

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 25 March 1982

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 10.45 a.m., and read prayers.

EDUCATION: PRE-SCHOOL

Funding: Petition

MR WILLIAMS (Clontarf) [10.47 a.m.]: I have a petition to present from 14 residents of Shelley drawing the attention of honourable members to their grave concern that Government funding of four-year-old children in community-based pre-school centres may be cut. It details four points of concern about the possible loss of facilities. The petition conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, and I have certified accordingly.

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

(See petition No. 4.)

STAMP AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Treasurer), and read a first time.

PUBLIC SERVICE AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [10.51 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill contains five amendments to the Public Service Act. Two of the amendments relate to acting arrangements within the Public Service in the event of certain offices being vacant or during the temporary absence of an officer. The other three amendments bring the wording of this Act into line with wording in the Industrial Arbitration Act 1979.

A feature of the Public Service Act 1978 was the reduction in the number of matters which previously had to be approved by the Governor in Council. The proposed amendments to sections 29 and 58 are consistent with that approach.

In respect of section 29, it is intended that the Act will now specifically permit the Public Service Board to make acting arrangements when a permanent head or a senior officer is absent on annual leave, sick leave, etc. or where any of those offices are temporarily vacant.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Carr.

SUPREME COURT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR RUSHTON (Dale—Deputy Premier) [10.53 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The principal purpose of this Bill is to increase the number of Supreme Court judges from seven to eight. The number of Supreme Court judges was last increased in 1960.

The policy of successive Governments has been to restrict the growth of the Supreme Court as the highest court in the State hierarchy and set up other courts to assist with the load.

Since 1960 there have been several changes to the court's jurisdiction which have seen the establishment of the District Court of Western Australia and the Family Court of Western Australia. The District Court at present has eight judges and the Family Court has five judges. Hence, an additional 13 judges are now sharing the work. From this it will be appreciated that the changing jurisdictions have had a considerable bearing on the number of Supreme Court judges required.

Until about two or three years ago there was little delay in the Supreme Court dealing with civil matters. Over the years the number of cases and their duration have increased and it is now apparent that the situation cannot be permitted to proceed to the point where access to justice is frustrated due to delay in a case being brought before the court.

Members will appreciate that the Government has no control over the number of civil cases which come before the court and there is no accurate way of predicting what numbers there will be in future years. As an example, the following figures for civil actions heard in the Supreme Court in 1970 and for each of the years 1975 to 1981 give an indication of the fluctuation in the numbers—

1970	82
1975	75
1976	75
1977	117
1978	120
1979	104
1980	135
1981	129

These figures indicate that whilst the number of civil actions heard will fluctuate, it is also apparent that the numbers are steadily, although slowly, increasing.

In the criminal jurisdiction of the Supreme Court the number of cases also continues to increase, although some changes will occur this year following the proclamation on 1 February last of the Acts Amendment (Jurisdiction of Courts) Act which was passed by this Parliament last year. The exact extent of those changes remains to be seen, but the normal expectation would be for a decline. It is apparent also that the increase in availability of legal aid, particularly in criminal matters, is having a significant effect on the time taken to bring matters before the Supreme Court.

The number of criminal and civil matters heard in the Court of Criminal Appeal and the Full Court, as well as appeals to a single judge, have increased over the past 10 years. To ensure that any delay was minimised until a further appointment could be made, the Governor approved the appointment of a Commissioner of the Supreme Court for six months from 15 February.

It is clear that the increasing pressures being brought on the Supreme Court have been generated principally by the natural increase in the State's population as well as the greater availability of legal aid to which I have already referred.

For the reasons indicated the Bill proposes to increase the number of Supreme court judges other than the Chief Justice from six to seven. This will mean an overall increase including the Chief Justice from seven to eight.

The Bill deals also with three other matters. The first of these is a proposed amendment to section 11D relating to vacancies and temporary appointments during a vacancy in the office of Master of the Supreme Court. Subsection (4) provides that where a person is appointed or deemed to have been appointed acting master such appointment continues beyond the termination of the period of appointment so that he may complete the hearing and determination of proceedings. This subsection applies to an appointment made or deemed to have been made pursuant to subsection (2). However, subsection (2) has no deeming provision and an amendment is desirable for accuracy.

The second item refers to the question of appeals from the Master of the Supreme Court. When the Act was amended in 1979 to make the master a constituent member of the Supreme Court, the intention was that any appeals from the master would be dealt with in the same way as appeals from a single judge; that is, to the Full Court.

The Government's intention and the rules of the Supreme Court are quite clear, but it is desirable that the situation be clarified by amending section 58 together with some consequential amendments to sections 59 and 60.

The final matter concerns section 155 of the Act and the appointment of associates and ushers as "officers of the Court". This matter has been included to put beyond doubt the fact that when acting in such positions those persons are officers of the court and will not by reason of the office they hold become subject to the Public Service Act. They have certain duties to perform as court officers and in practice have not been classified as public servants; hence this provision is declaratory.

I might add that these appointments are made on the recommendation of the Chief Justice, but in the name of the Attorney General as the responsible Minister and the person named as employer in the relevant industrial awards.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bertram.

POTATO GROWING INDUSTRY TRUST FUND AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Resources Development) [11.01 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Potato growers in Western Australia contribute through a levy on potatoes sold through the Potato Marketing Board to a potato growing industry trust fund.

The purposes for which the fund may be used include—

(a) the payment for measures taken to prevent or eradicate pests and diseases;

(b) the payment of compensation to growers with respect to losses resulting from measures taken to prevent or eradicate pests and diseases;

(c) the payment of the costs of research for the improvement and transport of potato crops;

(d) the provision of financial help for the Potato Growers Association and its branches;

(e) any other purposes which, in the opinion of the Minister will promote and encourage the industry.

Through their association, growers have sought a change in the level of contribution to the fund and a limitation on the percentage of the annual

income of the fund which might be committed to research, administration of the association, or specific activities approved by the Minister to a maximum of—

- (i) 50 per cent for any one purpose; or
- (ii) 80 per cent for all three purposes.

The last increase in growers' contributions was in 1966. The current level of 2c per 50 kilograms—40c per tonne—yields \$24 000 on an average crop of 60 000 tonnes of potatoes. When interest on investments is added the total income is presently in the vicinity of \$50 000.

It has been the practice for a maximum of 50 per cent of the income to be paid to the Potato Growers Association to meet the costs of running the association. The remainder of the income is paid into reserves or used for disease eradication, or other purposes of importance to the industry. The cost of running the association has risen almost to the level of the total annual income of the fund and, for some time now, it has been necessary for the association to arrange for additional separate contributions from growers to maintain the association's operations, which presently cost nearly \$45 000 per year.

The proposed new maximum level of contribution to the trust fund sought by the association is 10c per 50 kilograms of potatoes with an initial rate of 6c per 50 kilograms—\$1.20 per tonne—of potatoes sold.

This initial rate of 6c per 50 kilograms would yield approximately \$72 000 in a full year, which, with interest, would yield an annual income of approximately \$98 000. The association's budget could be covered by less than 50 per cent of this amount.

In order to maintain a reserve of funds for protection of the industry against a serious outbreak of a pest or disease that could threaten the future of potato growing, the Bill restricts the total expenditure on other activities for which the fund may be used to 80 per cent of the estimated annual income. The Bill also restricts the amount that may be spent on any one of the above activities in any year to no more than 50 per cent of the estimated annual income.

Other amendments sought by the Potato Growers Association which have been incorporated in the Bill include the staggering of the terms of office of grower members on the trust fund committee and deletion of the requirement for a commercial producer to be a grower who is qualified to vote at the election of a member of the Legislative Assembly.

A similar provision was deleted from the Marketing of Potatoes Act in 1974 as it was considered unnecessarily restrictive.

These amendments sought by the Potato Growers Association have the support of the majority of growers who attended meetings to discuss the issues.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Evans.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FOURTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 24 March.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [11.04 a.m.]: I must again raise matters relating to an imprisoned minor. I realise that my raising this matter has become repetitious to the point of being like a stuck gramophone record. However, I must continue raising this matter because the Government has not taken any practical action to remedy the situation. An indication of the lack of practical action by the Government is provided by communications I have before me.

I will not use the minor's name. To recap the matter, I indicate he has been in custody since 30 August 1974 when he was 15½ years of age. He was imprisoned for an offence committed while on parole for another offence. Rehabilitation of such people is most desirable. I have been pursuing this case for a long time and have received assurances in this House, from the present Premier, his Deputy Premier, and the previous Premier, that worthwhile action will be taken.

This prisoner is now serving his eighth year in custody and it is high time that something drastic was done. In June 1981 I received a letter from the Chief Secretary saying—

I refer to your comments made in the Legislative Assembly on April 9, 1981 relating to the prisoner.

The Corrections plan envisaged the gradual reduction in his placement from maximum security to medium security followed by minimum security prior to his release on parole.

After that, I received further communication on 1 July from the Attorney General saying—

As was indicated in the Hon. Chief Secretary's letter, consideration will be given shortly to the prisoner's placement in minimum security. I would emphasise that at all times the overriding consideration given to his case was to ensure that the community interest was safeguarded.

I have always agreed with that, but progress has been painfully slow. After I raised the matter in the Budget debate, on 16 December I received another communication from the Chief Secretary saying—

Recently you raised the question of placement of prisoner mentioned during debate in the Legislative Assembly. I am advised that the Governor in Council, on November 25, 1981 issued an Order directing that the prisoner be detained in Safe Custody at Barton's Mill Prison. The prisoner's placement at Barton's Mill will serve towards preparing the prisoner for eventual release into the community.

I refer to *The Sunday Times* of 6 September 1981 where the Attorney General was said to be unduly upset by a letter that appeared under my name in the previous edition regarding this prisoner. Amongst other things, he said in his defence—

To imply that an un-named minor has been left to rot in a prison with little if any reformatory guidance, as Mr Colin Jamieson does (*The Sunday Times*, August 9), is reprehensible.

I do not know what is the most reprehensible, the action of the Attorney General in doing nothing, or my highlighting this problem.

He continued—

As already pointed out to Mr Jamieson, consideration is being given to reports on the prisoner's progress and to his placement in minimum security.

Today the prisoner is still in Fremantle. He was in Barton's Mill for a while, but was sent for psychiatric assessment to Fremantle where he has been for eight years. If he could not be psychiatrically assessed during that time, he certainly will not be now. The Government is taking very little action in this case. The promises of his being put into minimum security and then released to his family have been a lot of nonsense. The Government was responsible for the prisoner attending his sister's funeral as she had died rather suddenly and the family was anxious that he attend. He was brought up from Bunbury on that occasion. With that exception, he has been inside some form of prison since 30 August 1974. This is not fair when we see rapists who have actually committed the crime allowed out of custody after three or four years. I deplore the Government's action in relation to committals under section 19 (6) (aa), the key provision for a juvenile offender.

Since 16 May 1975 the Parole Board has been reviewing this case and on 10 June 1977 it

recommended to the Minister that the prisoner be transferred to safe custody. It has taken this long to reach this stage and we find he is still in Fremantle. He has a committal to Barton's Mill now as it appears it is the only place he could be sent under the Executive Council order.

Nobody has taken notice of what has happened to this boy, which worries me, because if prisoners are kept in gaol indefinitely their association with society is completely gone and they are liable to commit offences or cause problems. It was mentioned in the *Daily News* on 9 March 1982 that the court had added three years to a rape term. The term was the key. The Governor's pleasure had been given to Darryl Scott Kelley. A prisoner on parole raped a 15-year-old girl last May and had his gaol sentence increased by three years. I do not know how the Governor's pleasure can be increased by three years as I thought that meant indefinitely. One could stay there for the term of his natural life. The Government felt that when the court reimposed the term of the Governor's pleasure the court had not really given him a sentence at all. There was an appeal and he was given a finite sentence to be added to his previous sentence. So he will have three years to serve beyond that and if the Governor's pleasure is the term of his natural life, I doubt if he will be worrying about the extra three or four years as it would not be much use to him.

I do not condone the action in relation to this prisoner, but it is interesting that while this young person on whose behalf I am making representations was not a cleanskin—I have enumerated the various activities he got up to—he has not been given a chance in his adult life at all because he has been locked up since he was 15½ years of age.

Darryl Scott Kelley was first sent to an institution at the age of nine and has spent 15 of his past 17 years in custody, so he has not been in an environment conducive to learning normal patterns of social behaviour, particularly in regard to sexual matters. The judge commented to that effect. What is to be done with these people? In the case of Kelley, I would say he has had his chance.

In December 1980 he was released on parole, having served five years of a nine-year sentence which was imposed in February 1976, after he had been involved in a car chase and had shot at the police. The case I am referring to is not as serious an offence, but I am saying that during all this time the Government has not made any progress in placing him in a position of trust.

His family seems attached to him and they want to look after him. I thought the Premier would do something about this matter, but apparently it is up to the Attorney General. He seems peeved that I have raised the issue continually. If we consider the statements he has made in the Press and what the Government has done, we will note they are not in accord. I suggest the Premier should look at this case so that the young man may be returned to his family as soon as possible.

Arrangements have been made for his employment, but no progress has been made for his release. It is ridiculous that a person of this age—

Mr O'Connor: What age is he?

Mr JAMIESON: He was 23 last November and has been in prison since he was 15½ years of age. That is a long time for a young person to be under sentence. He should be given a chance.

The Parole Board has recommended that something should be done for his release because no other person who has been committed under section 19(6)(aa) of the Act has been kept in gaol as long as this young man. It is usually the case when a minor is committed under such sentence that the case is reviewed by the Parole Board. We must bear in mind not only that was he a minor when he was placed in Fremantle Gaol, but also that it was as a result of a court order and the only way this can be altered is by decision of Executive Council.

The Executive Council order did not specify any medium security prison; it specified Barton's Mill. While he was at Barton's Mill he had problems because he felt there were too many temptations, so he was moved to Fremantle for some time. Of course, when an order specifies Barton's Mill there is nowhere else to send him, except Fremantle where he has been since December. So now the position is as bad as it could ever be.

It is not good enough for the Attorney General to state in the Press that my implication that this person has been left to rot is reprehensible. It is not reprehensible; it is a fact. The Attorney General ought to be ashamed of himself. He appears to be moving the file along each time the case is brought to his attention.

Mr Evans: What has the Premier done?

Mr JAMIESON: I do credit him with the fact that he made provision for the young man to go to a funeral. However, the previous Premier said that he would see that something was done about this matter, but the position is still hopeless; no progress has been made.

His mother has informed me that his family has made arrangements for a State Housing Commission home with an extra room to be made available so that he may come home. The family has taken care of its side, but the Government has made no progress. Moves should have been made to have the young man out on day release and progressively brought back into the community.

Mr Rushton: I will have discussions with the Attorney General and take it up from there.

Mr JAMIESON: I am pleased the Deputy Premier has assured me of that; however, with the previous assurances I have received, I am not sure how far we will progress. I hope that at some future time I will be able to say that this young man has been returned to the community. We should not keep such young men in prison because they will become embittered and perhaps act as a young man did when he killed a young couple at Melros several years ago.

This young man has been placed in an awkward position because prison officers at Bunbury have told me that other prisoners on charges of rape have received sentences of three to five years, and they want to know what is wrong with him? He has served a longer sentence for a lesser offence, but of course he cannot explain the reason for that. Something must be done about this matter. Most prison officers believe he has been given a rotten deal.

If there had been some suggestion of doubt on this matter from the parole officers or anyone else, I would not have pursued this case. However, none has expressed doubt about this case; therefore, I think it is time this young man was placed back into the community so that he might work and take up his place as a worthwhile citizen.

This young man's long sentence should be reviewed. If the Parole Board had had its way the case would have been reviewed a long time ago. It is unfortunate that when a person is sentenced under such provisions of the Criminal Code the Parole Board's jurisdiction is tied. The Deputy Premier has indicated that further action will be taken and I look forward to a result.

MR COYNE (Murchison-Eyre) [11.25 a.m.]: I wish to exercise my option to speak in this Address-in-Reply debate. I wish to raise a number of points relevant to political matters, and others of a more personal nature reflecting on my own electorate of Murchison-Eyre.

I join with previous speakers in offering my congratulations to the member for Swan. I wish him well in his term in Parliament and I hope I

can develop the same relationship with him as I had with his predecessor (Jack Skidmore)!

Mr Jamieson: You once went pretty close to getting a punch in the nose from Jack Skidmore!

Mr COYNE: Jack Skidmore and I had an important common bond: We both were strong supporters of the Swan Districts Football Club and I hope the new member will use his political judgment and become a member of that club. Indeed, I would be surprised if he has not already done so.

Mr Hill: I am a member.

Mr COYNE: The people who reside in that area are very strong supporters of the Swan Districts Football Club and it is important to them.

Mr Rushton: I think it will take more than you three fellows to do any good for that club this year.

Mr COYNE: I also support the Meekatharra Thirds; I suppose they would derive some comfort from knowing that.

I also offer my congratulations to the new member for Nedlands. I hope he carries on in the great traditions of his father.

Government members: Hear, hear.

Mr COYNE: Sir Charles Court will go down in history as one of the really great Australians. I once read a book titled *The Steel Master* which was the autobiography of Essington Lewis, another great Australian. Essington Lewis at one stage was Chairman of BHP, and was its general manager for many years. During the war years he was seconded to the Defence Department where he made a tremendous impact. If members read the autobiography of Essington Lewis they could not help relating his tremendous effort to that of Sir Charles Court.

Sir Charles Court's personal example was an inspiration to us all. His tremendous dedication to the job at hand, his personal influence, and his ability to manage such a diverse group of politicians, past and present, and to make them all work towards a common aim was remarkable.

Mr Bertram: Then why did you sack him?

Mr COYNE: We are a pretty diverse group of people and I admit that at times we are fairly difficult to follow. All I can say is that he eloquently demonstrated his ability. I wish both Sir Charles and Lady Court a long life and a life of great peace of mind. He possibly will not be able to completely dissociate himself from the activity in which he has been heavily involved over the last 29 years and I hope that on occasions he will be able to give us some advice.

There was only one fly in the ointment as far as Sir Charles Court and I were concerned. We had a serious difference back in 1980. I think that in hindsight he might have agreed with the sentiments contained in the letters I wrote to him at that time and the matters I raised with him subsequently in the party room on the same issue. It is not very often that anybody outmanoeuvres the great Sir Charles Court.

A number of members on the other side will be hoping that this will be my last contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate. I would like to advise them that that will not be the case. I have made a full assessment of the situation, and they will be disappointed. There are other members opposite who are of a more friendly disposition and with whom I have plenty of accord. I hope I can increase the number of Labor people with whom I associate because normally we have pleasant relationships and I might add it has been quite profitable on a number of occasions. I hope there will be no change in the situation this year.

The demise of Shack Evans was a personal blow to me. He was a great member of this Parliament. He was a very pleasant person and was easy to get along with, and it was a great shock to all of us who had an association with him. His demise left a great gap in this Chamber.

At this stage I have not been able to establish properly any sort of relationship with his successor. We have crossed swords on a number of occasions, mainly through Press releases in the Kalgoorlie media, concerning principally the Workers' Compensation and Assistance Bill. The attitude I adopted in trying to protect pneumoconiosis sufferers was the correct one and I think most of those people will take the option that I have suggested.

Mr O'Connor: What you wanted is included in the Bill.

Mr COYNE: Yes, and I am grateful to the Deputy Premier, as he was then, for his efforts in accommodating my particular thoughts in that Bill.

In the electorate of Murchison-Eyre there are a number of redundant miners—burnt out miners as they are called—and I was trying to look after their interests. I am sure most of them can see the logic in what has been implemented. At every opportunity I circulated my suggestions to the miners and gave them the proper advice, and this has borne fruit.

My private opinion is that the present member for Kalgoorlie is becoming unduly influenced by the member for Yilgarn-Dundas, my opponent in 1974. Unfortunately, he and I have been unable

to establish a common bond. I cannot really understand him. He is a wily fellow, as we found out in the 1974 election, with some of the subterfuges he used in that election, particularly concerning the Main Roads Department camp which was based between Laverton and Mt. Malcolm.

