

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 23 March 1982

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

HOSPITALS: ST. JOHN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

Mundaring: Petition

MR HERZFELD (Mundaring) [4.31 p.m.]: I present a petition bearing 231 signatures which reads as follows—

To:

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

We, the undersigned residents of the Shire of Mundaring request the Parliament of Western Australia to urge the St. John Ambulance Association to position a permanent full time Ambulance and crew in the town of Mundaring.

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

I have certified that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 2.)

150th ANNIVERSARY OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL: SPECIAL SITTING

Address-in-Reply: Acknowledgment of Presentation to Governor

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I have to announce that, accompanied by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, I attended upon His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech given at the special sitting held to mark the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the first sitting of the Legislative Council of Western Australia.

His Excellency has been pleased to reply in the following terms—

Mr Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty The Queen, and for your Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which I conveyed the Message sent by Her Majesty The Queen to mark the 150th Anniversary of the first meeting of the Legislative Council.

RICHARD TROWBRIDGE,
Governor.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Resignation and Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I have to announce the receipt of the following letter addressed to me as Speaker—

Dear Mr Thompson,

In the light of my appointment as Hon. Minister Assisting the Minister for Education, I hereby tender my resignation from the position of Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees in the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely,
J. G. CLARKO, M.L.A.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [4.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the Member for Vasse (Mr Blaikie) be Chairman of Committees of this House.

Question put and passed.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Days and Hours

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [4.42 p.m.]: I move—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays at 4.30 p.m., on Wednesdays at 2.15 p.m. and Thursdays at 10.45 a.m. and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS: PRECEDENCE

Tuesdays and Thursdays

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Appointment

The following sessional committees were appointed on motion by Mr O'Connor (Premier)—

- (a) Standing Orders Committee—Mr Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr Sibson, Mr Bryce, and Mr Jamieson.
- (b) Library Committee—Mr Speaker, Mr Tubby, and Mr I. F. Taylor.
- (c) House Committee—Mr Speaker, Mr Old, Mr Trethowan, Mr Jamieson, and Mr T. J. Burke.
- (d) Printing Committee—Mr Speaker, Mr Williams, and Mr Bryce.
- (e) Public Accounts Committee—Mr Watt, Mr Herzfeld, Mr Crane, Mr I. F. Taylor, and Mr Parker.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT: OFFICES OF PROFIT

Joint Select Committee: Membership

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [4.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Member for Karrinyup (Mr Clarko) be discharged from membership of the Joint Select Committee Inquiring into the Law Relating to Members of Parliament Holding Offices of Profit under the Crown and the Member for Clontarf (Mr Williams) be appointed in his place.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 18 March.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [4.46 p.m.]: It is a change to be starting a parliamentary session without the former Premier in the Chamber. We on this side had begun to think that he was grafted into the Premier's chair. We are pleased to see that he is no longer the resident of that high office; and we note that there is a new incumbent.

You will have noticed, Mr Speaker, that the Opposition has been loath to criticise the new Premier during the early days of his premiership. It seems strange to us that the members of his own party have not been as loath to criticise their leader. It is a long time since anyone but the Labor Party has shared the anonymous criticism that now seems to be directed so frequently at the new Premier, with all sorts of thoughts and

reservations being expressed about his capacity. Those expressions have not been by people on this side of the House, I hasten to say, but apparently by people who sit alongside and behind the present Premier.

Government members interjected.

Mr Herzfeld interjected.

MR BRIAN BURKE: For the benefit of the member for Mundaring, I hope to be able to do much better than that. As lately as last Sunday, we read senior Liberal Party sources quoted as saying that the Premier had yet to prove to his own members his leadership potential and capacity.

Mr O'Connor: Who were they?

Mr Wilson: If you do not know, who does?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Parker: Do you want us to give you a list?

MR BRIAN BURKE: Two or three Liberal Party members were quoted anonymously by the newspaper reporter. I suggest that the Premier not stare straight ahead, but that he cast occasional quick glances behind his shoulder.

Mr Laurance: Which section of the Labor Party are you talking for, anyway?

MR BRIAN BURKE: We wish the Premier well in his office although, of course—

Mr Laurance: Hear, hear!

MR BRIAN BURKE: —we do not wish him a long tenure; and we hope that within 12 or 13 months it will be our pleasure to see this Premier replaced. Nevertheless, for the period of time that he has to occupy the premiership of this State, we hope he maintains good health and that he is able to cope, not with the restlessness on this side of the House, but with the restlessness on his own side. We hope, too, that the Premier remains expansive and good humoured, as seems to be his stance these days.

Mr Laurance: He is laughing all the way to the election.

MR BRIAN BURKE: I welcome into this Chamber the new member for Swan. I was very pleased with his success. It was part of a result that gave the Labor Party reason for cautious optimism in the months that lie ahead. Certainly it has put the Government on its mettle. I warn the Government that, as far as it is concerned, eight years is a long time in office. It is possible for any Government, regardless of political complexion, to become tired and old; and changes in leadership do not change the vigour with which Governments attack their performance.

I was pleased to see a significant swing to my party in the by-election for the South Metropolitan Province. Despite the fact that 14 per cent fewer people voted at the by-election than voted in the previous State general election, the swing was significant. Once more it was cause for cautious optimism.

Of course, I note that we have a new member for Nedlands in this House. It would be hypocritical of me to say I am pleased to see him here, because I was committed to his defeat, as members on the Government side of the House were committed to the defeat of Labor candidates in the by-elections. However, it is significant to note that the swing to the Labor Party in the Nedlands electorate was of the order of 11 to 12 per cent.

Mr Herzfeld: Rubbish! How many extra votes did your candidate get?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: On the basis of the distribution of preferences from the Independent Liberal candidate—90 per cent to the Liberal Party and 10 per cent to the Labor Party—the swing was between 11 and 12 per cent.

Mr Sibson: This has all been discussed in the newspapers. The public are very aware of that. Why don't you get on with the business of the House?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have great pleasure in reminding the member for Bunbury—

Mr Watt: What was the swing in Balcatta when you won it?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —and other assorted back-benchers on the Government side that the Australian Labor Party has reason for cautious optimism in the results of the by-elections. I do not care what Government members say, and I do not care how they want to rationalise the results. The truth is that the electorate has sounded a very clear warning to the Government that it cannot afford to be complacent, and that it cannot afford to leave undone the things for which the people would seek assistance from the Government to complete. If the Government leaves unheeded the warning that was sounded at the by-elections, it will pay the price at the next State general election. I do not care what the member for Bunbury says, because he will be one of the casualties. I do not care what the member for Mundaring says, because he will be another.

It is plain, political sense to realise that, whether a Liberal Government or a Labor Government is in office, one cannot afford to throw poor administration into the faces of the public, and seek to continue to receive support at elections.

I wish to touch briefly on one matter before dealing with the theme of my contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate, and that is the question of industrial relations. The Government in this place has made a practice of attempting to maximise its political advantage by causing industrial disruption and by promoting industrial stoppages and disputes. Any Government that deliberately sets about headline hunting to cause industrial disputes for political advantage has a callous disregard for the public interest. As far as we are concerned, in the next 12 months we will make sure that the public are fully aware of the way in which this Government deliberately and continually has sought to maximise its political position by promoting industrial disharmony and causing industrial disputation.

It is from the mouths of unlikely people that comes confirmation of the way in which this Government set about this job. We know that one of the unhappier casualties of the O'Connor reshuffle was the former Minister for Education (Mr Grayden). We know what happened in this place when the preference to unionists' clause was removed from the Industrial Arbitration Act. We know how everyone on the Government side said that they were acting in unison and that it was one thought causing the removal of preference to unionists as then existed in the Act.

What happened? On 20 March the former Minister for Education finally came clean and revealed to the public who was responsible for a change that he said he did not support. On that day the former Minister was quoted as saying that the provisions for voluntary unionism were written into the legislation at the behest of Mr Masters, his predecessor in the portfolio of Labour and Industry, Mr O'Connor, and the present Minister for Police and Prisons (Mr Hassell) who at the time was a back-bencher.

Mr Grayden: That report was substantially correct.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: But the former Minister has confirmed today that that voluntary unionists' clause was inserted at the insistence of the present Premier, who has always pretended to be the great healer in industrial disputes, the Minister for Police and Prisons who was then a back-bencher, and the present Minister for Labour and Industry (Mr Masters) who is in the Legislative Council.

The former Minister for Education said, "I think we should return to the old system of preference to unionists. If we are going to have mass defiance of the existing law, it should be changed." If that is what the former Minister

thinks now, what about the united facade which was presented to the Parliament by the Government at the time the changes were made? We find now that the former Minister for Education, who was the Minister for Labour and Industry a few short years ago, now says that the preference to unionists' clause should be returned.

Mr Grayden: Only if it is not going to be policed.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: What is more, he says it was originally abolished at the insistence of the Premier when he was a Minister, the Minister for Police and Prisons when he was a back-bencher, and the Minister for Labour and Industry newly appointed in the O'Connor Government. That is the sort of hypocrisy which underpins this Government's thrust to maximise the political advantage that it sees possible in industrial disputation.

Mr Hassell: Why don't you tell the public that you believe in forcing people to belong to unions contrary to their will?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We have had this sort of thing time and time again from the demoted and disgraced former Minister for Police and Traffic. Let me answer him once and for all. We have always said that we support preference to unionists with the ability of any person to opt out of union membership if he has a conscientious objection.

Mr Hassell: What a laugh.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Is that compulsory unionism?

Mr Hassell: Of course it is.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Of course it is not. Good God, the Premier's best friends cannot even go along with him. We now have a confrontation between the Premier and Multiplex Constructions Pty. Ltd. causing the Premier to say on the radio today, "I am embarrassed." He said he was embarrassed by the inability of one of the bastions of private enterprise to accept what his private enterprise Government wants to do.

Mr O'Connor: Again you have twisted my words.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I listened to the interview, and the Premier was asked whether the actions Multiplex was taking were causing him embarrassment. The Premier replied, "Yes."

Mr O'Connor: And the Government.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The question was, "Is Multiplex Constructions and Mr Roberts causing the Premier and the Government embarrassment?" The answer was, "Yes".

Mr Laurance: Bully boys. Standover tactics.

Mr Hassell: I suppose you support standover tactics used by the BLF? You believe they are entitled to force people to join the union before they can attend a site.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the Minister for Police and Prisons will stop interjecting I will answer him. I do not support standover tactics by any union. If members opposite want to take as an example what is happening in New South Wales, let me make my position clear. The Premier of that State is acting responsibly and properly in refusing to cave in to unfair union pressure. I will say that publicly here or at any union meeting anywhere in this country.

Mr Herzfeld: He has made a mess of the State and is blaming the unions.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not stand behind any unfair pressure exercised on any section of the community by another section of the community. At the same time, I am prepared to throw into the face of this Premier the embarrassment that he says he feels because he is unable to promote changes in the law that meet with the acceptance of even his closest friends.

Mr Hassell: You still have not told us about the BLF and its tactics to force people to join that union.

Several members interjected.

Mr Hassell: It is easy to skip over that issue.

Mr Bryce: Do we have to put up with Noddy in this frame of mind?

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I thought I had given the Minister for Police and Prisons more time than his new Premier had given him, and members will understand that I do not want to dally interminably with the Minister for Police and Prisons.

I want to say one or two things that may be of benefit to the Premier and to some of his new Ministers because the things I want to say touch directly upon the very unfair treatment that this State has received and is continuing to receive at the hands of the Federal Government.

Mr Bryce: Hear, hear!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: As far as the Opposition is concerned, its conscience is completely clear because three successive Opposition leaders have stood here and warned the Government that to proceed with this new federalism policy of which the former Premier so proudly boasted would be doing this State a terrible disservice.

What has happened? We have seen the birth of a new premiership accompanied by statements on all sorts of things, but completely lacking in any notice that the incumbent of that high office understands what is being done to this State by the Federal Liberal Government.'

In terms of funds, under the tax sharing arrangements over the last two years this State has lost \$106 million. That is \$106 million less than the State otherwise might have expected to receive. If members want to apply that loss practically, that \$106 million would employ another 1 000 school teachers; it would employ another 1 000 nurses; it would provide 100 additional hospital beds in public hospitals where they were demanded, and still there would be change of about \$5 million.

What is the Premier's position on this most important question, a question that is crucial to the State's welfare in the next decade?

Mr O'Connor: Already we have fought it very strongly. Irrespective of whether it was a federalist or centralist system, we would not have achieved anything better from Canberra, and you know it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The truth is that this Government, particularly in the past three or four months with the decline of the previous Premier and the ascension of the new one, has been remarkably ineffective.

As far as I am concerned, I have yet to see any public evidence whatsoever that this Premier is aware of, awake to, or acting upon the very serious situation which is facing his Treasury.

Mr O'Connor: You had better get out of your slumber because not only have I expressed it here, but also I have done so in front of the Prime Minister in Canberra.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: This Premier is not aware of the financial disaster that is staring him in the face. If he is aware of it, he has not responded appropriately. I do not think he understands what is expected of him.

Mr O'Connor: Then look away!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: This State stands on the verge of the most disastrous financial deal that has ever been meted out to a State by any Commonwealth Government.

Mr Bryce: Hear, hear!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is a deal which is worse for this State than it is comparatively for any other State and we have yet to see this Premier mark out his ground, or explain the programme that he will implement to make sure that we combat as effectively as possible the plans

the Commonwealth has. Even the previous Premier from time to time was wont to call Liberal Party members of the Federal Parliament into his office and explain to them that their State was being poorly served. Let us see this Premier do the same thing, and use every single Liberal Party channel including the upcoming national conference of the Liberal Party to put our State's case, because if he does not, we face the prospect of losing up to \$219 million in State funds in a deal that will be worse for this State than for any other State in the Commonwealth and worse than any other deal previously meted out to Western Australia.

We want to see from this Premier some sign that he is aware of the difficulty, that he understands the complexities, and that he has got a plan of action to protect this State's interests. I do not want to unnecessarily delay this debate, so I will quickly run through the history of new federalism and the delinquency of this State in, firstly, its acceptance of the plan, and, secondly, its complete inability to stave off its worst effects.

In 1976-77 when new federalism was born, despite the boasts of the former Premier of this State who said that the States were embarking upon a financial arrangement that proposed a whole new deal, the States received 33.6 per cent of net personal income tax collections. In 1977-78, 33.6 per cent was again the State's share. In 1978-79, 39.87 per cent was received by the States and the same figure was received the next year. Until 1979-80 the formula guarantee operated to ensure that no State received less under the Fraser arrangement than it would have under the old Whitlam arrangements. After 1979-80 the formula guarantee was abandoned and in 1980-81, the share of net personal income tax collections delivered to the States remained at 39.8 per cent. This resulted in a revenue loss to Western Australia of \$49.1 million compared with the amount that would have been received under the system that operated in 1979-80.

Mr O'Connor: We pointed that out very strongly and objected strongly to it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Western Australia must expect more from this Premier than the ability to point things out. When will we get some action instead of moans and whinges and the pointing out of things? What we want is a better deal. The Premier should understand that this is a Liberal Party financial policy and it is not just, in abstract, someone in Canberra making decisions. This is a Liberal Party philosophy to which this Premier adheres, and about which this Premier's predecessor boasted so often. We want action, not

words. We want solutions. We do not want to talk about the problems.

In 1981-82 the Fraser Government decided to defer the implementation of revised arrangements as had been promised. We then saw the States' individual amounts in 1980-81 increased by 9 per cent to yield in 1981-82 a decrease in real terms of 6.7 per cent. This resulted in a revenue loss to WA estimated at \$57.7 million in 1981-82 compared with the amounts that would have been yielded under the previous system.

Then we come to the question of personal income tax collections or total tax collections. It was until the end of 1980 that the States held out to their people that they should have a share of personal income tax collections.

Mr O'Connor: Not true!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I repeat that it was until the end of 1980 that the States held to the proposition that they should receive a share of net personal income tax collections. The Premier can say it is not true if he likes and I will quote *ad nauseum* for him reports and documents that were sent from this State to the other States which show that to be the position.

It was in January 1981 that Court, the former Premier, withdrew Western Australia's support of a share of personal income tax and proposed a share of Commonwealth total tax receipts. That presented the Fraser Government with a choice of two alternatives: It could stay with the personal income tax formula that was being supported by the New South Wales Government, or it could switch to the total tax receipts situation that was being put forward by other States, notably Western Australia. Just in case the Premier is under any misapprehension, I will quote some newspaper articles.

On 29 January 1981 *The Australian Financial Review* reported—

The other States, led by Sir Charles Court, Premier of Western Australia, are leaning towards a system of receipts based on a broader tax base.

On 5 February the same newspaper reported—

This state of affairs evolved as a result of some States (Western Australia most particularly) drawing back from the agreement made at the September 12 meeting last year that tax sharing should be based on income-tax receipts.

That is the truth. Given the present situation, if in 1982-83 Western Australia retains its position compared with those in the other States the Commonwealth has said that of total tax

collections 20.72 per cent will be shared amongst the States. If one equates the share of personal income tax collections the States were receiving with total tax collections, one sees that the 39.87 per cent should be translated to 22.25 per cent; but the Commonwealth Government, aided and abetted by its Liberal counterparts here, decided to reduce the figure from 22.25 per cent to 20.72 per cent. The States are estimated to lose \$569 million. If relativities do not change, the States will lose that much. But relativities will change because of the Act which was passed to implement the scheme, the States' (Tax-sharing and Health Grants) Act, under which Western Australia will lose another \$16 million. But the minimum loss that confronts this State at the next disbursement of Commonwealth funds is \$89 million. An amount of \$89 million is the loss that the Fraser Government is promising the people of Western Australia.

What is going to be done? What is this Government proposing should be the action to be followed in the names of the citizens of this State? That is the situation only if relativities change in accordance with the provision of the Act. Let us not forget that a report on tax sharing was completed in 1980 and the Grants Commission is currently reviewing the results of that report. If it implements that report's recommendations without change, Western Australia's relativity compared with those in the other States will worsen to an extent that will mean that we will lose \$219.9 million. Is the Premier aware of that?

Does the Premier realise the implications of that 1980 tax sharing report? Does he understand how much we risk losing and what \$219.9 million less means to our Budget in terms of policemen, teachers, hospital beds, and housing interest rates subsidies? The Premier shows no sign whatsoever of being aware that the minimum loss we face at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference is \$89 million, and the maximum possible, if that 1980 report is not adjusted, will be \$219.9 million. The people of this State have a right to expect from their Premier, firstly, some evidence that he is aware of the problem, and, secondly, a plan of action to minimise the effects of this sort of financial delinquency on the people he pretends to govern. This Premier has shown neither of those two signs.

