000 A.D. less than 10 000 vehicles per day—and probably substantially less—would wish to make the long regional trips used by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority to justify the highway?
- (2) How many vehicles per day are estimated to travel from Rockingham to Karrinyup in 2 000 A.D. with and without the construction of the Fremantle eastern by-pass?
- (3) What percentage of these trips are by heavy vehicles?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) to (3) By the year 2000 AD, the metropolitan regional population is estimated to be in the order of 1½ million people. A city of this size will have a multitude of long regional trips as well as the local shorter trips. The prediction methods used sum all these trips and no value is seen in extracting the figures into their individual components.

ROAD: WESTERN SUBURBS FREEWAY

Justification

434. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) If the western suburbs study is based on the assertion that a major new link is needed to connect the north-west and south-west corridors, why cannot the Mitchell-Kwinana Freeway link serve north-south demands across the region?
- (2) How does the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority justify an entirely new north-south link on the basis of a peak capacity at one point in the Mitchell-Kwinana system viz the Narrows Bridge?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) As explained in answer to question 247, the Western Suburbs Highway is planned to allow for better continuity and improved capacity for the road proposals already in the Metropolitan Region Scheme. It is not a proposal to provide an entirely new major north-south link in the system.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Western Suburbs

435. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

Why is no consideration given to serving the supposed demand for the metropolitan north-south road link through the western suburbs by means of public rather than private transport?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The public transport needs of the region are allowed for in the planning of the Western Suburbs Highway, as are the needs for private transport.

436. *This question was postponed.*

ROAD: WESTERN SUBURBS FREEWAY

Origins and Destinations Surveys

437. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

What origins and destinations surveys were conducted to justify the proposed western suburbs highway?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

When predicting the traffic demand of a future form of urban development it is more appropriate to use land use-travel models. The basic data for such models is obtained from the surveys conducted by the Australian Government Bureau of Statistics in addition to travel surveys conducted in 1966 and 1976 by the State Government.

MINING: GOLD

North Kalgurli Mines Ltd.

438. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Mines:

In respect to North Kalgurli Mines Limited and its current problems—

- (a) What help, if any, has the Government been prepared to extend to the company and/or its employees;
- (b) what steps have been taken by the Government to help find alternative employment for the retrenched employees;
- (c) what help is the Government prepared to give to the industry generally;
- (d) can the Government give a guarantee that North Kalgurli's custom mill will continue to operate for treatment of other than company ore;
- (e) has the Government at any time given consideration to promoting the gold price stabilisation scheme on a voluntary basis as outlined by the State Opposition; and
- (f) if not, why not?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) to (c) Contact has been maintained since the public disclosure of North Kalgurli Mines Limited difficulties between myself and officers of the Department of Resources Development, and directors and senior executives of the company. Areas in which the Government might be able to assist have been and continue to be explored, and discussions are now being held with relevant Government departments with this in view. I am advised that an officer of the Department of Labour and Industry is now located in Kalgoorlie, and is working with the regional administrator and the Commonwealth Employment Service to co-ordinate efforts to find employment for retrenched North Kalgurli Mines employees.

Assistance given by the Government to the industry as a whole has included a substantial investment in housing and social infrastructure, and the progressive upgrading of transport facilities. This has contributed to the continuing development of Kalgoorlie as a service centre to the mining industry. The proposed extension of the State Energy Commission grid to provide coal-based power from Collie to the goldfields in 1984 will make a major contribution to maintaining costs to industry there.

- (d) No. North Kalgurli's legal obligation to the State to process custom ore was discharged on its repayment in full of a Government guaranteed loan in June 1981. Prior to the emergence of the company's present difficulties, it had declared its intention to continue to accept custom ore and process it with ore from their own mine.
- (e) and (f) No. The Government does not believe that such a scheme is economically feasible.

MINING: IRON ORE

Goldsworthy Mining Ltd.

439. Mr GRILL, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government at any time in the past indicated verbally through any of its Ministers or in writing that it will give Goldsworthy Mining Limited any concessions or incentives over and above those normally given to the industry for the establishment of a new iron ore project at area C?
- (2) If so, when and by whom were they given and what were they?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

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

MINING: IRON ORE

Pilbara

440. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has the Government given consideration to the development of a further iron ore project in the Pilbara?