Mr Bertram: It would be almost as bad as rigging the electoral laws, as your side does continually.

Mr COYNE: In borrowing some of the member for Avon's constituents he probably caused some discord with that member because had the member for Avon lost by 27 votes in 1974 he would have had the responsibility of being our worthy Labor candidate for Murchison-Eyre at that time. I do not think any other tactic has offended me more. There was a strong campaign to unseat me; a lot of contact was made with the Aboriginal people, and so forth. I imagine that the member has had no association with those particular people since 1974.

One of the mistakes the Parliamentary Labor Party has made is to appoint the member for Yilgarn-Dundas shadow Minister for Mines. God forbid if he ever becomes Minister for Mines!

Mr Sibson: Just Imagine!

Mr COYNE: It would be like appointing Dracula to manage the blood bank! Many people in Kalgoorlie and the goldfields in general would agree with that sentiment. He is an unusual type of socialist in that he has three hats and does not know which to wear. I hope any future Labor candidate who aspires to the seat of Murchison-Eyre does not have the same traits.

Another development is now taking shape and it looks as though we will have a difficult time in Murchison-Eyre with the new challenge to win this seat. The new candidate is Francis Donovan, who was endorsed in July 1981; he already has made clear his policies. He is very handily placed in the office of the Federal member for Kalgoorlie. He is employed there as a research officer, and his situation allows him make forays into the electorate of Murchison-Eyre in the guise of a research officer. This is really beyond the pale. He represents the Federal member at certain functions, and he makes public statements about deficiencies in the Murchison-Eyre electorate. This behavior seems to me to be untenable. Usually the matters raised are ones that have been aired from time to time.

I obtained some information about the uses of these electorate offices and the criterion has been that the offices should not be used for blatant electoral campaigning. The offices and facilities

are provided at public expense and it is wrong that they should be used for electioneering purposes. I do not think there is anything we can really do—it is not much use whinging about it.

Mr Sibson: It is actually a misuse of public funds, is it not?

Mr COYNE: That is right, and we just have to accept it.

Mr Bertram: You want to take it to the Prime Minister.

Mr COYNE: I am not in the same position as one of our other members. The member for Pilbara has a much more difficult task because he is facing a two-way battle. First of all, Tom Stephens, the candidate for the North Province, is based in the office of Graham Campbell in Port Hedland. He has the run of the office and the use of all facilities, as Frank Donovan has in my electorate. The member for Pilbara also has to cope with a lady by the name of Kim Buchanan, the endorsed candidate for Pilbara, who is based in Peter Dowding's office. It is morally reprehensible for candidates to campaign in this manner.

Mr Bateman: Do you think that is any worse than one of the Federal members who has his wife as his private secretary and she is paid for doing that job?

Mr COYNE: I do not know about that, but I do not think we can do anything about it. At the same time, it is not a practice in which I would indulge. I will not take advantage even of free travel on Federal aircraft because I believe those facilities are provided for Federal members of Parliament. When I first entered Parliament I did avail myself of this service, but I now realise that I should not have done so as it could allow a precedent to be set. Once advantage is taken of such things, it can expand into other areas.

Very soon after Frank Donovan's endorsement he indicated that he would adopt the usual strategy applied by Labor members in electorates which contain large numbers of Aboriginal constituents. With your permission, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Crane), I would like to quote from an article which appeared in *The West Australian* of 7 July 1981. It reads as follows—

The ALP was told last night that it had to get Aborigines on the electoral roll in order to win the seat of Murchison-Eyre.

Before being pre-selected to contest the seat at the next State election in 1983 a Perth social worker, Mr Francis Donovan (33), said that the party could no longer rely on its traditional supporters to win.

There were 1 400 Aborigines in the electorate who had never had a vote and the party could be assured of their support.

About 2 000 voters were on the roll at present.

"We need a nine per cent swing and only the Aborigines can give it to us," he said.

Mr Donovan said he had met representatives of Aboriginal communities who asked for party support and wanted to become involved in politics.

There was no doubt about the electoral advantage of getting Aborigines on to the roll.

The party's experience in North-West seats in last year's election had also shown that support from Aborigines in the Lower House flowed through to Labor candidates for the Legislative Council.

Three justices of the peace had said that they would go to Murchison-Eyre to assist in enrolments to overcome difficulties caused by amendments to the Electoral Act.

Mr Donovan was to have faced a pre-selection ballot, but a Goldfields union organiser withdrew from the contest yesterday, leaving him as the only candidate.

So members can see that the same strategy is to be followed again. We also note that Mr Donovan is trotting out the same old tried and tested chestnuts to which Labor members always refer. Of course, he has referred to the road link between the goldfields and the Pilbara. From our research we have found that the greatest cost in transport is the cost of interchanges at various areas. It is not much dearer to transport commodities from the Eastern States to Perth than it is from the Eastern States to Kalgoorlie. It would be a costly exercise to set up a freight terminal at Kalgoorlie, and the volume of goods going through the terminal hardly would justify such a transport system at this stage.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you saying that you do not favour that link?

Mr COYNE: I favour it as a defence link, and in time it probably will eventuate. There is a sealed road right through to Leinster, but it would be impossible for any Government to finance a black top all-weather road through to Meekatharra joining the Great Northern Highway. In the past we depended on the fact that the mining companies, which are contributing greatly to this region of the eastern goldfields, have helped substantially to fund these roads. Just last November the Minister for

Transport opened a 100-mile high-capacity roadway between Leonora and Leinster. This has been a tremendous boost for the area. It is not an ordinary road—it is a magnificent high quality highway. Certainly a good road was needed because of the heavy haulage trucks which will travel it and the higher axle loadings in these vehicles.

The next great development in the area will be the uranium project at Yeelirrie, and the company concerned in that development will contribute heavily to the 60-mile road link from Leinster to Yeelirrie which will leave unsealed approximately 110 miles from Yeelirrie to Meekatharra. Possibly at that stage the Government will need to enter into discussions to provide the money for an all-weather section linking Yeelirrie and Meekatharra.

Mr Donovan made these comments. Obviously he is seeking publicity; but these matters have been discussed over and over again. The Boulder Shire Council was involved in that area; and it was aware of the difficulties that the Government had in trying to fulfil such a project.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you saying Mr Donovan should not be raising these things?

Mr COYNE: No. I am not saying anything. We are prepared to live with it. I am objecting to the fact that Mr Donovan is operating out of a Federal member's office, and using his facilities, his travel privileges, and other things, to pursue his own campaign programme.

Mr Brian Burke: I thought you were talking about the Pilbara-Kalgoorlie road link?

Mr COYNE: Yes, but I am stating that he is raising these things from that position.

Mr Brian Burke: Do you not think he should bring them up?

Mr COYNE: He can raise them if he wants to. I am just pointing out his tactics. As I said, we are prepared to live with it.

Mr Brian Burke: That is the difference between you and us. We want to get things done.

Mr COYNE: Mr Donovan also mentioned that the Laverton post office needs to be upgraded; and he also says that Mt. Magnet is seeking a resident doctor.

Mr Brian Burke: That's a good idea!

Mr COYNE: Everybody knows that we have been trying desperately to provide doctors for the remote areas. It is almost impossible. A medical practitioner is a free enterprise person, and he cannot be dragooned and told, "Look, you are going in there." We have communities such as Laverton with more than 2 000 people. At

Laverton, the medical officer is reaching the end of his career. He is a bachelor, and he likes Laverton, but when he goes, the town will be serviced completely by the Flying Doctor Service. At Leinster, the doctor likes the town because he likes the climate; but a doctor who was interested in making some money would be unlikely to go into such an area and it will be difficult to attract a doctor to Mt. Magnet. The Minister for Health certainly will have to consider upgrading the Flying Doctor Service to Mt. Magnet.

In relation to my own campaign difficulties, I am fortunate by comparison with the member for Pilbara, because I have two very industrious and dedicated young upper House members to help me in the Murchison-Eyre campaign. According to a news release recently, one of my colleagues is on a first name basis with 5 698 Lower North constituents, and that makes a tremendous impact. He has a great record. He drove 52 000 kilometres last year, and he flew on 100 commercial flights, as well as logging 300 hours as a light aircraft pilot. That is an impressive performance, and I am sure that members of this House will hear a lot more of Phil Lockyer and his tremendous energy.

I am happy with that sort of back-up. It will be a very difficult task for the Labor Party to unseat the present member for Murchison-Eyre. I have never had that sort of back-up before, so this will be a change for the better.

One aspect that concerns me is that Mr Donovan says that 1 400 Aborigines are not on the electoral roll. I could not imagine it would be that number; but in the central desert area a number of communities average about 200 people each. They include Wingelinna, Giles, Warapuna, Blackstone Ranges, Jamieson, Warburton, and one or two others.

In that area, the Aborigines have virtually opted to return to their original lifestyle and conditions. They are well looked after by the Government because it provides airstrips, water, windmills, education facilities, and advisers. I do not believe that we should try to influence those Aborigines to depart from their way of life and to force our ideas onto them. The Liberal Party is always at a disadvantage in the situation where we do not have access to the Aboriginal communities in the same way as the Labor Party has. As the Labor Party is oriented towards socialism, we find that the people who normally take jobs with the communities are inclined towards that ethic, and virtually the ALP has an open entry into the communities.

I have known a number of officers in the communities, as I make periodic visits to them. During the last election, I noticed some stickers. Mark Nevill was my opponent at the time—a real gentleman. He was one of the most polite and courteous people against whom I ever fought an election. I noticed the stickers, and I asked the community service officer how the stickers came to be issued. He said, "Well, they were sent out from Alice Springs, and we were told to enrol every Aboriginal regardless." He kicked open the bottom drawer of a filing cabinet, and I could see hundreds of electoral enrolment cards for Western Australia. He said that the direction came from a legal service officer named Philip Toyne—a name not unlike mine. Philip Toyne is a dedicated socialist, and he is endeavouring to infiltrate the area. So, we know we will have problems in that locality. We cannot do much about it, because we do not have the machinery to overcome our problem.

I need to deal with a number of other matters. They include the gloom that is pervading the goldmining areas in my electorate of Murchison-Eyre. It was disastrous for the gold price to decline, and that has forced the suspension of some of the goldmining developments that previously were operating profitably when gold was being sold at \$400 or \$500 an ounce. It was a bonanza when it was \$700 an ounce.

It is not good that this gloom is descending on the area. It affects not only the companies, because some of them can still manage. One of the good things about the gold boom was that it provided a very buoyant share market, and it allowed money to flow into the goldmining industry. The larger companies were able to expend millions of dollars to upgrade their crushing facilities, sink new shafts and update old ones, and improve their plants. They were able to achieve that in the prosperous climate that existed for a couple of years, until recently.

At the opening of the Hill 50 Gold Mine about 12 months ago, the manager declared that the break-even basis for profitability of the Hill 50 mine was something like \$320. It will be difficult for that company to keep its work force happy under the present circumstances.

The other major mining development in my electorate is the Lancefield goldmine, which is an adjunct to the Windarra nickel mine. It is operated by a Western Mining-Shell Company consortium. They were very fortunate to uncover a major ore body very close to the surface. It had been overlooked completely previously. This is one of the biggest gold open-cut mining operations I have ever seen and it has added a new dimension

to the community at Laverton, because it has provided a new avenue on which the people can depend, apart from the nickel operation at Windarra. At the moment the town of Laverton would be the most prosperous town in my electorate.

Recently other mineral deposits have been discovered at Mt. Morgans and Mt. Weld. As an indication of the importance of these deposits, I point out that when I was there, three plane-loads of top American officials flew into the area in one day. They must be very optimistic about the progress of the potential of their discovery. At the present time, Laverton is a town with great all round potential.

The other major development in my electorate was the Agnew Mining Co. Pty. Ltd. nickel mine. A few weeks ago gloomy reports were published as to the future of this mine. Members might recall that it is one of the biggest nickel deposits in the southern hemisphere. It contained approximately 60 million tonnes of nickel ore of a grade above 2.5 per cent. As a result of this operation, an important town with great tourist potential developed in the area. It is located some 340 kilometres north of Kalgoorlie in a very pleasant environment and I would classify it as a model town.

As a result of the very gloomy predictions contained in that false newspaper report, a certain amount of pessimism pervaded the town. The interim General Manager of Agnew Mining Co. Pty. Ltd. (Fred Kipling) published a report on the future of the Agnew nickel mine in the local newsletter *Town and Underground*. The article reads in part, as follows—

In a frank interview following recent adverse publicity he said that the owners of the mine had demonstrated their confidence in the long term future of Agnew Nickel Mine by the spending of large sums of money on the project.

Multi-million dollar expenditure was continuing with the equipping of No. 1 Shaft, extensions to the winder house, authorisation for the construction of a new winder in the United Kingdom (with some parts from Japan and Australia), and the current sinking of the ventilation shaft by Australian Shaft Drilling.

EXPENSIVE

He said that it is no secret that the situation has been bad, as costs have been high with the result that AMC has been an expensive producer.

However, dramatic improvements have been made in the metallurgical area, the mine itself, and engineering maintenance.

All areas have helped to reduce the cost per pound of nickel produced. If the momentum of the improvements can be maintained, he said, AMC will ultimately become one of the cheaper producers of nickel and can compete successfully on the metal market. The signs are now there that this can be achieved.

IMPROVEMENTS

Mr Kipling pointed out that the improvements in the metallurgical results have been remarkable. The nickel concentrate grade has been raised from 8.5% to 14% by modifying flotation circuits and changing reagent regimes.

Modification work is continuing and it is expected that further improvements can be made on results already achieved.

New equipment has arrived recently from America and it can punch a 16-foot shaft from ground level to a depth of 15 000 feet. It is a remarkable piece of equipment which costs the company approximately \$18 000 a day to hire. The cost of the first ventilation shaft is estimated at \$5.6 million, and it is planned that a similar 8-foot ventilation shaft be driven in the near future. It can be seen that a company which undertakes such an operation cannot be pessimistic about the future of the mine. I am sure all members will wish those companies well.

Not long ago some senior, experienced members opposite advocated that royalty prices should be increased and said that we should kick the mining companies in the guts because of the tremendous profits they were making. I have been in mining areas most of my life and I refute those statements. Anybody who has had any association with those areas would be aware of the tremendous benefits which flow to the people as a result of mining activities.

In a very marginal situation two major companies, Western Selcast and Mt. Isa Mines, undertook the mining of copper, zinc, and silver at Teutonic Bore which is a model operation. They experienced difficulties with low metal prices and it certainly will not be a bonanza for the companies involved. However, it is pleasing to see a company like Mt. Isa Mines, which has a worldwide reputation, coming into Western Australia, because not only does it inject capital into the area, but also it brings with it a great deal of expertise which has been developed over the years in its operation at Mt. Isa. The officers

of Western Selcast are experts in the field and it is pleasing to see such high-ranking people running these mining operations. As a result, a completely new lifestyle has been brought into the area.

Mr Brian Burke: Do you have any worries about the new Mining Act? The things you are saying are interesting—

Mr COYNE: I do not have any worries about the new Mining Act and I shall have plenty to say about that later.

Mr Brian Burke: The things you are saying now are interesting and good for home consumption—

Mr COYNE: The companies concerned do not have any worries about the new mining legislation. It has brought a breath of fresh air into the mining industry. The attitude of the Labor Party to this legislation is one of complete hypocrisy. Indeed, members opposite introduced the Bill and, when one looks at *Hansard*, one sees that, when the legislation was introduced, the first person to applaud it was Sir Charles Court. He said, "This is long overdue."

Mr Brian Burke: Why do you think it is occasioning such protest from many people who are not Labor supporters? Do you think they are misinformed?

Mr COYNE: I can answer that question, but I do not want to get involved in it at the moment, because I do not have very much time left. I am looking forward to the time when I can put the record right as far as that goes. I endured a good deal of criticism during the 1978 debates. If a person believes in something there is no way he can turn his back on it. I have learned much about political opportunism, something that was never more clearly demonstrated than by the reinclusion of the member for South Perth into the Cabinet. I totally disagreed with that and had a terrible confrontation with the Premier.

Mr Brian Burke: Before?

Mr COYNE: Yes, before.

Mr Brian Burke: Why did you object to his being included in Cabinet?

Mr COYNE: I will tell the Leader of the Opposition in due course.

Mr Pearce: There are a few Ph.Ds in political opportunism on your side.

Mr COYNE: If members opposite have the welfare of this State at heart they should be among the last people to oppose that legislation.

Mr Tonkin: It is the regulations.

Mr COYNE: They are nothing. Even if Don May were handling the Bill everyone knows

nothing could be produced that would be spot on and suit everyone. The Government and the Mines Department have always been fair. If they are not, objectors may go to the local member, whose job it is to make sure everything is fair.

Mr Brian Burke: Afro-West does not think it would be fair.

Mr COYNE: We had a briefing with that firm which pointed up very clearly just where the difficulty was. It is impossible to produce legislation which is agreed to by everyone. All Government members are people of integrity. A couple needed convincing, but I was not one of them, because I have a long association with the industry. Time will tell that the new Bill was the greatest decision we made. It was the right decision. However, I want now to get on to other matters.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the other great industry that occupies my electorate; that is, the pastoral industry. I entered Parliament in 1971, right in the middle of a tremendous drought in the north-eastern goldfields, a drought which brought the pastoral industry to its knees. It caused a great deal of gloom in the industry.

It was only in 1975 that the industry gained some sort of help brought by a cyclonic disturbance which produced great rains in the region. The rains came to areas such as Kookynie, Menzies, Leonora, Laverton, Sandstone, and Agnew, which all benefited from it. Since 1975 they have had regular good seasons to such an extent that all the stations operating in the area are selling sheep. They are stocking maximum numbers. With the recent rain, which was distributed fairly evenly through the area, the pastoralists have been assured of another good season. This is at a time when the wool industry is booming.

Mr Evans: Because the Labor Government put in a floor price and for no other reason.

Mr COYNE: The interjector has been a Minister for Agriculture, and a very good one. In my electorate his stakes are really high. He did all the right things and all the people in the area believe he was a good Minister. I congratulate him on his achievements.

The Murchison area of my electorate underwent a very severe trauma by way of a drought which lasted for over five years. The pastoral industry there was almost on the point of falling back into a trough. However, when we had the recent rains—not the ones that washed out the north-west, but the secondary rains—they were assured of enough pasture to build up their flocks and to increase their lamb numbers.

Through my efforts the Government was quick to help those pastoralists. I was able to have the Premier persuade the Prime Minister to come to the rescue. We arranged for something like 56 loans to struggling pastoralists at rates of 4 per cent. I am sure those loans were greatly appreciated.

I do not wish to add much more except to say that the gleeful comments coming from Opposition members recently show that they think they are on the way back and that they believe the Government is in some sort of discord. I am able to allay their worries about that.

MR TRETHOWAN (East Melville) [12.11 p.m.]: I begin my Address-in-Reply contribution by congratulating the new members for Swan and Nedlands on their election to this House. I hope they have a very enjoyable, productive, and satisfying time while they are members of Parliament. If history is a guide to their likely futures, both will be members for a considerable time. I wish them well during their stay in this House.

I am pleased to associate myself with the remarks made by the member for Murchison-Eyre on the retirement of Sir Charles Court. I am very fortunate to have been able to spend my first two years here as a colleague of Sir Charles. I learnt a great deal from his leadership and I hope that his forward-looking attitudes and planning will continue to be built on so as to ensure a continuation of the bright and successful future that lies before us.

I turn now to an area of concern within my own electorate. A considerable degree of apprehension exists among a large number of people in my electorate about any redevelopment on the Majestic Hotel site, which is on a peninsula adjacent to Applecross by the Swan River. I do not wish to override the prerogative of the City of Melville to make any decision concerning the redevelopment of this site, but, as I have mentioned, a good deal of apprehension exists in my electorate about any such proposed redevelopment. This has occurred because of an architectural competition held last year, the principal aim of which was the selection of what was called an architectural outline for the redevelopment of the site. I understand the City of Melville has some preliminary proposals for the redevelopment of this site, but these proposals have not been made public and I do not have any knowledge of what they contain.