The Opposition proposes to tell the Premier exactly what he should be doing. We are not saying it will be an easy job, but it will be a much harder job if the Premier spends his time saying "Yes" to everybody who comes to see him, and fails to face up to his Federal colleagues. The first

thing that the Opposition proposes is that the Premier should accept the need for compromise and true co-operation between the States. That is the cornerstone of any successful campaign, to ensure that the Federal Government, fresh from its election campaigns in Lowe, comes to heel regarding State finance, and then we need the Premier to take the lead in calling a fully representative meeting of all people needing to be informed of the present situation and how it will affect them. We propose that included in this fully representative meeting are, amongst others, representatives of State Governments and of the Opposition, representatives of employer groups and unions, representatives of local authorities, metropolitan and country, and representatives of welfare authorities. We envisage these representatives being amalgamated into a peak council because they are the people who will suffer if we lose this amount of revenue and they need to know how serious the present situation is and what tax cut they are going to have to expect in their budgets.

Two weeks ago at a well attended meeting of local government authorities in the Maylands Hotel, the propositions put by the Premier's Government were rejected outright by a meeting which was uninformed of the true financial position of this State. We need to have this peak council so that the Government, firstly, can inform, and, secondly, take advice first before it takes the very step, which is the convening, at the Premier's request, of an urgent Premiers' Conference, because if we do not succeed in getting this message across, we stand on the brink of financial disaster in this State.

Following the meeting of this peak council, the Premier should immediately see his colleagues in other States and call a Premiers' Conference. This is essential if we are to succeed in attempting to reverse or ameliorate the effects of the economic strategy being followed by the Fraser Government. We do not want the Premier to get up and tell us that Mr Fraser is doing his best. It is about time the gloves came off as far as this Government is concerned over the Fraser Government because it is not doing its best, but its worst. If the Fraser Government was, in fact, the Whitlam Government in the years 1972-1975, all sorts of howls would have come from that side of the House. There would have been no rest whatsoever for the Whitlam Government. It was accused of all sorts of things, yet the Premier in this place goes easy on Mr Fraser.

Mr Grewar: How many howls came from your side of the House?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Mr Fraser belongs to the same party and the only time the gloves will come off as far as this Premier is concerned in his dealings with Mr Fraser is when it becomes clear that Mr Fraser is captain of a sinking ship. In the public interest, now is the time for this Premier to take strong and decisive action. As well as the peak council and the urgent Premiers' Conference, we need to enlist the assistance of specific interested groups to give the Government advice and to ensure that they know the seriousness of the situation. We want this Premier to use every internal channel available to him within the Liberal Party.

We want this Premier to call in his Federal Liberal Party members and tell them that, firstly, they are Western Australian and, secondly, they are members of the House of Representatives and if they serve the interests of this State poorly, they will pay the price in years to come. There is no evidence whatsoever that the Premier realises, firstly, the significance of the difficulties facing this State or, secondly, that he has any plan of action to combat the problems as they occur. Remember that the minimum financial loss to this State is \$89 million and the maximum is \$219.9 million; those are the parameters. Let us see how the Premier will handle this deficiency in the revenue. We suggest that it would be more proper for him to be preparing now to minimise the loss to this State rather than attempting to pretend it did not occur.

Amendment to Motion

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I move—

That the following words be added to the motion—

but we regret to inform Your Excellency that the State faces serious financial problems because of severe cutbacks in Commonwealth funds for the States and that your Government has failed to protect West Australians against the consequences of Liberal Party financial policy.

Mr TONKIN: I formally second the amendment.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [5.17 p.m.]: I oppose the amendment because, quite frankly, I believe that to this date the Government has not failed to protect Western Australia against the consequences of the Liberal Party's policy. In fact, we have been the leaders of State Governments in this regard.

Mr Bertram: Achieving nothing.

Mr O'CONNOR: We have been leaders in this regard, and members will recall that the previous speaker said the previous Premier was the person responsible for the alteration to the tax system. Of course this was not so. I refer members to page 4284 of *Hansard* for 1981 in which the previous Premier, during his Budget speech, said the following—

When the present Commonwealth Government introduced tax sharing as part of the new federalism concept in 1976, I hoped that we had at last found a formula which promised to provide the States with revenue resources commensurate with their responsibilities. We were promised a firm share of personal income tax and consultation on changes to that arrangement.

I must confess to being disillusioned and deeply disappointed at the development at the May 1981 Premier's Conference. The drastic and unheralded changes to the tax sharing arrangements announced by the Commonwealth Government at the conference, together with the changed hospital funding arrangements, were the cause of the severe budgetary problems the Government has experienced this year.

This particular change was made without the concurrence of all the States, but all States agreed with certain propositions.

Mr Brian Burke: Not all of them.

Mr O'CONNOR: Maybe New South Wales—

Mr Brian Burke: New South Wales was the leader of the opponents to it.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Premiers were not happy about the change in the system because to those who know, it is quite obvious personal income tax rose at a greater rate.

Mr Brian Burke: The total tax includes personal income tax also.

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes, I know. The total tax percentage has not increased to the extent that personal income tax has increased. I think the Leader of the Opposition will agree with that.

Mr Brian Burke: I do not disagree with it.

Mr O'CONNOR: I have discussed the matter with the Treasury officers and they feel strongly about it. When I was asked a question last week as to whether I agreed to the alteration, I said, "No", because I did not agree with it. I believe that in these issues the Commonwealth Government should be much more sympathetic and that it ought to consider some of the problems the States face and endeavour to help them to a greater degree.

Mr Evans: What political party are they?

Mr O'CONNOR: If the member does not know, I will write him a letter and tell him.

Mr Brian Burke: Your attitude is different from what it was when Whitlam was there.

Mr O'CONNOR: When Whitlam was there, I was not the Premier. I have made it clear that as far as this State is concerned we are not prepared to accept the reduction in funds which the Commonwealth wants to impose.

Mr Brian Burke: What will you do?

Mr O'CONNOR: We went forward and objected strongly in regard to the methods imposed and were able to defer any consideration in relation to the Grants Commission reductions in connection with Western Australia. The amount by which the Commonwealth wanted to cut us back was \$162 million, and that would have been disastrous from the point of view of this State. We opposed it bitterly, despite the fact that other States, such as New South Wales and Victoria, were virtually being given gifts.

Mr Brian Burke: You know they are going to do it this year.

Mr O'CONNOR: No.

Mr Brian Burke: They deferred it for one year.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am prepared to state unequivocally that \$162 million will not be taken from this State this year. I am sure of what I am saying. We investigated the grounds on which the figures were based and found in many ways they were invalid.

The Grants Commission and the Commonwealth Government claimed that this State had much better conditions than other States in so far as hospitals and education were concerned. They claimed that we have better schools and hospitals and that conditions here are better than in other States. I cannot disagree with that—they probably are. However, we were penalised also because a number of charges were not imposed in this State which were imposed in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland.

From our point of view we have already taken action to implement some of these charges so that the base on which the Grants Commission works will be revised. I say this unequivocally: There will be no way in which we will be prepared to accept a cut of \$162 million by the Grants Commission in funds to this State, because we cannot afford it. We have bitterly attacked the Commonwealth on many occasions in connection with reductions in the health scheme and other areas, and we would have preferred to retain the personal income tax scheme. If any member has

been to a meeting of Premiers he would know that frequently—

Mr Parker: Brian Burke will be going to one next year.

Mr O'CONNOR: Members of the Opposition were confident of sitting on the Government benches after the last election. We are quietly confident that we will do better than the Opposition at the next election.

Mr Brian Burke: That is my line.

Mr Bryce: Do you concede that your predecessor was responsible for the drop in revenue in this State?

Mr O'CONNOR: No, I do not.

Mr Bryce: By switching from the personal income tax collections to the total Government revenue, the Commonwealth grabbed the cheapest alternative.

Mr O'CONNOR: The then Premier opposed it at the May conference.

Mr Bryce: He switched in January 1981.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is not so.

Mr Carr: Perhaps he was saying different things in different places.

Mr O'CONNOR: In February last year the then Premier, in agreement with all Premiers, advanced to the Commonwealth the option of total tax sharing.

Mr Brian Burke: That is right.

Mr O'CONNOR: It must be remembered that the Premiers put forward possible alternatives after a long public debate and in the face of the possibility of major changes in the Commonwealth tax structure.

Mr Brian Burke: Do you mean they are putting forward unacceptable alternatives?

Mr O'CONNOR: No, it is open for debate.

Mr Brian Burke: That was a good idea.

Mr O'CONNOR: Here we have a man who wants to be Premier of this State. How on earth can he know whether or not the alternatives are beneficial to the State if we do not consider the issues and discuss them?

Mr Brian Burke: It is too late after you are caught.

Mr O'CONNOR: However, the question of preference was made clear by Sir Charles at the May Premiers' Conference, the conference at which the Commonwealth unilaterally abandoned the tax sharing agreement and brought in a new system which will be based on total tax collections. At the beginning of that conference

Sir Charles said he preferred tax sharing to be based on personal income tax.

Mr Bryce: What are you quoting from?

Mr O'CONNOR: I will give the member a copy of it later. It is the details of discussion which took place at the conference.

Mr Pearce: What is it called?

Mr O'CONNOR: It is a document compiled by my office from details of the last conference.

Mr Brian Burke: It contradicts public reports. That is important.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am quite happy to give the member for Ascot a copy. At the end of the conference Sir Charles Court rejected the allocation of funds for the current financial year and the Commonwealth's decision to base tax sharing on total tax collections. He later repeated that message to the Prime Minister and to this Parliament in his Budget speech.

I do not think we could have been firmer than that. We opposed the system which was placed upon us, but we had little option other than to take it. As far as the Commonwealth is concerned, we will battle on strongly and take the point as far as we can.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you aware that the reduction is \$89 million even with the tax sharing report being considered?

Mr O'CONNOR: There is a reduction, there is no doubt about that. When we go to the Premiers' Conference we have the opportunity, if there is a reduction, to battle for a higher percentage.

Mr Brian Burke: All we are trying to tell you is that if you leave it until the Premiers' Conference you know what will happen; you will be over a barrel and the Prime Minister will say, "Take it or leave it." We propose that you start working on it now.

Mr O'CONNOR: We are not leaving it to the Premiers' Conference. We are working on it now and the Treasury is involved also.

The Leader of the Opposition said we ought to include the Federal members in this matter. Arrangements have been made for this through the Federal Minister, Mr Viner.

[Laughter.]

Mr O'CONNOR: The Leader of the Opposition says we should include the Federal members and yet he laughs when I advise that I have contacted the Minister in this regard.

Mr Brian Burke: You know he is close to the Prime Minister—call Senator Withers.

Mr O'CONNOR: When I say I have contacted the Minister and asked him to arrange to discuss

these aspects, he haw-haws it. We have done exactly what he asks and when he is told he laughs at it.

Mr Brian Burke: We know that Viner walks beside Fraser—call Senator Withers.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order! I suggest to the member that this is an important reply to the amendment moved and that members should at least give the Premier the courtesy to which he is entitled.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Just like the courtesy extended to—

The ACTING SPEAKER: The member for Kalgoorlie will note that I am on my feet and he will certainly not make remarks while I am on my feet. If he continues to do so I will deal with him and he will leave the Chamber.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Leader of the Opposition asks, "Why don't we get Reg Withers to come in?" I have invited all Western Australian Federal members to a meeting in order to let them know the problems and to seek their assistance. This is what we propose and what we are doing, and the arrangements have been made through Mr Viner.

Mr Brian Burke: What about the idea of the peak council?

Mr O'CONNOR: As far as I am concerned, I do not support bringing in peak council for this purpose. The Treasury officers are working on it and we understand there are difficulties with local authorities. They had a percentage increase greater than the States—an increase of 16 to 18 per cent last year. We received nothing like that—in some areas we received 9 per cent and in others 12 per cent. The local authorities have been looked after, by the Commonwealth better than we have in that regard. The point the member makes is correct. If we receive a reduction in funds, obviously we have to pass it on. However, we will continue to battle against the Commonwealth Government in its efforts to reduce our funds. We started the battle in September last year in relation to housing and the State has already formulated tax reductions for housing.

At that time many people thought we had achieved nothing. By battling on, by getting the other States behind us, by having a Premiers' Conference in Victoria about three weeks ago, and by putting up other alternatives, eventually we will be able to achieve something from the Commonwealth, although perhaps not all that we want.

Mr I. F. Taylor: What about the increase in interest rates?

Mr O'CONNOR: Of course, that is one area—

Mr I. F. Taylor: And further to come. It will be up to 18 per cent according to you.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is not right, and the honourable member knows that.

Mr I. F. Taylor: You have been reported as saying that.

Mr O'CONNOR: The honourable member should check up on that. Just to clarify what happened, I would point out that I was asked by the Press whether it was possible that interest rates could increase to 18 per cent by the end of the year and I said that of course it was possible. However, I was not referring to housing interest rates.

Mr I. F. Taylor: But surely they are connected?

Mr O'CONNOR: No. Money for housing is available through the banks and through other areas at a lower rate than the general interest rate.

Mr Wilson: The general interest rate is the housing interest rate, surely.

Mr I. F. Taylor: You just told us there is no relationship between the two.

Mr O'CONNOR: I said they are not the same.

Mr Tonkin: You said there is no relationship.

Mr O'CONNOR: Let me say again for clarification, that housing interest rates and general interest rates are not the same.

Mr Tonkin: Who said they were?

Mr I. F. Taylor: Are they connected?

Mr O'CONNOR: If one moves up, there is a possibility of the other moving up.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Only a possibility?

Mr O'CONNOR: It depends on the subsidy or the arrangements that the Commonwealth makes with the banks in connection with these issues. As members well know, two benefits will flow with this housing money. Firstly, to a degree people having difficulties will be relieved of the higher interest rate. This was the result of this Government's taking action some time ago to endeavour to achieve something for Western Australia, and we have achieved something for Australia. People who bought homes three or four years ago will receive a benefit from this scheme. On top of that, extra money will go into the building trade and this will help to create employment and to reduce unemployment in the country. I thought that the Opposition would have

welcomed this. Certainly the members on this side welcome it.

The building trade uses more labour than almost any other industry, and if we can get it operating in the way we want it to—and in a way it has not been operating of recent times—it will assist everyone. This scheme will inject something like \$600 million into the building industry and this will not only bring more people into the work force and take some off the dole, but also it will help many small businesses which provided commodities to the community. I am thinking in terms of businesses that supply bricks, timber, steel, light fittings, furniture, and carpets.

Mr Brian Burke: I would not argue with that, but just let me put this to you: While you are tilting at windmills about housing bonds, I am trying to point out to you that you will lose \$89.1 million in tax sharing money from the Commonwealth, so you will be paying out much more than this scheme will raise.

Mr O'CONNOR: Of course that is something we do not know at this stage. If the Commonwealth endeavours to retain the system, we will be fighting as hard as we can to get an increase in the percentage that will come back to the States. Quite frankly, the States are entitled to it.

Mr Brian Burke: There is no question but that the Commonwealth will retain the system because it was brought in only from 1 July. This will be the first year it has operated, so it will not be changed.

Mr O'CONNOR: I do not agree with that. People thought the Commonwealth would not change its views in relation to housing. I will come back to that point in a minute. Help in connection with housing is not only of advantage to the people who have purchased homes and who will obtain relief from the interest rates on their loans, but also of advantage to people on the dole and to small businesses. We strongly support such action, and we sincerely hope that it will have the benefits we think it will and that those benefits will accrue to the country.

We are concerned about the 1 per cent increase in interest rates, but we do not agree with the comments of the Leader of the Opposition about the possibility of \$89 million being lost. I agree that changing from the personal income tax basis to the total tax basis will result in a reduction in the amount that we receive. We will take this up with the Commonwealth Government.

Mr Brian Burke: That is a reduction of \$70 million.

Mr O'CONNOR: That could be so, but we are not prepared to accept that. We will attend the Premiers' Conference and we will operate on the basis that we will not be prepared to accept less than we received previously. We believe that all States ought to receive an additional percentage.

Mr Brian Burke: In addition to that \$70 million, section 7(11) of the same Act means that we will lose another \$16.7 million.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Leader of the Opposition is referring to \$89 million in total. I realise that.

Mr I. F. Taylor: That is the minimum.

Mr O'CONNOR: We will fight our case with the Commonwealth, and we will endeavour to ensure that the States receive what they are entitled to. Certainly they should not receive less than they did last time. We will be plugging for a greater percentage of the total tax, because we believe we are entitled to it. Western Australia has a strong case for a greater entitlement. We have looked after the employment of great numbers of people from the Eastern States, and we create a fair share of the export income.

I oppose the amendment.

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.36 p.m.]: During the course of his remarks the Premier offered to table, for our information, a memo from which he quoted during the course of his speech.

Mr O'Connor: Yes I will do that.

Mr Tonkin: It was supposed to be a whole file.

Mr O'Connor: That is the one from which I quoted.

Mr BRYCE: In defence of his Government's position, the Premier made three main points. Firstly, he said that his Government will protest strongly to the Federal Government in defence of Western Australia. Secondly, he said that we have many Treasury officials working very hard on this question, and that he is confident these officials have the ability to defend the position of Western Australia.

Thirdly, he made an endeavour to make something correct that is not correct. He attempted to whitewash his predecessor who changed his course of action, and who switched from an agreement with all the other States of Australia on this question of what constitutes the fairest and best method of collecting tax revenue returns for this State.

The then Premier of this State (Sir Charles Court) altered an agreement that was made in September 1980. In January 1981 he let the other States down, and as a result of that turnabout,

that backflip, the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer went into that May conference with two clear options between which they could choose. Instead of the States being united in the opinion that the tax revenue should be raised upon personal income tax returns—the agreement reached in September 1980—the then Premier of Western Australia (Sir Charles Court) changed his mind in January 1981 and allowed the Prime Minister of Australia to betray the States again and to break yet another promise. This was the original promise that none of the States would be worse off under new federalism than it had been previously.

At the commencement of my remarks I would like to remind the Premier that it is not good enough for him to insist that he will protest strongly on our behalf at the Premiers' Conference. That has not been good enough in the past and certainly it will not be good enough in May or June of this year. It is not good enough to say that Treasury officials are working very dedicatedly and tirelessly on this question. Does he not realise that such action will not throw off the ideological blinkers that have been imposed upon the Treasury officials of this country through the concept of new federalism?

It is true to say that currently Western Australia faces the most serious governmental financial crisis that it has faced since the war. There is not a member opposite who could suggest that our situation is not diabolically serious. We stand to lose somewhere between \$87 million and \$219 million in revenue next year. Everyone in this House knows the extra stress that this will place on our scarce and limited social expenditure. The Premier himself knows that he faces this problem because the formula has been changed. The Premier did not dispute the figures I have given. Where are we to get such a sum of money? Western Australia's Consolidated Revenue Fund will be that amount of money short. The Premier knows that Western Australian families are being asked to pay the price of going along with successive Liberal Governments.