- (2) Which of the competing new projects are on the short list for Government approval?
- (3) By what criteria will these new projects be judged by the Government?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) The Government is publicly committed to the development of a new iron ore project in the Pilbara, initially as a replacement for the existing Goldsworthy Mining Limited operations.

The Government does not have a "short list" as suggested by the member. Any proposed new iron ore project will be considered in relation to its effect on the long term stability and competitiveness of the Pilbara iron ore industry.

Consideration of any development will include marketing considerations, use of existing infrastructure, total capital costs, and similar economic and marketing factors.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

INTEREST RATE: AUSTRALIAN SAVINGS BONDS

Increase

84. Mr O'CONNOR (Treasurer):

Last Wednesday the Leader of the Opposition asked me a question without notice on interest. There was some confusion about the question and I undertook to give details of the matter to the Leader of the Opposition at another time.

On reading the transcript I realised that the question probably referred to interest rates on Australian savings bonds although the question did not refer to them. From the exchange that took place last week I believe that a wrong impression could have been given through a misunderstanding. Members will recall there was some debate regarding a discussion I had with the Prime Minister in relation to bank and savings bonds interest rates.

If the question does relate to the Australian savings bonds and whether the Western Australian Government agreed to the one per cent interest rate

increase sought by the Chairman of the Loan Council, the answer is, "Yes".

Australian savings bonds are one source of funds raised by the Commonwealth Government on behalf of the States for their capital works programme. It is a cheaper source of funds for the States than Commonwealth bonds.

However, in the last six months, redemptions of Australian savings bonds have been exceeding subscriptions by an average of \$55 million a month. In other words, there has been a net outflow of funds at this rate. The result of the run is that the payment to subscribers has to be made from higher-priced funds such as Commonwealth bonds.

As these manoeuvres cost the States additional interest, it was desirable to try to stop the run. The proposed one per cent rise in interest was aimed at doing that. It was my judgment that, in view of interest rate movements which preceded the request from the Chairman of the Loan Council, agreement to his proposal would not adversely affect other areas of the market nearly as much as having to issue higher interest bearing Commonwealth bonds to make good the loss from Australian savings bonds.

INTEREST RATES: AUSTRALIAN SAVINGS BONDS

Increase

85. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Treasurer:

I can hardly believe this, and I seek to ask a question which will clarify the whole issue. I ask—

- (1) Is the Treasurer now telling us that his Government agreed to an increase in the interest rate applicable to Australian savings bonds?
- (2) Is he now telling us the answer he gave the House in reply to my question without notice last Wednesday—which mentioned Australian savings bonds in those words—was the wrong answer?

- (3) Will the Treasurer please explain not only to this House, but also to the people of Western Australia, how it is that a Government committed publicly to lower interest rates can agree to an increase in the Australian savings bonds interest rate which will have the effect of attracting funds from areas already providing housing finance?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) As the Leader of the Opposition will understand, discussions were held last week on this matter. Some remarks were made regarding a telephone call I had with the Prime Minister.

Mr Wilson: No, a telex.

Mr O'CONNOR: We also discussed the issue of a telephone call.

Mr Wilson: A telex.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am telling the member what we discussed. We received a telex, and we also discussed the matter of a telephone call.

Mr Davies: It is true; you mentioned it.

Mr I. F. Taylor: You discussed it.

Mr O'CONNOR: If members want me to answer the question, they should allow me to proceed. However, if they continue making inane remarks, as the member for Dianella has, I will not answer it.

Mr Wilson: It is your inane answer to which we are objecting.

Mr O'CONNOR: I was of the understanding that the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition referred to an increase in the bank housing interest rates. I gave an undertaking to provide details in relation to the matter. I make the point now that my answer was incorrect, and I have rectified it today.

FISHERIES

Two Rocks Marina

86. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Resources Development:

- (1) Has the matter of a separate fuelling berth for commercial fishermen at Two Rocks marina been satisfactorily resolved?

- (2) Does the Minister confirm that this facility was agreed to by Yanchep Sun City Pty. Ltd., prior to his visit to the marina in December last year, and reconfirmed to the Minister personally during that said visit?

- (3) Has the restraining post which bars entry by vehicles to this berth been removed?