The State Government's involvement relates to the inclusion four years ago in 1978 of section 32 of the metropolitan region planning scheme, a

provision which requires any redevelopment proposals to be submitted for approval to the MRPA.

I believe two principles need to be considered in the concept of the redevelopment of the site. One is the very important principle of ownership of land. If a person buys land with a designated use and seeks to redevelop that land in accordance with the appropriate town planning scheme, he should be able to do so. If a Government seeks to change the laws governing the use of certain land, adequate compensation should be payable to landholders who suffer any detrimental effects from that change. This principle is extremely important and fundamental, and the principle on which our landholding system is based.

The Majestic Hotel site historically is a hotel site. As far as I can determine a hotel has been on that site since 1897—85 years. Virtually all the residential suburban growth in the area surrounding that hotel site was established with the knowledge that a hotel would remain on the site. On that basis it seems reasonable that any redevelopment of the site should conform to the existing use and the planning scheme.

Another important planning principle must be considered when any development of a major scale takes place, and that principle involves the impact of the development on the amenity of the surrounding area. Nowadays a large number of architectural solutions are available in order to achieve the same available areas of floor space for office accommodation, the same number of rooms for a hotel, or the same number of units for a residential development; vastly different forms of building can be adopted to give the same economic result. In this regard meticulous attention must be given to the impact any development will have on its surrounding area. The redevelopment of the Majestic Hotel site as a high-rise building site may well have considerable detrimental effect on the amenity of the surrounding residential suburban area. I hope that any proposal coming forward for the redevelopment of that site will satisfy the two principles I have put forward.

Disquiet has been caused amongst the residents of the area by the winning entry of the architectural competition conducted last year. The competition produced proposals incorporating a casino, and a marina facility.

Two separate questions arise in relation to a casino. The first obviously is: Will a casino be allowed to operate in this State? The second is: If a casino were allowed to operate, would it be suitably placed on the site of the Majestic Hotel?

The answer to the second question is that the operation of a casino at that site would be totally inappropriate. Firstly, it would not conform to the existing land use; and, secondly, a casino would have a grave detrimental impact upon the amenity of the surrounding residential suburban area.

For the development of a marina a detailed environmental study would need to take place to ensure almost nil disturbance of the natural environment. Such an establishment may have very little disturbance on the environment at one site, but at another it could have great detrimental effects. The Swan River must be protected from detrimental disturbance which could result from the development of a marina. At present the river has one of the cleanest environments of any river adjacent to a capital city in Australia, and possibly the cleanest of any capital city in the world. These matters should be weighed and scrutinised closely when any proposal for a marina is being considered.

I hope that when plans regarding this site redevelopment finally are made public, the matters of land use and the impact on the surrounding area are taken into account by the Government when it makes its decision. Close investigation of the environmental impact should be carried out.

I now turn from a problem which essentially affects my electorate to a problem which affects not only this State and this country, but also virtually all western industrialised countries. I refer to the detrimental effects which have occurred from the rapid expansion of public sector activity in western economies.

It is quite clear that since World War II major growths have occurred in the public sectors of all countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In Australia in 1966 the percentage of the work force, including the defence forces, employed in the public sector was 25.7; that is, one in every four persons employed. In 1980 that same percentage was 31.4; that is, one in three. I will refer later in my speech to certain inferences which can be gained from those statistics, but essentially my point is that now every two people employed in the private sector must create sufficient productivity and pay sufficient taxes to allow the employment of one person in the public sector. This rapid rise in the size of the public sector relative to the private sector in all western economies is one of the principal reasons for the breakdown of the traditional Keynesian fiscal policies of the latter years of the 1970s, and now the 1980s.

The expansion of the public sector has been caused in part by the adoption of Keynesian fiscal policies after World War II. Everything went well until the early 1970s for Governments following the Keynesian model; public sector expenditure was promoted in times of downturn, but held back, especially with public works, in times of private sector expansion.

Mr Tonkin: Why don't you think the Keynesian approach is working now when it worked a few decades ago?

Mr TRETHOWAN: The precise point I make is that the size of the public sector has expanded so much in relation to the private sector that the relative effect of the priming action of Government spending has been reduced to a point where it does not have the effect it had with a lower base. It is rather like supplying a household indoor plant with nutrients. If the plant is not supplied with nutrients it tends to grow rather slowly; and if it is supplied with adequate nutrients it grows well, quite strongly. However, if an excess of nutrients is added, the plant starts to wither.

The other problem is that if a plant has too many nutrients, it grows too rapidly and becomes unable to support its own weight and will begin to have problems. If there is even a minor drop in the level of nutrients it will begin to wilt. If a plant is force fed, eventually the situation will be reached where it becomes unstable. This is what has happened to our economy. More and more expenditure has been primed into the public sector area. The result has been that by adopting this fiscal policy, expanding public sector expenditure now has very little effect on economic growth. The shifts that resulted in the seventies relate directly back to the overgrowth of the public sector.

Mr MacKinnon: Hear, hear!

Mr Bryce: Are you one of the dries?

Mr TRETHOWAN: The adoption of labels, jargon, and propaganda is characteristic of the statements of the Opposition and that is why it does not get to the real facts and solutions.

Mr Bryce: No, all the political pundits across this nation take those fairly accurate and meaningful labels to describe philosophy.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Crane): Order! There is too much audible conversation and *Hansard* is having difficulty in picking up the member for East Melville. I ask you to keep it to an extremely low level or, preferably, not have any conversations at all. The speaker is a very

soft-voiced person. I hope you appreciate the problem.

Mr TRETHOWAN: I do not believe in labelling things in the manner suggested. There are conservative and socialist approaches to economics which are contrasted by their approach to the expenditure of public sector funds. I do not class myself as either "wet" or "dry".

Many countries, particularly those which have adopted very high levels for welfare expenditure—Scandinavian countries especially—have found that while the very rapid growth of GNP occurred during the 1950s and 1960s when the average rarely dropped below 5 per cent and increased in some countries such as Japan where it was well over 11 per cent, expenditure on welfare services and other public sector expenditures would occur without any apparent effect on the taxation burden carried by the population.

However, as soon as the oil crisis occurred in the early 1970s and GNPs started to drop back quite severely, an instability occurred which resulted from a demand from electorates that standards of living should be supported by Governments during times of economic downturn. This resulted in increasing demands for public sector expenditures in order to stimulate the economy and maintain an apparent standard of living. When the wealth was being produced to justify increased public expenditure, it was easily done, but as soon as the economic downturn occurred, in order to finance the increases in demand for public sector expenditure so as to maintain an apparent standard of living, Governments were required to increase their tax bases and to demand a higher percentage of the gross national product in tax. As the tax rates and the demand for increases in the tax base rose, it produced a disincentive for people to go out and work harder to produce more. The result of this was downwards pressure on the rate of growth of productivity and a discouragement to the rate of increase of GNP. This downturn produced further demands to support a standard of living through welfare services and other areas of expenditure, so Governments required higher and higher demands on the taxation system in order to pay for it, producing further disincentive. The higher level of uncertainty that has been seen throughout the world in the business climate and economic forecastings during the late 1970s and 1980s can, at least in part, be attributed to this progression.

The only answer to this is to rapidly bring to a halt the rate of growth of the public sector expenditure. That is the first step hopefully to redress the balance and increase incentive through

the reduction or at least levelling out of the demands of the taxation base. Currently, as inflationary effects occur, working people are finding themselves moving more and more into substantially higher tax brackets. Another major effect of this is that small businesses and businesses generally are finding they are paying an increasingly heavy burden of tax related to their real, non-inflationary, level of profits. There is substantial disquiet, particularly in smaller organisations, as their liquidity is suffering substantially due to the level of charges that is imposed to finance the public sector expenditure.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Crane): Order! The conversation is getting loud again.

Mr TRETHOWAN: Correcting this is the only way we will see a further substantial growth.

Mr Barnett: Could you speak up, please?

Mr TRETHOWAN: We need to encourage a substantial growth in future productivity which, when it occurs, will allow a higher standard of living to be enjoyed by the whole community. The only way to achieve this is to improve incentive and certainly not allow an increase of the disincentive that is now being borne through the taxation system by both private individuals and the business sector, especially the small business sector. It is ironic in the extreme that members of the Opposition who seek to portray themselves as the saviours of business and as having the policies to save small businesses—

Mr Tonkin: We will do more for them.

Mr Bryce: Not only the policies!

Mr TRETHOWAN: —are under the overall policy control of their political masters, the trade union movement—

Mr Tonkin: Rubbish!

Mr TRETHOWAN: —which is now promoting a public campaign in this country to assure people that the only thing wrong with Australia is that not enough is being spent by Governments. Should those policies be pursued, it would bring about major increases in the tax burden faced by small organisations, and the whole of the community at large.

Mr Bryce: Will they find it uncomfortable and wrong if they have to pay tax when they are presently evading it? You represent them.

Mr TRETHOWAN: No. I agree entirely. We should ensure that justifiable levels of tax are instituted, not only for those people on high incomes who may seek to evade taxation, but also for those people at the other end of the scale, the small people who find the level of tax a disincentive to work harder. We must bring tax

rates down to a level where there is an incentive to work harder, not only for those people who enjoy higher incomes, but also for those on lower incomes in the community.

Mr Bryce: You would do that with a lot of those tax evaders!

Mr TRETHOWAN: Precisely. It is an eloquent and good argument that if the level of tax is reduced we also encourage such people not to evade taxation.

The point I am making is that the increased expenditure in the public sector will inevitably require an increased burden of tax and an increased burden of tax will contribute to erosion. There can be no total prevention of tax avoidance because when dealing with a complicated tax system, as soon as one scheme is closed down, another will be developed.

It would be much better if such ingenuity were turned towards increasing productivity and towards improving the efficiency of the industrial section of our community. This can be shared to benefit the whole community.

I agree we should look seriously at the question of tax avoidance and we should attempt to stop it. We should look at the reasons that such schemes are occurring.

Another major problem is facing us in the question of future public sector expenditure. At present we are on an upward slope and the expenditure is becoming greater. Demographic predictions show also that over the next 20 to 30 years, by decreasing the number of people entering the work force the implications of more of the tax burden will be shared by fewer people, even if we level out the public sector expenditure at the current level. Fewer people will have to bear the tax burden in the future.

This gives rise to considerable concern about the whole level of economic growth. Unless some action is taken and unless awareness is created about the problem of public sector expenditure we will have even greater problems in the future.

Another aspect I wish to mention relates to a speech I made last year on the efficiency of management within the Public Service. I made the point that we have very fine officers within the Public Service, but the organisational size is up to five times larger than the organisational size within the private sector. Therefore, the public sector has many problems of management that the private sector organisations do not have.

One of the ways in which we can look to reducing the burden of public sector expenditure, and still maintain many of the services that are

currently provided, is to find more efficient management techniques to assure the effective application of the tax funds that are generated.

It would be an important question for every member of the community to ask as to how, and how efficiently, Governments, at all levels spend money. It is only when enough people are asking that healthy question, "How are you spending my money? Are you spending my money as well as it can be spent, and are you getting the most for what I am giving you?", that truly critical decisions will be made for change. New techniques and ingenuities—which are presently available to the Public Service—need to be applied in order to increase the efficiency with which tax dollars are spent. I hope that Governments at all levels in Australia will address themselves to these problems.

I would hope also that those who present themselves to the alternative Governments will consider those problems as well. However, ever since I have been in this House I have heard no support from the Opposition on matters which have been reasonably put forward by Ministers on this side of the House to improve the efficiencies of their departments and to provide better value for the funds which are being spent for the community and for the services being produced. All we have heard from the Opposition is criticism and, "You should not do that", "You are affecting this", and "You should not be doing this." We always hear negative comments, never positive comments. They never present themselves to the real problem. I would hope that they will change, but I cannot see it.

Mr Tonkin: Did you read *Economic Outlook*?

Mr TRETHOWAN: I have read it and it represents the duplicity of presentation of the Opposition—one face for one section of the community and another for another section. It seems that the whole point of my speech is to prove how the ACTU, the political masters of the Labor movement of Australia, are advertising that more Government services should be provided because Australia is a rich country and at the same time the Opposition here is seeking to present itself as being on the side of those who will have to pay the taxes to provide the funds for the increased expenditure promised by their political masters.

I find that an extremely disquieting situation. I am worried by the attitudes that members on the other side of the House seem to have adopted.

Mr Brian Burke: Fraser is not a bad spender.

Mr TRETHOWAN: If the tax burden increases over the next 20 years in the same way

as it has increased over the last 20 years, the capacity of the community to pay will be exhausted. We must help the growth of the private sector. Two members of private industry are supporting one member of the public sector. That is a ratio which is too high; it is a ratio which is not sustainable in the long run. It is not a system which encourages long-term economic growth.

I hope the Opposition will think again when it makes pronouncements in the economic area to ensure that they avoid the dichotomy they are presenting at present. I hope the people of the community will realise which party and which Government in this country, and particularly in this State, represent the interests of those who wish to see long-range economic growth—

Mr Brian Burke: You are out of touch.

Mr TRETOWAN: —and who wish to ensure that efficient use of public sector expenditure will be achieved.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [2.15 p.m.]: I hope the Government notes the new atmosphere of co-operation that emanates from this side of the House, especially considering we have a new Premier. Just before the suspension of the sitting for lunch the member for Vasse approached me and begged me to speak. By the way, it was not the Government Whip who approached me, so I hope that does not mean a power struggle is going on amongst Liberal back-benchers.

Mr Blaikie: It is just a new spirit of co-operation.

Mr TONKIN: I decided I would have a few bars on the Address-in-Reply in the hope that my learned words would help members to understand their true functions.

Mr Blaikie: You say your few bars and we will judge whether they are learned or otherwise.

Mr TONKIN: I am sure the honourable member will. I thought one of the main purposes of this place was to blow one's own bags, and I was doing just that in the honourable traditions of this House.

I could not help thinking that the remarks by the distinguished—looking, at least—member for East Melville were the kinds of remarks conservatives uttered last century and early this century to argue against the introduction of widows' pensions, the age pension, child endowment, free schooling for everyone and the like, on the basis that the economy could not afford it.

Mr Trethowan: That is not true.

Mr TONKIN: Indeed, the contention then was that if they stopped children working in the mines, and fenced machinery in order to protect the limbs of workers, the economy would surely be destroyed. It was obvious to those people that the economy of the United States would be destroyed if slavery was abolished. It was interesting to hear those echoes from last century coming down to us in this place.

Mr Clarko: Does not socialism come from the last century?

Mr TONKIN: We are not talking about socialism but about welfare statism, of which I would have thought the member for Karrinyup, as a former lecturer in social sciences, would be well aware.

I congratulate the member for Nedlands on his election to this House. He has a difficult task. I believe there is an old proverb—if there is not, I just made it up—that acorns do not grow very well in the shadow of oak trees. I guess the difficult or, perhaps, daunting task facing the member for Nedlands will be to be his own man and not to be always compared with his illustrious father. That is a difficult job for any person to do—to walk in the shoes of a man recognised in a community as being great. That is one of the reasons I preferred to choose a rather ordinary man as my father.

Mr Barnett: Oh, come on!

Mr TONKIN: There is nothing wrong with ordinary men; after all, we do outnumber the rest.

Mr Clarko: Have your children done the same?

Mr Blaikie: You did not give your children that choice, did you?

Mr TONKIN: I intend to ignore interjections which are inconvenient and, once again in the hallowed traditions of this House, score off those which are convenient.

I also congratulate the member for Swan on his election, I am sure he will be a very good member. I had occasion to work for him and, in fact, there was a marked swing in the very area in which I door knocked on his behalf.

Mr Rushton: Which way?

Mr TONKIN: Touche. That interjection is a good one, especially considering its source.

I believed before he was elected that the member for Swan would be a very good member and this was confirmed when I telephoned him the other day. There was a loud crash outside his window which I could hear over the instrument. He wanted to hang up the telephone and rush out to see whether he could help one of his constituents who had been injured. I thought,

"That shows a good member—really on the scene and doing the best for his constituents." This brings me to the reason I stand here today, and that is to speak about a matter of local importance. The Address-in-Reply debate traditionally has been a time when members may speak about their electorates, and bring to the attention of this Parliament the very important concerns of members of their electorate. That is why I want to talk about lots of crashes. By the way, members will see how carefully constructed this speech is by the fact that it leads smoothly from one crash to another; that is all in the best traditions of speech making and debating. It is a pity the member for Gosnells is not here.

Lots of crashes occur at the corner of Beechboro Road and Morley Drive. I see members are particularly interested in this interesting facet of community living in Morley. What I would like to know is, when is the Minister for Police and Prisons going to do something about it? I can see him there on the other side of the House assiduously taking notes, as is his wont, and I am sure he will pay attention to this problem. What we need at that confluence are some traffic control lights of the type which turn from red to green to amber. I think they are the best kind and I believe they should be introduced at that intersection.

Mr Blaikie: If that corner has created such a problem, would it not be better to have traffic control lights continually on red? Would that solve the problem?

Mr TONKIN: Yes, I think it would; the number of traffic accidents would be less. I thank the member for his help.

I am not sure whether there is a Minister for drains; I am not sure whether there is actually such a portfolio in this Ministry. Whoever he is, I would like to draw his attention to a problem in my electorate.

Mr Brian Burke: Did you say, "drains" or, "drones"?

Mr TONKIN: A very important drain in Morley is giving us a lot of trouble, and I look forward to meeting the Minister there at some time to inspect it. I will be contacting the Minister for drains by letter and raising that important matter with him.

Last night in the Parliament we had an early night. The thing that really concerns me is the fact that I had a pair.

Mr Blaikie: Your speech continues to be one surprise after another.

Mr TONKIN: I was working while members had knocked off. However, I was really amazed with the excuse of the Premier that he wanted to give members a night home with their families. Parliament has been in recess for something like four months and on the second day back, like a benevolent headmaster, the Premier gave us a half-day holiday. We cannot accept that Parliament should be closed up almost as soon as it has drawn its first collective breath. The Premier's excuses were very poor. He said he thought that perhaps Opposition members had nothing to speak about concerning their electorates. In fact, I think the speeches of Opposition members yesterday outnumbered those made by members opposite—and the Government has more members than the Opposition.

Mr Coyne: Yes, but we have Ministers, too.

Mr TONKIN: Subtract the Ministers, and see how many we would get. I thought I might get away with that point, but the member for Murchison-Eyre is on the ball.

Mr Coyne: Nobody moved for an extension of time when I spoke.

Mr TONKIN: We believe this Parliament should have a lot of business before it but obviously the Government does not have a great deal on its hands. I would have thought an energetic Government would have been quite pleased to continue with Parliament last night and, if there were no more speakers, so be it; the Address-in-Reply debate would be finished; hoorah, hoorah for the end of what can be a rather dreary time in the House. If the Government had been prepared, it could have gone on with its legislative programme.

As revealed by His Excellency's Speech, the Government practically has no legislative programme. It has a very thin programme and, therefore, the Premier was embarrassed. He thought, "Good heavens above. If we cannot have the Address-in-Reply debate continuing for a few more weeks with members talking about their drains and crashes, what on earth will this Parliament do?" So in a panic he adjourned the House. I believe this is to be regretted, and I hope we will not have the situation continue of this Parliament's being mismanaged.

On the first sitting day of the session, the very first question addressed to the new Premier was responded to as follows, "I have received no notice of this question; put it on the notice paper." What kind of Premier is it who cannot answer a question off the cuff?

Mr Clarko: It depends on the question.

Mr TONKIN: I think we should be concerned about the high standards of Parliament. I do not mean the high standards of this Parliament because I do not think they are particularly high. We should be endeavouring to lift the standards as much as we can. It is second-rate for a Premier to reply to his very first question by saying, "I have received no notice of this; put it on the notice paper."