In recent times we have witnessed the spectacle of the Under Treasurer of Western Australia, at a seminar organised by local government officials, standing up to warn members of the State Parliament and representatives of local government that 1983 could be the worst year on record. It will be a very serious year indeed. We know that the Under Treasurer has contacted the officials of every Government department and instructed them to conduct a very serious review of fees and charges collected by those

departments. More particularly, the Under Treasurer has directed those departments to examine carefully services currently provided free of charge and to investigate ways and means of imposing fees and charges where they do not currently exist.

Over the six years that the Fraser Government has been in power, the Western Australian Government has been deprived of \$280 million of capital works funds. The Premier must face this reality. We are behind the eight ball in regard to the establishment of hospitals, schools, etc. We are in this situation because in 1975, the then Premier of this State, together with the Prime Minister of this nation, conceived a plan to restructure completely Commonwealth-State financial relationships. It took our present Premier's predecessor five years to realise that he could not trust Malcolm Fraser. It took the previous Premier five years to work out that all the guarantees and assurances he was given that the States would not be worse off financially were simply not true. From the outset this concept of new federalism was a monumental hoax. It was designed to put a "shifty" over the community.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr BRYCE: I move—

That I be given leave to continue my speech at a later stage of the sitting.

Motion put and passed.

Debate thus adjourned.

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr Thompson): I wish to announce that the following members have been appointed Deputy Chairmen of Committees for the present session: The member for Moore (Mr Crane), the member for Welshpool (Mr Jamieson), the member for East Melville (Mr Trethowan), the member for Greenough (Mr Tubby), and the member for Albany (Mr Watt).

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Amendment to Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.30 p.m.]: A number of fairly clear cut indicators suggest that Western Australia is heading for a financial trauma. After six years of the Federal Fraser Government and seven years of a Liberal Government in Western Australia, this State has been deprived of \$280 million of capital works funds. To bring that into a sense of focus, I indicate that amount is the equivalent of 20 hospitals the size of Wanneroo Hospital and more than 40 senior high schools.

I am not suggesting that the State needs 20 hospitals the size of Wanneroo Hospital, but that is an indication of the amount of money and social assets that the State has been deprived of during this period because Fraser went back on his word.

We had no-one in Western Australia to fight for us because we had a Government led by one of the architects of the new Fraser federalism. The Leader of the Opposition has indicated that only last year an announcement was made at the Premiers' Conference that the ground rules were to be changed again in respect of the share of Commonwealth funds going to the States. Western Australia stands to lose between \$87 million and \$219 million in the next financial year in direct revenue terms.

We have lost already our specific purpose payments and members in this House will appreciate that specific purpose payments always have been an important component of Federal Government funding or financial assistance to the States.

As of the financial year 1980-81, specific purpose payments have been discontinued, but of more alarm is the fact that, at this moment, the State Treasury is investigating the feasibility and practicability of imposing a sales tax in Western Australia for the first time. I know that happens to be a fact because I have it on excellent advice.

Mr Herzfeld: Another leaked document?

Mr BRYCE: Is there anything wrong with leaked documents?

Mr Herzfeld: If you want to trade in that sort of thing.

Mr BRYCE: The Prime Minister of this country, a colleague of the member for Mundaring, has indicated that when a civil servant has trouble with his conscience about matters of importance to the welfare of the nation, he has the responsibility to leak that information.

My information from the Treasury is that the State Treasurer has conducted a fairly exhaustive

inquiry into this tax system. It remains to be seen whether the Government makes a political decision to impose this new tax, but it is clear that we are heading for a State financial trauma.

The basic explanation for it is that not only has Western Australia lacked a proper defence system in terms of its financial needs and interests in the national capital, but also we have politicians in this State on the Government side aiding and abetting new federalism. They were the politicians who conceived the idea and it has taken them six long years to wake up to the fact that Western Australia is suffering seriously as a result of this attempt to fundamentally alter Commonwealth-State financial relations.

The purpose of new federalism—upon which Sir Charles Court was well and truly hooked—was threefold. In the first instance it was an attempt to destroy the effectiveness of government.

When the Fraser Government came into office it was determined to place significant obstacles in the path of future reform government and it was determined to destroy the effectiveness of government. New federalism was designed to counter the growing sense of national identity in Australia.

There is no question that the people who conceived and then promoted new federalism were the people in this country—the politicians in particular—who really saw the future of this country as seven different regional units and not as a national unit. More importantly, the basic purpose of new federalism was the clear-cut determination to prevent the redistribution of wealth—particularly in this community—from a national level for the remainder of the century.

Mr Fraser, Sir Charles Court, and Bjelke-Petersen, as well as other members of Parliament of that ilk, were determined to frustrate future Federal Labor Governments. All they succeeded in doing was to bring the roof in on top of them. They have created the greatest financial mess this nation has ever seen.

Mr Hassell: You don't believe in federalism.

Mr BRYCE: Don't I?

Mr Hassell: Your party does not.

Mr BRYCE: Very fundamentally we do.

Mr Hassell: No States, no Senate, one House of Representatives.

Mr Brian Burke: Rubbish!

Mr Parker: I suggest you read Coombes.

Mr BRYCE: Despite warnings from us that Fraser could not be trusted and that Western

Australia would suffer as a result of these new policies, the supporters of these policies were determined to introduce new federalism. The Premier marched on, determined to introduce new federalism.

Members will recall a ministerial statement issued by the previous Premier in 1976. Members will remember also the humble manner in which the recently departed Premier described achievements with which he was closely associated. In 1976 he described the Commonwealth-State financial relations in this way—

... I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE SCHEME WILL NOW OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY AND TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE STATES. The guarantee provisions are a complete answer to those who have criticised the income tax sharing scheme on the grounds that we could be worse off than under the Financial Assistance Grant formula. As it is we can be better off, BUT WE CANNOT BE WORSE OFF.

He went on to say—

These are history making developments and I believe the Premiers' Conference last week will be seen in future years as a turning point in Federal-State financial relations and the beginning of greater State independence and increased self-reliance.

Five years later, that same Premier spoke at the 1981 Premiers' Conference. On page 122 of the transcript he was quoted as follows—

Had I known when we first went into this federalism so enthusiastically five years ago that this was to be the situation and that the promise we would not be worse off was to be broken, I would not have had a bar of it.

After five years of leading the people of this community into a dead end, the man who conceived this concept finally made his admission to the Premiers' Conference. Because over the last six years there has not been at the helm of this State anyone prepared to defend the interests of Western Australians, we are paying the price today. The State is being hurled headlong into financial bankruptcy. It is nothing less than bankruptcy if the national Government prunes \$219 million from our Consolidated Revenue Fund. We have lost \$280 million of capital works projects already and it is basically because the former Premier of this State and the Prime Minister in this country insisted upon wearing a set of ideological blinkers. They have maintained

that set of blinkers to the point where this State and nation are going down the tube.

Fraserism is wreaking havoc, it is destroying the fabric of Australian society. Western Australians are having to sit back and watch their educational facilities, health facilities, transport system, and practically every conceivable service which is funded by the Government deteriorate before their eyes.

This is occurring because the State has lacked anyone at Government level who was prepared, or big or game enough to stand up to the national Government and insist that this crazy notion of new federalism should have been buried before it was born.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [7.43 p.m.]: Tonight we are speaking about the way in which Fraserism has affected this State. It is vain for this Government to distance itself from Fraserism because we remember the previous Premier (Sir Charles Court), who had been Premier since 1974, was one of the main architects of new federalism.

It is quite impossible for members of this Government, who stand in the shadow of their previous Premier, to say that they abhor it and regret it, but really they had very little to do with the so-called new federalism.

We have seen the Fraser Government aided and abetted by this Government in the massive transfer of the funds from the public sector to the private sector. It has been a transfer of funds which will affect the people who need services to be provided by Governments. We are prepared to stand up and say that there are certain things that Governments must do and must continue to do.

What is happening under this Liberal regime in Canberra and in Perth? We are seeing a situation where funds are being transferred from the public to the private sector and this transfer is greatly affecting people who depend upon public services.

I wish particularly to mention how this policy is affecting local government in this State. The Court Government announced the phasing out of various forms of assistance to local government, which phasing out will be effected at the next Budget. We note, for example, that country towns sewerage schemes subsidies are to be cut back from 85 per cent to 75 per cent as a result of a unilateral decision made by this Government. Country shire councils and town councils were inveigled into entering the sewerage schemes on the understanding that they would receive an 85 per cent subsidy. Now, unilaterally, the Government is to cut back this subsidy to 75 per cent. Many of these local government authorities

in the country are in very difficult circumstances as a result of these unilateral decisions of the Government. They would not have gone into the schemes had it not been for the fact they were promised a subsidy of 85 per cent.

Another way in which local government authorities—in the country, in particular—are being badly affected is by the abolition of the swimming pool subsidy. Some 90 councils have been paid an annual subsidy of up to \$3 000, which is equal to the operating loss they sustain on their swimming pools. This is an additional cost local government authorities in the country cannot afford.

We note and deplore that the Government is to phase out over three years the local authority assistance funds. We remember that it was the Tonkin Government a few years ago which decided local government authorities in the country were in a difficult position and were deserving of some assistance. At the moment, something like \$1.150 million is paid annually from this fund to local government authorities; however, the Government intends to phase it out. We regret that the new deal which was given to local government authorities in this State by the Tonkin Government is to be axed by this Government. It was not game to do it in 1974; it had promised there would be no change. However, having found itself firmly in the saddle once again, the Government turned its attention to this area.

We note, too, that local government audits to date have been subsidised in the country by 50 per cent; this practice is to be discontinued. The new system of auditing will represent a great burden to local authorities outside the metropolitan area.

In addition, the responsibility for recreation officers is to be transferred to local government authorities.

We see here a catalogue of the ways in which this State Government is phasing out assistance to local government authorities directly because of the way in which the Commonwealth Government has short-changed the State Government. The Government expenditure review committee which recommended these changes was under the chairmanship of the present Premier; so, he certainly cannot claim it was anything to do with his predecessor. It was claimed these decisions were made directly as a result of cutbacks in Commonwealth assistance to the States. So, here we have a direct flow-on of the policies of the Fraser Government with which the Court Government was and the O'Connor Government is inextricably linked.

The result of the policies of the Fraser Government, and of this State Liberal Government is this series of cutbacks to local government authorities throughout the State, which will result in country dwellers being greatly disadvantaged.

For those reasons, we deplore Fraserism. The Premier will need to come up with something a great deal better if he is to try to show that his Government is not part of the whole Fraser deal because, of course, the present State Government is a direct successor of the Court Government; most of the Ministers in the present Government were members of the Court Government. They are certainly part of the whole confidence trick which, euphemistically, has been called "new federalism" and which has resulted in this situation.

The previous Premier said that if he had known what new federalism would be like, he would never have started it. He should have known, because right from the start he was warned by members on this side of the House of the disaster which would lie ahead of this State if we embraced the so-called new federalism. However, the then Premier chose to embrace it and this Government which, through its own agency, is causing the State to suffer so much, cannot shelve its responsibility; it cannot deny its culpability. It must accept that these are the consequences of the Court-Fraser type of politics which were to introduce new federalism into Australia, but which instead have led to a new disaster.

MR HERZFELD (Mundaring) [7.51 p.m.]: The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition would have to be the most cynical piece of political opportunism I have ever come across. Furthermore, it is loaded with hypocrisy and is obviously a tactic used by the Opposition to try to create an atmosphere of crisis in this State. However, such a crisis does not exist. I said the exercise was highly cynical and hypocritical, and I will return to that matter in a moment to explain why I believe that to be the case.

Before I do so, however, I point out to the House that the situation we have today is no different from that of nearly 12 months ago. We have had to wait nearly 12 months for the Opposition to come forward with an amendment such as the one now before the Chair. Either the Opposition is very slow, or this amendment is simply political opportunism. The Opposition knows these financial arrangements were developed last May. Since then, we have had a State Budget, in which all matters were explained. The previous Premier (Sir Charles Court), representing the Western Australian point

of view, spent a considerable amount of time saying his piece about what he thought of the Commonwealth. Now the Opposition has moved an amendment in which it claims this Government has failed to protect Western Australia against certain actions of the Federal Government. What a lot of nonsense! Members opposite know it is nonsense.

Mr Bryce: Western Australian Liberals across the board have supported this crazy notion of new federalism.

Mr HERZFELD: I said the amendment was hypocritical and cynical, and I come now to why I said that.

Mr Parker: You were told to.

Mr HERZFELD: Only this month the Leader of the Opposition has been circulating a document titled, "Economic Outlook"; obviously, he knows his reputation in this State in the field of economics is absolutely nil, and is trying to increase his credibility. We know the Leader of the Opposition has been traipsing up and down St. George's Terrace with his deputy, calling on the captains of industry and trying to convince them the Labor Party knows something about the management of the State's affairs.

Mr Bryce: Doing a great job, too.

Mr HERZFELD: The Leader of the Opposition will find out, in due course; members of the Labor Party are just making fools of themselves. I say again how cynical tonight's exercise is, because members of the Australian Labor Party who sit opposite will say whatever they think their audience wants to hear.

Mr Bryce: It is the same party of which you were once a member.

Mr HERZFELD: This document supposedly contains words of wisdom from their leader. Obviously, it is written by some academic, because it is full of highfalutin words and phrases.

Mr Bryce: I will bet you the next member for Mundaring can pronounce them. He did a great job last night.

Mr HERZFELD: I have heard that before; it is very interesting.

Mr I. F. Taylor: You were not on the mailing list were you? How did you get a copy?

Mr Bryce: That is not a leaked document is it?

Mr HERZFELD: No, it is not leaked. I received the document from one of the people to whom members opposite sent it; he was absolutely horrified at its contents.

Mr Parker: Would you like us to put you on the mailing list from now on?

Mr HERZFELD: Yes, then it will give me even more ammunition with which to criticise members opposite.

The incredible thing about this document is that it spends a great deal of time heaping words of praise on successive Liberal Governments in this State. The document made a comparison of the growth rates in OECD member countries and made the following statement in relation to Australia—

These growth rates are among the highest of the organisation's member countries . . .

Very early in the piece, the document contains the following statement—

At the outset of 1982, economic conditions in Western Australia are punctuated by the highest rate of inflation of all the State capitals . . .

That may well be, but it is certainly a lot lower than it was in the days of the previous Labor Government.

Mr Parker: Are you saying the inflation rate now is lower than it was when the Tonkin Government was in power?

Mr HERZFELD: I am indeed, and it is lower than the inflation rate which applied when the Whitlam Government was in power; it rose to about 19 per cent under Whitlam.

Mr Jamieson: It has gone mad.

Mr HERZFELD: What is the current rate of inflation—9.8 per cent?

Mr Bryce: It is closer to 11 per cent or 12 per cent.

Mr HERZFELD: Members opposite want to talk up inflation all the time; that is their strategy.

Mr Bryce: I learnt that from Sir Charles Court.

Mr HERZFELD: The document went on to refer to "zero employment growth". For years, this State happens to have had the best employment growth rate of any State. The document continues—

However, the results do not support prophecies of doom and gloom.

Is that not amazing? What have we been hearing tonight, with claims of members opposite that Western Australia is in a state of crisis?

Mr I. F. Taylor: You are like the Premier: You start off on one thing and end up on another.

Mr HERZFELD: No, I am referring directly to what the honourable member's deputy leader said. Is it not strange that the document released to the public states something different? Of

course it is different; it is for the consumption of the captains of industry. The Leader of the Opposition and his Deputy were marching up and down St. George's Terrace trying to impress them.

Mr Parker: Why didn't the Premier put you into the Ministry?

Mr HERZFELD: I think perhaps he saw a bigger role for me on the back bench. It just shows the amount of talent we have on this side of the House if I cannot get into the Ministry!

I would like to continue quoting from this document, but there is a matter I intended to deal with during my speech on the Address-in-Reply, so perhaps I will leave it until then.

Mr Davies: You might understand it by then.

Mr Parker: We could send somebody over to explain it to you in the meantime.

Mr HERZFELD: I could always use a bit of help!

It is quite obvious that during the recess a strategy was developed by members opposite to con the people of Western Australia into believing that they are capable economists so that they appear credible as a possible alternative Government. I have a lot of faith in the people of Western Australia, and I have no doubt that they will not be conned in that way. However, it is obvious that that is the strategy; and the amendment tonight is part of that new direction. Members on this side have a responsibility to point to some of the factors which will indicate that what the Opposition is trying to achieve cannot happen. There is no way that members opposite will be able to persuade the people of Western Australia that they are a credible alternative, for a number of reasons.

Mr Bryce: They tell us every day of the week. They can't wait till February 1983.

Mr HERZFELD: Let us consider some of those reasons. The Opposition has had the opportunity for 12 months to tell us how it would deal with the current economic problems. It has waited all this time to do it. If it would take that long to make decisions in government, heaven help this State!

Let us go a little further. Let us look at the situation in Australia where the ALP happens to be in government. It is not in government in very many places, but unfortunately some of the States are saddled with that terrible burden.

Mr Evans: What about Victoria?

Mr HERZFELD: I will deal with Victoria in a minute. Let us consider that disastrous State of

New South Wales, which has an economic crisis of disastrous proportions on its hands.

Point of Order

Mr TONKIN: On a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Crane), no doubt you were listening carefully to the member. He does not seem to be addressing himself to the amendment, which deals with the State's serious funding problems because of the severe cutbacks in Commonwealth funds for the State and the Government's failure to protect Western Australians against the consequences of Commonwealth policies. The point is that the Standing Orders require that a member shall speak to the amendment; and I do not believe this member is speaking to the amendment at all.

Mr Bryce: Hear, hear!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Crane): It has been a practice in this House that members are allowed to traverse a little to bring forward their points. Sometimes some go a little further than others, and sometimes they are encouraged to do so by interjections from the opposite side. Perhaps the member has strayed a little in that regard. I draw his attention to the amendment, and ask him to continue with his remarks.

Mr Bryce: Very generous, Mr Acting Speaker!

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr HERZFELD: If I have strayed, it is because I wanted to use as an example the situation that would face Western Australians if they were to go along with the sort of amendment we have before us. I refer to the situation in New South Wales, which has had a Labor Government for some seven years. We have read about the situation in which 40 per cent of the population cannot go to work because the Government has allowed the State energy system to run down to such an extent that it has no capacity to meet the demand.

Mr Bryce: The Liberals did that.

Mr HERZFELD: We have listened frequently to criticism by the Opposition of how the Government of this State has handled power supplies.

Mr Bryce: You are an engineer. Do you know how long it takes to build a power station?

Mr HERZFELD: Yes, I do. Power is the key to the economic development of this State. I am pleased that no such problems as exist in New South Wales are experienced in this State.

Mr Pearce: Because we hardly have any economic growth.

Mr HERZFELD: It is because the Government has not allowed the instrumentality to be run down and to go bankrupt. In contrast, the New South Wales Government has taken every drop of political advantage out of the utility by holding down tariffs artificially.

Mr Bryce: You will live to regret that in 1982-83. This Government has virtually got the State Energy Commission on the brink, and you know it.