- (4) In view of the fact that the Two Rocks harbour agreement was drawn up in its present wording as a result of and in spite of misleading and erroneous charting—as proved by an official aerial photograph of November 1972, which clearly shows commercial fishing boats moored in the vicinity of the old jetty, and inshore of the wrongly claimed natural mooring basin—has the Minister issued an order to Yanchep Sun City Pty. Ltd. to dredge the proper natural mooring basin as required in clause 5(2) of the Two Rocks harbour agreement; and, if not, what action is the Minister proposing to take?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I am also aware of his remarks on the subject during the Address-in-Reply debate last week. My answer is as follows—

- (1) and (2) The matter has not been resolved. The parties with whom I met late last year and early this year agreed that a fuelling facility would be provided for the fishermen who had paid the pen fee and who were allowed within the Yanchep marina. However, according to the latest information available to me, the facility has not yet been completed—certainly not in the way agreed between the two parties.

- (3) On the last information available to me, the post had not been removed.

- (4) As suggested by the member for Moore, the agreement was drawn up under confused circumstances. It contains the plan tabled last week by the Premier, which also involves the delineation of an anchorage area which was the subject of an aerial photograph at the time; the Premier has undertaken to table a copy of this photograph when it becomes available. There is no doubt some confusion exists as to the basis on which the agreement was drawn up. Indeed, the information given to the consultants and by the consultants would appear to be somewhat erroneous. As the member for Moore intimated, the Minister has some suggested powers to require the parties to the agreement to dredge the natural mooring basin in order to provide a safe anchorage for the boats should they not wish to use the marina. I have not given that order as yet because the matter now is subject to some legal discussion as to whether or not the Minister is able to give an order requiring the dredging to be undertaken. The matter currently is being reviewed by the Crown Law Department, in addition to which discussions are taking place between Crown Law and the solicitors acting for the fishermen's association. My only comment on this matter is that it is a very sorry situation. It is one which the parties involved should be able to resolve in an amicable way instead of having to resort to legal challenge, and charge and countercharge, and try to invoke the penal clauses of agreements when in fact a certain amount of common sense should bring the matter to a head. It seems a degree of unwillingness to do so prevails. As the Premier indicated last week, the Government is pursuing the matter through the offices of several Ministers.

LOTTERIES COMMISSION

Liberal Party Raffle

87. Mr GORDON HILL, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that retailers in the Nedlands area were approached recently

to donate prizes for a raffle to be held for the purpose of raising funds for the Liberal Party?

- (2) Is he further aware that a raffle was held at a Liberal Party fund-raising function on 6 March at the home of Mr and Mrs B. Campbell of 5 View Street, Peppermint Grove?
- (3) Can he say whether a permit was issued for the raffle?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3), what are the details of such permit?
- (5) If the Premier is unaware of these details, will he cause the Commissioner for Police to carry out appropriate inquiries?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (5) I have no knowledge of the matter raised by the member. If he provides me with the details, I will follow up the matter.

PRISON: FREMANTLE

Opposition's Proposal

88. Mr TRETHOWAN, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

- (1) Is it not true that the Minister indicated in this House last week that, in the future, when Fremantle Prison was no longer being used as a penal institution—apart from some of the buildings being preserved for historical purposes—it was not feasible for the Government to consider giving up to anyone, free of charge, a capital asset as valuable as the Fremantle Prison site without gaining anything towards the cost of its replacement?
- (2) During that speech, did not the Leader of the Opposition by interjection deny that he had committed a future Labor Government to giving Fremantle Prison to the Fremantle City Council and that he had undertaken only to "consult" with the local authority on the future of the prison?

- (3) Has the Minister seen reports in the March edition of the journal of the Fremantle Society and in the Fremantle-Cockburn news supplement to *The West Australian* of 18 February 1982 that the Leader of the Opposition, in addressing the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce, had indicated that a future Labor Government would vest Fremantle Prison in the Fremantle City Council?
- (4) Does there not appear to be a confusion as to what the Leader of the Opposition in fact has committed a future Labor Government in regard to Fremantle Prison?

Point of Order

Mr PEARCE: Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule whether, in fact, the question comes within the area of the Minister's competence. What the Minister is being asked to do is not to answer in regard to his ministerial responsibility, but to venture an opinion on what the Leader of the Opposition may or may not have said.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is my view that the Minister for Police and Prisons can properly be asked the question. I invite the Minister to answer the question.