When another question was addressed to the Premier, he tossed it to the Minister for Fuel and Energy, etc., and he tried to get away with that action. When we pointed out that the question had been to the Premier, he then tried to answer it. So we find in the first few sitting days of this session of Parliament the Premier fluffing his lines rather badly.

A Government member: What nonsense!

Mr TONKIN: We hope, for the sake of the State, that the Premier improves on his performance so far.

Some time ago, on behalf of the party, I raised the question of the optimum size of Perth. This matter has been raised many times since by the member for Geraldton. The Deputy Premier came in like a flash and said, "What would you do? Would you erect a barbed wire fence around Perth to stop more people coming in?" That is the level of debate from the Deputy Premier!

We enunciated a very sensible policy; we thought there should be an inquiry into the optimum size of Perth to try to discover the disadvantages and the advantages of continued uncontrolled growth. We hoped that this would lead to public debate on the subject which in turn would lead to an appreciation of some of the problems. We hoped that the people of Western Australia would press for greater decentralisation and that everyone would realise that Perth is the fastest growing capital city in the nation and that therefore we should put a brake upon its growth and allow other parts of the State to grow.

The rest of the State is not growing in the way that Perth is and we believe that is a matter for great concern. I will mention a few of the results of the tremendous growth in the size of Perth. Firstly I would like to refer to the quality of our water supplies. When I was first elected to this Parliament, I said that the water quality would deteriorate as a result of the continued growth of Perth. At the time people said I was scaremongering. To use the Government's phraseology, it could have been said that I was talking Perth's water dirty by saying this kind of thing; but we know, whereas once upon a time it was a delight to drink a glass of Perth water, now

the smell and taste of our water is enough to put people off drinking water for pleasure.

Mr Clarko: Have you stopped drinking?

Mr TONKIN: The Government talks about assistance to small businesses, but it is to be censured because it has done very little about this question of the size of the metropolitan area and it will not address itself to the problem of decentralisation. The Government is permitting a deterioration in the quality of life in Perth. This is obvious in many ways, and, as an example, I referred to our water supplies.

Mr Mensaros: That is very nice. What would you do? What would you suggest?

Mr TONKIN: We have already suggested several times—

Mr Mensaros: What?

Mr TONKIN: —the need for a serious debate on the subject—not a debate about barbed wire fences as mentioned by the Deputy Premier. We would suggest that the Government make a sincere attempt towards decentralisation so that other parts of the State grow rather than Perth being the only place to grow.

We saw the Premier duck three questions in two days relating to fuel prices. Obviously he is running for cover. The price of fuel affects country dwellers severely. Of course a country dweller must pay more than he should for his fuel. Western Australians are greatly disadvantaged because of this Government's refusal to legislate to control the wholesale price of petrol. Such legislation has been passed in Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia.

Mr P. V. Jones: Do you know what is happening with that legislation in Victoria?

Mr TONKIN: The Victorian Government has not proclaimed it.

Mr P. V. Jones: It is unable to make work what it has done.

Mr TONKIN: Of course the Victorian Government is unable to make it work if it has not been proclaimed.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is the reason it has not been proclaimed.

Mr Carr: It will work after 3 April.

Mr TONKIN: It is working in New South Wales. The fact is that Western Australians are paying much more for their petrol than they should.

Mr P. V. Jones: Much more?

Mr TONKIN: That is a moot point. I am saying we are paying more.

Mr P. V. Jones: Oh, you are saying we are paying more. You can clearly demonstrate we are paying more on an average, is that right?

Mr TONKIN: It is not just a question of the retail price, it is also a question of small businessmen. Despite the Government's professed concern about small businessmen, it is sending them broke in large numbers. If this goes on as it is at present, there will be no independent service station operators in Western Australia. I am not concerned just about independent service station operators, I am also concerned about the economics of the State. Once we have a monopoly or an oligopoly in this industry, we will lose freedom and competition. We would then have the situation of the oil companies controlling the economy of this State to a greater extent than they do already. Other States have taken action. Fuel prices are far too high here, and this Government will not act.

We require more than just legislation to control wholesale prices. We should attempt also to divorce the wholesaling from the retailing because at the moment we have the very serious problem of vertical integration. Once we have that kind of problem, we lose competition. If this Government believes in the market economy—and we had the member for East Melville talking about the market economy earlier today—the Government should realise it does not work without competition. Because of the power of certain companies and corporations in our society, the only way to achieve fair competition is for Governments to intervene by introducing legislation to prevent restraint of trade.

Thanks to the Whitlam Government—which is always maligned—we have some legislation of that type. However, it is not nearly good enough and it needs to go a great deal further. Increased fuel prices have greater effects in country areas because of the extra distances to be travelled. They increase the cost of goods carried by road and other forms of transport. So we are not just talking about the price of fuel in country areas, we are also talking about the price of all goods in country areas. Also, for various reasons, electricity, water, sewerage, and irrigation charges are higher in country areas than they are in the metropolitan area. The main reason for the high costs is that this Government is not really committed to decentralisation.

Mrs Craig: What proportion of the irrigation costs do the people pay?

Mr TONKIN: That will be dealt with in detail later in the Address-in-Reply debate.

Mrs Craig: By you? You are the one making a comment about it now, and saying it is unfair. I think you ought to indicate to the House the reasons you think it is unfair.

Mr TONKIN: I would be interested in the Minister's comments as the member for an area which has a certain amount of irrigation. I would like to hear her defending the irrigation charges.

Mrs Craig: Actually, most of the irrigation area. I was wondering how you could prove it.

Mr TONKIN: Madam Minister has decided to defend this Government and this Cabinet against the interests of her electorate.

Mrs Craig: I did not say that. I asked you to indicate to the House that you know what you are talking about; but you do not.

Mr TONKIN: There is no question that irrigation charges, like other charges, are causing a great problem. If the Government believes in decentralisation as we do, efforts should be made to ensure that country living does not cost as much as it does.

Mrs Craig: What proportion of the cost of irrigation is paid by those who utilise it?

Mr TONKIN: I will make my own speech in my own way, and I will not be dictated to by the Minister.

Mrs Craig: I was just wanting to point out to the House you do not know what you are talking about.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister should rise to her feet and speak for herself.

Mr Wilson: Let us hear you speaking as a local member.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TONKIN: Will the Minister speak during the Address-in-Reply debate?

Mr Bertram: No!

Mrs Craig: If you move an amendment on my responsibility—

Mr TONKIN: I am talking about the Minister as a member of the Parliament—

Mr Rushton: You are not letting her speak, anyway.

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

Mr TONKIN: Thank you. I feel at a disadvantage when that Minister interjects, because I am rather chivalrous.

This Government provides the least incentive for decentralisation of any mainland Government, yet this State, above all other States, needs assistance with decentralisation. It is the largest

State by far, and the problems of centralisation are paramount. However, we find that this Government spends something like a couple of million dollars on decentralisation when States like New South Wales and Victoria, where the problem is not as great, spend in excess of \$25 million. I can assure the House that if we become the Government, once again we will have a Minister for Decentralisation. We have had only one Minister for Decentralisation in Western Australia, and that was the late H. E. Graham.

Mr MacKinnon: If you look at New South Wales—Bathurst-Orange and Albury-Wodonga—you will see \$18 million of wasted taxpayers' money going straight down the drain.

Mr Carr: That is nonsense. Albury-Wodonga has been successful.

Mr MacKinnon: Are you prepared to go on record as saying that?

Mr TONKIN: He just has.

Mr MacKinnon: It is a failure—a total disaster.

Mr TONKIN: I would like to hear from the Minister about decentralisation.

Mr MacKinnon: What do you mean by "decentralisation"?

Mr Davies: You will get all the industries from the Eastern States over here—only the fifth time in four years!

Mr TONKIN: Perth has the most rapid growth of any city—

Mr MacKinnon: It just happens that the whole State has the fastest growth in Australia.

Mr TONKIN: Not the State. Most of it is going to the metropolitan area. This Government needs decentralisation; yet the Government fiddles and will not do anything about fuel prices; it will not do anything about country prices; it will not do anything about trying to make businesses in the country more viable. It will not do anything about making the cost of living in the country more reasonable. If it does not do those things, it will preside to an increasing extent over a situation where development in Perth will increase to the detriment of the rest of the State. That has been demonstrated many times, especially by the member for Geraldton.

If that does not happen, the country will continue to decay. At the moment we have a flight from the country. A number of people are moving from the country because of Government services being withdrawn.

Amendment to Motion

Mr TONKIN: On that basis, I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

but we regret to inform your Excellency that the policies of your Government have acted against the interest of country residents and have done nothing to assist with the problems of country living.

Further, your Premier has failed to take action to reverse policies that add to the disabilities of country people.

Mr CARR: I formally second the amendment.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier) [2:40 p.m.]: I oppose the amendment moved by the member for Morley.

Mr Evans: Go on, you will embarrass him!

Mr O'CONNOR: I have just received the amendment; if the Opposition were sincere about it, it would have given us notice.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Davies: What nonsense! What about the new boy?

Mr O'CONNOR: This shows the total insincerity of the Opposition—

Mr Davies: For God's sake!

Mr O'CONNOR:—in adopting an entirely new attitude in the House. It is trying to confuse rather than trying to have things done for the people of this country.

Mr Davies: Come on, what an amazing statement!

Mr O'CONNOR: Twice this week the Opposition has not even been able to have a member support the Opposition's spokesman on the issue.

I do not accept the amendment by the Opposition. It is not that we have acted against the interests of the country people. At the Ord River at the moment, we are pursuing—

Laughter.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Leader of the Opposition chuckles and laughs. He is an immature little boy, the way he carries on. Obviously he does not accept the Ord River as a country centre. I have only just started, but he has laughed at the first comment I have made.

Mr Barnett: And you have already made a mess of it.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is what we have come to expect from the Opposition—total insincerity in its approach. It comes into this House in an

immature way, and it tries to confuse rather than—

Mr Brian Burke: You want to be very careful, because nothing has changed. Your predecessor fielded amendments like this time and time again. We have not changed our tactics. Rather, you are incapable of dealing with the amendment.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr Brian Burke: You face up to the facts. The former Premier was perfectly comfortable with amendments like this.

The SPEAKER: The House will come to order.

Mr O'CONNOR: I assume that the Opposition is worried because of the way in which we handle the situation.

Mr Tonkin: We have received an answer to the first question.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Opposition is worried—

Mr Davies: We are worried, all right. The way you are handling it, we are worried for the people.

Mr O'CONNOR:—because it moved an amendment the other night, which was defeated easily, both on the floor of the House and in the debate. The Opposition's attempt last night to finish the Address-in-Reply debate was indicative that its members had no problems in country areas.

Mr Tonkin: We had more speakers than you. What are you talking about?

Mr Carr: It was you who closed the place down.

Mr Tonkin: You moved the adjournment.

Mr O'CONNOR: I suggest that members opposite confer with their leader in connection with that issue.

Mr Barnett: Get on and answer the amendment.

Mr Wilson: This is all padding.

Mr O'CONNOR: It is obvious that the Opposition does not want to hear my reply. It does not want to hear what we have done in country centres.

Mr Hassell: There is not much to reply to, because the whole of the speech moving the amendment was padding. He said straight-out that it was just a series of things put together.

Mr O'CONNOR: I hope the Opposition will give me an opportunity to reply. I sat in silence while the member for Morley was speaking—

Mr Bryce: But you were never here.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is not true.

Mr Brian Burke: I took a note of the times you were here. From 2.15 p.m. until the end of the speech, you were here for five minutes.

Mr O'CONNOR: Has the Leader of the Opposition taken a note of the time his brother has been in the House over the last five years?

Liberal members: Hear, hear!

Mr Hassell: Where is he now?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr O'CONNOR: If the Leader of the Opposition's brother has spent three hours in the House in the last five years I would be amazed.

I have been in the Chamber since 10.45 a.m. and have left it only to answer telephone calls from people with problems they wanted to discuss with me.

Mr Hassell: The Leader of the Opposition was noting the times the Premier was here because, as usual, he was trying a stunt! He wanted to catch out the Premier! What a stunt! These are the usual tricks of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am sure all members would agree the efforts of the Government in the Ord River over many years have been remarkable. Today the Minister for Agriculture is at the Ord River discussing the possibility of setting up a sugar industry there.

Mr Blaikie: I don't think the Opposition heard that: You should say it again.

Mr O'CONNOR: This industry is of vital importance to the State.

Several members interjected.

Mr O'CONNOR: Members opposite should be quiet and let me have my say. At least I give members opposite a chance to speak when they are on their feet, but the Opposition, because of its inability to put forward a good case, endeavours to slaughter the speeches of members on this side of the House by way of interjection.

Mr Bateman: What a lot of codswallop!

Mr O'CONNOR: Members opposite are continuing with their interjections.

Today the Minister for Agriculture has travelled to the Ord River and is discussing the possibility of establishing a sugar industry there. Such an industry would be of great advantage not only to the people in that area, but also to people throughout the State.

A large amount of money has been spent by this Government on housing in the Pilbara in an effort to assist the people there. If I remember correctly, over a three-year period \$20 million was spent in that area. Most of the funds available for housing in this State were spent in

country centres in an effort to help areas which were experiencing difficulties.

Members should travel to Manjimup where they will see what the Government has done to assist the Manjimup canning factory. The Government has propped up industry to help people in country areas, to ensure decentralisation occurs, and to assist people, such as farmers and orchardists, who are experiencing difficulties.

The Government has been sincere in its efforts. This year we agreed to extend the amount of funds available to industry in country areas in order to assist people there. In almost every field the Government has done its best to allocate funds where they are most needed.

The Government is aware that times are not easy at the moment and the economy is fragile not only in Western Australia, but also throughout the world. However, the Government of this State is coping better with the problems than are most other Governments.

Members should look at the Government's record in the provision of water and electricity to country centres. The Government subsidises electricity supplies to country areas by an amount exceeding \$30 million a year to ensure excessive rates are not paid. I ask members: Does the record of this Government indicate it is insincere and does not want to help people? Of course it does not.

The Government subsidises water supplies to country areas to the tune of approximately \$40 million a year. On occasions it has been necessary to impose funding cutbacks in certain areas, but the Government has still managed to subsidise electricity and water supplies in country areas to the tune of \$30 million and \$40 million respectively.

Recently members opposite referred to the fact that the Commonwealth Government had not been very generous to this State, and I agree with that remark. I admit the attitude of the Commonwealth has caused us some problems. Last year Commonwealth funds allocated to this State were cut back substantially and the same situation may occur this year. However, we shall fight to obtain a realistic allocation from the Commonwealth.

Bearing in mind the reduction in the allocation of funds from the Commonwealth, it is clear cutbacks are necessary in the State Budget. Does the Opposition want us to cut back funds allocated to education? No, it does not, and nor do we want to do so. Does the Opposition want us to cut back on the amount allocated to health? Of course it does not. However, the Government

must ensure cutbacks are made in the appropriate areas.

Mr Tonkin: There are ways to cut back on expenditure. Look at the new members of Parliament you have appointed.

Mr O'CONNOR: I ask the member for Morley why he does not resign. At least then we would be better off.

Mr Tonkin: That is a stupid comment. You have created two extra members of Parliament and that costs money.

Mr Hassell: It was a stupid amendment moved in a stupid way.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Government has tried to adopt a realistic approach to Budget allocations. Bearing in mind the situation, last year's allocation to education of 12 per cent of total Budget expenditure was realistic.

We have managed this State well. The same cannot be said for the Labor Government in New South Wales, because that State is not in the strong financial position Western Australia enjoys. New South Wales has suffered a loss of \$500 million on the railways this year. The money borrowed by the New South Wales Government from the Commonwealth Government and for electricity supplies will probably cost in excess of \$1 000 million this year. The Government of this State adopted a realistic attitude to expected wage increases this year and allocated a figure of 12.5 per cent to that area. That was not the case in New South Wales and, as a result, it will sink in quicksand. However, Western Australia has been built on strong foundations. The Liberal Government has achieved that through the good management of the previous Premier (Sir Charles Court) and it will continue on that path.

When it is necessary for the Government to institute funding cutbacks, it does so taking into account the best interests of the State and the country. All areas are important, but the Government attempts to impose expenditure restraints and cutbacks in the areas of least importance.

I reject the amendment moved by the member for Morley, because I believe it was moved in an insincere way. The member is attempting to cover up the inadequacies of the Opposition.

Mr Davies: It has to be true. You say it is insincere, but it is absolutely true.

Mr O'CONNOR: If the member for Victoria Park gives his wife \$300 a week for housekeeping and she spends \$400 a week, both of them are in trouble.

Mr Davies: Why are you talking about insincerity?

Mr O'CONNOR: I am simply pointing out that responsible housekeeping is necessary.

Mr Davies: Every word the member said was absolutely true! You do not like the fact that no-one warned you this was going to occur. Sit down and have a sulk!

Mr O'CONNOR: If the member for Victoria Park had his way, he would like to say that I had been sulking for 15 minutes!

Mr Davies: You certainly have.

Mr O'CONNOR: It is a fact that Commonwealth funds allocated to this State were cut back last year. Members opposite have maintained that the Commonwealth allocation to Western Australia next year will be reduced by \$90 million. It is not possible to allocate additional funds in certain areas. We must take genuine steps to cut back expenditure in the areas which will be least affected. That was one of the reasons the Cabinet expenditure review committee was established. That committee reduced Government expenditure by \$40 million this financial year.

Mr Tonkin: And you created two new members of Parliament!

Mr O'CONNOR: Bearing in mind that figure, the Cabinet expenditure review committee will be maintained in an endeavour to ensure the finances of this State are allocated in the most satisfactory manner.

Mr Davies: That should be done at all times. There should be no excuse for a special committee.

Mr O'CONNOR: Did I say it was not done at all times?

Mr Davies: You said it was going to be done. It should have been done every day and year you have been in government. You have lost control of Government departments.

Mr O'CONNOR: I reject the comments of the member for Victoria Park because they are not true.

What we are trying to do—and what we have done—is to run the Government efficiently and to get people to go into various departments and look at their procedures to make sure they are operating efficiently. If we can peel away money from one or two areas so that we can provide greater help to needy people in other areas, we will do so. That is what we are trying to do. We believe in this and we will continue in this vein.

When Opposition members say that country people have been disadvantaged they must look also at the increased funding given to local authorities throughout the country in recent times. Because of the changed atmosphere and conditions relating to the Federal Government in Canberra, local authorities received an increase of between 16 and 18 per cent.

Mr Tonkin: Do something about fuel prices.

Mr O'CONNOR: At the same time, the Government of Western Australia received an increase that did not keep up with inflation. Surely we have to look at the overall position, not just in the metropolitan area but also in the country area, and try to even things out in a manner we believe is best for the State. We have followed this policy strongly. We have subsidised heavily those things most needed in country centres, and we will continue to do so.

We believe country people are entitled to good roads and we are providing funds for this purpose. At one time I made an assessment of the north-west of the State and found that the area contained 4 per cent of the population yet received 30 per cent of road funds spent in the State. The people in the area were disadvantaged, and it was up to us as members of the Government to make sure they had better facilities. It was up to us to provide roads for those people who were living inland and were inconvenienced when they wanted to visit resort centres, taking into account the harsh conditions under which they live.

It is up to us to make sure electricity is supplied to people in country areas, even if people in the metropolitan area have to subsidise this electricity, which they do. The same applies to water. Recently we had a proposition put to us in connection with the Agaton water supply, which involves a very big area in the central wheatbelt. In that area alone the Government has agreed to provide 35 per cent of the cost of the scheme because of the difficulties involved. We have offered to provide that amount if the Commonwealth Government will put in one-third of the cost and the people involved contribute the rest. All told, a very substantial amount of \$60 million will be involved.