Mr HERZFELD: I refer to a recent article in *The Australian*. The headline by the business editor (Des Keegan) was as follows—

Ineptitude, selfishness, and expediency bankrupt New South Wales.

Mr Tonkin: What has that to do with the amendment?

Mr HERZFELD: That is the situation in New South Wales under a Labor Government. If that is the sort of Government that the people of the State could expect under Labor here, how could we place any credibility in the amendment before us tonight? The facts are well known. If the Opposition had any sort of memory, if it had ever read the newspapers, if it had ever listened to the speeches made in this House by the former Premier—

Mr Bryce: Who led us into financial disaster.

Mr HERZFELD: —it would realise how ridiculous is its amendment. It does no credit to the Opposition for it to come forward with this amendment.

As I have already indicated, the situation in New South Wales is at crisis point. Heaven forbid that we should end up in that situation! I know that we will not be in that position while we retain the present Government in power, because it has shown over the last eight years that it is a good economic manager. It knows how to run the State. To suggest the Opposition as an alternative—

Mr Brian Burke: A good Government.

Mr Bryce: A credible alternative.

Mr HERZFELD: Its new leader has been here hardly long enough to be regarded as more than a new boy. Anybody who has been in Government or who has had ministerial experience has been stabbed in the back and thrown onto the political scrap heap. Half the back-benchers do not even support the leadership. That is the situation on the other side of the House.

Mr Brian Burke: Gosh, you are the first in this debate to get personal.

Mr HERZFELD: Yet members of the Opposition have the hide to talk about dissension in the ranks on the Government side. If that is the case, they certainly know more than I do.

Mr Brian Burke: That would be typical.

Mr HERZFELD: It worries the Leader of the Opposition that we have had a change in the leadership, and the change-over has been smooth. We have had no faltering in the leadership provided. Initiatives have been taken, and leadership has been shown. That is worrying the Opposition.

Mr Parker: It would be a different story under the previous leadership.

Mr HERZFELD: We are lucky to have very good leaders. We have a number coming up behind the present leaders—

Mr Bryce: We told them so.

A member: And it is only a matter of time.

Mr Brian Burke: They are coming up awfully quickly.

Mr HERZFELD: By the time the Premier is ready to give it away at about 70 years of age, we will have ample leaders to take over.

Mr Brian Burke: I don't think you should have spoken tonight, really.

Mr HERZFELD: When members of the Opposition say that one should not have spoken, it means that the remarks have hit home and they are considerably concerned. They have a lot for which they should answer. They should come out and say what they really mean. If they believe, as the Leader of the Opposition said in his document, that "things are in pretty good shape", "just in a temporary downturn", "don't worry"—

Mr Bryce: Read the whole lot.

Mr HERZFELD: Half of it is gobbledygook; that is, the part written by the Leader of the Opposition. I suppose the rest of it was written by the academics from the Western Australian Institute of Technology or Murdoch University.

Mr Brian Burke: The member for Kalgoorlie, actually.

Mr HERZFELD: Mr Halfpenny did not have anything to do with it, did he?

Mr Brian Burke: Mr who?

Mr HERZFELD: I have made my points loudly and clearly. I cannot see any chance of the people of Western Australia trusting the members across the Chamber, no matter how hard those members try. However, let them keep trying.

Mr Brian Burke: We will.

Mr HERZFELD: The people will learn. At the same time, they will recognise that the policies being pursued by the Government and the Premier—

Mr Bryce: Financial disaster.

Mr HERZFELD: —have to be taken to ensure that Western Australia receives the best deal possible. The people should forget about doom and gloom. We have a lot of bright prospects ahead of us in Western Australia. The Opposition should preach confidence in the State, because that is how we will get the economy moving.

Mr Brian Burke: You just attacked us for doing that.

Mr HERZFELD: The Opposition should not go around preaching gloom and doom. That will not take us anywhere.

I reject totally the amendment moved by the Opposition.

MR HODGE (Melville) [8.11 p.m.]: The severe cutbacks in Commonwealth funds to this State have been felt in many areas, but none more seriously than the health area, especially in the provision of hospital and general health facilities. As part of the new Commonwealth arrangements, the 50-50 cost sharing agreement for running the hospitals of this State has been abolished, and a set grant has replaced it. As part of the package deal, the right of every citizen of this State to have free hospitalisation and free pharmaceuticals in public hospitals has been abolished. Therefore, every citizen is obliged to pay a fee to go to hospital, apart from pensioners or the most poverty stricken, who are provided for free of charge.

This Government welcomed that change. Indeed, it provoked the Commonwealth into introducing the new health arrangements. Therefore, the Government cannot blame anyone but itself for the mess in this State in respect of the provision of hospital and health facilities.

We now have a very cumbersome, inefficient, and costly method of collecting funds from individual patients who go to public hospitals. Every patient at a public hospital has to be levied a charge—\$15, \$8, \$3, or whatever may be the appropriate charge—and that charge has to be collected individually. That is proving to be a cumbersome, costly, and grossly inefficient system. I know of at least 50 new clerks who have been employed at the major teaching hospitals in the metropolitan area to administer the new scheme. On its own, that move is costing \$500 000.

Mr Bryce: The Minister just whispered to his colleague he thought it was 45, not 50.

Mr HODGE: The Minister told me it was 50, so I am relying on the accuracy of the answers he gave me.

As part of the new health arrangements, almost every citizen in the country, with the exception of pensioners and the poverty stricken, has been forced to take out costly private health insurance. This is an inequitable, unfair, and unjust system. People are required to pay health insurance whether they are poor or wealthy. There is a certain cutoff point, under which people obtain free insurance. However, whether one earns \$1 or \$1 000 above that point, one is required to pay the same amount for health insurance. Obviously, many people in the community have taken the risk. They have decided they cannot afford to pay \$10, \$12, or \$15 a week for health insurance, and have taken the risk and not taken out any insurance. Those people are running the risk of financial bankruptcy if they have to face long spells in hospitals.

Members will be horrified to know, as I was when I found out, that the Department of Health and Medical Services has issued an instruction to Government hospitals advising that they can permit people who do not have the money, or who do not have health insurance, to charge their hospital fees to Bankcard accounts. Have members ever heard anything so incredible? These poor patients, people without sufficient means to pay their hospital accounts and who do not have health insurance, are being encouraged by this Government to pay their hospital accounts by Bankcard.

Mr MacKinnon: If they had insufficient means they would not get Bankcard.

Mr HODGE: There are plenty of people with Bankcards who cannot afford the bills they run up. The Minister should know of frauds involving Bankcards. We could have the spectacle of people paying hospital bills using Bankcard and paying an extra 18 per cent. But this has been the instruction to Government hospitals throughout the State. I have been told that a number of Government hospitals are now displaying on their doors and counters notices about the use of Bankcard. The Government is now becoming an agent for the Bankcard system, an incredible situation I thought would never occur in this State.

Another tragedy of this Commonwealth-State financial arrangement is the downgrading of public hospitals. The general clinic of the Royal Perth Hospital has been closed for 12 months.

Formerly that clinic was treating up to 500 people a week. Up to that number of people from lower socioeconomic groups were attending that clinic for their health needs. Where are those 500 people a week going now for their medical treatment? I do not know and I am quite certain our Minister for Health does not know either. What is more, I suggest he does not care. People have been discouraged from attending the RPH general clinic and general clinics in other teaching hospitals. People have been charged for pharmaceuticals which formerly they received free of charge.

Staff ceilings at all Government hospitals have been clamped down so tightly that efficiency and staff morale have dropped. The closure of Jewell House and other nursing accommodation has caused problems. There has been an irritating tinkering with nurse rosters in order to save a few measly dollars. This has made life very difficult for the nurses, and they will not forget the treatment they have received at the hands of this Government.

Mr Young: What was the treatment they got which they will not forget?

Mr HODGE: The Government has been tinkering with the roster arrangements—long-standing arrangements which had worked very well. The Minister should know I was referring to the treatment he dished up to the nurses 12 months ago.

Mr Young: We said we did not do anything.

Mr HODGE: I will waste no further time with the Minister.

There have been many other consequences of the Commonwealth-State financial arrangements—the lack of funds for the Family Planning Association, the Alcohol and Drug Authority, and the women's refuges.

The Family Planning Association in this State is desperate for funds. Last November the Commonwealth Government changed the method of funding for the association. Since 1975 to last November it was funded under a deficit funding arrangement. With a unilateral decision the Commonwealth told the association that in future it was to receive a straightout grant which was to be used for the provision of clinical services. That grant is nowhere near to being adequate.

Through lack of funds the association in this State has been forced to close five of its suburban clinics. Apart from its headquarters it now has just one clinic still operating. That is in Fremantle and it is operating on a very restricted basis.

This Government has been approached by the Family Planning Association and asked to provide urgent emergency help. It requested \$27 000 to tide it over this financial year. The funds were to be used for educational and training purposes and would have helped to take the pressure off the association for the rest of this financial year. The application was rejected by the Minister for Health and by the Public Health Department. The association was told there was no money, that the kitty was empty. The Minister for Health referred the association to the Treasury which gave the same answer. The association was told the Treasury was empty and no funds were available.

This Government provides only a relatively measly amount of money—\$22 000—annually to the association. That amount compares very unfavourably with the sort of support provided to such organisations by other State Governments. The South Australian Government provided \$147 000 this financial year and even the Queensland Government provided \$100 000, yet our Government provided a measly \$22 000. This State Government is prepared to sit back and watch the Family Planning Association virtually grind to a halt because of a shortage of funds. The kitty is empty and there is no money available for this sort of organisation.

The Alcohol and Drug Authority is another casualty of the Commonwealth-State financial arrangements. The ADA is a very important body in the overall scheme of things in this State and it has been starved of funds year after year. This year it even suffered a decrease in the amount provided by the Government. The State Budget contained an allocation which was reduced by 2.6 per cent on the previous year. The ADA previously was allocated \$2.872 million compared with this year's sum of \$2.803 million. The ADA cannot keep pace even with inflation and is being forced to cut back its services in order to keep within the Government's budgeted allowance.

Many worthwhile voluntary agencies in our community are treating alcoholics and drug addicts, and these agencies also are crying out for funds to supplement those they raise by their own efforts. Again, each time these voluntary agencies approach the Government for additional funds they are told that the Government has no money and that they should see the ADA. Out of the ADA's very tiny budget it is able to give these agencies only token support. From a total of \$2.8 million the authority allocates \$200 000 to help the various voluntary agencies in this State. A number of these agencies are finding their work is

being restricted. They are having to contract their operations because of a severe shortage of funds.

The ADA was established in this State in 1974. The legislation was based on some great ideas and contained some grand expectations for the work it would do in rehabilitating and caring for alcohol and drug addicts in this State. However, the ADA has been reduced to a very sorry state indeed. It is down to acting merely as a co-ordination and education body rather than being able to expand its operation into practical health and rehabilitation programmes in this very important area.

Women's refuges in this State are still the most poorly funded when compared with those in all the other States except Queensland. The State Government did increase contributions to this area some time ago, but they are still far from adequate. Under the old arrangements the Federal Government provided 75 per cent of the cost of running these refuges while the State Government was supposed to contribute 25 per cent. The State Government never did contribute that 25 per cent. The maximum it ever gave was 12.5 per cent. The women using the refuges and the people working in them were apparently supposed to raise the other 12.5 per cent. Even taking into account the recent increase by the State Government for the funding of women's refuges it still does not reach the 25 per cent. It peaks at about 19 per cent. If the State Government had increased its contribution to 25 per cent as was applicable under the old financial arrangements a further \$49 000 would be available to women's refuges this financial year. That additional amount would have made a tremendous difference and taken a lot of pressure off the refuges. Again, the excuse given by the Minister for Health was the lack of available funds.

The shortage of funds has had an effect in other areas also, areas not directly funded by the Commonwealth Government. Mental Health Services traditionally have been funded entirely from State Government resources. The fact that the Commonwealth Government has cut back so drastically to the State on its funds for health care has put a strain on the State Government and forced it to cut back support for Mental Health Services.

The last State Budget provided for only a 10.2 per cent increase in funding for Mental Health Services. Even on the Premier's own figures in the Budget speech the amount allocated was not enough to keep pace with inflation and so, taking the effects of inflation into account, Mental

Health Services received in real terms a reduction of about \$2 million.

The State Government has attempted to make that up by raising the contribution that inmates in mental and psychiatric institutions have to pay from their pensions. People in psychiatric institutions now are paying up to 87.5 per cent of their pensions to the State Government for board and lodging. As if that is not enough, the administration of the Mental Health Department recently sent out a memo saying that wherever possible patients should be made to pay for their own clothes and footwear, etc. So, the cost of items that were previously supplied to patients by Mental Health Services are now wherever possible to be paid for out of the patient's own money.

This does not make sense, because most of the patients are living on pensions and up to 87.5 per cent is going for board and lodging. The does not leave them much for the provision of clothes and other necessities. The State Government is trying to boost its funds by bringing in these penny-pinching arrangements. It is insisting that these patients use their social service payments.

The age and condition of many of our mental health institutions are a disgrace. The State Government is making very slow progress in replacing facilities such as Swanbourne and Heathcote. Both hospitals are very old and should have been replaced long ago.

Mr Young: Do you want Heathcote closed?

Mr HODGE: I would like to see it improved and upgraded.

Mr Young: Rebuilt on that site?

Mr HODGE: I am open to offers on that.

Mr Young: Just for the record.

Mr HODGE: If the Minister cares to consult with me later I will give him my views.

The capital works programme for hospitals in this State is in tatters. I will not rehash the saga of the RPH north block extensions. That project is still in the same condition it was in last year. We all know about the condition of Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital and of all the hospitals throughout the wheatbelt and the north-west of the State, hospitals such as Roebourne, Derby, Broome, and Port Hedland. They all require capital works money spent on them.

The reason nothing is happening is that capital works money for hospitals has been slashed dramatically and the Treasury is empty. The cutbacks have affected most areas of our State, but I suggest that hospitals and the provision of health facilities have been among the most

severely hit. This Government has tried to offer excuses and to apologise for what has happened. I contend that the blame rests at the feet of the State Minister for Health. He was the person in the forefront of getting the Treasury and the Federal Government to make these changes. Our State Minister for Health is responsible for the mess our health system is in.

MR I. F. TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie) [8.30 p.m.]: When it comes to leadership of the conservative Government of this State, the people of Western Australia must be in somewhat of a quandary. The previous Treasurer, who professed a real knowledge of Commonwealth-State financial relations—and I am quite sure any of us in this House tonight would have to admit that he did, in fact, have a very good knowledge of it, a knowledge that was built up over eight years of involvement in that area—led this State into its current financial quagmire.

Now we have a Treasurer who, in fact, obviously has little or no knowledge of Commonwealth-State financial relations, yet has the job of trying to lead the State out of its financial quagmire. The little knowledge he has is very dangerous for this State. We now have little opportunity of coming out of the financial quagmire into which we have been led. In his performance in the House tonight he has given us some indication of that lack of knowledge.

Mr O'Connor: Look at the expert!

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: I refer to his reference to the current State grant situation where the Treasurer seemed to be under the misapprehension that he would have the opportunity in the near future to change the situation.

I have a copy of the States' Tax Sharing and Health Grants Act No. 99 of 1981 which in section 9 makes it quite clear that the tax sharing grants for 1982-83, 1983-84, and 1984-85 are set and there is no opportunity to change those grants at this stage.

Mr O'Connor: You would sit and accept that, would you, if you were in my position?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: No, I would not accept it.

Mr O'Connor: You have just defeated your own argument.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: How can the Treasurer do anything about it when he does not appear to understand the situation?

Mr O'Connor: I understand it.

Mr Old: You pompous fellow!

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: It will cost us \$160 million to get the Commonwealth Grants Commission to

change its mind. The Treasurer we have now does not have the knowledge or the understanding to make the Commonwealth Grants Commission or the Commonwealth Government change its mind on that subject. The Treasurer must feel intellectually and politically uncomfortable when he is forced to rely on Treasury to the extent that he does for briefings, and in fact the Treasury decision-making process itself is such that it completely dominates the Treasurer.

Mr O'Connor: Not at all. I take note of what it says.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: The previous Treasurer looked at Treasury decisions, at its papers and read and understood them and, on the very odd occasion, went back to Treasury and said, "I don't like that. I want to have another look at that." I understand that is not the situation with the present Treasurer.

Mr O'Connor: Are we onto the Treasury leak?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: No. What we really need in this State is a Treasurer with the confidence and knowledge in this area and who, having an understanding of this area, can in fact look at the Commonwealth over the conference table, meet it face to face, lay his cards down and say, "This is what we want. This is what we can get", and not have to rely on the advice of his Treasury officials sitting alongside him.

Mr O'Connor: I did that at the last conference and if you had any nous at all and information that you thought you had, you would realise that.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: That is not so, on my understanding of the situation.

Mr O'Connor: You do not understand. As a matter of fact, I was able to achieve a few things that others missed out on.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: The effect of that was that we have a one per cent rise in interest rates. Why anyone would want to claim credit for what the Commonwealth Government has done in the housing field, I do not know. The Treasurer is trying to claim credit when the Victorian Government is also claiming credit for it.

The real crisis facing this State is illustrated by correspondence we have received from the State Treasury. That correspondence has gone out to all departments and authorities in the budgetary process. The Treasurer has requested them to review charges for existing services and to extend the review to services for which there are no charges. That in itself is an indication that this State, particularly in 1982-83, will be faced with a curtailment of services and an increase in charges over a wide range of services.

At a recent conference of local government authorities, the Under Treasurer himself made quite clear the situation and the difficulties being faced by this State in the area of finance.

The point of the tax base is another matter that should be cleared up tonight. There appears to be confusion here. I have no doubt that prior to the May 1981 conference of Premiers this State put forward a proposal that we should look at total taxation rather than at a share of personal taxation. That proposal was put forward because the Commonwealth Treasurer at that time was making noises about increasing indirect taxes and giving us a value added tax. To put it quite bluntly, we are sucked into that situation. We went ahead and suggested that we should be looking at a total taxation and the Commonwealth must have been rubbing its hands with glee because at last someone had brought it up and it had the opportunity to introduce the total taxation provisions.

Already, because of the new Federalism provisions, this State has lost \$106 million in Commonwealth revenue, but that is nothing compared with the financial disaster that we will face in the next three years. Changes to Commonwealth-State financial arrangements over the next couple of years cost us a minimum of \$89 million in revenue and a maximum of nearly \$220 million in revenue in 1982-83 alone. In 1981-82 the transition arrangements in relation to this new agreement are such that it will cost this State \$57.7 million or in real terms a fall of 6.7 per cent. In addition, the Commonwealth Grants Commission is looking at the situation in this State and has recommended that we lose grants of \$160 million. I understand that decision is subject to review and the State Treasury is reviewing the situation at present and has met with the Commonwealth Grants Commission recently.