Questions (without notice) Resumed

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) It is certainly true that I made it clear it would be quite irresponsible for a Government to commit itself in advance to giving away a very valuable asset of the State, the value of which may need to be considered in relation to the development of alternative facilities which are needed to replace Fremantle Prison.

Mr Tonkin: That is our position too.

Mr HASSELL: To continue—

- (2) It is correct that the Leader of the Opposition returned to the Chamber and interjected on my speech to say he had never spoken to the Fremantle Society and that he had not offered to give the Fremantle Prison to the Fremantle City Council. He wanted to make it clear that all he had done was to indicate to the Fremantle City Council that it would be consulted on the matter.

Mr Brian Burke: I did not say that at all.

Mr HASSELL: Is the Leader of the Opposition going to change his story for the third time?

Mr Brian Burke: No; I did not say that. I indicated they would be consulted, but I did not say I had indicated it to them.

Mr HASSELL: Who is "them"?

Mr Brian Burke: "Them" is the Fremantle City Council. The speech I made was to the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr Pearce: That is right.

Mr Brian Burke: That is the whole point, smarty!

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order!

Mr Tonkin: Doesn't the truth matter any more? You object to the truth.

Mr HASSELL: I do not recall ever having referred to—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Police and Prisons will resume his seat. If interjections do not cease, I will have no alternative but to terminate questions.

Mr HASSELL: The issue is what commitment the Leader of the Opposition gave in relation to Fremantle Prison. It is quite clear from the newspaper reports—two of them—that the Leader of the Opposition did what he has done in other places. He went into an area and tried to tell the people what he wanted them to believe he was committing himself to. For two years he has been talking about royalties being too low, and then he went to Kalgoorlie and said they were too high.

Mr Brian Burke: Don't be so stupid.

Mr HASSELL: He went to Fremantle and said, "We will give you the Fremantle Prison." The report in the Fremantle Society magazine has a headline, "Immediate vesting of prison to council".

Mr Brian Burke: Are you saying I am responsible for that report?

Mr HASSELL: I am referring only to the report. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would like to clarify the position.

Mr Brian Burke: I am perfectly happy to clarify it for you once again.

Mr HASSELL: I wonder if I could complete the answer. In due course the Leader of

the Opposition might like to clarify his position. I want to put the record straight: I was referring accurately to two reports.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: You referred to only one report during your speech.

Mr HASSELL: Yes.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Well, you were not referring to two reports.

Mr HASSELL: I am now referring to the second report.

Point of Order

Mr PEARCE: I wonder whether the last minute or two has suggested to you, Mr Speaker, that my original point of order may have been accurate with regard to the second part of the question. I concede that the Minister did in fact deal with his ministerial responsibilities in the first part, but now he appears to be reading from a newspaper.

The SPEAKER: I take the point made by the member for Gosnells, and I suggest to the Minister for Police and Prisons that he is now commenting on that which the Leader of the Opposition has had to say, or what he is reported to have said in a newspaper, and that is not really within his competence to handle in the House.

Questions (without notice) Resumed

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Thank you, Sir. My question without notice is—

Mr HASSELL: Mr Speaker, I had not completely answered the question.

Mr Tonkin: You have been shut up.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I thought I had the call, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Will the Leader of the Opposition resume his seat? The Minister for Police and Prisons answered the first part of the question which, in my view, related to his ministerial responsibilities. I have said that in my view, in regard to the second part of the question, he is not responsible for the Leader of the Opposition. If the Minister for Police and Prisons has something to add to that part of the question covered in part (1), then he may continue.

Mr HASSELL: With great respect to you, Sir, I have to say that I am very concerned about the future of Fremantle Prison. I just put on record, in response to the question raised by the member for Melville—

Mr Hodge: Fair go—get it accurately.

Mr HASSELL: —that the Leader of the Opposition ought to clarify his position.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have clarified my position.

Mr Tonkin: The Minister is debating the Speaker's ruling.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Point of Order

Mr HODGE: On a point of order, Sir, the Minister for Police and Prisons inaccurately referred to the fact that the member for Melville had asked the question. I would like to put the record straight—I had nothing to do with the question. I think it is a lot of rubbish.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Police and Prisons.