Does all that sound as if we are a Government that is insincere and does not want to help country areas? What the Opposition has put up is a lot of rot, and I oppose the amendment.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [2.58 p.m.]: I think members on both sides of the House will agree that the Premier's

reply was one of the worst efforts we have heard in this Chamber for many years.

Mr Laurance: You will have to do better than that.

Mr Blaikie: On the Richter scale he scored very well.

Mr Pearce: It was a lot of rumbling, and that is all.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let us go back to the start of his speech and his allegation about the Opposition doing something it had not previously done. Those who have been here for a year or two will know that the Opposition did nothing more or less than it has done previously during Address-in-Reply debates over any number of years. We have always moved amendments in the way this amendment was moved. On many occasions the amendments have been formally seconded and have not been spoken to by the seconder. There is nothing unusual about that. Why should the Premier complain about it?

There is one difference, and I will tell members what it is: When previously we moved amendments the Premier was always sitting there, especially on Thursdays, waiting to see whether the Opposition moved an amendment, and be prepared to deal with it. Those members who were here when Sir Charles Court was Premier would know that he invariably sat in the Chamber during the currency of the Address-in-Reply debate because it is a good thing for the head of a Government to do so that he is not caught out as was the present Premier today, with the main reply to the amendment coming from a man who had been in the Chamber for four minutes out of 40 during the currency of the speech. That is the whole problem we are trying to highlight.

If the Parliament is to be run that way we may as well give the Premier a pair. It is not good enough.

Mr O'Connor: I have not been out of the House at all today.

Mr Tonkin: What about the Chamber?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let me make the point once more that the Opposition did nothing more or less than it has done previously on many occasions in the nine years I have been here. We moved an amendment to the Address-in-Reply, as is our right. The Premier complained that we had not given him notice of the amendment. When do we ever give notice to the Government of an amendment to the Address-in-Reply?

Mr Tonkin: Never.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It has never been done.

Mr Clarko: Never?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Oppositions are always very careful to attempt to make sure that no news or word leaks out about a proposed amendment to the Address-in-Reply because an amendment is a censure of the Government. It is a challenge to the Government's ability and veracity. It is a challenge to the person whose job it is to reply to the amendment and to do so in a forthright and detailed fashion. Let not the Premier complain that he has been harshly treated. He has been treated in exactly the same way as Premiers before him were treated by Oppositions which previously sat on this side of the House.

Mr O'Connor: How long did you say I was away from the Chamber?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier can say what he likes about being in the House all of the day. Being in the House is not being in the Chamber. He has a responsibility to be in the Chamber when the business is proceeding.

Mr O'Connor: How long was I out of the Chamber?

Mr Clarko: Are you always going to be in the Chamber?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: When will the Honorary Minister for Education understand that I am not the Premier in charge of the business of the House?

Mr Laurance: And never will be.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is not my job to be here every minute of the day shepherding through the Government's legislative programme. That is the Premier's job. Does not the Minister understand that?

Mr Clarko: Your job is to be here to oppose. Speak to your brother.

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

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The unworthiest comment that was first made by the Premier and then by the Honorary Minister for Education, said in defence of the Premier's inability to be here was, "Your brother is not even here." I cannot understand how suddenly my brother, the member for Perth, has the same responsibility as the Premier. Is that what is meant by that interjection? Is the Premier made less culpable for his absence by the absence of the member for Perth? Are Government members saying that in this place the member for Perth is as important as the Premier? That seems to be what the interjection means.

The Premier was here for five minutes out of 40. He did not do his job. He was ill-prepared and he could not answer the amendment moved.

Mr Hassell: What nonsense.

Mr Clarko: The incredible alternative.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I can tell members opposite what will happen, and I am perfectly happy that it should happen because that is where it should have come from in the beginning. One of the Premier's Ministers will rise shortly and make some sort of intelligent contribution to the debate. I advise the Premier that, if he is not going to be here, he should not leap into the fray to answer arguments he has not heard.

Mr Hassell: There were no arguments.

Mr Clarko: Just a couple of jokes.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I really cannot cope with the Minister for Police and Prisons. He seems to have become, with his demotion, much more strident.

Mr Hassell: You are so twisted you cannot cope with anything.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is all right when he is able to interject and say things, but should anyone attend to him even slightly he is in trouble.

Let me make one or two points in support of the amendment.

A Government member: That would be a change.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We have said consistently that the Government has a responsibility to take a view on how it sees the development of the Perth metropolitan area and whether it wants in 50 years to have in this State one city the size of Sydney located at Perth, with all of Sydney's attendant social and other problems, or whether it wants to start to plan now—

Mr Laurance: That's not in the amendment. What about reading the amendment?

Mr BRIAN BURKE:—for three cities each the size of Perth as it is now; one to the north, one at Perth's present location, and one to the south. We have said that should be the cornerstone of how we will view the geographical enormity of this State. We really need now to be planning for what we see to be the development of the State and how we see that development easing the disabilities presently geographically imposed on Western Australians living in remote areas.

Hand in hand with the investigation necessary to obtain a firm view of whether we are content to let Perth grow without restriction, or whether we are to develop Geraldton to a city the size of Perth as it is now, and perhaps Broome or Bunbury to the same size, we should determine how we want this State to develop and how that

development will impinge upon the policies we must determine and the provisions we must make to ensure an appropriate life is lived by people in our regional centres.

Mr Herzfeld: How would you do it?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: One way to do it is to consider seriously whether Perth can be inhibited in its growth, and one way to do that is to determine whether some Government departments can be moved from the metropolitan area.

Mr Herzfeld: You would frog march people out of the city.

Mr Tonkin: Don't be silly. You will be a Deputy Premier.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It may not be possible, but before we decide how we can carry out such a policy we must investigate whether it is desirable, and we must determine an optimum development plan. Next we need to determine whether we can relocate some departments outside Perth if we decide we want some decentralisation.

Mr Trethowan: You would want another Albury-Wodonga, and what has happened in other places.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am simply saying that whether such a policy would mean another Albury-Wodonga or something else, now is the time to consider what is desirable. If we are to talk sensibly about decentralisation, now is the time to be inquiring into the possibility of relocating some Government departments outside Perth.

Mr Rushton: You are a bit late now.

Mr Herzfeld: We have done more for decentralisation than any Government in Australian history.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: With growing technology of a kind that has revolutionised Government and public enterprise, it should be possible to consider realistically the possibility of relocating some Government departments. It would take a courageous Government to look at that proposition because it is a proposition which, after 12 months of application, may fail. It may not be possible to relocate sensibly in regional centres some of the Government departments, but if we do not consider the possibility we doom ourselves for the foreseeable future to the ever-burgeoning size of Perth and the great disabilities inherent in country living.

The Premier's answer was deficient in many ways. The first deficiency was that he failed to deal sensibly with the question of controlling fuel prices. Any Government which has ever sought

the support of the public of this State always has gone to country areas and said, "We will implement policies which will ensure that fuel per litre costs you the same in Marble Bar as it costs in Perth." No Government has ever kept its word. I do not know how members of this Government grapple as smartly as the one from Mundaring with propositions like that, but it is plain dishonesty for a political party to say, as has been said at election after election, that if in Government it will ensure equalisation of fuel prices—it never comes about.

In New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia some attempts have been made to implement practical policies to control the wholesale price of fuel as the first step in any sensible equalisation plan. What did the Premier have to say about that? He said nothing. He did not even refer to one of the main points made by the member for Morley during his contribution to this debate. I am not surprised the Premier did not, because he was not here for most of that contribution.

The Premier made remarks in connection with the Pilbara, although I fear not referring specifically to the Pilbara, when he mentioned the devotion of housing funds to country areas. The truth is that this Administration's Government Employees' Housing Authority policy is making it almost impossible for key personnel to be attracted to work in country centres. Power house employees, metropolitan water supply employees, main roads employees, teachers, and other public servants are now expressing their unwillingness to be employed in country centres because of the very housing policies the Premier tried to praise.

Mr Laurance: That's rubbish!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Most people know as well as do I that teachers throughout the north-west are complaining that they are now forced to pay rentals that detract in real terms from their salaries to an extent which makes it not worth while for them to teach in the country.

Mr Laurance: They have subsidised accommodation and pay exactly the same rental as State Housing Commission tenants.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The same complaints are being heard from SEC workers as a result of the GEHA accommodation that is made available to them. Private enterprise is crying out for skilled power house workers, and this Government has turned away from itself the many employees who will not go to the country because it will not subsidise rentals at a proper level.

Mr Clarko: Who should pay?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will get to that. The Minister for Lands said housing rents paid by Government employees are the same as those paid by SHC tenants, and that is true. But what he did not add is that SHC rents are now at the market level.

Mr Laurance: That's not so in the north. I thought you would know more about the north. Although your party policy stops at Midland Junction, I thought you would have read something about the north.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: In country areas, including the north, the market related rentals policy of the SHC means that its rentals in country areas are considerably above rentals paid, for example, by mining company employees.

Mr Laurance: That's not the point.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is the point. Government employees in country areas often pay twice or thrice as much as others living next door to them in air-conditioned brick homes.

Mr Laurance: Are you saying that Government employees should pay less than SHC tenants?

Mr McIver: Isn't it marvellous when you put two stripes on their arms?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Minister's statement indicates a drastic change from what was previously the case, and that drastic change is to the disadvantage of key Government employees working in country and regional centres. The Government's policy is causing those people to say that they are not as willing as previously to work in those areas, and that is a serious disability imposed on country residents.

Mr Laurance: That's not so at all. It is subsidised accommodation.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We heard the Premier talking also about the Manjimup cannery. I cannot say the Labor Party when in Government was responsible for the development of the Manjimup cannery, but the Labor Party supported its development. I may have serious doubts about that cannery, and I do not wish to detract from the Premier's saying that his Government has continued the practice of support for that cannery; but continuing the practice does not comprise new initiatives, and the same applies to the subsidies of which he spoke—

Mr Clarko: The operation of that canning factory hasn't remained the same; it has changed several times.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The support of that cannery by successive Governments, if members wish to know the truth, is something about which I have some doubts. Yet the continued

commitment passing from Government to Government certainly is not something for which this Premier can take credit; the same as he cannot take credit for the provision of power and electricity subsidies of which he boasted.

Mr Laurance: We have extended them extensively.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am glad the Minister mentions that. When this Government has extended those subsidies, the prices have risen. The Minister should talk to the people of Carnarvon.

Mr Laurance: The prices have gone down.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: When I was at Carnarvon a special meeting of the shire council was called to tell me that Sir Charles Court had misled the people of Carnarvon, and that the prices they paid were then higher than they were previously when they did not have the SEC service.

Mr Laurance: They went down. What about being truthful?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The local member was the subject of some barbed criticism, as was his bag when we referred to water supplies, because his tenor has been one of complaint about the quotas imposed on the amount of water taken from the Gascoyne River. Those plantation owners are extremely upset because, as the Premier says, on the one hand, we take such great interest, but on the other hand, quotas are being imposed thus preventing their extending their plantations.

Mr Laurance: What about Whitlam's promises for water for the Gascoyne? The people know who provided the water for them and it was not you or your Government. You haven't done too well so far. You have scored a big zero.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Opposition did nothing more nor less than has been done by Oppositions from time immemorial in this place. If the Premier wants to sit outside the Chamber during the major part of the Address-in-Reply contribution from the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Nanovich: What rot you are talking!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —do not prevail on us not to move an amendment.

Mr Hassell: Who has prevailed on you? Yesterday you did not have anyone to speak.

Mr Wilson: Order, Heinrich!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have two minutes left and want to make a couple more points.

Mr Laurance: Sing for John Tonkin! Tell the truth. Give us a decent Opposition to oppose!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Crane): Order!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We did no more nor less than has been done previously. The fact that the Premier has not been here is not our fault.

Mr Clarko: That has been the main point of your speech.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am trying to answer the points made by the Premier. He wants to blame the Opposition for not having given notice.

Mr Clarko: You have told us that four times!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: He is living in a fairyland. The Opposition has never given to Premiers notice of amendments to the Address-in-Reply, and the previous Premier was always able to handle those sorts of amendments.

Mr Herzfeld: The present one, too!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: There is nothing unusual about it, except for the comment made by the Premier in regard to the absence of my brother. I support the amendment.

MR BLAIE (Vasse) [3.17 p.m.]: I oppose the amendment. For the benefit of certain members, it is important that we realise what the amendment is and that it was moved by the member for Morley. It reads—

But we regret to inform Your Excellency that the policies of your Government have acted against the interests of country residents and have done nothing to assist with the problems of country living.

Further, your Premier has failed to take action to reverse policies that add to disabilities of country people.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr BLAIE: Speaking from the Government side of the House, I indicate the Opposition's amendment is completely fallacious and without any argument at all.

Mr Bateman: What does "fallacious" mean?

Mr BLAIE: The member for Morley moved an amendment and his seat is vacant. That shows how much interest he has in the amendment.

Mr Laurance: Where are they now?

Mr Bateman: He has been in the Chamber all the time.

Mr BLAIE: At last he has come back!

Mr Tonkin: Don't you ever go to the toilet for two minutes?

Mr Clarko: I hoped you would have stayed there.

Mr McIver: If he knew you were talking he would have stayed out longer!

Mr BLAIE: The fact that he referred to traffic lights in his electorate, the quality of the

water, and other matters, speaks of his concern for the amendment. In the closing minute of his speech, he then moved this amendment in which he showed "concern" for country people!

Mr Tonkin: I spoke about fuel for 10 minutes.

Mr BLAICKIE: How fallacious his argument is! The concern shown by the member for Morley and the lack of detail he went into indicate clearly that this is nothing but a political stunt. Unfortunately the Leader of the Opposition is not in his chair right now.

Mr Brian Burke: I am here. Don't be silly.

Mr BLAICKIE: The Leader of the Opposition is here, but not in his seat; I am sorry. He was quite unfair when he attacked the Premier for his not being in the Chamber. It was unwarranted.

Mr Pearce: But quite true!

Mr BLAICKIE: It was quite unfair and unwarranted.

Mr Bateman: What does that have to do with the amendment? Tell us about milk!

Mr BLAICKIE: The Leader of the Opposition in making his comments went into a tirade against the Premier for seven or eight minutes without speaking to the amendment at all.

Mr Bryce: Since when were you the speaker of the household?

Mr BLAICKIE: If members paid attention to the reasons that were given for the amendment being presented they would realise they were fallacious and spurious and based on political opportunism. What has the Government done for country people? The amendment says that the Government has acted against the interests of country residents and has done nothing to assist the problems of country living. I mention the Rural Housing Authority. Unfortunately, no member of the Opposition is aware of what the RHA does.

Mr Bryce: Come on!

Mr BLAICKIE: Does the member for Morley want to tell us what it is and what it does?

Mr Tonkin: You are making the speech. Don't say we know nothing!

Mr McIver: It means you have to be starving before they even look at you!

Mr Grill: Well said!

Mr O'Connor: You must have one!

Mr BLAICKIE: It is a very sad set of circumstances.

Mr Grill: Is that the Rural Housing Authority?

Mr BLAICKIE: All members, especially members of the Opposition, should do a very

careful study of the Rural Housing Authority as it was established by a most important piece of social-rural legislation.

Mr Brian Burke: It has been a good thing, but without sufficient funds to do those things demanded of it.

Mr BLAICKIE: It has had adequate funds.

Mr Brian Burke: It has not. A year and a half ago we had to amend the law to permit additional people to be housed by the Rural Housing Authority. One of the reasons was that it was too limited.

Mr BLAICKIE: It was a new initiative. Further new initiatives have come forward and in addition to those the Rural Housing Authority has had its franchise extended—

Mr Brian Burke: By the amendments I told you about!

Mr BLAICKIE: —for pastoral areas and also to include employee housing. Those new initiatives do not really mean the allocation of funds, but are new incentives and they certainly improve facilities for rural Western Australia.

Mr Laurance: Hear, hear!

Mr BLAICKIE: The Rural Housing Authority has been an outstanding Government achievement. The involvement of the State Housing Commission in joint ventures in pensioner developments and bank housing has been significant. Within my own electorate it is involved with the Masonic homes and has been of great social benefit to the people involved. The member for Dianella would be aware of how important it is to provide adequate housing for people.

Mr Wilson: Don't bring me into it!

Mr BLAICKIE: People in country areas feel more isolated.

Mr Brian Burke: You realise one of the reasons for those joint ventures was the cutback in housing funds? I look forward to being a part of the Government that does something about it.

Mr BLAICKIE: The subject of regionalisation of development was raised by the member for Morley in a passing moment when he mentioned Albury-Wodonga.

Mr Tonkin: I didn't mention it. It was an interjection.

Mr BLAICKIE: That was about the extent of his argument then.

Mr Tonkin: That is nonsense! I talked about fuel prices for 10 minutes and you were not even listening.

Mr BLAIKIE: The Leader of the Opposition raised also the matter of regionalisation. I assure members of this House that the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Education, and the Department of Forests have now a programme of decentralisation where many important decisions are made in regional areas. Over the last six to eight years dramatic changes have been made in the areas of administration, and the importance of regionalisation has been recognised.

The member for Kimberley is certainly aware of the regional administration in the Kimberley, and the Education Department officers are able to make day-to-day decisions without referral to Perth. The member for Geraldton would be aware also that officers of the Education Department in his electorate are able to make day-to-day decisions regionally.

Mr Carr: You are half-right because they do have an office there, but you are half-wrong because they do not have the power to make any worthwhile decisions.

Mr BLAIKIE: If the member for Geraldton is indicating that I am half-right then I have made dramatic progress.

I wish to point out that the Premier has taken action to assist country people. At the time the Premier took office, the south-west of the State was faced with a major flood. The Government and the Premier in particular took action immediately and offered assistance to them and displayed a degree of understanding and compassion. Therefore, it ill behoves the Opposition to ignore such facts and to bring forward such a spurious amendment.

This Government legislated to abolish probate and I would not like to see a Labor Government in this State because I know what it would do in relation to probate and I know what it would do for country people.

Mr Bateman: You should not be a member of Parliament if that is your attitude.

Mr BLAIKIE: Another matter which is very dear to country members of Parliament is electoral reform. The member for Morley has chastised the Government on this matter by way of his amendment. He used the opportunity to relate the Labor Party's policy on electoral reform and what it would do for country people.

Mr Jamieson: What do you think then?

Mr BLAIKIE: Firstly, it will take away the degree of representation country people have.

Mr Jamieson: That has been done by the Federal Parliament since federation.

Mr BLAIKIE: Just because the Federal Parliament has done something does not mean we should do it also.

Mr Bryce: You should worry about your job.

Several members interjected.

Mr BLAIKIE: The amendment moved by the member for Morley does not indicate a great degree of thought; if it had, the word "interest" would have been spelt correctly on the copy of the amendment he submitted. With those remarks I reject totally the motion.

MR McIVER (Avon) (3.30 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to support the amendment moved by the member for Morley. However, I should put into perspective a few remarks made by the member for Vasse, who castigated the member for Morley for his attempt to move such an amendment. However what he does not realise is that the member for Morley has a great responsibility, as far as his Opposition duties are concerned, because he is the Opposition spokesman for local government and regional development.

Surely, irrespective of whether he resides in the metropolitan area or the country, that is his responsibility, allocated to him by the Opposition. That allocation surely provides him with scope to move an amendment in his sincere way.

It is absolutely ridiculous for the member for Vasse to waste the time of the Parliament in the way he has during the last 20 minutes by castigating the member for Morley. He was as wide of his mark as is the Nullabor Plain. Let us get to the essence of the amendment. The subject matter of the amendment is the policies of the Federal and State Governments which are affecting the people of Western Australia.

Firstly, I would like to refer to the procrastination of this Government in its disallowance of TAA's entry into the north-west of this State above the 26th parallel. I am amazed when I read the daily Press statements of the boy wonders of the Government when they refer to tourism and regional development. They constantly castigate our Federal Government for the cost of air fares between Perth and the capital cities of the eastern seaboard. Surely charity begins at home, but they have done nothing to come to grips with this problem, despite the decision of a Royal Commission which stated in its findings that the State Government should give consideration to TAA's entry into the north-west of our State.