It is very important in the Commonwealth Grants Commission area that the Treasurer himself should have an understanding of the principles behind the Commonwealth Grants Commission's study on this matter and why it has come up with the suggestion that we lose \$160 million. I do not think the current Treasurer has that understanding or that he is capable of understanding the situation within the time available and, therefore, Western Australia will be in dire financial difficulties unless he is able to sit down with the Treasury people and spend some time coming to grips with the situation. I do hope, for the sake of this State within the next couple of months, he does come to grips with the situation. I hope when we are in Government in 1983 we do

not face a financial mess left by this Government because of the inability of this Treasurer to understand Commonwealth-State financial relations.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [8.37 p.m.]: There is no question that the first half of this amendment has been the major area of complaint that the State Government has been making in the last two years. This Government has made its position very clear and has identified the Commonwealth Government as being the one which has denied this State some of the finances which it believes should be rightfully returned to it. The only point that proves is that there often have been claims by members on this side of the House that we have to be in Government to be able to achieve anything at all, which is quite wrong. This Government has been arguing for three years with a Government of the same colour and very regrettably, all its complaints and arguments have fallen upon deaf ears. I do not think we should be overcritical of this Government; in fact, the criticism has to be properly directed at the Federal Government and those people from Western Australia who support that Government unreservedly without making any concessions at all for the State and the people they are supposed to represent.

The National Party has never supported amendments to the Address-in-Reply. In the past we have supported substantive motions that have been put forward by the Opposition, and we intend to continue with that policy. However, there is no reason that we should support the amendment to the Address-in-Reply.

I am sure that the Premier is aware that unless he can convince the Commonwealth Government that it has to be more reasonable in its allocation of financial resources, this Liberal Government will suffer rather disastrous consequences at the next election. That is one of the truths of politics.

It is quite within the rights of the Opposition to make its position clear and to be able to use this Parliament as a forum for publicity and to state the fact that the State Government has been unable to convince the Commonwealth Government, from a similar political party of the predicament it is in.

I am quite sure that whilst it is the right of the Labor Party to move this amendment, even if it is passed, nothing will result from it. The government will suffer the consequences of this issue in the 1983 election. We oppose the amendment.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [8.41 p.m.]: I must support the amendment if only to say "I told

you so." On many occasions over the past three to four years I have expressed, in detail, the feelings of the Opposition in regard to new federalism and I have called on the Government to abandon it. It is distressing to note that the new Premier is prepared to embrace it, although not entirely. However, he is not prepared to abandon it, even in the form that his predecessor had reached, albeit rather belatedly.

I am disappointed by the remarks of the previous speaker who told us that the National Party, by tradition, does not support amendments to the Address-in-Reply. It appears that, *ipso facto*, no matter how good the amendment and no matter how beneficial it may be for the people of this State, the party will not support it because its members are hidebound by tradition. A party of four to five years' existence is already hidebound by tradition! We have watched where its members have put their mouth, but more particularly we have watched where they have put their vote and they have always been wanting when the crunch has come.

I do not believe that the Government or members on the other side of the House realise what a grave position we are in. They fail to grasp the realities of the situation and it gives me no pleasure to say "I told you so."

Mr Cowan: Would you agree that it is the Federal Government that fails to see the disasters of the new federalism system?

Mr DAVIES: I will tell the honourable member who has failed to grasp the realities of the new federalism. I believe the Federal Government knew what it was doing with every letter it wrote. It knew what it was doing and we fell for it hook, line, and sinker.

The Opposition took the unusual step of putting its views on this matter direct to the Prime Minister at the Premiers' Conference. The Labor Party thought that the matter was so serious that even if its support were rejected by the State Premier, it should put its view independently to the Premiers' Conference, through the Prime Minister. We did that on two occasions because we regarded the matter to be serious.

However, it was to no avail. The previous Premier swallowed the system hook, line and sinker and when the other Premiers wished to have another meeting in 1981 to discuss the position and to try to opt out of new federalism, the Premier of Western Australia was the only State Premier who would not agree to it. Because he would not agree to it the proposed Premiers' Conference did not take place and the chance was

lost when we might have had an opportunity to make a change to the new federalism.

Interjections have indicated that the Government did not adopt enthusiastically the new federalism. I refer members to page 494 of *Hansard* volume 211 of 1976. The then Premier was given permission to make a statement and he was bubbling over in his enthusiasm because of the deal that had been made. I must say that whatever the Premier did, he did enthusiastically. He embraced new federalism enthusiastically and it proved to be a disaster for this State.

Mr Cowan: Only because the Commonwealth changed the rules.

Mr DAVIES: The member for Merredin obviously does not understand the various stages of new federalism. The new arrangements were to be introduced in two stages. Stage 1 was to commence the next year and was to cover the income tax sharing proposals. Stage 2 was to operate from July 1977 and to provide for the States to be able to levy a surcharge or grant a rebate of personal income tax if they so elected. Those were to be the main factors of the two stages of new federalism.

I will quote the words of the Premier and add that I am not saying anything I have not said to him personally. The Premier said—

I am pleased to report that the conference was a most successful one and was conducted in an excellent co-operative spirit. There were many aspects of the scheme still unresolved on which the Commonwealth Government could have taken a position which would have made it less attractive to the States. However, it is also pleasing to record that the Prime Minister gave every consideration to the views expressed by the Premiers and deferred to the wishes of the States on almost every key point.

That was nonsense. There was no key point. The Commonwealth Government changed the system. Had the system remained exactly the same, from the first day, it would still be a rip-off of the States and when the Federal Government changed the income tax structure it put a levy on all the States. It was said that there would be more personal income tax being collected and that we would get a greater share. When challenged on that matter, the Prime Minister said, "I only spoke about income tax and I did not talk about the levy or the Commonwealth getting the lot." We were done in the eye on that occasion as we were done in the eye time and time again.

On page 495 of the same *Hansard* the Premier said—

The guarantee provisions are a complete answer to those who have criticised the income tax sharing scheme on the grounds that we could be worse off than under the Financial Assistance Grant formula. As it is, we can be better off and almost certainly will be, but we cannot be worse off.

Members have heard tonight that we are already several hundred million dollars behind in the amount we should have had. The former Premier was convinced that we could not be worse off and he was done in the eye, and done splendidly in the eye, by the Prime Minister. At the end of the statement he says—

These are history-making developments, and I believe the Premiers' Conference last week will be seen in future years as a turning point in Federal-State financial relations, and a beginning of an era of greater State independence and increased self-reliance.

Members will recall that we were always hearing about the Whitlam Government giving the States money with strings attached. The States wanted as much money as they could get, and they wanted to do their own thing. Suddenly all these special purpose grants were not available to them. They just disappeared. We finished up with grants made on a tax sharing basis and for three years we were to receive no less than we received under the old scheme.

The crunch came in 1980 when the States had another look at what would happen. The three-year guarantee had expired. To give him his due, the then Premier had voraciously defended new federalism at every turn, in this House, in the market place, and in the Press. Everywhere he said it would be of tremendous benefit to Western Australia. What was the Premier's comment after the May 1981 Premiers' Conference? I have here a transcript from the Premiers' Conference of his remarks, and this transcript has never been denied by the former Premier. He is quoted as saying—

Had I known when we first went into this federalism so enthusiastically five years ago that this was to be the situation, and that the promise we would not be worse off was to be broken, I would not have had a bar of it.

That is to the former Premier's credit.

Mr Cowan: Who had broken the promise?

Mr DAVIES: The Federal Government broke the promise, and that has been accepted. However, even though the Premier said this at the conference, on the hustings he was still saying, "We will be better off, you will see."

After the May 1981 Premiers' Conference, Jo Bjelke-Petersen squealed like a stuck pig and he received an extra \$6 million for his hospitals. I believe the member for Melville told us the history of that. The Premier of Victoria bleated and he received extra money also. Our Premier bleated, but he did not receive one cent more, and neither did any of the other Premiers. I do not know what pull the first two fellows had with the Prime Minister, but they did receive some money. It did not matter that we were carrying the rest of Australia on our backs, and that we needed the money for development, we did not get one cent. The Federal Government felt it could forget Western Australia. I think it is about time that we forgot the Federal Government. I have never been a secessionist, and I am never likely to be one, but when one sees deals like this handed out, one wonders where we are going.

Our future situation depends on which of the plans is adopted, and I ask members not to forget that there was a Premiers' Conference early this year and a second Premiers' Conference shortly after, and, as a result of the various matters put forward, the Prime Minister is now confronted with two options. The Prime Minister knows that the States are split on this point. Which option do members think he will accept? We believe it will be the one that will be of the least benefit for the majority of the States, and that includes Western Australia.

So depending on which option the Prime Minister picks, and depending on which recommendation he adopts, this State can see itself with a shortfall of between \$87 million and \$219 million. Is that not something to be concerned about? Is that not something that the Premier should be attacking the Commonwealth Government about? Should we not be putting our case as forcibly as possible and grasping the realities of the situation? It will be bad enough if we are \$87 million worse off, but it will be a disaster if we are \$219 million worse off.

Members can work out for themselves how many houses or hospitals could be built for \$87 million. If we then multiply that figure by about 2.5, we will see what the end result is likely to be. We should be begging for a change and our Federal members of Parliament should be attacking the Commonwealth Government on this issue.

I recall the former Premier calling in the Federal members on this matter. He said to them, "We want your support on this", and they replied, "You have our support." We did not hear even an effective burp from them. Once our representatives returned to Canberra they were

told to mind their own business and to forget the State from which they came. They were told not to worry about what their Premier had said to them and that they would just have to accept whatever financial arrangements were made. The only submissions of any consequence made in the Federal Parliament were those made by the members of the Australian Labor Party. So the matter is one of extreme concern. Unfortunately I did not hear the Premier's reply to the amendment tonight, but I understand that he said he will fight the Commonwealth Government as strongly as his predecessor did. That is not good enough because his predecessor had an amazing lack of success in his fights. We want some guarantee of success.

Despite all the Press statements, the meetings, the conferences, the leaked reports, the telegrams, the letters, the telephone conversations, and the appearances on the "Nationwide" programme, Western Australia did not receive one cent over and above what the Commonwealth Government said initially we would receive. So I believe that if this new Premier has any sense, he will deny new federalism immediately and completely. Perhaps I should add an adjective and call it "new new federalism" because the new federalism seems to have been superseded by another new federalism. The Premier should deny it absolutely and completely and he should try to revert to our former method of tax sharing. At least then we knew how much we were getting and that we were not being ripped off. We are facing the gloomy prospect of being either \$87 million or \$219.9 million down the drain. Western Australia is in such a situation at the moment that we need every cent we can get. The employment situation is worsening and our schools, Public Service, hospitals, and transport system all need attention. We will say more about some of these items in due course.

We have raised this matter at the very first opportunity, on the second sitting day of this session of the Parliament, so that the Government is aware that we will be doing everything we can towards the abandonment of new federalism, and hopefully the Government will be trying to do the same thing. Otherwise we will be in a sorry situation. It reflects on our credibility—and someone was querying that earlier—and it reflects on our understanding of what is necessary to put this State back on the rails and to keep it there.

The way we are going now, we will have to rob Peter to pay Paul. We will have to stretch the money further than it will go. We will see a further worsening and running down of services.

They will be worse than they are at present, and we cannot afford that. We have to put our State in motion, and we have to keep it going.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 17

Mr Barnett	Mr Hodge
Mr Bertram	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bryce	Mr Parker
Mr Brian Burke	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Evans	Mr Tonkin
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman
Mr Hill	

(Teller)

Noes 25

Mr Blaikie	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Mr Court	Mr Rushton
Mr Cowan	Mr Sibson
Mr Coyne	Mr Spriggs
Mrs Craig	Mr Stephens
Mr Crane	Mr Trethowan
Mr Grayden	Mr Tubby
Mr Grewar	Mr Watt
Mr Hassell	Mr Williams
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Young
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Nanovich
Mr McPharlin	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Davies	Mr Sodeman
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Laurance
Mr McIver	Mr Shalders
Mr Bridge	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Mensaros
Mr Pearce	Dr Dadour

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR HERZFELD (Mundaring) [9.04 p.m.]: I had not planned to speak a second time so shortly after the last occasion.

Mr Davies: We are not looking forward to it, either.

Mr HERZFELD: But I am sure the Opposition will be impressed again by my words of wisdom.

Mr Pearce: They will be the same ones again.

Mr HERZFELD: The Address-in-Reply debate gives members an opportunity to canvass some of the important issues facing the State and its people. All too often we concentrate on single issues, and because of that we miss the overview that it is important for members of Parliament to take.

There is no question that we live in a very prosperous country. We have a standard of living which is comparable with any in the world. One would hardly think this was the case when listening to the prophets of gloom and doom, and particularly those who sit on the opposite side.

Mr Davies: You wait until we really start on you.

Mr HERZFELD: It is a fact that every person in this country is in receipt of a guaranteed income. In many other countries no income is provided for some people, and they have to scrounge a living as best they can. We also have what amounts to a universal health scheme. In this nation, three million people have their health taken care of free of charge. We have an education system that is second to none. Again, if we were to listen to some people, particularly those like the President of the Teachers' Union, we would think that matters were pretty grim in our schools. Certainly that is not the case; any member who has had the opportunity to compare our education system with those overseas, let alone those in other States, would have to agree, if he is honest, that ours is a very good education system.

In addition to the matters already mentioned, we have excellent working conditions for the people in the work force. The prospects for improvements in every sphere affecting the lives and the prosperity of the people of this nation and of this State are extremely high. That is particularly so in this State, because of our tremendous energy resources—what is most needed to ensure the creation of jobs and prosperity in the future.

Perhaps there is only one cloud on the horizon, and that is the question of the industrial turmoil which we have to suffer at the hands of militant union leaders.

Mr Bryce: I thought it was conservative Governments that caused strikes and stoppages. Would you like a copy of this document, incidentally? Are you going to give us the second verse?

Mr HERZFELD: I have my own copy. Is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition holding the second issue?

Mr Bryce: No.

Mr HERZFELD: When is the second issue coming out?

Mr Bryce: Another month.

Mr Tonkin: Did you understand this one?

Mr HERZFELD: I can understand it very well. That document heaps great praise on the present Government.

Mr Tonkin: It is very positive, isn't it? It is not a knocking kind of document at all.

Mr HERZFELD: Yes, except for little bits every so often which are totally erroneous. Anyway, I will deal with that later on.

I do not see anything in that document which refers to the great problems we face because of poor industrial relations in this country other than a statement by the Leader of the Opposition that somehow, magically, if the Opposition ever gets into power, it will come up with all the answers. The statement does not spell out the answers, so it is not very convincing.

I have only to refer to occasions in the past when Labor Governments have been in power to illustrate quite conclusively that statistics prove industrial relations are worse under a Labor Government. To emphasise that, I can once again point to the present situation in New South Wales.

Mr Pearce: Try to point to the situation in the days of the Tonkin Labor Government when there were half the number of strikes we have during a term of a Liberal Government.

Mr HERZFELD: That was aeons ago. Let us look at the situation today under a Labor Government in New South Wales, where because of the poor industrial relations a total of 100 ships are sitting off the coast waiting to load coal. There have been constant strikes and there is a lack of facilities for loading coal, because the Government has not had the foresight or management ability to install such facilities to enable efficient turnaround of ships.

To compound the difficulties being faced by NSW at the present time, there is a problem of major proportions in relation to energy supplies. A handful of people are helping to deny employment to people in New South Wales, because they are out on strike and are not maintaining equipment. The problems being experienced in that State are not temporary.

Worse is yet to come in New South Wales, because that State will not be able to solve its energy problems before the advent of winter. As a result, brownouts and blackouts will occur and people will suffer. The position in that State is disastrous. Workers in New South Wales face the prospect of being stood down three days a week and members can imagine the chaos that will cause.

The Government in New South Wales is attempting to blame the SEC for the position, but in reality the Government has squeezed the commission of funds over the years and the results are apparent today. The Government has refused to allow the SEC to increase its tariffs to an economic level. The commission has gradually been bled dry to the point where it is now broke and it does not have enough money even to maintain its equipment. The Government has as

much as admitted that fact because it has indicated to the people that energy charges will have to be increased substantially.

Mr Harman: What has all this to do with this State?

Mr HERZFELD: It has a lot to do with it, because it indicates how poor ALP socialists are at managing economies. That is why I have indicated the material published by members opposite is absolute garbage and will not convince anyone.

Mr Harman: Do I have to put up with the rest of this?

Mr HERZFELD: The member for Maylands can sit and listen just as I have to listen to him. It is my privilege to speak in the Address-in-Reply on whatever matters I choose. I believe the issues to which I am addressing myself are extremely important to the people of Western Australia.

Mr Harman: Keep going! You might impress some of your ministerial colleagues.

Mr HERZFELD: The most critical issue which faces society in Western Australia is not of a political nature, but rather is an attitude of mind which I shall call the "mendicant mentality" or "great expectations Australian style". It is a sickness which pervades Australian society today. It is not confined only to this State, but is a phenomenon which has developed throughout Australia over the last decade. It is an attitude of mind which says, "The Government can give us more and more. Every time we have a problem, let us go to the Government and it will fix it." That is also what the Opposition is saying.

Mr Grill: You are saying there is nothing wrong with the State, but the problem lies with the people in it.

Mr HERZFELD: We all know the Opposition will promise anything. Recently we have seen members opposite prepared to promise anything to buy a vote.

Mr Harman: You did all right out of the Bayswater Shire.

Mr HERZFELD: What did I get out of the Bayswater Shire?

Mr Harman: You know what you got—everyone else does.

Mr HERZFELD: I invite the member to tell us about it.

Mr Harman: You might hear one day.

Mr Grill: I want to hear you run down the people of this State a bit more. That is what you are doing.

Mr HERZFELD: I do not blame the people for having reached the sort of frame of mind to which I have referred. I blame members opposite, because they have raised people's expectations to unreasonable levels through outrageous promises.

Mr Grill: You are to blame for the plight the State is in.

Mr HERZFELD: The State is not in any sort of plight. That is what members opposite are trying to indicate and I believe we have heard enough tonight to enable us to say that is absolute nonsense.

The member for Yilgarn-Dundas should exude confidence instead of gloom, because it is his gloom and doom attitude which helps to create a depressed economy.

Mr Grill: I have not been putting around gloom and doom. It is you who is doing that. You have contradicted yourself.

Mr HERZFELD: It is not surprising that we should have this mendicant mentality in our society today, because it is what members opposite promote. It is the very basis of socialism.

Mr Harman: You have been there since 1975.

Mr HERZFELD: A colleague of mine has given me a very graphic simile which describes the thinking of members opposite and it goes as follows: If one is running in a Liberal foot race, when the starter fires the gun, all the competitors take off and the one who crosses the line first wins.

Mr Pearce: Yes, by tripping up everybody else!

Mr HERZFELD: There are umpires too.

Mr Bryce: And when do you guys accept the decision of an umpire?