Questions (without notice) Resumed

Mr HASSELL: I apologise for that reference to the member for Melville. The member for Melville has never asked such an intelligent question as that asked by the member for East Melville.

Several members interjected.

Mr Bryce: Boots and swastikas!

Mr HASSELL: The Leader of the Opposition ought to clarify his position because this is a matter of substance.

Mr Tonkin: Don't you try to clarify it for him.

Mr HASSELL: It is not good enough for the Leader of the Opposition to go into every town in this State and to tell the people what he wants them to hear.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have not been to every town.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Fees and Charges: Review

89. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Treasurer:

(1) In the last few weeks have Government departments been instructed to review

all their fees and charges and to consider imposing charges for services which currently are being provided free of charge?

- (2) If such an instruction has been given, why?
- (3) When will increases in charges and new charges be imposed?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) No such instruction has come from me, nor do I know of any such instruction. Obviously Governments are always looking at problems in connection with charges such as water rates and the like. As we know, normally charges are looked at annually. However, to answer the question, certainly the issue has not been put to anyone by me.

GAMBLING: CASINO

Government Decision

90. Mr CARR, to the Premier:

In view of the decision made today by the Government parties not to allow a legal casino to operate in Western Australia, can he please advise whether the Government intends to allow the existing illegal casinos to continue to operate?

Mr Tonkin: Of course!

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

At the moment it is in the hands of the Police Force to carry out the law. However, if the member is asking whether any further decisions were made in the party room, the only decision made today was the one referred to.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Bunbury Power Station: Private Financing

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

Earlier this year the then Premier indicated that the State Government had had discussions with the Prime

Minister on the private financing of the proposed Bunbury power station. I ask—

- (1) Have these discussions been followed up by the Minister or the Treasurer?
- (2) What is the Federal Government's attitude towards the funding proposal?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) There is no secret about it. It is public knowledge and well known that this matter has been pursued in several areas and with the Commonwealth Government so that the likely way to finance the expansion of the Bunbury power station meets acceptable requirements so far as taxation and depreciation provisions are concerned. There is no secret about that.

Mr Grill: What is going on though?

RAILWAYS

Boyup Brook-Katanning

92. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of the significant local opposition to the proposed closure of the Katanning-Boyup Brook railway line, was the proposal to close the line considered by the Commissioner for Railways, the Director-General of Transport, and the land freight transport steering committee, before Cabinet made up its mind?
- (2) If so, what course of action did the commissioners and the committee indicate?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) The reactions I have received were to the effect that the line should be closed. The recommendations were firstly that the line be closed on a seasonal basis. The recommendation for the cessation of the service was made last year by the Commissioner for Railways. Subsequent to that, groups of people were consulted and the general impression was that the service should cease because of the economics involved.

The Director-General of Transport has an ongoing responsibility to review the situation, and that is what he has been doing. He will make a final report which I will present to Parliament eventually.

Mr Brian Burke: But what was his recommendation prior to the closure decision made by Cabinet?

Mr RUSHTON: Both of them.

Mr Brian Burke: They both supported the closure?

Mr RUSHTON: Both the Director-General of Transport and the Commissioner for Railways recommended the closure. We are acting on their recommendations.

Mr Brian Burke: What about the land freight committee?

Mr RUSHTON: The land freight committee is involved in the well-being of transport. On visits to this area, it was put to me that the line should be closed and that this would benefit the local people; the local people would receive a freight benefit if the line were closed.

STATE FINANCE: EXPENDITURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Savings

93. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

(1) Was he correctly quoted on commercial radio this morning as saying that in the past 12 months a saving of \$40 million had been effected by the Government through economies in Government departments?

(2) If so, can he give us some detail of how the \$40 million is made up?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) and (2) If I recollect the incident to which the member for Victoria Park referred—

Mr Davies: This was 8.30 a.m. on 6IX.

Mr O'CONNOR: —I commented to the effect that last year the Cabinet review committee made recommendations that would save about \$40 million.

Mr Davies: You said "had saved".

Mr O'CONNOR: That amount would be saved over a 12-month period.

Mr Davies: That was not how it came across.

LAND: AGRICULTURAL

Release

94. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Lands:

Arising from reported statements made by the Minister for Lands in two country addresses, I ask him to table the map showing the location of land which it is proposed to release for agriculture in 1981-82.