I am hoping our present Premier will come to grips with the problem. We have ruled a line as to what happened under Sir Charles Court's leadership. He is now only a name in the annals of

the history of Western Australia. He made a contribution to the progress of this State, but irrespective of what he is quoted as saying in our newspapers, he is no longer a legislator.

Mr Rushton: His ghost will haunt you for a long time.

Mr McIVER: I think it is important to remember that the legislators make the decisions in this Parliament. I believe Sir Charles Court did no more than did Sir David Brand. Irrespective of the hogwash that has come from Government benches over the years, Sir Charles Court did no more than did Bert Hawke or anyone else. He did no more than those people. He was fortunate in the boom of the 1960s when he followed in the footsteps of a great leader in Sir David Brand. Yet members opposite boom him up and say that he was the messiah and saviour of Western Australia.

Yesterday in this Parliament I referred members to the closing of several important industries, not the least of which was Australian Iron and Steel Pty. Ltd. at Kwinana. Those industries are closing before our very eyes and thousands of people will be out of work and the social implications will be mammoth. Sir Charles Court is no different from any back-bencher or any other member who has made a contribution to this Parliament. He is no different from his predecessor, Sir David Brand, who worked very hard for Western Australia. Members opposite are being very disloyal to a man who made a great mark in this State, as did Labor Premiers such as Tonkin, Hawke, Collier, and the like. Those people were no different; in fact, they were roosters one day and feather dusters the next.

Mr Herzfeld: Some are feather dusters while they are here.

Mr McIVER: The member for Mundaring does not even reach the feather duster stage! However, I will not belittle him. His contributions in this place, particularly in relation to transport matters, are so pathetic.

The policies being pursued by the State and Federal Government's are having a very detrimental effect on the people of Western Australia. Here is one instance that will not cost the Government one cent because it has been determined by a Royal Commission. The Government has received dozens of inquiries on various policy matters. Here we have a situation where TAA wants the same rights in the north-west as Airlines of Western Australia.

Let us consider the situation with which people are faced in the north. For instance if a person from Kununurra in the Kimberley must travel to

Perth with his children it will cost him in excess of \$500 return. This trip may have to be undertaken two or three times in one year. There may be families in the north who, due to sickness, have to travel to Perth to seek medical treatment. Surely I do not have to stand here and spell out the complications that could arise because of the monopoly held by one airline company in this region. Despite the ignorance of members opposite I am sure they will agree that what I am saying is absolutely correct.

Mr Laurance: You talk about people coming down to Perth for medical reasons. You know very well that if they must come to Perth for medical reasons they will be assisted in doing so. Both the Federal and State Governments provide such a scheme; now, of course, the Federal Government controls it. The State Government makes it easy for people to come to Perth by providing them with loans for air fares and accommodation.

Mr McIVER: That is a concession, but it can be improved more, just as can education facilities. That is a red herring and I have been in this place too long to fall for it. I am talking about the business commitments of people in that area and of the monopoly one airline has over the air service. The Government did not have to make the decision because it was made by the Royal Commission. However, the Government bows and scrapes to these people, no doubt because of the funds which go to the coffers of the Liberal Party. Time and time again we hear members such as the Minister for Lands saying that the Labor Party must bow to the trade unions. What I am saying is that a decision could be made overnight which will assist the people of the north-west.

Mr Laurance: They pull the strings and you jump.

Mr McIVER: If this were done the people in the north-west could save a great deal of money and enjoy other commodities of life. Does anyone from the other side disagree with that statement? The silence answers my question.

Mr Herzfeld: No-one is listening.

Mr McIVER: When I travel to the north-west in my capacity as Opposition spokesman for transport this is the first subject with which I am greeted. Yet the member for Vasse had the temerity to accuse the Opposition of hypocrisy when it talked about private enterprise. Whenever there is an election the main theme preached by the Government is private enterprise, yet when matters affect certain sections of private enterprise the Government goes into hiding.

If there were any words that have become a myth in this Government they are "decentralisation" and "private enterprise". The Government's interpretation of private enterprise is that private enterprise is all right, but only if it helps the people who help the Government. God help anyone else who speaks against it! "Decentralisation" is a word that has been bandied around by present Government members at any available opportunity, but the policies the Government is pursuing are most certainly destroying it.

Recently the Federal Government issued an instruction to employees of the Department of Social Security visiting country regions. To be specific I will use as an illustration the town of Merredin because it is about 300 kilometres from Perth. Members of this department are not permitted to have a meal or sleep overnight in that town when they visit on departmental business. This instruction has been issued in order to save costs. However, tomorrow I am attending a swimming carnival in Brookton, and the Federal member for O'Connor, Mr Tuckey, will also be present. I think he is the Federal member, although, because of his recent intervention in State affairs, I do not really know whether he has joined the State Government ranks. I often look around the back benches to see if he is present. With his statements on transport, with his holding of meetings on transport and on the proposed joint venture, I began to think he had transferred to the State and that he was here, but we did not know it.

Mr Tuckey was going to have a Government plane to fly him to Brookton to attend a swimming carnival, and yet members of the Social Security Department are not allowed to have a meal and are not allowed to book into a motel. They travel to such places as Merredin to interview the local people and to give advice on the way to fill in application forms for pensions and the like. We are told that there are budgetary restraints. Is there anything more ridiculous? What are the priorities of the Federal Government? We must be united in our efforts and we must fight Canberra when it makes such ridiculous decisions.

Let us consider the main roads situation. I know the State Minister for Transport and I are on the same side in regard to the money allocated to the States for transport. Contracts must go to private tender. So main road employees in these regional centres are either retrenched or transferred to other towns to carry out road improvements. After they are forced to go to other areas the whole economy of their own

region is affected. The next thing that happens is that little corner stores begin to close. They may be employing a couple of young school leavers and these girls are dismissed because of the decline in the economy.

The whole problem stems from the policies of the Federal and State Liberal Governments, and members opposite cannot deny that. It is ridiculous that senior officers of the Social Security Department cannot be given money for a meal. They could put at risk their lives and those of other motorists. Members here have travelled long distances after an early start, and they know what happens if they miss a meal. What a ridiculous situation this is when the Federal Government is spending millions of dollars in other areas.

This amendment before the Chamber is not ridiculous, it is sensible. Members opposite have to get themselves into gear and fight Canberra on these issues. Cabinet also must become involved and work out a policy to assist country people.

The joint venture proposal is a retrograde step. It will end in disaster.

I disagree with the member for Murchison-Eyre when he claims the Opposition does not want to be in government next year. He must have been talking to people right out at the back of Day Dawn where they have no wireless and they cannot get *The West Australian* newspaper. If the Government continues in this vein at the Federal and State levels there will be a landslide. If the Labor Party were to put up Mickey Mouse—

Mr MacKinnon: It already has!

Mr McIVER: —for a seat it would win it. Government members should not disregard the opinion polls. I hope honourable members opposite, particularly the "boy wonders" in the Government, continue to behave in a cavalier and facetious manner. It will be much easier for us to win and we will save a great deal of money, because it costs a lot to mount an election campaign.

I trust when we come to power next year there will be a few dollars in the coffers to try to redress the situation. It gives me much pleasure to support the amendment.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [3.51 p.m.]: This amendment moved by the Opposition highlights another opportunity that Parliament gives to the Government—it allows the Government, if it wants to, of course, to take note of some policy issues where the public may be critical of either the policy itself or the Government's failure to take action on the policy.

I do not intend to become involved in the debate on whether or not the member for Morley introduced this amendment in a sincere manner. However, the Government should pay particular attention to the issues to which he referred.

Unlike the speaker who has just resumed his seat, in the case of fuel prices I do not believe we can direct most of our anger at the Federal Government. It is perfectly clear to me that it is possible for the State Government to take some action in regard to fuel prices. If the Government does not do so, it will certainly suffer the consequences at the next election. South Australia and New South Wales—and I believe Victoria will follow suit shortly—have introduced legislation which has made the wholesale price of fuel far more realistic. Similar legislation can be introduced in this State, and it should be. There is no competition in Western Australia in regard to the sale of wholesale fuel, although retail competition is intense. The sooner this State Government can introduce legislation to allow retailers to call for tenders for the supply of fuel, the better. Similarly, the sooner this Government can introduce legislation which will prevent wholesale suppliers from selling fuel wholesale to a retailer and then using their own retail outlet to sell fuel at a lower price, the better this State will be.

Country people accept that there must be a higher mark-up from retail outlets in country areas because of the lower volume of sales. However, there can be no doubt at all that motorists in Western Australia are paying at least 3c a litre more than they should. I am talking generally because some people do have access to outlets which sell fuel at a much cheaper rate, but I wonder how many people in Western Australia have access to those outlets. Certainly very few country people do. They are the people who, by the price they pay, will compensate the oil companies for the fuel outlets which sell at a very cheap rate.

Mr Carr: That's right.

Mr COWAN: The Government cannot ignore this issue. It is one on which it should take action. I assure the Premier, and everybody else on this side of the House, that the Western Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, the Primary Industry Association, and other such bodies will make it an issue, if they have not already done so. I am certain the Opposition, and certainly the National Party, will maintain it as an issue until the election. If the Government ignored the comments that are being made on issues such as this during the debate on the Address-in-Reply

and the amendments, it would be foolish in the extreme.

I remind the Government that it should be a State responsibility to do something about fuel prices. It cannot ignore this issue and say that it is the responsibility of the Commonwealth.

The Premier mentioned the items in relation to which the Government has given concessions to rural people. I do not deny that what he said is factual. The concessions and subsidies have been made available, and they are very welcome.

Mr O'Connor: And fairly so, and should be made available.

Mr COWAN: I was not too sure if the figure was \$30 million, but I will accept it from the Premier. We accept that \$30 million has been made available for SEC connections and power supplies.

Mr O'Connor: It is \$40 million annually.

Mr COWAN: Again the Premier must bear in mind that some of the rural people who are being connected can pay up to \$17 000 for a connection, whereas the connecting fee for people in the metropolitan area is no more than \$20. Perhaps the Government can address itself to that imbalance, and give the situation a bit more equity.

Statements made in this House should alert the Government to policies which it can correct. That is what the Government should be doing. A great deal of concern has been expressed, for instance, about the current joint venture; and the member for Avon, who has made transport his speciality, has said something about that. A statement has been made that the joint venture will reduce the Westrail deficit by \$7 million. We have little information about where that \$7 million will come from. We can assume only that something like \$4.5 million to \$5 million will be removed from the deficit because of the fact that about 400 employees of Westrail will become redundant. However, that still leaves \$2.5 million to \$3 million. If the consumers are to be asked to pay that cost—and I am afraid they will, because of the experience with things like chilled goods—

Mr Rushton: You are ignoring the fact that you got a contract for grain in all of the areas; and now we have to do it again.

Mr COWAN: Perhaps the Deputy Premier could inform this House of the level of discount that was granted to grain producers after the last harvest. Perhaps the Deputy Premier could tell the House the view of the Primary Industry Association when the contract was signed finally. The only advantage in the contract for grain

freights is that now, for the first time, growers do have some say in what happens. We agree that the contractual rate that was set was very poor; but that was basically because of the basis upon which it was formulated. We are hoping that, now we have our foot in the door, we may have greater influence over grain freight rates in future years.

Mr Rushton: The grain industry received what it asked for.

Mr COWAN: The grain industry did not receive what it asked for; and if that is the Deputy Premier's assessment of the negotiations, he does not deserve to be in the position he holds.

Mr Rushton: You have said that so many times, it is old hat. It is funny how we get results and you do not even acknowledge them.

Mr COWAN: If the Deputy Premier claims that he had a result in respect of the transport of grain, perhaps he would like to answer a question on notice about the level of grain that was road freighted to Perth and other regions. If that level of freight has been reduced, I concede that he has been successful in moving grain back onto rail. I will put the question on notice, just to embarrass the Deputy Premier. He has not been successful in transferring back onto rail the freight of grain that has been going by road. If that had been done, it would be a testimony to his success. He certainly has not achieved that. If he believes he has, he is kidding himself.

People are concerned about the Westrail joint venture. Until they are given fairly solid answers, particularly about the cost to the consumers and the effect of the joint venture upon employment opportunities in country towns, people will be suspicious. That is an issue about which the Government should be doing something.

As the Premier has been in office for two months only, it is a little difficult to ask him to sweep through and attack all of the policies that cause problems to country people. I will give him at least until the 1983 election, when he will have had 12 months to do something about the problems.

However, some factors have been known for a long time, and this Government and members on this side of the House as well as the other side of the House will recall that, some years ago, the member for Geraldton called for an inquiry into the cost of living in country areas. His motion was diluted by members on this side, and the inquiry was not in the form that the member for Geraldton wanted. The inquiry came up with some answers and some recommendations. It found that the cost of living in country areas was greater than in the metropolitan area. I do not

think the Government of the day has ever addressed itself to that problem. It has had plenty of time; and it must do something about the problem. It cannot be ignored.

While we are not prepared to support the amendment, I hope that the Government bears in mind the areas and issues which have been raised. They will be important to the Government in terms of its chances at the next election. Certainly they are important to the people who live in the rural areas. They will decide how to vote on the way in which the Government addresses itself to the problems that have been mentioned.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch—Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce) [4.04 p.m.]: I reject the amendment moved to the motion by the member for Morley. In doing so, I will run through many of the areas in which the Government is involved actively in assisting country people. Hopefully, during that explanation, I will answer some of the comments made by the member for Morley and the member for Avon, although both of them made very few constructive comments. In fact, I did not think either of them, or the Leader of the Opposition, suggested any policy that the Government should reverse.

The Opposition would agree that the thrust of development in this State is in the resources development area; and it is in that area that we in Western Australia have the greatest opportunity for true regional development. One needs to look only at the major developments taking place in Western Australia for that fact to become clear. Let us consider the North-West Shelf gas project at Karratha; the Worsley and Wagerup alumina refineries; the Ord River scheme; and, adjacent to that, the Ashton Joint Venture for diamonds. Then we have Yeetirrie, with the uranium mining proposal; and Kalgoorlie where, despite the fact that the price of gold is going down, we have a great, long-term future.

All those areas will be established on current costs and on current and future projected world demands with some Government moral and financial support, but no direct subsidy which Opposition policies always imply in relation to decentralisation and which is exactly what was said by the member for Morley when he spoke about Albury-Wodonga.

Mr Tonkin: I did not speak about Albury-Wodonga.

Mr MacKINNON: The members for Avon and Merredin—

Mr Tonkin: I did not speak about Albury-Wodonga.

Mr MacKINNON:—raised some issues with respect to transport. If members opposite travel to country areas, they will understand—

Point of Order

Mr TONKIN: If this Minister intends to tell lies in this place, he should be pulled up. I did not mention Albury-Wodonga. The Minister interjected and said, "What about Albury-Wodonga?" I would respect the Minister a lot more if he told the truth.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Trethowan): There is no point of order.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr MacKINNON: I will not retract anything I said, because I have no respect for the member for Morley.

Mr Carr: That reflects more on you than it does on the member for Morley.

Mr MacKINNON: If members opposite travelled through country areas, they would know transport is a key issue there and is probably the first question raised with any Minister travelling into those areas.

Mr Tonkin: That Minister of the Crown is a liar—we do not respect him.

Mr MacKINNON: I should like to assure the member for Merredin that fuel prices are a concern of the Government. However, I do not agree with the criticisms that are being made of the Government in this regard at the present time, because it is taking moves to ensure people can enjoy cheaper, better, and easier lives in the country. To achieve that, the Government intends to move towards deregulation of transport and Westrail proposes to enter a joint venture with Mayne Nickless Ltd. to that end. Similar moves are occurring in most major railways throughout the world—it is not just occurring in Western Australia—and it is a positive move for the total benefit of country people. It is not just a secondary benefit which will affect the odd person here and there who may be employed by Westrail and has to be transferred as a consequence of the change; but rather it will be to the total benefit of people in country areas.

The joint venture proposal, the freeing up of country transport and its deregulation, will be the biggest single move in the right direction this Government will make for country people in its current lifetime.

I draw the attention of members to the fact that probably the greatest potential industry for country people is tourism. During its lifetime this Government has been actively involved in the promotion of tourism. The Government's record

may be compared with that of the Leader of the Opposition who, since he entered Parliament in 1973, has made one speech on tourism and now professes to be an expert on it. The Government has shown a great deal of interest in tourism to the extent that, in a time of financial stringency, the Budget allocation to that area last year was increased by 15 per cent.

The Government's interest in tourism is indicated also by the fact that it is giving its support to regional tourist committees. We believe the regional concept of tourist committees will be of great benefit and will attract tourists to country regions. It will also assist in encouraging people to remain there.

I should like to refer also to the policies and activities of the Department of Industrial Development and Commerce. It is all very well to talk about Geraldton, Albany, and Kalgoorlie as regional centres; but the Department of Industrial Development and Commerce has what is termed a "small country towns exercise programme". Under that programme, officers of the department travel to small country towns which are being affected by change and sit down with the people there to talk about their problems and encourage them to form local committees which will identify (a) where their problem areas are, and (b) where their areas of opportunity lie. For example, in Koorda we have been successful in assisting the community to help itself. If members opposite have had any contact with country people, they will realise they are not looking for subsidies all the time. Country people are prepared to help themselves if the Government joins with them and that is what is being done through the department's exercise to which I have referred.

It is important to note also that every year the Government assists country industry when it encourages Western Australian agricultural manufacturers to go to the Orange field day.

As I have mentioned previously in this House, last year over 30 companies, most of them from country areas, went to the Orange field day and, as a consequence, we have received approximately \$5 million-worth of business from an investment of \$100 000 by the State. That was a positive form of assistance to people in country areas.

I should like to mention also the recent Government announcements with respect to regional administration. It is hoped that by this reorganisation far more emphasis will be placed on working with regional development committees and operating closely with them. I do not denigrate the work of my colleague, the Minister

for Resources Development, who, in recent times, has placed a new emphasis on this area; but we hope that, as a result of the changes we have made which include an improved staffing structure, the work of regional development committees will be highlighted and regional administration generally will be improved.

In conclusion, I should like to mention two areas of concern to country people and in regard to which this State is taking the lead ahead of the other States of Australia and which give the great lie to the amendment before us. Firstly, I refer to zone allowances. Last year a Federal Government inquiry was conducted into zone allowances, and this State was the only one which took this matter seriously and held its own inquiry which was led by my colleague, the Minister for Lands. Western Australia was the only State which submitted a comprehensive report to that Federal committee. Alas, it was not successful, but that does not mean we will not keep trying to achieve what would be a meaningful benefit for people in country areas.

Secondly, at the moment a committee is looking actively at the whole question of the communications satellite which has been proposed by the Federal Government. On that matter, this is the only State which has an active committee working, which has put forward a comprehensive proposal to the Federal Government, and which has queried the location of the satellite. It is now situated over eastern Australia rather than Western Australia and, following the answers we have received from the Federal Government, we are satisfied that positioning is correct.

I have instanced all those matters as examples of the work of a Government which is interested in the welfare of country people. Unlike the shallow approach of the Opposition, this Government adopts a policy of continuing interest in country areas and that interest is proved by its performance and not by its moving insincere amendments in this House.

MR CARR (Geraldton) [4.12 p.m.]: It is interesting to hear the Minister say the Government will proceed with positive action and not insincere amendments. It is at least to the credit of the member for Merredin that he acknowledged that the matters raised in this amendment to the Address-in-Reply are serious and of considerable concern to country people. It does little credit to the Government to simply write off the amendment as an insincere stunt or something similar to that. Most of the response from Government members in this regard seems to have been in that vein. Members opposite have claimed we were not fair in

bringing forward the amendment in this way and at this time, because it has embarrassed them. As the Leader of the Opposition has said quite clearly, we have used the same mechanism which has been used many times and if we have caught the Government in an unprepared and embarrassed state, so be it.

Mr MacKinnon: That will be the day!