Mr HERZFELD: In the case of a socialist race, the starter fires the gun, the runners get half way down the course, and one fellow gets in front, so the starter fires his gun again and pulls them all up. It is not possible for one runner to cross the line in front of the others. The starter begins the race again and in 100 metres this would happen two or three times to ensure all the competitors were mediocre and crossed the finishing line at the same time. That is a simile which graphically describes the sorts of policies pursued by members opposite when they promise continually they will do more for the people.

Members opposite have said that, if they were in power, there would be more teachers in the schools. Last year the Opposition indicated it would increase royalties. However, this year all of a sudden it has changed its mind and the Leader of the Opposition told the people of Kalgoorlie, "Oh no, we are not going to raise royalties on

your minerals. We are not going to raise royalties on iron ore because the companies are going broke!"

Mr Bryce: Have you heard the saying that converts make the best zealots?

Mr HERZFELD: There is no convert here, my friend.

Mr Bryce: Are you saying you were a Fifth Columnist when you were a member of the Labor Party?

Mr HERZFELD: I am not saying that.

Mr Bryce: Aren't you a convert?

Mr HERZFELD: To save the Deputy Leader of the Opposition bringing up this matter again and again, I shall tell him the story.

Mr Pearce: Storytime again! This one starts, "Once upon a time . . ." and ends up "happily ever after".

Mr HERZFELD: The member for Morley might remember how long ago it was, but approximately 10 years ago—

Mr Grill: We are all trying to forget!

Mr HERZFELD: —a friend of mine suggested it might be a good idea to attend an ALP party meeting at Mundaring. I said I would go along. We went once and heard quite an interesting guest speaker, so we went a second time. This time there was a lady at the door who must have been a membership officer and she asked us to subscribe. The cost was just 50c. Members will know what it is like when people offer raffle tickets; just to get rid of them one gives them the 50c. That is what happened.

Mr Bryce: He thought he bought a raffle ticket and he bought a membership ticket.

Mr HERZFELD: To save the Deputy Leader of the Opposition from worrying any further, I indicate my friend and I went to one further meeting and that was that.

Mr Bryce: But you learned so much about our policies.

Mr HERZFELD: Quite right. I was a member of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's party, but that did not last for long.

Mr Pearce: Did we refund the 50c?

Mr HERZFELD: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition thinks I am a convert and a zealot, so be it. I must be getting the message across at long last. Perhaps I will convert him to our side one day.

Mr Rushton: Steady on.

Mr HERZFELD: The message has to be put across to the general public, firstly, that what

they get in return for the taxes they pay is as much as they are prepared to put in, and secondly, and more importantly, that they get back only part of what they put in, because when Governments take over anything there is always a large cost involved.

I am not ashamed to say that I want to see Government doing less and less as time goes by and that I would like to see it withdrawing from programmes which are not contributing towards the needy. Governments have a definite role. It is the Liberal policy to help the needy and to help them more than we are helping them now. But we can do that only if less money is spent helping people who do not need it. I do not see why we should be paying the age pension to our august former Premier who has just retired. He gets it automatically simply because he is 70 years of age.

Mr Bryce: No, he does not. He has to apply.

Mr HERZFELD: He gets it automatically. Members opposite know nothing about it.

Let me point to another area. I admit that these are Federal matters, but they are all part of our philosophy. I do not believe that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's wife or the member for Fremantle's wife should be paid the family allowance for their children. Those members receive perfectly good incomes as members of Parliament, so why should their wives receive that allowance? I would rather see a doubling of the amount going to more needy families.

Mr Bryce: I do not disagree with that. That could and should be means tested.

Mr HERZFELD: I agree.

Mr Parker: What about Billy McMahon getting \$500 000 on which to retire?

Mr HERZFELD: He has worked long and hard for the people of the nation and is entitled to that money.

Mr Tonkin: You are very consistent!

Mr HERZFELD: I wonder how much the member for Fremantle will receive when he retires in a couple of years?

Mr Parker: If I retire in a couple of years it won't be \$500 000.

Mr HERZFELD: Just so long as the member for Fremantle receives his party's endorsement he will be around for a long time. If he reaches 65 years of age perhaps he will also receive \$500 000. At that time probably he will have deserved it, if he continues to work as hard as he does now.

Mr Harman: You said we ought to opt out of paying welfare services.

Mr HERZFELD: Out of those services paid to people who do not need them. We could then increase payments to those people who do need it.

Mr Tonkin: You reckon McMahon needs \$500 000?

Mr HERZFELD: Admittedly, welfare is primarily a responsibility of the Federal Government, but let us look at this situation as it affects this State. For every two people in the work force there is one adult totally supported by welfare payments, not forgetting the children of those recipients. That is a serious situation.

Mr Bryce: It is likely to increase.

Mr HERZFELD: If we consider it in dollar terms, we realise it is costing the average WA family of husband and wife and two children \$5 500 per annum in State and Commonwealth welfare services. Ten years ago the average family contribution was \$1 016. This represents a fivefold increase. If looked at in constant dollar terms it represents a doubling of that family's contribution. In other words, everyone in the work force is having to contribute twice as much today for the welfare needs of our community.

If this growth continues at that rate there will not be any workers left. As we all know, we face a serious problem of an aging population. The current percentage per 100 workers of aged persons receiving an age pension in this State is 14.3. By the year 2001 the percentage will have gone up to 17.7, an increase of 3.4 per cent. Converting that 17.7 per cent to today's population at today's values, the Government would have to find another \$1 000 million to pay those people entitled to age pensions.

Mr Bryce: All your Federal Government has to do is bring an end to tax evasion. That way you will find \$5 million overnight.

Mr HERZFELD: I agree. The Federal Government should get rid of tax evaders, and it has done a lot towards that end.

Mr Young: What did Frank Crean do? The only Treasurer who has done anything in the last 20 years is John Howard. Let us be fair. Crean ignored it for three years.

Mr HERZFELD: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition talks about getting rid of tax evasion and sees it as being a panacea. If he did his sums he would find it would not solve the problem, because whatever the Government tries to do to curtail the welfare element in its Budget, it just continues to grow—despite all its efforts. The problem is that there is an increasing number of people taking advantage of the situation.

Mr Bryce: Just like tax evaders.

Mr HERZFELD: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition thinks it is wrong for tax evaders to evade tax he would also agree that it is wrong for people to take advantage of our welfare system.

Mr Tonkin: They are not all taking advantage of the system; some are genuine.

Mr HERZFELD: I have never heard the member for Morley criticise people for refusing to accept welfare payments. There are so-called single mothers whose husbands visit them twice a week pursuing their conjugal rights.

Mr Bryce: Tell us about them.

Mr HERZFELD: I have received information on dozens of such cases.

Mr Bryce: I challenge you to table the files in this place.

Mr HERZFELD: It is not my job to investigate the actions of such people; qualified people are employed to do that.

Mr Bryce: You are dealing with rumours.

Mr HERZFELD: I have had information on dozens of cases presented to me, and my answer to the people presenting such information is that the cases should be reported to the appropriate welfare department because I have known the cases will be checked properly.

Mr Bryce: They investigate, but they can't produce the evidence.

Mr HERZFELD: It is difficult to catch these offenders. We would need an army of inspectors to catch husbands who visit their wives two nights out of seven.

Mr Harman: You have to be the greatest showman in this place.

Mr HERZFELD: I will again highlight a point I made earlier tonight during debate on the amendment. Really we have a mob of hypocrites on the other side of this House. During the last few years there has not been one group of crackpots which the Opposition has not taken under its wing in order to gain a few votes. Opposition members had to be allowed to prove to themselves that such a course would not work, and the last election proved that. Now we see an about-face with the Opposition vigorously championing private enterprise. I spoke earlier about a document which I gather came from the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Bryce: If you want this copy you can have it instead of the one you have done your colouring-in on.

Mr HERZFELD: It is not necessary; I do not want to refer to it in detail. The point I make is that it is pathetic that such a document has been

produced. I do not disagree with much in it; in fact, some of the material is a downright compliment of what the Government has been able to achieve for the people of Western Australia for the last eight years. It is to the credit of the Leader of the Opposition that he has turned around in his attitude to give credit where it is due; however, the laughable aspect of the document is that it shows the Leader of the Opposition again turning around in an attempt to say the Opposition could do better than the Government. I guess the people of Western Australia will see through that. It is not for me to pass judgment; I am sure others will.

The sad result of all these turnabouts and manoeuvres is that the ALP will lose a great many of its friends. Already it has lost a member of Parliament for whom I had a great deal of respect; that is, the member for Swan. He lost the stomach to support his party. After a lifetime of dedication to a cause, a dedication for which I have respect, he no longer had the stomach to be a supporter of this Opposition, and gave it away.

Mr Tonkin: He wanted to save his contributions.

Mr HERZFELD: Many others who sit opposite do not want to hack it any longer, but personal circumstances insist that they do.

Mr Tonkin: You wanted to be a member to sit over here.

Mr HERZFELD: That is not correct.

Mr Tonkin: You joined our party.

Mr HERZFELD: It is a sad Opposition that sits opposite. It is sad that the Opposition must go to the extent it has to win a few votes.

I could speak on many matters which show the incompetence and incorrect philosophical base of the Opposition. This evening I asked a question of the Minister for Mines about what is happening in South Australia in relation to the Roxby Downs project. The Leader of the Opposition in this place suddenly has become the champion of mining development, industrial companies, and small businesses, yet we have in South Australia a classic example of the Labor Party's hypocritical attitude. In South Australia the greatest development the southern hemisphere has seen is set to get under way. It is a resource development project in a State which sorely needs that development because it does not have the same riches and resources as Western Australia—it depends mainly on manufacturing. The ALP in South Australia is using its numbers in the South Australian upper House along with the Australian Democrats to stifle legislation to set off this great project.

Mr Bryce: Has it got to the upper House?

Mr Parker: It hasn't.

Mr HERZFELD: What does that have to do with the attitude of the ALP?

Mr Tonkin: He doesn't want the facts to interfere with his speech.

Mr HERZFELD: The Parliamentary Australian Labor Party in South Australia is carrying out directions issued by the ACTU.

Mr Parker: That's not true.

Mr HERZFELD: The important point is that the ALP is carrying out ACTU directions.

Mr Bryce: You didn't learn as much about the ALP as a member as I thought you did.

Mr HERZFELD: I attended only three meetings.

Mr Bryce: You must have pretended you were a pensioner to get a 50c ticket. I think you pulled a swifty.

Mr HERZFELD: The important point is that it was not merely that the Australian Labor Party was getting a bee in its bonnet, but that the ALP was directed by the ACTU in accordance with that organisation's policy.

Mr Bryce: It's not ACTU policy, you goose?

Mr HERZFELD: The ACTU does not support the export of uranium.

Mr Bryce: It has changed its policy.

Mr HERZFELD: Its policy depends on who is in the chair. Mr Dolan made it clear where he stands, and therefore where the ACTU stands. That body through the Western Australian Trades and Labor Council exercises the power to direct the mob that sits opposite in this place. Members can be sure that all the sweet and honeyed words the Opposition puts to the mining industry, as its leader travels up and down St. George's Terrace, would not mean a thing should it gain power as the Government in this State. Members can be sure that the Yeelirrie project would come to a dead stop if the Labor Party were in Government. It tried through the union movement to stop the pilot plant, and if it were not for the AWU not having a bar of that attempt, the Labor Party would have succeeded.

Mr Sibson: It was only the AWU which allowed it to go ahead.

Mr HERZFELD: It was certainly not the Opposition; it wanted to leave the ore in the ground.

I will refer briefly to education.

Mr Davies: Are you for it or against it?

Mr HERZFELD: I was reminded by His Excellency's Speech that \$480 million has been allocated to education in this State during this financial year, which is an increase of 12.4 per cent over last financial year. That increase is a credit to the Government and tangible evidence of the priority it has continued to place on education. Recently I wrote to a colleague of mine in New South Wales asking him to send me the NSW Budget papers so that I could make a comparison with ours. As members are aware a Labor Party Government is in power in NSW.

Mr Sibson: It's not in power!

Mr HERZFELD: It is running around like a ship without a rudder; I quite agree with the member for Bunbury. The best the NSW Government could do for education in this financial year was an increase of 9.1 per cent. The comparison between that Labor State and Western Australia is obvious.

I am rather disturbed at utterances by the President of the Teachers' Union both last year and this year to deliberately mislead the parents of school children in this State in an attempt to agitate them. A letter dated 10 November 1981 was circulated to parents and related to the subject of class sizes, which was said to be the great issue for 1982. I quote as follows—

A study was made of children before and after their classes were increased in size. For the first time a comparison was made where the children, teacher and classroom remained the same, and the only change was the number of pupils.

The results were quite dramatic. In measuring the amount of actual learning time for each child, the researchers found that when the class was increased by ten children, each child lost the equivalent of 24 school days per year!

One does not have to be a Rhodes scholar to see the loopholes in that statement, nor how very deliberately sections of this letter set out to mislead the parents who received it.

What does it all mean? When it speaks of increasing a class by 10 children, was the class increased from one to 11 or from 30 to 40? It is very relevant in relation to how the class would react to an increase of 10 pupils. It goes on to say that each child lost the equivalent of 24 days per year, but that would be impossible to measure because so much depends on the quality of the teacher, on how he organises and conducts his classes, and on 101 other factors—

Mr Brian Burke: What are they?

Mr HERZFELD: —that go into the act of teaching.

Mr Brian Burke: Not even your own side is listening.

Mr HERZFELD: If in fact an increase in the size of a hypothetical class by 10 pupils resulted in the children losing 24 school days per year, but would assist the State in improving the efficiency of education, I would certainly go ahead on that basis and increase classes by 10 and save that 24 hypothetical days by cutting out all the excursions that take place these days.

Mr Bryce: Do you think the private sector should take over the schools?

Mr HERZFELD: When I was at school we did not have excursions four or five times a term where children go around the place and have fun.

Mr Bryce: Perhaps that accounts for your narrow outlook.

Mr HERZFELD: I wonder about these tours. A teacher at one of the schools in my electorate was organising during the school term a tour to Mt. Kosciusko so that the children could go skiing.

Mr Parker: What about the tours of Parliament House? What do you think about those?

Mr HERZFELD: It is hardly necessary to take children to Mt. Kosciusko for skiing. If I had a say in the matter and was principal of the school, I would not have a bar of that type of excursion—

Mr Brian Burke: But you are a strong man.

Mr HERZFELD: —because it discriminates against people who cannot afford it.

Mr Bryce: You are really mean!

Mr Parker: What about excursions to Parliament House?

Mr HERZFELD: There should be more of them. They are educational.

Mr Young: You are trying to turn the kids into masochists.

Mr HERZFELD: The whole purpose of my bringing this matter up is that it is high time that the President of the Teachers' Union and others who want to be considered to be professional and who want people to listen to what they have to say, stopped playing around with the truth.

Mr Parker: The Premier listened and sacked the Minister.

Mr HERZFELD: Statements such as the one I refer to do no credit to the President of the Teachers' Union. Some people may be able to be conned if they look at things like this superficially, but anyone who cares to think about

these statements will realise they are a con. I will quote from more of the letter as follows—

At a time when education is vital because unskilled and semi-skilled jobs are scarce, more jobs are being lost to technology and competition for employment is fierce, West Australian children cannot afford to lose that much education.

To suggest that they would lose a fixed amount of time because there are a few more children in a class is absolute baloney, as any teacher will tell us. Our class sizes in this State compare favourably with the situation in other States.

Mr Tonkin: Rubbish! That is not true.

Mr HERZFELD: Even if they did not—

Mr Brian Burke: And just in case I am wrong!

Mr HERZFELD: —and I do not admit that for one moment—there are many initiatives which have been instituted in this State that have led other States. Let us return to class sizes, which is another area in which Western Australian people are being misled by the Teachers' Union and its leadership and, I am sad to say, most of them appear to be people with the same political leanings as members opposite.

Mr Bryce: The leadership of the Teachers' Union are Tories.

Mr O'Connor: You are the only one who "tells Tories"!

Mr HERZFELD: A recent issue of *The Education News* contains statistics put forward by the President of the Teachers' Union and, quite incredibly, it came up on each occasion that we were worse off than New South Wales and Victoria, a fact which has been strongly denied by

the department. It has its figures. I know who I would prefer to believe. It ill behoves the President of the Teachers' Union to publish incorrect and misleading figures.

I have great confidence in our educational system and in our Minister for Education.

Mr Parker: Which one? You said that last year.

Mr HERZFELD: In the short time he has had that portfolio he has already made a world of difference.

Mr Parker: You said you had full confidence in the last Minister.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): Order!

Mr Bryce: What a crawler!

Mr HERZFELD: I do not think the member heard me say that.

Several Opposition members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): Order!

Mr HERZFELD: We have a great State.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr HERZFELD: We have great leadership which is positive and constructive and has been proven.

Mr Bryce: You have three more alternatives.

Mr HERZFELD: It has proved that it can perform for the people of Western Australia. The alternative to that is to listen to the utterances of gloom and doom on the other side. I do not know what they are talking about, where they are going, or how they will do it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Nanovich:

House adjourned at 9.50 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SWIMMING POOLS: ACCIDENTS

Amendments to Uniform By-laws

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

- (1) In view of the many reported serious accidents occurring annually in backyard swimming pools, would she consider introducing amendments to the uniform private swimming pool by-laws to—
 - (a) require owners to take out a public liability insurance to cover all accidents associated with swimming pools;
 - (b) require the swimming pool companies to ensure such a cover is taken out before the pool is laid;
 - (c) require the swimming pool companies to display visible signs showing the depth of the pool?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) I am always prepared to give consideration to the introduction of legislation where there is an adequate case for doing so. However, no case whatever has ever been put to me in respect of these proposals.

MINING: URANIUM

Enrichment Industry

2. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he or any of his Ministers in receipt of the final report on the "Pre Feasibility Study for the Establishment of a Uranium Enrichment Industry in Australia" by the uranium enrichment group of Australia?
- (2) Is it a fact that only two States forwarded detailed proposals for an enrichment industry?
- (3) As one of the States is Western Australia, would he make available to me a copy of this detailed proposal?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Information has been provided by Western Australia to the uranium enrichment group of Australia on the siting aspects of a uranium enrichment plant. We understand that South Australia has provided similar information. No detailed proposals have been made by the Western Australian Government in connection with the establishment.
- (3) The Western Australian submission to the uranium enrichment group of Australia study contained information received through commercial-in-confidence agreements with the technology holders, and therefore cannot be made available.

LIQUOR: HOTELS AND MOTELS

Good Friday

3. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Can alcohol be served at a hotel/motel on Good Friday, to cater for a weekend congress or similar function?
- (2) If "Yes" what action should be taken to apply for such a function permit?
- (3) If "No" to (1), would an amendment to the Act be considered to overcome this problem?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) There is no provision for permits in these circumstances.
- (3) No.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Meters: Monthly Reading

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

- (1) Is it proposed to read electric light and power meters monthly instead of the two-monthly period currently being used?
- (2) If "Yes", will a fixed charge be made?