Mr LAURANCE replied:

I am prepared to give consideration to that. I had no prior notice of the question, and if the member for Warren tells me the exact releases and areas in which he is interested, perhaps I could arrange to table the material.

TRADE UNIONS

Voluntary Amalgamation

95. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

In the light of past industrial disputes, which have occurred as a result of the multiplicity of small unions in Western Australia, will he indicate to the Chamber why his Government lodged an objection to the amalgamation of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union, the Cleaners and Caretakers Union, the Hospital Employees' Industrial Union and two or three other small unions?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

As the responsible Minister is in another place, if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will give me full details of the information he requires, I will obtain a reply for him.

TOWN PLANNING: SWAN VALLEY

MRPA: Meeting

96. Mr GORDON HILL, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

(1) Why did not the Minister attend a public meeting organised by the MRPA on 5 April 1982 in regard to the Swan Valley project?

(2) Is it a fact that the Swan Valley project does not have the support of her Cabinet colleagues?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) I did not attend the meeting held in the Midland Town Hall on Monday night, 5 April, because it was indeed an MRPA meeting.
- (2) The member is quite correct: It is a study that is being conducted by the MRPA. At the end of that study, the MRPA will make recommendations to me which I will pass on to the Government. I believe that had I attended the meeting, it would have been a clear indication to the people there that the Government had approved already of the matters under consideration.

Mr Parker: You have been to meetings before.

Mrs CRAIG: I am not saying I am not pleased that the authority has seen fit to examine the very difficult situation that exists in the Swan Valley, and that the Swan Valley is not an area in which the State needs to take an interest to see whether something can be done to assist the people living there to retain the lifestyle they enjoy so much. However, it is true that the Swan Valley project is not a Government study; it is a study being carried out by the MRPA.

INTEREST RATES

Commonwealth Bonds

97. Mr WILSON, to the Treasurer:

In view of the fact that the Commonwealth Government's next series of interest rate conversions is due in August 1982 and that this is likely to involve an increase of about one per cent in the bond rate—

Mr O'Connor: Are you talking about the Commonwealth bonds?

Mr WILSON: Of course I am.

Mr O'Connor: Right.

Mr WILSON: In view of the fact that is likely also to have a drastic effect on interest rates affecting home mortgages, small businesses, and other people in the community I ask—

- (1) What attitude is his Government likely to take towards that situation?

- (2) What representations is his Government likely to make to the Federal Government if that happens?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) I take it the member is not referring to the Australian saving bonds.

Mr Wilson: Of course I am not.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am just trying to clarify the situation and to attempt to give the right answer.

Mr Hodge: That would be a change.

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Speaker, I will not even bother to reply if that is the case.

Mr Bryce: Not a bad admission.

Mr Wilson: Hopeless!

Mr Laurance: That is all you deserve. Turn your collar around again.

QUESTIONS

Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education

98. Mr DAVIES, to the Speaker:

I ask you, Sir, whether or not we can direct questions on education matters to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Interjections are highly disorderly, and I would prefer that they do not continue during question time, particularly when I have asked for order to be maintained on several occasions. At this particular time the member for Victoria Park is seeking some assistance from me, and I cannot assist him if I cannot hear him.

Mr DAVIES: I was asking the position in regard to questioning the Minister assisting the Minister for Education in regard to educational matters. Are we able to direct questions on education to him or do you rule otherwise?

The SPEAKER replied:

Order! The practice in this House over a long period of time—this is not the first occasion on which we have had Honorary Ministers assisting Ministers in various areas—has been for Honorary Ministers to be asked questions relating to the particular area for which they are

responsible in their honorary capacities. Therefore, it is in order to ask that question.

EDUCATION: DEPARTMENT

Vacation of Buildings

99. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

What is proposed to be done with the Government-owned buildings that are presently occupied by the Education Department, but which will be vacated by it when that department moves to its new headquarters?

Mr CLARKO replied:

It is my understanding those particular buildings will, depending on the leases which have been arranged for them—

Mr Davies: I asked about Government-owned buildings.

Mr CLARKO: I understand they are handled by the PWD in the section which deals with leased property. If the member is asking for a specific answer in regard to specific areas, he should put the question on notice and I will be happy to answer it.