Mr CARR: The Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce, who has just resumed his seat, on behalf of the Government made a number of comments to which I shall refer briefly before I make my contribution to this debate. The Minister referred to the role of industrial development in this State's decentralisation. Obviously it is valid to say industrial development is important for any decentralisation programme.

Mr MacKinnon: Resource development.

Mr CARR: But that Minister, by his delivery, clearly repeated the point I have made many times in this House and that is: This Government sees resource development as being the be all and end all of its decentralisation and regional development policy.

Mr MacKinnon: That is rubbish!

Mr CARR: In contrast to that, the ALP, while recognising the importance of industrial development, believes the Government has a major role to play in terms of Government administration, decentralisation of Government departments, improving the quality of the living conditions of country people, and, most importantly, in the area of country prices to which I shall refer in a few moments.

The Minister referred to transport arrangements and seemed happy to say that the Government is doing wonderful things to help solve transport problems and bring down costs by the joint venture proposal. That is arrant nonsense. It is becoming clear to people throughout country areas in this State that that item of policy to which the Minister referred in defence of the Government will do exactly the opposite. It will cause greater costs to be faced by most country people, it will cause there to be less services for country people, and it will force up freight rates in most country areas.

Mr Rushton: That is scaremongering.

Mr CARR: The Deputy Premier can say that is scaremongering, but it does not alter the fact that any reasonable assessment of what will happen will reveal the truth of what I have said.

The Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce referred also to tourism and said that

the Government is interested in doing all it can to help tourism. That is very good and we appreciate that the Government is interested in tourism. We are also interested in it. We believe the tourist industry, the leisure industry, and the retirement industry, are the growth industries in Australia as they are in most countries and that they have a great potential for the country areas of this State.

But it is no good talking about tourism if nothing is done about the internal air fares in this State and this nation. We need lower air fares to enable more people to come to Western Australia from the Eastern States. We need lower air fares in Western Australia so that people living in this city more easily will be able to afford to travel to the remote parts of this State. That point was outlined adequately by the member for Avon, who referred to the continued opposition by this Government to allowing TAA to operate to a greater extent in the northern areas of our State.

The Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce referred to regional administrators and the changes that are being made there. I, too, will refer to this matter a little later.

It is well known to members that during the eight years I have been here I have spoken frequently on the high cost of living in country areas of Western Australia.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Trethowan): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I ask members to reduce the level of conversation in order that the member for Geraldton might be better heard.

Mr CARR: I moved a motion in this House some seven years ago seeking a Royal Commission into the cost of living in country areas of this State, and related matters, and of course nothing came out of that. But that does not stop the issue of country prices being an increasingly major and important issue throughout country regions.

Prices are much higher in the country than they are in the metropolitan area. They are widely believed by people in the country to be excessive and unjustified. In the face of that this Government has been constantly inactive during the past eight years. I know that not a great deal of research has been done into the level of prices in the country and that we have to rely on the survey done on 15 March each year by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. That survey is called the "Relative Retail Prices of Food in Certain Localities". That survey constantly shows up higher prices in country areas and, more importantly, it has shown in the last couple of years that the gap between the level of country

prices and city prices is growing. So this already serious problem is becoming even more serious.

There is widespread suspicion that the margins are much higher on commodities other than food. Of course, there is some justification for higher prices in the country. We cannot ignore freight differentials or the question of the amount of turnover a retailer may have in a country distribution point.

This Government simply has not been active on the issue. Throughout the last eight years the ALP has been constantly appealing to the Government to set up a procedure to monitor country prices so that where we find them to be excessive the Government can use the power of public exposure against people who are forcing prices up too much. The Government has rejected this approach all along the way except on one occasion. That one occasion involved the present Premier when he was Minister for Consumer Affairs. At that time he visited Karratha and found food prices there very high. He then did exactly the sort of exercise in that town at that time that we have been advocating for the past eight years. He ordered an inquiry carried out to monitor food prices and found they were excessive. The Government went to the Press and exposed the extent to which prices were excessive, and consequently the prices fell.

The present Premier came into the House at that time and claimed great credit for this successful initiative in bringing down the excessively high prices of food in Karratha. Full credit to the Premier on that one occasion. But what he did on that occasion proves that the ALP's policy does work. He proved that the system of monitoring prices to decide whether they are excessive, and then using public exposure to bring them down, is successful. Having used that procedure on one occasion with success he has done nothing about it through the rest of the time he has been a Minister in the Government. We are disappointed that that should be so. The Government should take action to monitor country prices and to use the power of public exposure where those prices are found to be excessive. If that action does not succeed the Government should consider further action.

As I said earlier, one cause of higher prices in country areas is freight differential, and I turn now to the Westrail Joint Venture. This is a matter of very serious concern in country communities, especially in small country communities, and I shall give an example of what I mean.

I attended a meeting organised by the Country Shire Councils' Association where one council put forward a proposal to approve the Westrail Joint Venture. That proposal was overwhelmingly defeated by the rest of the shires at the meeting. There are strong feelings on this matter. If the Government is lucky, it is possible that there could be one benefit to be gained from the Westrail Joint Venture proposal. It is true that there could be a slight lowering of prices for freight to the major centres. I concede that is a possibility. But against that must be weighed the fact that unemployment will arise both among Westrail staff and the carriers, and also the serious impact it will have on regional suppliers.

I refer to the situation faced by the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce. Traditionally, the suppliers in that region have supplied the surrounding towns. A person could put an item of farming equipment on the train tonight and it would be in Mingenew tomorrow morning. With the joint venture and its profit motive, we will find that this service to small centres will be considerably reduced. There will be less service, and any service will be more expensive.

I mention now a letter written by the Deputy Premier to the Morawa Shire, a letter which was read out at the meeting to which I have just referred. The president of the Morawa Shire had raised the question of service to Morawa. The Deputy Premier said that if the Westrail Joint Venture services were not available or adequate, a competitor would be able to cart goods.

How many people will want to start a business as an alternative operator running a transport service from Perth to Morawa? More importantly, on a regional basis, how many people will want to start a private transport venture between Geraldton and Morawa? What we will see is that, to the extent there will be transport services to small country centres such as Morawa, they will be services from Perth.

I have said that the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce is very concerned, but this applies equally to businessmen in major regional centres such as Albany, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, and Esperance. I refer to businessmen who have had an historical arrangement to supply small towns in their region using Westrail services. They will find difficulty in maintaining those supplies. The transport service from the regional centres to the smaller towns around them will be less frequent because of cost. The member for Bunbury, who realises the importance of this to his electoral situation, can bleat as much as he likes, but the fact is that a company with a profit motive will not want to cart goods from Bunbury to small

towns in the region when those towns are able to obtain their services from the metropolitan area.

The Geraldton Chamber of Commerce is well aware of the situation that applied following the closure of the Meekatharra-Mullewa railway line. Historically Geraldton suppliers serviced people in the area of that line, but with its closure the region is now supplied from Perth, and the Geraldton suppliers have lost custom.

Mr Sibson: Why don't you talk about a comparison of Busselton and Flinders Bay? You're not game.

Mr CARR: The member for Bunbury obviously has some parish problem he wants to raise, but he can do so at the appropriate time. During the seven minutes left to me I wish to move to another area of Government policy, and that is its policy on petrol prices in country areas. Country people pay vastly greater amounts for their petrol than people in the city, and this Government has taken no action to remedy that disadvantage.

High petrol prices affect country people in two ways. Firstly, country people use their vehicles more than city people do because of the lack of public transport and the long distances involved in country areas. High petrol prices have an effect also on the cost of freighting goods. High fuel costs are a problem in Western Australia generally, but particularly in country areas, and this problem relates specifically to wholesale prices.

Other Australian States have acted to institute price control measures on the wholesale price of petrol, and those measures have stabilised the price of petrol in those States. As a result of those States taking that action, fuel companies have sought to recoup their lost profits by charging higher wholesale prices in Western Australia, particularly in country areas—the areas which suffer most.

In many country areas, and certainly in my electorate, the wholesale price of petrol is higher than the retail price in Perth. The differences in prices relate also to the Federal Government's policy on fuel prices. Who can forget the November 1977 election promise of Malcolm Fraser, the person who is for the time being our Prime Minister? He made the memorable statement that petrol prices in all country areas would be reduced to within 1c of the normal city retail prices without any increase in city prices. That so-called fuel equalisation policy was introduced, and has cost more than \$100 million each year, but it has had no effect; the subsidy just has not been passed on.

Of course, the Federal Government cannot control prices. Mr Fife, the Federal Minister responsible for this area in 1978, said at the time he introduced the appropriate legislation that the Federal Government could not enforce the legislation because it did not have price-fixing powers, but the States did. He was reported as making that statement in Federal *Hansard* of 16 March 1978.

Of course, this Parliament has the power to fix prices, something that is normally a State responsibility. But this Government simply is not interested in dealing with the issue.

On 20 August 1980 I asked question on notice 386 of the then Minister for Consumer Affairs, our present Premier: What action does the State Government propose to take to ensure that the benefits of the subsidy are passed on to the consumers? The Minister replied, "No action is necessary since the benefits of the subsidy are already passed on to consumers."

I asked him a follow-up question on 10 September 1980, question on notice 708, asking him to detail the information enabling him to make his conclusion. He replied, "The oil companies and their registered distributors are required to reduce the passed on freight charges by the amount of the differential." He clearly did not know what were the constitutional rights of the State Government—or he did not care.

The Government should legislate urgently to control the wholesale price of petrol in Western Australia to remove the disadvantages we presently face as a State compared with others, and to remove variations within the State. The Premier often refers to a committee examining this matter, but it has pigeon-holed the issue so that the Government does not need to do anything about the issue.

In the time left to me I will refer to regional administration. I am critical of attempts made to absorb the Office of Regional Administration and the North West in the Department of Industrial Development and Commerce. In the past I have been critical of regional administrators because the Government has used them for public

relations purposes; they have had no real power and their potential has been lost.

As the member for Bunbury said last night, regional administrators have played a constructive role in regional activities as Government representatives and key figures within regional development committees. However regional development committees always have been too development oriented, and not oriented towards the social development of their areas. Others may disagree with me, but that is my assessment of those committees, just as I believe regional administrators have not achieved their potential. We now find that regional administrators are to be absorbed by the Department of Industrial Development and Commerce, which I understand will have a slightly different name.

It is clear that the regional development committees and regional administrators will be more development oriented, and as a result will have even less time and financial resources to handle social issues such as representing the Ombudsman and community support institutions, and less time will be spent communicating with community organisations. I strongly criticise the proposed downgrading of the role of regional administrators.

The Government has failed to act in the interests of the people of this State by neglecting a number of other areas. It is sufficient to make the point that these issues concern the people of Western Australia, and if the Government does not act within the next 12 months to remedy the situation it will find that these issues will come to rest at election time.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 18

Mr Barnett	Mr Hodge
Mr Bertram	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bridge	Mr McIver
Mr Bryce	Mr Parker
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Terry Burke	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Mr Wilson
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Noes 23		Pairs	
Mr Blaikie	Mr Laurance	Ayes	Noes
Mr Clarko	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Grill	Mr Shalders
Mr Court	Mr Mensaros	Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Connor	Mr I. F. Taylor	Mr Young
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton	Mr Hill	Mr Sodeman
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson	Mr Evans	Mr Watt
Dr Dadour	Mr Spriggs	Amendment thus negatived.	
Mr Grayden	Mr Stephens	<i>Debate (on motion) Resumed</i>	
Mr Grewar	Mr Trethowan	Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Court.	
Mr Hassell	Mr Williams	<i>House adjourned at 4.56 p.m.</i>	
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Nanovich		
Mr P. V. Jones	(Teller)		

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

COMMUNITY WELFARE: COMMUNITY SERVICES TRAINING CENTRE

Voluntary Agencies

41. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Can he confirm that the community services training centre is now no longer permitted to offer training to workers from voluntary agencies?
- (2) If "Yes", at what level was the decision made to discontinue this opportunity for workers with voluntary agencies, and for what reason?
- (3) What consideration was given to the effect of such a decision on the resources of voluntary agencies which are already having to pick up bigger burdens in response to growing requests for assistance as a result of increased Government charges and the impact of financial hardship on low income families?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) No. The community services training centre is permitted to run, and is currently running, training courses for staff employed by the voluntary agencies in residential child care. Training programmes of a limited nature may be offered to workers from voluntary agencies provided they are not an additional cost on the centre. Voluntary workers will be invited to participate, if vacancies are available, in relevant training programmes specifically produced for departmental staff.

The restrictions on and reduction in the variety of training courses offered by the centre is brought about by the need to make economies in some of the department's activities in line with the Government expenditure review committee's recommendations.

- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not relevant.

EDUCATION: SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Boulder and Esperance: Funding Cutbacks

146. Mr GRILL, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

In respect of the Boulder Special School and the Esperance Special School for retarded children:

- (a) what special grants have been made available to the schools for the current year;
- (b) is it fact that the grants for these schools have been drastically cut;
- (c) on what basis are the grants calculated for the current year and for previous years;
- (d) what has been the level of the grants for each school for each of the previous four years;
- (e) for what purposes are the grants made;
- (f) how can he justify the drastic cuts in the level of the grants?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (a) An interim grant of \$40 per head based on enrolment has been made.
- (b) No. The grant already made will be supplemented by special purpose grants when the schools' submissions on priorities have been received.
- (c) Funding provided during 1982 will consist of two elements: (1) a per capita grant; and (2) special purpose funding based on school submissions. In previous years only special purpose grants were paid.

(d)	Boulder	Esperance
1981	3 500	2 000
1980	4 500	2 500
1979	Not available	
1978	400	1 200

The 1979 figure is temporarily unavailable as the records for this period have been stored pending the transfer of the Education Department to the new building.

- (e) Grants are made for recurring school expenses such as the supplementation of consumable items, the maintenance of existing teaching resources, and other priorities determined by the school.

- (f) There are no drastic cuts. It appears that the concern expressed is based on the misunderstanding that the per capita grants were all that these schools would be receiving in 1982. This is not the case.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Marketing Arrangement

149. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Resources Development:

Is the State Government prepared to accept a marketing arrangement for Western Australian diamonds, whereby the Central Selling Organisation will control the marketing of gem quality stones?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The member would acknowledge that the Ashton Joint Venture has to maximise returns on a continuing basis; and it is in the State's best interest to ensure that this occurs. At this stage, the Ashton Joint Venture has not submitted formal detailed proposals to the State Government on its marketing strategy. It is premature, therefore, to speculate on what those proposals might contain, or what might be the State Government's position on any particular aspect.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Ashton Joint Venture: Capital Outlay

150. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Resources Development:

- (1) What is the current estimated cost of capital outlay by the Ashton Joint Venture to bring the Argyle diamond deposit into full production?
- (2) Will he provide a breakdown of the capital cost details?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) I am advised that the currently estimated cost to bring the Argyle project into production at a level of 2.25 million tonnes per year is in the order of \$300 million. Studies are still in progress, and a detailed cost breakdown is not yet available.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Banks and Building Societies

151. Mr BRYCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What was the standard rate of interest charged on housing loans—
 - (a) by Western Australian building societies;
 - (b) by Western Australian banks,
 in the years—
 - (i) 1974;
 - (ii) 1975;
 - (iii) 1976;
 - (iv) 1977;
 - (v) 1978;
 - (vi) 1979;
 - (vii) 1980;
 - (viii) 1981?

- (2) What was the standard level of repayments on a \$20 000 housing loan taken out over 25 years from Western Australian building societies during each of the calendar years referred to above?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) The interest rates charged vary between building societies. The table below reflects the average between societies and also variations that occurred during the year:—

	W.A. Perm. Bld. Soc.	West Aust. Banks
(i) 1974-9¾%-12%		8%-10%
(ii) 1975-12%		10%
(iii) 1976-11%-11½%		10%
(iv) 1977-11%-11½%		10%
(v) 1978-10½%-11%		10%
(vi) 1979-11%-11½%		9.5%
(vii) 1980-11%-12%		10%-10.5%
(viii) 1981-12%-14%		11.5%-12.5%

- (2) 1974—\$178.60-\$211.00
- 1975—\$211.00
- 1976—\$196.40-\$203.60
- 1977—\$196.40-\$203.60
- 1978—\$189.20-\$196.40
- 1979—\$196.40-\$203.60
- 1980—\$196.40-\$211.00
- 1981—\$211.00-\$241.00

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Micro Computers

152. Mr BRYCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Education Department made its decision regarding the type of micro

computers to be used in State primary schools?

(2) If so, will he provide details of—

- (a) the system of funding;
- (b) maintenance provisions;
- (c) the type and specifications of computers to be installed?

Mr CLARKO replied:

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

ICEBERGS

Antarctica

153. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that plans are afoot to tow giant icebergs from Antarctica to the south-west coast of Western Australia?
- (2) (a) Has the co-operation of the Western Australian Government been sought with regard to this experiment;
- (b) if so, what was the Government's response?
- (3) (a) Has the State Government considered the value or appropriateness of this concept to provide water to the parched areas of Western Australia;
- (b) if so, what is the assessment of the Western Australian Government?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No. Considerable research into the possibility of towing icebergs from the Antarctic to temperate zones, and possibly eventually to the northern hemisphere, has been undertaken by a firm called Iceberg Transport International Limited which, until recently at least, was based in Paris. This company has considerable support from Saudi Arabia through His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed al Faisal al Saud. The manager of ITI has been in Western Australia on several occasions and has kept government departments reasonably well informed as to the progress of the company's research.
- (2) (a) No.
- (b) Answered by (a).

- (3) (a) and (b) Indications are that the problems of towing icebergs to temperate zones are not insurmountable. Icebergs under consideration require a depth of nearly 200 metres of water to float and any iceberg towed to our coast in the vicinity of Rottnest would run aground some 20 kilometres west of Rottnest. The environmental problems resulting from an iceberg grounded in such circumstances have been considered by ITI and do not appear to be unacceptable. However, the problems and the cost of conveying water, or a slurry of water and ice, from an iceberg stranded in such a position and distributing this through the metropolitan system are so immense that it is quite out of the question that icebergs will be used as a source of water for Perth in the current century.

HEALTH: WOMEN'S REFUGE CENTRES

Number, and Funding

154. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many women's refuge centres have been established in Western Australia?
- (2) Where are the centres located?
- (3) Is there a centre which caters specifically for single women who are victims of rape, domestic violence, or drug abuse?
- (4) What is the current system of funding for—
 - (a) establishment costs;
 - (b) recurrent costs,
 of women's refuges in Western Australia?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Fourteen.
- (2) Ten of the refuges are located in the metropolitan area and the others are in Northam, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, and South Hedland.
- (3) There is one centre which caters for young single women who are victims of rape, domestic violence, drug abuse, and other crisis situations which result in homelessness.

- (4) Once a women's refuge has been approved for funding by the State, the Government makes a contribution towards its establishment and/or recurrent costs on an annual basis.

DEFENCE AND SMUGGLING

Coastal Surveillance

155. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

What facilities exist for the defence and smuggling surveillance of the Western Australian coastline?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Coastal surveillance in Australia is a Commonwealth responsibility and is provided by the coastal services division of the Department of Transport.

The civilian programme operates in conjunction with the Navy and Airforce. Its aim is to combat illegal entry into Australian waters and especially unauthorized landings. The surveillance programme aims to prevent the introduction of disease, to combat smuggling and illegal immigration and to prevent despoilation of natural resources such as fish stocks. An important defence function is fulfilled. The bulk of the surveillance effort is concentrated in the north of Australia.

The bulk of the surveillance is provided by aerial search with facilities kept to a minimum by the use of civil air charters to patrol the coastal strip from Geraldton to the border with the Northern Territory.

Three customs patrol boats are stationed at Geraldton, Port Hedland, and Broome for covert surveillance largely directed at drug smuggling.

The Navy's patrol boats also provide the response and enforcement aspects of the surveillance effort and call at the State's ports as part of their programme.