- (3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2), is he aware of the extra labour that will be required to read the meters, bearing in mind the possible problems consumers are already having in keeping up with the two-monthly readings?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

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

EXPLOSIVES AND DANGEROUS GOODS ACT

Amendment

5. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Government to amend the Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act this session whereby persons would be limited to carting only two drums of fuel and in excess of two drums a special licence must be applied for?
(2) If "Yes", would not this amendment place rural producers at a financial disadvantage, having regard to the fact that many farmers backload with fuel from the city?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

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

RAILWAYS: WESTRAIL

Employees: Continuity of Service

6. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Would employees who join Westrail from the Rural and Industries Bank with no loss of service be entitled to continuity of service, which applies to other employees of Government departments, thus retaining their long service leave entitlements?
(2) If "No", would he give reasons why it is not applicable?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) No.
(2) The Rural and Industries Bank is not a party to the reciprocal agreement for continuity of Service for long service leave purposes between Government departments and instrumentalities.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Legislation

7. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

When does the Government intend to introduce legislation to implement the joint venture concept re Westrail?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Legislation for the proposed joint venture is expected to be introduced during the current parliamentary session.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Transport Concessions

8. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) As all States in Australia give concessions to unemployed personnel on public transport except Western Australia, will he give the same privilege to the unemployed in Western Australia and so conform with other States?
(2) If "No", what are his reasons?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) In Western Australia free travel on metropolitan public transport is currently available under the Federal Government's fare assistance scheme for people receiving unemployment benefits when travelling to or from job interviews arranged by the Commonwealth Employment Service.
It is understood that in other parts of Australia the situation with unemployed travel concessions varies from State to State.

RAILWAYS: RAILCARS

Repairs and Modification

9. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Of the newly acquired railcars how many have had to have repairs effected in the Midland workshops?
(2) (a) Are the railcars under warranty or does Westrail have to meet complete cost;
(b) if so, what amount of finance to date has been involved;

- (c) is it intended to modify the railcars to avoid overheating, thus causing delays to suburban services?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), who will be responsible for modification costs?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) None.
- (2) (a) The railcars will be under warranty dating from the final acceptance of each unit by Westrail. From the date of take-over they shall then be covered by warranty for a period of two years on componentry and for five years on design.
- (b) Nil. Rectification work required until final acceptance of the railcars is the responsibility of the manufacturer.
- (c) The railcars are currently being modified by the manufacturer changing the thermostats to overcome heating problems.
- (3) The manufacturer.

RAILWAYS

Bokal-Bowelling

10. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it the Government's intention to close the Bowelling-Bokal section of railway?
- (2) If "Yes", when will it close, and why?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government has nothing under consideration relating to closure of the Bowelling-Bokal section of railways. However, I am aware that because of damage caused during the recent floods in the lower south-west of the State, Westrail is undertaking a study of the options available to it for meeting the transport requirements of the general area.

RIVER: SWAN

Navigation Aids

11. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What means exist for navigating the Swan River upwards from Barrack Street jetty by passenger-carrying ferries at night time?

- (2) Are there any navigation lights on any bridges or spit posts on this navigable section of the Swan River?
- (3) Is the present method of night navigation considered to be safe by the Harbour and Light Department?
- (4) In view of the number of craft now using the river for pleasure during the night, beyond the Causeway, is it the intention of the Government to improve navigation aids in this stretch of water?
- (5) Other than the ferry hitting the Garratt Road bridge, have there been any other accidents during night navigation reported to the Harbour and Light Department during the last year?
- (6) Have the personnel controlling craft carrying passengers up river been required by the Harbour and Light Department to possess any special qualifications?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Day navigation marks on white painted piles which are fitted with reflectorised strips.
- (2) No.
- (3) The Department of Marine and Harbours considers night navigation safe if the vessel is manned by a competent master who exercises due care.
- (4) I am advised that there are no immediate proposals to provide navigation lights in this stretch of river.
- (5) The Department of Marine and Harbours has no record of any other accident being reported with respect to night navigation upstream of the Causeway.
- (6) Yes. Appropriate certificates required by the Western Australian Marine Act.

ABORIGINES: SACRED SITES

Argyle Sites K1098 and K1100

12. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

With reference to question 694 of 9 September 1980, regarding Aboriginal sacred sites Argyle K1098 and K1100, can the Minister advise the outcome of action taken by the Western Australian Museum please?

Mr HASSELL replied:

On the basis of information from Conzinc Riotinto of Australia Ltd, the trustees determined to take no further action in respect of site K1098, since it was considered that a prosecution would have failed.

In addition, the trustees informed the Warmun community that no further action would be taken in respect of damage to site K1100 because it was outside the area finally determined as requiring protection under the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

In the meantime, the Minister for Cultural Affairs accepted the trustees' recommendation that consent be given to CRA to utilise the site K1098 in the terms of section 18 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act and undertook to protect a number of other sites including site K1100 under section 19 of that Act.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Kent Street: Transportable Classrooms

13. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many transportable classrooms have been located at Kent Street Senior High School this year?
- (2) Has this been as a result of additional students attending the school following changes to Bentley Senior High School?
- (3) How long is it anticipated transportable classrooms will be needed?
- (4) What other arrangements have yet to be finalised in regard to—
 - (a) buildings;
 - (b) staff;
 - (c) other?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) Two.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Schools retain transportable classrooms until the peak of enrolments is passed. At Kent Street Senior High School such a decline is expected in 1985 or 1986.
- (4) All arrangements have been determined.
 - (a) Replacement of the home economics facilities and conversion of the existing rooms for business studies will complete the building of permanent facilities.

Should extra, multi-purpose classrooms be needed additional transportable rooms will be made available.

- (b) As with all other schools, staffing levels will be reviewed annually and changes made according to enrolment fluctuations.
- (c) Not applicable.

POLICE: LICENSING OFFICE

Victoria Park

14. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

On what evidence, including statistical, was the decision taken to close the Police Department licensing office at Victoria Park?

Mr HASSELL replied:

The decision to close the Victoria Park licensing office was made on economic grounds following a recommendation of the Cabinet Expenditure Review Committee, taking into consideration the close proximity of both the Perth and Carlisle licensing centres.

LAND: BEDFORDALE

Grant to Emmaus Christian Primary School

15. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is it a fact that a large grant of land in Bedfordale has been made or is to be made to the Emmaus Christian Primary school?
- (2) If so, will he give details of the terms and conditions of this grant?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) and (2) Following clearances from the Town of Armadale, and all other interested State Government agencies, action is proceeding to survey an area, comprising about 9.3 hectares, in order that it may be set apart as a reserve for the purpose of a schoolsite for the Armadale Christian Education Association.

ANIMALS: INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Funds

16. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is the organisation entitled International Fund for Animal Welfare which has recently solicited funds by way of newspaper advertisement a legitimate one?
- (2) What action is normally taken to check on the legitimacy of organisations which solicit funds in this way?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) No information is available concerning the bona fides of this organisation. The fund is not capable of being licensed under the Charitable Collections Act 1946-49.
A legal opinion obtained indicates that organisations not related to a human-kind do not come within the definitions of "a charitable purpose" as prescribed in the Act.
- (2) Inquiries are made into any public appeal for funds for "charitable purposes" by unlicensed organisations. As funds sought by the International Fund for Animal Welfare are not for charitable purposes, no investigation is necessary.

EDUCATION: PERTH TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Resignation of Joan Lewis

17. Mr PEARCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it a fact that Joan Lewis resigned from the Education Department as a consequence of her reduced hours in teaching Indonesian at Perth Technical College?
- (2) If so, why were her hours reduced?
- (3) What arrangements have been made to continue to offer Indonesian at the college?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) Mrs Lewis was employed in a full-time temporary position in 1981; this contract was not renewed for 1982. She was offered part-time employment for 1982, but did not accept.

- (2) A rationalisation of language classes at Perth Technical College.
- (3) Lecturing by a full-time permanent teaching staff member and part-time lecturers.

EDUCATION

Creation Science

18. Mr PEARCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Education Department or the Board of Secondary Education been approached to approve for use in schools a curriculum for a subject entitled "creation science"?
- (2) If so, by whom were these approaches made?
- (3) What was the result of these approaches?
- (4) Will he table details of the proposed curriculum?
- (5) Is creation science being taught in any schools in Western Australia which receive State or Commonwealth subsidies?
- (6) If so, have these schools been certified as efficient schools in terms of the Education Act?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) To my knowledge, no.
- (2) to (4) Not applicable.
- (5) and (6) It is not part of any official science, social studies, or religious studies programme in Government schools. The information is not readily available with respect to non-Government schools. However, no school, Government or non-Government, has applied for the certification of such a subject by the Board of Secondary Education.

EDUCATION: FILM

"Footprints in Stone"

19. Mr PEARCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the film *Footprints in Stone* been approved for use in schools?

- (2) Does the Education Department have guidelines concerning the use of films from the Gospel Film Ministry or other religious groups in science courses in Western Australian schools?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) The film *Footprints in Stone* has not been evaluated nor approved for use in Government schools.
- (2) In developing religious studies topics through the workshop approach, teachers view available materials and list those they consider suitable as suggestions for other teachers.
- A copy of the Education Department's policy statement No. 22 entitled "Treatment of Controversial Issues in Schools" will be forwarded direct to the member for his information.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Aboriginal Society and History

20. Mr PEARCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

What further teaching is given on Aboriginal society and history to students in—

- (a) primary;
(b) secondary schools;
in Western Australia?

Mr CLARKO replied:

Teaching about the Aborigines is not a single unit of teaching in the school curriculum. The aspects of their society and history that may be taught in particular units are—

- (a) Primary
Year 2—Aboriginal signs and painting.
Year 3/ Year 8—Meeting basic needs whilst living in a harsh environment.
Year 5—Cultural differences between early settlers and the Aboriginal people in the Swan River settlement.
Year 6—Theories on the origin of the Aborigines and their interactions with settlers in Australia.

- (b) Secondary

Year 9—The Aborigines as part of a study of the ethnic composition of Australian society. A study of the cultural development of the Aborigines in Western Australia: Yesterday and Today.

TRANSPORT: PERTH AIRPORT

Runway

21. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) Does the Government favour extension of the existing runway or construction of a parallel runway at Perth Airport?
- (2) What representations have been made to the Commonwealth Government in this regard?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) The existing north-south long runway has recently been extended, and there is no knowledge of any plans to extend it further. Provision is made in the metropolitan region scheme for sufficient land for the ultimate development of a parallel runway.
- (2) Continuous, over many years, at Premier, Minister, and officer level.

HOUSING: PENSIONER

Average Economic Rent

22. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is an average economic rent for—
(a) single;
(b) double;
pensioner accommodation?
- (2) What would be the rebated rent in each case where the tenant has no means other than a full social security pension?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) The standard rent for pensioner accommodation is:—
(a) single—bedsitter \$17.50 per week.
(b) double—one bedroom \$27.00 per week.
- (2) The rebated rent for pensioner tenants is:—
(a) single \$13.00 per week.
(b) double \$21.00 per week.

LAND

Resumptions

23. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) When the Government resumes land for any purpose, in negotiating price, is the owner always advised as a matter of form, that if there is disagreement the matter can be taken to arbitration?
- (2) If not, could this be adopted as standard practice in the future?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) When the Government resumes land for any purpose, the owner is advised of the methods that can be utilised if it appears that agreement will not be reached. Arbitration is not provided for in the Public Works Act. The methods for the determination of a dispute are—
 - (a) by agreement between the respondent and the claimants;
 - (b) by a court action for compensation by the claimant against the respondent; or
 - (c) by reference of the claim to the compensation court.
- (2) It is not considered necessary to advise owners of the methods of determining disputes until it appears that no agreement will be reached.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Kent Street School Nurse

24. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does his department have an application for a school nurse to be appointed at the Kent Street Senior High School?
- (2) If so, when can the request be met please?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) and (2) No. I understand that an application has been made to the Education Department. The Education Department will, in turn, ask the Public Health Department to provide a nurse when funds are available.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Rents: Rebates

25. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) When a State Housing Commission tenant receives a rental rebate for any

reason, is any of the amount rebated recouped from the Commonwealth Government?

(2) If so, on what basis?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) and (2) The Commonwealth Government does not recoup the State Housing Commission for rents foregone due to rental rebate. Frequent approaches have been made to the Commonwealth requesting assistance with this ever-increasing problem, without any satisfactory result. Rents foregone due to rebates on Commonwealth State rental tenancies in 1981-82 are expected to amount to \$12.7 million.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Mail Consignments

26. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) If the joint venture is implemented, who will transport mail consignments to country areas?
- (2) Will mail be delivered daily, as it is at present?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Australia Post will use carriers of its own choice to transport mails. I am given to understand that the proposed joint venture company will seek to participate in this business.
- (2) The question of delivery schedules is a matter for Australia Post. There will be daily services by various operators to most parts of the State.

HEALTH: CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES (KWINANA) PTY. LTD.

Dumping of Rubbish

27. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of reports that Chemical Industries (Kwinana) has been dumping its process rubbish on to the tip at Kwinana?
- (2) (a) How much rubbish was dumped and what did it consist of;
(b) how was it finally disposed of?

- (3) (a) Did health authorities stop this dumping process last week;
(b) when;
(c) why?
- (4) Where is this rubbish being disposed of now?
- (5) Did the Government health authorities give 48 hours' notice of an intended visit to Chemical Industries (Kwinana) on Thursday, 18 March, also saying who the health inspectors would be?
- (6) Why was it necessary to give such notice?
- (7) Is it a fact that when the firm knows it is to be inspected on a particular day it "runs cold"; i.e., it continues to mix and stir the chemicals but does not steam heat them?
- (8) Is it a fact that when the chemicals plant is operating with heat vapours are continually rising from the tanks?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) No, but the Kwinana tip is the designated site to receive solid wastes from this factory.
- (2) (a) and (b) The tip is operated by the Town of Kwinana and these details are not known.
- (3) (a) Yes, by the local authority;
(b) 17 March 1982;
(c) there was an unpleasant smell and although it was not known for certain that it arose from dumping by Chemical Industries, the health surveyor stopped further dumping until details of the nature of the loads were supplied and an assessment made as to the suitability of disposal at the tip.
- (4) The waste is being held on site.
- (5) The Public Health Department's Clean Air Division advised the company that the scientific advisory committee of the Air Pollution Control Council proposed to visit on 24 March 1982. This was subsequently amended to 31 March 1982.
- (6) The committee comprises a rather large group and includes at least one representative of the council itself. It is quite impractical for such a large number to visit without notice.
- (7) No Officers of the Public Health Department visit Kwinana Chemicals regularly and frequently without notice.

- (8) Operations involving heat take place in closed reaction vessels. Open tanks are usually used for cold mixes. Escape of steam from normal outlets is common place in factories of this type.

HEALTH: CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES (KWINANA) PTY. LTD.

Employees: Safety Measures

28. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Health:
 - (1) (a) Is he aware that the labels on the chemicals which are sold by Chemical Industries (Kwinana) say "Avoid working in and breathing spray or mist";
(b) why do they say that?
 - (2) Why are the workers permitted to continue to work in the vapours with no more protection than wellington boots, gauntlets, and a hat?
 - (3) What medical testing of workers at the plant takes place—
(a) before they commence;
(b) during their employment;
(c) when they leave?
 - (4) (a) Were recent promises of blood tests made to the workers by the firm or Government employees;
(b) why have these not been given?
 - (5) What special equipment is provided by the firm for employees required to enter and clean the tanks?
 - (6) What resuscitation equipment is provided on the site and where is it located?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
(b) In order to minimise exposures to users.
- (2) In a normal production this protection together with goggles and overalls, which are also provided, if supplemented on occasions with a protective apron, is sufficient.
- (3) (a) None;
(b) none;
(c) none.
- (4) (a) No; urine tests only were proposed;
(b) herbicides were not in production at the time.

- (5) Self-contained breathing apparatus is on the site and the chemists are trained to use it. No special equipment is provided otherwise for employees required to enter the tanks because tests for safety by chemists are carried out prior to entry.
- (6) An oxygen resuscitator is available in the laboratory.

HEALTH: CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES (KWINANA) PTY. LTD.

Soakage Pond: Seepage

29. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is it a fact that Chemical Industries (Kwinana) when cleaning tanks used for the production of 2,4,5-T sends an employee with a stiff broom into the tank to sweep out the concentrated chemical sludge at the bottom?
- (2) Is it a fact that this sludge and other chemical spillage is then hosed straight out to a soakage pond or pit on the site?
- (3) What precautions have been taken to seal this pond or pit to ensure seepage to the groundwater does not occur?
- (4) What Government testing has taken place in—
 - (a) 1978;
 - (b) 1979;
 - (c) 1980;
 - (d) 1981;
 - (e) 1982;

to determine if seepage is occurring and what were the results on each occasion?

- (5) What action has the Government taken to ensure seepage does not take place and when was this action taken?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The Minister for Health advises that this is denied by the company. Spot checks have not revealed the existence of this practice.
- (2) Not known.
- (3) None, as this pit is designed to permit soakage.
- (4) Not applicable. See (3).
- (5) No action has been taken to eliminate seepage. However, in 1979 a licence was issued which set a standard for effluent finally discharged to the ground.

WATER RESOURCES: GROUNDWATER

Chemical Industries (Kwinana) Pty. Ltd.

30. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Have recent readings been taken of ground water in the vicinity of Chemical Industries (Kwinana) which indicate higher than normal levels of chemicals in the ground water?
- (2) (a) What chemicals were detected and at what levels;
(b) how far from the plant were they detected?
- (3) What is the accepted World Health Organisation level for each of the chemicals found in—
 - (a) drinking water;
 - (b) ground water?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.

	Monitoring bore mg/litre	CIG bore mg/litre
(2) (a) Phenol	44	0.002
2,4-D	41	0.44
2,4,5-T	5.7	0.04
- (b) Monitoring bore is approximately 200 metres west of C.I.K. plant. CIG bore is approximately 100 metres north.
- (3) (a) Maximum permissible level set by World Health Organisation for phenol in drinking water is .002 mg per litre.
There are no WHO standards for 2,4-D or 2,4,5-T in drinking water.
- (b) WHO does not set a standard for groundwater and, in any case none of the groundwater has been used for drinking or other domestic purposes.

LAND: NATIONAL PARK

Yanchep: Argentine Ant Outbreak

31. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) In view of the recent reports that Yanchep National Park is to be closed for two days to allow the spraying of a

serious outbreak of argentine ants, why was this serious outbreak allowed to occur when the park is supposedly staffed with a team of experts who could reasonably be expected to act instantly at the first sign of an outbreak?

- (2) Who is doing, or has done, the job of spraying the ants?
- (3) What steps have been taken to ensure the health and safety of—
 - (a) the enclosed fauna in the park;
 - (b) the wild fauna in the park;
 - (c) the wild fauna adjacent to the park?
- (4) (a) What is the chemical which is to be sprayed;
- (b) will he please provide a detailed analysis of it?
- (5) What arrangements have been made to assess any damage which may occur as a result of the spraying?
- (6) Who will be held responsible for any damage occurring as a result of the spraying?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) Yanchep National Park was inspected by Department of Agriculture specialists approximately four years ago, but no argentine ants were recognised. National Parks Authority rangers are not skilled in entomology and could not be expected to identify a small ant that proliferates explosively when conditions are appropriate—warm but wetter than usual summer.
- (2) Operators from the Department of Agriculture argentine ant section over two days, 17 and 18 March.
- (3) (a) and (b) National Parks Authority's ecologist arranged protection for all captive fauna and water fowl and kangaroos were frightened away from the sprayed area and prevented from returning for 24 hours.
- (c) Fauna outside the park will not be affected in any way whatsoever.
- (4) (a) Oftanol—isofenphos—in picnic areas and other public places. Heptachlor was used in bush areas around the base of buildings and on roads.
- (b) There is no definite short title for the chemicals for the purpose of analysis and the member is referred

to "The Pesticide Manual—A World Compendium" published by the British Crop Protection Council, Editor Charles R. Worthing. However, Oftanol degrades in 48 hours whilst Heptachlor has a residual effect for about two weeks.

- (5) The National Parks Authority's ecologist was on duty over the two days and he established a biological monitoring programme prior to the spraying and scientific observations will continue for the next month. Monitoring will then continue on a more relaxed basis.
- (6) The probability of "damage" is extremely remote and the question in this context is hypothetical.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

TRADE UNIONS

Compulsory Membership

5. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

I should like to point out I telephoned the Minister for Labour and Industry this morning and gave notice of my question which is as follows—

- (1) Has he received a ruling from the Crown Law Department regarding—
 - (a) the erection by Multiplex Constructions Pty. Ltd. of "No Ticket No Start" signs on building projects and also its action in informing subcontractors that non-union labour would not be permitted on such sites;
 - (b) the refusal by Fletcher Watts to allow a subcontractor to complete a job on Canning Vale Prison?
- (2) If no ruling has yet been received, when is one expected?
- (3) If a ruling has been received, what is the ruling and what action, if any, does the Government intend to take in respect of the matter?

Mr YOUNG replied:

On behalf of the Minister for Labour and Industry, I thank the member for South Perth for notice of the question the answer to which is as follows—

- (1) and (2) I have not received a written legal opinion from the Crown Law Department in connection with this matter, although I have received some verbal advice.
- (3) Preliminary advice received which is subject to written confirmation indicates that under the State Industrial Arbitration Act there is no action that can be taken against a company such as Multiplex because it does not employ any labour. It appears that Multiplex arranges contracts with subcontractors for the carrying out of the work and the subcontractors employ any necessary labour. In the case of the Canning Vale Prison site, the problem related to a matter between the contractor and a subcontractor. The subcontractor was not an employee under neither the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act nor the State Industrial Arbitration Act. It would, therefore, appear to be a matter to be resolved between the contractor and the subcontractor.

Mr Hodge: Is that a written legal opinion?

Mr YOUNG: I prefaced my answer by pointing out it was subject to written confirmation from the Crown Law Department. It is not a written legal opinion, but verbal advice. To continue—

The Government has announced that it will seek draft amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1979, to overcome the problems and will ask the Commonwealth Government to take similar action.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

North-West Shelf: Contractual Arrangements, and Postponement

6. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister Co-ordinating Economic and Regional Development:

We are seeing a change from the situation which obtained previously when the Premier always managed to answer questions without notice. My question is as follows—

- (1) What are the reasons for the reluctance of the Japanese power utilities to enter into contractual arrangements to buy North-West Shelf gas?
- (2) What are the implications of the postponement of the commencement of the project's export phase and the lengthening of the period before the maximum level of gas exports is reached?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

This question should have been directed to the Minister for Mines.

Mr Tonkin: We asked it of you.

Mr Brian Burke: It covers about five portfolios.

The SPEAKER: I invite the Premier to answer the question as it was directed.

Mr Brian Burke: I sent the Premier a copy of it.

Mr O'CONNOR: Under the circumstances, I am quite happy to answer the question as follows—

- (1) and (2) As members are aware, the Japanese have signed a letter of intent. During the last week I have had discussions with various people about the North-West Shelf project and it has been indicated no problems exist as far as proceeding with the project is concerned, except in relation to the matter of price.

Discussions in relation to the price which will be charged have not been concluded, because the escalation in charges for fuel and other commodities is written into the details. It is obvious, therefore, that the detail could not have been worked out at this stage.

Mr Brian Burke: It is now a buyer's market, isn't it?

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes, and that is one of the reasons the Japanese have held off.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you confident it will go ahead?

Mr O'CONNOR: I believe the project will proceed. As a matter of fact, the first stage of the project will be completed on time in September 1984. At that time gas will be delivered to the metropolitan area.

Mr Brian Burke: What are the implications of postponement?

Mr O'CONNOR: Any delays would have implications for the companies concerned, because they would affect the flow of liquid assets required to enable the project to proceed at a reasonable rate. If the North-West Shelf project is delayed for any length of time, the companies involved will experience some financial problems.

Mr Tonkin: What are the implications for the State?

Mr O'CONNOR: As far as the State is concerned, returns from the project would be obtained at a later date than if the project proceeded on time.

There is no doubt the North-West Shelf project will proceed. The first stage will be completed in 1984. The second stage is approximately eight or nine months behind schedule; but it will be completed.

SALES TAX: STATE

Turnover

7. Mr BRYCE, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has the Treasury completed its study of the feasibility of introducing a new State sales tax on turnover?
- (2) Is the Treasurer aware of the mounting concern in the community at the prospect of another new form of taxation?
- (3) Will the Treasurer assure the Parliament that the Government does not intend to introduce State Government sales tax on turnover?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) Nothing has been brought to my attention in connection with this matter and the State Government has no intention of taking such action.

TRADE UNIONS

Compulsory Membership

8. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

I gave the Minister for Labour and Industry notice of this question this morning. It reads as follows—

(1) What action can an employee or subcontractor take to obtain redress if—

- (a) he is denied the opportunity of continuing in employment or completing a job solely because he declines to join a trade union;
- (b) he is denied the opportunity of applying for a job or tendering for a job solely because he is not a member of a trade union?

(2) Is the Department of Labour and Industry prepared to assist aggrieved employees or subcontractors in such cases and, if so, how and to what extent?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) Preliminary verbal advice from the Crown Law Department which is subject to written confirmation indicates the following—

(a) State Industrial Commission Jurisdiction.

Employee

Under the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act an employer is not to act to the prejudice of a member or a non-member of a union. Preference to unionists and compulsory unionism are not included in the definition of industrial matter under the State Act. Therefore, if firm evidence acceptable to an industrial magistrate were available it is possible that prosecution action could be initiated.

Subcontractor

A subcontractor is not an employee under the State Act and is generally engaged under a contractual arrangement with the principal contractor. Any breach of contract, therefore, would appear to be a civil action matter between the subcontractor and the principal contractor.

(b) Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act

Employee

There is provision under the Federal Act and Federal awards for preference to unionists. The

provision in the national building trades construction award reads as follows—

Subject to the provision of this clause absolute preference of employment shall be given to the members of the union party to this award as listed in Clause 7, Parties and Persons Bound.

Such preference shall be limited to the point where a member of such union and a person who is not such a member are offering for service or employment at the same time and in the case of retrenchment, to the point where either such a member or such a person is to be dismissed from service or employment.

Therefore, there is preference at the point of engagement and termination for members of appropriate unions.

Subcontractor

A subcontractor is not an employee under the provisions of the Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act, therefore, he cannot legally be forced to become a member of a union.

Mr Bryce: Doesn't that sound like a legal opinion?

Point of Order

Mr TONKIN: I am sure you, Sir, have been listening with great interest to the answer. It sounds as if the Minister is giving a legal opinion and I ask you to rule accordingly.

The SPEAKER: I have listened to the two questions asked by the member for South Perth and it appeared to me that the member was asking for a legal opinion. It is not in order for a member to do so. In answering the question, there is nothing to prevent a Minister from giving the House the benefit of legal advice he may have had. I could just as easily rule the questions out of order, because they are tending towards asking for interpretations of Statutes.

I ask the Minister to draw his answer to a close quickly and I point out to

members that they have an obligation to ensure Standing Orders applying to questions are adhered to.

One of the problems the Speaker and Clerks have with respect to questions without notice is that we do not see them and know nothing of them until they are actually asked. I and previous Speakers have pointed out that if members who ask questions without notice do not have proper regard for the rules under which questions are asked, the Chair may require questions without notice to be handed in before they are actually asked in the House to ensure we can verify whether they are in order.

Questions (without notice) Resumed

Mr YOUNG: In fairness to the member for South Perth, his question is very clear. He does not ask for an opinion; he asks what action can be taken under certain circumstances. The Opposition is confused, because I commenced my reply by saying I had referred the matter to the Crown Law Department and wanted a written opinion on it.

Mr Tonkin: I hope the same courtesy will be given to the Opposition.

Mr YOUNG: The question is very clear.

Mr Tonkin: We are not talking about the clarity of the answer.

Mr YOUNG: The question is very clear. It is requesting a statement of fact and I am giving the facts as they have been given to me.

To continue with the answer—

Presumably again in this instance, if a contract was breached the subcontractor may have grounds for a breach of contract with the principal contractor.

There may also be grounds for proceeding against a union for violation of its union rules because a subcontractor is not an employee.

- (2) Officers of the Department of Labour and Industry are prepared at all times to take complaints and advise as far as practicable any aggrieved employees or subcontractors in connection with any grievance that they may have.

RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT: SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Roxby Downs: ALP and ACTU Action

9. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Mines:

My question without notice is as follows—

The SPEAKER: Order! There seemed to be an interjection critical of the fact that I gave the call to the member for Mundaring.

Mr Tonkin: It was just an exclamation.

The SPEAKER: It may have been an exclamation, but I took it as indicating a rebuke. I will give the call to those people whom I think should have it.

Mr Tonkin: Who should have it! Does it depend on their ideological stance?

Mr HERZFELD: My question is—

- (1) Is he aware of a report in the *Australian* of 13 March indicating the ALP in South Australia is acting on behalf of the ACTU to hold up—indeed, to stop—the largest onshore resource development project in Australia, the Roxby Downs project?
- (2) Has he had the report confirmed?
- (3) Would such action be tolerated in Western Australia?
- (4) What action does the Government propose to ensure Western Australians are not similarly deprived of employment opportunities in its development programme?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (4) I am aware of the report, and indeed I discussed the background of it with the South Australian Minister responsible for such matters. I also discussed the report with the managing company of the Roxby Downs project. Certainly, the Minister and the company are convinced that the report is factual; all evidence suggests that it is. In view of the attitude taken by the Australian Labor Party in regard to its policy on the mining and exporting of uranium, that policy is the affirmed policy of the Labor Party in this State.

If the ACTU and the ALP plan to stop the project in South Australia because of the presence of uranium amongst the ore body, what the member

for Mundaring suggests certainly is correct; it is not a situation which we in this State will tolerate.

It is noted with some interest that in view of the apparent policy of the ALP and the reassertion of that policy last weekend, quite a threat is posed to the people associated with the Yeelirrie project in this State. The Labor Party has reaffirmed that it will not in any way allow the mining and exporting of uranium in this State.

Mr Bryce: What would you do about it in this State if there were a democratically elected upper House?

Mr P. V. JONES: I draw the attention of the House to what the member for Mundaring identified as the situation which will result in this State. I remind the House that the Labor Party's policy is cold comfort to those associated with Yeelirrie. I wonder whether the member for Geraldton can satisfy the people of Geraldton who have asked the Government to consider whether it can bring some weight to bear—

Mr Carr: You have already decided to take it through Esperance.

Mr Grill: Are you saying it will go through Geraldton?

Mr P. V. JONES: I did not say that.

Mr Grill: You are hinting at that.

Mr P. V. JONES: I am not. Will the member for Geraldton support the people of Geraldton and their council who asked the Government to reconsider the situation in regard to using the Port of Geraldton for this project? The Government has said quite clearly that it will talk with the joint venturers to determine the port to be used and the area suitable for the other support services. We have reminded the people of Geraldton that they are represented by a member who is forced to support a policy which states that there should not be the mining or exporting of uranium.

Mr Carr: I am happy to support a policy that will not allow the exporting of uranium.

Mr P. V. JONES: So long as the people of Geraldton have this member as their representative, they will be disadvantaged.

Mr Tonkin: Who is in Government? He doesn't have a power of veto.

Mr Bryce: Isn't it to be through Narrogin?

Mr P. V. JONES: The answer is that we will not tolerate such action in Western Australia.

Mr Bryce: What will you do about it?

Mr P. V. JONES: The Labor Party has revealed its colours in so far as its attitude towards development is concerned.

FUEL AND ENERGY:

Petrol Prices

10. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

Despite the fact that the Premier was confused when answering my question without notice on opening night by referring to the Minister for Labour and Industry when my question specifically referred to the Honorary Minister for Consumer Affairs, the Premier refused to answer my question which asked whether a comment of the Honorary Minister for Consumer Affairs accurately reflected the policy of the Government in regard to the control of petrol prices. I now ask again: Will the Government legislate to reduce the wholesale price of petrol and to ensure that most of the reduction is passed on to consumers? Does he agree that the lack of price control is the reason Perth motorists pay up to 3c a litre more for petrol than motorists in other States, and that country motorists pay even more?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

In view of the confused state of mind of the member for Morley I suggest he bring forward details of the purported Honorary Minister's suggestion that the Government will not legislate to control prices, because I do not believe that was said. In that case the point the member brought forward is irrelevant.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Mortgage Relief: Tax Rebate

11. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

With due respect to the Honorary Minister, I hope he will treat this

question as a question without notice and not adopt the practice of requesting all questions be placed on the notice paper.

(1) When will eligible first home buyers be able to apply for the recently proposed tax rebate on home mortgages, and where should they direct inquiries regarding eligibility and application procedures?

(2) In view of the fact that the Federal Government taxation rebate on home mortgages will not be available to second and third home buyers facing equally serious difficulty, what action does the State Government intend to take to assist the considerable number of Western Australians whose plight has been ignored by the Federal Government?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

(1) and (2) The details necessary to answer the member's question are not yet available from the Commonwealth. I ask him to place his question on notice. I inform him that as soon as the details are available an answer will be forwarded to him.

HEALTH: TRONADO MACHINE

Clinical Trials

12. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Why is the State Government prepared to tolerate delays to the clinical trials of the Tronado cancer machine, delays apparently caused by bickering and disagreement amongst doctors?

(2) When will the Minister use the authority and prestige of his office to bring about an end to the bickering and disagreement so that these vital trials will commence without delay?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) and (2) I am glad the member for Melville has asked this question. I would have been glad to receive it no matter by what method it was received, either from the Opposition or one of my colleagues.

I would have thought the member for Melville and every other member of this Chamber realised that notwithstanding what the member for Melville describes as my authoritative and prestigious office, there is absolutely no power—nor ought there be any power—to enable a non-medical person to direct a medical person to perform a medical investigation or any medical treatment. What the member for Melville overlooked or does not understand is that a clinical trial involves the treatment of patients. The persons who make the determination as to whether the treatment of patients should take place and how it should take place must in the final analysis be the doctors who treat the patients and have the responsibility for the lives of those patients. It would be patently ridiculous, even if thought to be in the interests of Western Australians, for a layman, someone who knows nothing about oncology and radiotherapy—to wit, myself—to direct people experienced in those fields to go into a room to carry out certain practices in respect of a medical procedure. That would be the most ridiculous thing in the world.

Mr Hodge: I didn't suggest that.

Mr YOUNG: I will tell the member for Melville exactly where the Government stands in respect of this matter. We have been trying for some time to establish the necessary protocol so that a clinical trial can take place in this State. We finally reached the stage of the National Health and Medical Research Council stating that it saw no objection to a trial taking place in Western Australia by Western Australians, and under the proper auspices.

I held a meeting with Dr Holt and others last week in my office and it became obvious that the only thing hampering the drawing up of protocol in respect of this trial was that Dr Holt and another eminent medical practitioner could not agree on one aspect of the protocol. I made it very clear to them, as did their peers, that the Government, as stated in Press releases and letters, stands ready to provide any form of assistance it can to ensure that this trial goes ahead.

We will not direct one of those doctors to give in to the other, because in the carrying out of a trial he is treating patients who are potentially dying of cancer. So, we had to leave it to those doctors. Only this afternoon I received a letter from Dr Holt and his partners which indicates the possibility of a protocol being written and a prospective trial taking place. I quote from the letter as follows—

Dear Mr Young,

Thank you for your letter. We are, as we indicated this morning, anxious that a trial proceed and will on our side do our utmost to produce an acceptable protocol in co-operation with the other doctors involved. We believe this is possible. We agree that the issues raised in respect of the Institute of Radiotherapy and Dr Holt's past and present appointments are not relevant to a trial but are a separate issue related to the radiotherapy service in the teaching hospitals.

Yours sincerely,

John Shepherd

John Holt

B. Cassidy.

In other words, I think the last barrier placed in the way by Dr Holt of a protocol being drawn has now been knocked over. I am confident that with the goodwill of those people there may be a proper protocol drawn up and a proper trial taking place. It has not been an easy road to travel. Many of the hurdles we had to overcome along the way arose out of a difference of opinion between medical practitioners about the treatment of their patients, something in which Governments should not be involved.

POLICE: FORCE

Ministerial Interference

13. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

My question relates to the Minister's claims that the Police Force is independent of the Government and that he does not involve himself in the day-to-day operations of the force. I refer to a letter sent by me to Commissioner

Porter arising out of representations against the campaign against moral persecution. The letter dealt with a matter involving the day-to-day operations of the Police Force and was replied to, not by the commissioner as addressed, but by the Minister. I ask—

- (1) Why did the Minister reply instead of the commissioner?
- (2) How does he relate this action to his frequent assertions that he does not involve himself in the day-to-day operations of the force?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) and (2) I do not recall the precise matter to which the member for Geraldton refers. I have received correspondence from a number of sources dealing with the campaign against moral persecution and can assume only that the commissioner submitted the letter for my reply because the letter came from a member of Parliament. I cannot answer the member in relation to the case he refers to. If he likes I can check on it.

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Fees: Service and Amenities

14. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Government intend to legislate for the abolition of service and amenities

fees at tertiary institutions in this session of Parliament?

- (2) If not, when is it expected that such legislation will be introduced?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) and (2) This matter is being actively considered by the Government at this time.

FUEL AND ENERGY: PETROL

Prices

15. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

For the third time in two days I ask: Will the Government legislate to bring down the wholesale price of petrol in this State and ensure that most of this reduction is passed on to the consumers?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

We are presently waiting for the Hobart committee's report to find out what action is to be taken. We set up a committee of all States to go into the various aspects involved to see which was the best way to organise a price that was comparable throughout Australia. When we receive the report we will make a decision.