In the near future two officers of the Australian Coastal Surveillance Centre will be permanently in the north of this State to improve the efficiency and co-ordination of the surveillance effort.

The State Government has made and will continue to make strong approaches to the Prime Minister to further improve the surveillance effort.

I seek leave to table a copy of a brochure produced by the Commonwealth Department of Transport titled "Australian Civil Coastal Surveillance".

The defence facilities in Western Australia involve Army, Navy and Airforce facilities and capability centred on the Perth area. In addition the defence of the Kimberley area is provided by the strong Darwin base which also possesses Army, Naval and Airforce units. There is also an Airforce base at Learmonth with the capacity to share some of the communications facilities of the United States Navy Harold E. Holt base.

The recently formed north-west mobile force made up of Army reserves has begun to make patrols of the Kimberley area from its Darwin base. The Defence Department has plans to establish a patrol boat base in the North of the State and to greatly upgrade its existing Derby airstrip.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 111).

156. *This question was postponed.*

HOUSING: ABORIGINES

Aboriginal Housing Board: Applicants, and Accommodation Units

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

- (1) How many units of accommodation in each bedroom size does the Aboriginal Housing Board have available for allocation to applicants on the current waiting list in the metropolitan area and where are these vacant units located?
- (2) What is the total number of two-bedroomed units and four-bedroomed units in the Aboriginal Housing Board's stock in the metropolitan area and how many of these units are currently vacant?
- (3) How many applicants are currently listed by the Aboriginal Housing Board for—

(a) emergent; and

(b) wait turn assistance

in each of the commission's offices at Mirrabooka, Victoria Park and

Fremantle for the following categories of accommodation—

- (i) two-bedroomed;
- (ii) three-bedroomed;
- (iii) four-bedroomed;
- (iv) five-bedroomed;
- (v) pensioner unit?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) There are at present 4 Aboriginal housing units vacant in the Metropolitan area.

North-east region—

Mirrabooka 2—3 Bedroom units.

South-east region—

Victoria Park 1—3 Bedroom unit.

South-west region—

Fremantle 1—3 Bedroom unit

(2) 2 bedroom	42
4 bedroom	65
	<hr/>
	107

None of which is vacant

- (3) (a) and (b).

	1 Bed- room (Pen- sioner Unit)	2 Bed- room	3 Bed- room	4 Bed- room	5 Bed- room
Mirrabooka					
Emergent	0	1	0	1	0
Wait Turn	0	22	19	6	2
TOTAL: 51					
Victoria Park					
Emergent	0	0	2	1	0
Wait Turn	2	3	13	6	1
TOTAL: 28					
Fremantle					
Emergent	0	1	1	0	0
Wait Turn	4	18	8	3	0
TOTAL: 35					
Metro Total—114					

CHAMBERLAIN JOHN DEERE PTY. LTD.

Government Subsidy

158. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce:

- (1) What Government subsidy has been paid to Chamberlain John Deere Pty. Ltd. for each of the past five years?
- (2) Can he confirm that the subsidy paid to this company represents \$2 500 for each tractor it sells?
- (3) What review, if any, has been made of this subsidy since the takeover of this former Western Australian company by an American company?

- (4) Is he concerned that the benefits of this subsidy are apparently being passed on to a company controlled by foreign interests?

Mr MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The only financial support provided Chamberlain John Deere Pty. Ltd. over the past 5 years was a Capital Establishment Grant of \$100 000 made in 1980 for the establishment of new foundry capacity.

No subsidies have been paid by the State to the company.

- (2) to (4) See (1)

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Hainsworth, Montrose, and Waddington: Attendance at Balga Senior High School

159. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

- (1) With regard to his department's decision to direct year 7 children from Waddington primary school and some children from Hainsworth and Montrose primary schools to Balga Senior High School as from 1983, what consideration, if any, will be given to parents with children attending these schools who have older children at Girrawheen Senior High School, who are concerned about the problems involved in having children from the same family attending two different high schools?
- (2) Is his department willing to allow parents facing this situation to opt for their children to attend either school for the first two years, after the change is made, to allow for a phasing in period?
- (3) if "No" to (2), why not?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) No firm decision has yet been made about alterations needed to the intake areas for the Girrawheen and Balga Senior High Schools. As Girrawheen has rising enrolments and numbers at Balga are falling, it is sensible to arrange an adjustment to the year 8 intakes of each school to prevent high numbers in the one and unused capacity in the other.

A sensible approach to these adjustments will be taken to avoid disruption of any family ties with one of these high schools.

- (2) and (3) Discussions will be held with the schools involved, by mid year, to identify procedures which will ensure a smooth phasing in of accepted changes to the enrolment areas for these two high schools.

HOUSING: PENSIONERS

Applicants

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

- (1) How many applicants are currently on the State Housing Commission's list for pensioner unit accommodation on—
 (a) emergent listing;
 (b) wait turn listing?
- (2) How many pensioner units are being built in the current financial year and in which suburbs and country districts are these units located?
- (3) Is the commission continuing to build bed-sitter units or are all new units separate single bedroom units?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) (a) 57
 (b) 901
- (2)
- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| Mandurah | 6 |
| Geraldton | 9 |
| Boulder | 10 |
| Bayswater | 14 |
| Balga | 15 |
| Innaloo | 21 |
| Midvale | 14 |
| Hamilton Hill | 20 |
| Carlisle | 10 |
| units | 119 |

- (3) All new units being constructed are single bedroom units.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Mortgage Relief: Funds

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

- (1) From what source have funds been provided by the State Government to the following—
 (a) interest rate subsidy (all homes);
 (b) interest rate subsidy (new homes);
 (c) sale of State Housing Commission rental homes to tenants;
 (d) help to tenants buying new homes;
 (e) Mortgage Assessment and Relief Committee?
- (2) When were these schemes first instituted and what amounts have been allocated for similar schemes or the same schemes for each of the past three years?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) and (2) The information will take some time to collate and the member will be advised by letter.

HOUSING: ABORIGINES

Local Authority Areas

163. Mr BRYCE, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

Will he please indicate the number of Aboriginal families housed by the State Housing Commission in the following local authorities:

- (a) Belmont City;
 (b) Bayswater Shire;
 (c) Swan Shire;
 (d) Kalamunda Shire;
 (e) Perth City;
 (f) Canning City;
 (g) Gosnells City.

in the following housing categories:

- (i) Aboriginal grant properties;
 (ii) other forms of housing?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (a) to (g) The commission does not keep a record of the location of Aboriginal families housed by the State Housing Commission.

161. *This question was postponed.*

HEALTH: NURSING HOME

Penn Rose: Inquiry and Report

164. Mr HODGE, to the Premier:

- (1) Why did the State Government opt for such a limited inquiry into Penn Rose Nursing Home and the death of Reginald Berryman rather than a full judicial inquiry?
- (2) What powers will his Minister have to call witnesses, carry out inspections and examine records?
- (3) Will his Minister be able to give any form of protection from possible legal action for any person who comes forward to give evidence relating to the operation of Penn Rose and the death of Reginald Berryman?
- (4) Will his Minister be holding any public hearings as part of the inquiry and will he be publicly inviting any person with knowledge of the matters under investigation to contact him?
- (5) How long is it envisaged that his Minister's inquiry will take?
- (6) Will his Minister's findings be tabled in Parliament?
- (7) Will the writ issued against the *Daily News* relating to this matter delay or inhibit his Minister's inquiry?
- (8) Will he arrange for a copy of the Attorney General's report on his inquiry into Penn Rose to be tabled?
- (9) It has been reported that the Attorney General said that he did not have any means of making an independent assessment of all the allegations concerning Mr Berryman and others, which had been made in Parliament and in the *Daily News*: Can he explain how the Minister for Health can independently assess the allegations when the Attorney General apparently finds it impossible?
- (10) Will the Minister for Health's assessment really be independent when some of the matters requiring investigation involve a department (Mental Health Services) for which he has Parliamentary responsibility?
- (11) Will the Minister for Health be engaging independent medical and legal advisers to assist him with his inquiry into the complex legal and medical aspects of Mr Berryman's treatment and

status, the role of Mental Health Services and the legality of Penn Rose holding itself out to be a nursing home when it was not registered as such?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The inquiry ordered by Cabinet was to determine whether there were sufficient grounds to justify a judicial or other inquiry bearing in mind the considerable cost which would be involved.
- (2) and (3) The Minister for Health's inquiries are directed to the Mental Health Services. As such, he will have full powers to demand detailed information from his department. There are other matters which have or will be referred to the appropriate bodies for investigation as has already been announced.
- (4) As the Minister's inquiries are directed to the operation of the Mental Health Services, there will be no need for public hearings. Any person who wishes to make a written submission to the Minister on matters connected with his inquiry may do so.
- (5) The Minister will complete his inquiries as soon as is practicable.
- (6) The results of the Minister's inquiry will be made public. The exact way in which this will be done has not yet been decided.
- (7) No.
- (8) No. The Attorney General's report was a confidential document prepared for Cabinet. However, a summary of the Attorney General's report has already been included in a Press Release issued by me on 16 March 1982.
- (9) The Attorney General was unable to make a completely independent assessment of all allegations due to his obvious inability to question persons against whom allegations had been made. The Minister for Health's inquiries are directed to his own department and not the allegations in general.
- (10) Yes.
- (11) The Minister's inquiries are directed to the operation of the Mental Health Services. In this regard he will be assisted by an independent legal adviser.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: SMOKING IN PUBLIC

Ban

165. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) What is the attitude of the Government to the submission by the Local Government Association that local government authorities be given the power to ban smoking in restaurants and in other public places?
- (2) What action is it taking with respect to this matter and when?
- (3) If no attitude has been adopted, when will the Government come to a policy decision?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (3) No submission has been made to me by the Local Government Association.

166. This question was postponed.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: SILVER PLATTER ENTERTAINMENT CLUB

Complaints

167. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Has he or the bureau received complaints about the Silver Platter entertainment club?
- (2) If so, how many and how have the complainants been assisted?
- (3) Does the Door-to-Door Sales Act apply in this matter?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) One. One restaurant did not honour a voucher. The consumer was issued with a free voucher booklet valid for a further 12 months.
- (3) Yes, with respect to permitted calling hours and the requirements for identification of the sales person and firm.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: VIDEO RECORDERS

Industry: Summonses

168. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Adverting to question 2363 of 27 October 1981, what was the result of the 12 summonses referred to in the answer to that question?

- (2) Have any further summonses been issued with respect to video recorders?
- (3) Besides the action referred to above, what other steps is the Government taking to rectify the position?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) and (2) A total of 18 summonses have now been served, however it is not possible to quickly ascertain the outcome of the original 12 summonses. Of the 18 summonses the following results have occurred—

Company	Breach	No. of Charges	Decision
Technical Services (WA) Pty. Ltd. t/a Custom Video	T. D. & F. A. Act Sec. 8(1)	4	Convicted Fined \$500.00 on each charge
Technical Services (WA) Pty. Ltd. t/a Metro Video	T. D. & F. A. Act Sec. 8(1)	2	Convicted Fined \$500.00 on each charge
Rustic Holdings Pty. Ltd. t/a Total Video	Door to Door Sales Act Sec. 3(2)	1	Charge Withdrawn Company in Liquidation

The following summonses are pending—

Company	Breach	No. of Charges	Date of Hearing
Edward Ronald Hardy t/a Mayfair Video	T. D. & F. A. Act Sec. 8(1)	4	26 March 1982
Edward Ronald Hardy	Cons. Aff. Act	3	26 March 1982
Technical Services (WA) Pty. Ltd. t/a Custom Video	Door to Door Sales Act Sec. 3(2)	1	21 April 1982
Technical Services (WA) Pty. Ltd. t/a Custom Video	T. D. & F. A. Act Sec. 8(1)	1	21 April 1982
John William Cavanagh t/a New World Video Aust.	T. D. & F. A. Act Sec. 8(1)	1	13 May 1982
Douglas Wauchope	Cons. Aff. Act Sec. 21(1)	1	1 June 1982

- (3) The Bureau of Consumer Affairs continues to monitor the activities of companies still operating in the video industry.

LIQUOR: HOTELS

Disorderly Conduct

169. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

- (1) Are the police still making raids on hotels on Sundays as part of their drive against street drinking and disorderly conduct and which was reported in the news media in November?
- (2) If so, is the problem being contained?
- (3) If not, is he confident of the problem being contained?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Not at present. Normal patrols are carried out.
- (2) Answered by (3).
- (3) Yes, a large squad can be re-activated at any time thought necessary.

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS: REAL ESTATE

Foreign Investment Review Board

170. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Government satisfied that the problem of overseas ownership of Western Australian real estate is being satisfactorily supervised for the Foreign Investment Review Board?
- (2) What is the Government's policy with respect to real estate being purchased below the threshold of the Valuation Investigation Review Board's examination of \$350 000?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The Foreign Investment Review Board refers all proposals in excess of \$350 000 for acquisition of property in Western Australia by foreign interests to the State Government for comment. Each case brought to our attention is considered by a Cabinet subcommittee which advises the board of the State Government's views on the proposal. This is an effective and useful arrangement which the Government considers is a satisfactory way of handling the matter.
- (2) The Government has established a committee under the Attorney General as convenor to consider and report on ways in which acquisition of property by foreign interests may be detected, monitored and, if necessary, brought under some form of statutory control.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Plain Wrap and Non-branded Lines: Protection

171. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is the Government satisfied that in the case of Coles plain wrap and Charlie Carter's non-branded lines there is adequate protection for consumers?
- (2) Given that there is no indication of the packaging wholesale or manufacturing company indicated on the articles concerned, is the Government satisfied that responsibility for defective goods can be sheeted home to those responsible?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. The Government is completely satisfied. There is a statutory requirement under the Weights and Measures Act for identification of manufacturer or packer of pre-packed goods by name and address or by code number registered with the Weights and Measures Branch of the Department of Labour and Industry. Where the packer is also the retailer the retailer himself is responsible at law for defective goods.

HEALTH: CANCER

Register of Patients

172. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

What is the Government policy with respect to a register of cancer patients which has been suggested as a means of establishing environmental causes of cancer?

Mr YOUNG replied:

The Government strongly supports the establishment of a cancer registry. Once accurate annual incidence and mortality rates are available, surveillance for the effects of environmental carcinogens can be undertaken both to detect previously unknown carcinogens and to monitor groups of individuals exposed to known carcinogens, thus enabling preventive measures to be taken.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: OVERSEAS GOODS

Guarantees

173. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Is the Government satisfied that guarantees on goods bought overseas by Australian citizens are effective in a real and practical way?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

Guarantees on goods purchased by Australian citizens overseas may be enforced where arrangements are made by overseas dealers or manufacturers to have such guarantees honoured in Australia. Consumers intending to purchase goods overseas should check on

this aspect prior to completing a purchase.

Unless this facility exists there is very little Australian consumers can do to enforce such guarantees unless private legal action is instituted, most probably in the country of purchase.

Purchasers of imported goods in Australia are protected by the Trade Practices Act as the importer is deemed to be the manufacturer for the purposes of the manufacturer's warranty provisions of that legislation.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: DOLLS

Dangerous

174. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister
Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

What has been the decision of the consumer products safety committee with respect to children's dolls imported from Korea which have been found to have dangerous spikes sticking out from the necks?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

An interim prohibition of sale was published by the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs in *Government Gazette* No. 95 of 1981 (December 18) at p. 5248. A permanent prohibition of sale was published by the Commissioner in *Government Gazette* No. 4 of 1982 (January 22) p. 237.

It is to be deplored if the operational time of the Bureau of Consumer Affairs is to continue to be wasted responding to questions the answers to which are a matter of public record.

175. *This question was postponed.*

HEALTH: FOODSTUFFS

Date Markings

176. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

Which foodstuffs are exempt from date markings in Western Australia at the present time?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) As in schedule 2 of date marking of packaged foods.

Schedule 2

SHORT LIFE FOODS EXEMPT FROM DATE MARKING REQUIREMENTS.

- (a) Meat products in unprinted edible casing not further packaged.
- (b) Alcoholic beverages other than wine sold in a package containing a collapsible plastic liner.
- (c) Fresh fruit or vegetables in packages which do not obscure the nature and quality of the fruit and vegetables.
- (d) Packaged sandwiches and filled bread rolls for sale on day of preparation.
- (e) Food in packages of surface area less than 50 square centimetres.
- (f) Carbonated soft drinks.
- (g) Icecream and related products less than 200 millilitres in volume.

- (2) Foods which have a minimum durable life of more than 2 years.
- (3) Food weighed, counted or measured and wrapped in the presence of the purchaser.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: BUREAU

Faulty Furniture

177. Mr TONKIN, to the Honorary Minister
Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is he aware of complaints made against Barkers of Victoria Park by Mrs P. Thompson of 33B Windsor Place, Kallaroo, with respect to a faulty lounge suite?
- (2) Is it a fact that an officer of the Consumer Affairs Bureau told Mrs Thompson that if deterioration occurred to furniture within 12 months it was the store's responsibility?
- (3) If so, what is the authority for such a statement?
- (4) Why was the bureau unable to assist Mrs Thompson?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not as a matter of record.
- (3) Answered by (2).

- (4) The bureau negotiated successfully for initial repairs. The complainant remained dissatisfied and was therefore referred to the Small Claims Tribunal.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: BAYSWATER SHIRE

Election Expenses

178. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Has she received a request from the Shire of Bayswater requesting that a submission be made—presumably to the Australian Government—requesting that the Tax Assessment Act be amended to provide that election expenses be made an allowable deduction for local government councillors?
- (2) If so, has such a submission been made?
- (3) If not, will it be made sometime in the future?
- (4) What is the Government's policy with respect to this matter?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (3) Although the Shire of Bayswater asked for my comments on the possibility of election expenses being recognised as a taxation deduction, it did not request that a submission on the question be made to the Australian Government or to anyone else.
- (4) The matter falls entirely within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Government.

TRAFFIC: LIGHTS

Beechboro Road-Morley Drive Intersection

179. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it intended to install traffic control lights at the confluence of Morley Drive and Beechboro Road in Morley?
- (2) If so, when will such lights be installed?
- (3) How many—
 - (a) fatal;
 - (b) non-fatal accidents,
 have occurred at that intersection during the past three years?

- (4) Is he aware of the considerable concern being expressed in the community at the traffic hazard there for students attending Hampton Senior High School and Hampton Primary School?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Signal installations are undertaken on a priority basis having regard to traffic volumes, potential hazard, etc, so as to achieve the best benefit from available funds. At this stage the Beechboro Road-Morley Drive site does not have sufficiently high priority. However, the Main Roads Department is keeping the site under review.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) (a) Nil fatalities January 1979—December 1981.
 (b) Twenty other accidents January 1979—December 1981.
- (4) Yes. Arrangements will be made for an assessment by the school crossing protection committee to determine the need for a guard controlled crossing.

TRAFFIC: ACCIDENTS

Evelyn Street-Hicks Street Intersection

180. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

- (1) How many accidents have occurred at the junction of Evelyn Street and Hicks Street, Gosnells, in the last two years?
- (2) What action can be taken to reduce the number of accidents at this intersection?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Four accidents officially recorded to 15 March, 1982, and it is known that two accidents occurred on the morning of Wednesday, 24 March, 1982.
- (2) Normal policing routine to ensure compliance with "Stop" sign associated with the intersection and given as prime cause.

GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES

Applications: Number

181. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce:

- (1) What is the number of applications received by the Government for

financial assistance under each of the following schemes contained in section 7(A) of the Industry (Advances) Act since April 1980—

- (a) the guarantee scheme;
 - (b) the residual indemnity scheme for small business;
 - (c) the capital establishment scheme;
 - (d) the regional industry assistance scheme?
- (2) What is the number of firms approved for assistance in each of the schemes identified in (a) to (d) in (1)?
- (3) What is the value of assistance to each firm assisted under the schemes identified in (a) to (d) in (1)?
- (4) What number of firms assisted since April under each scheme (a) to (d) in (1), are small businesses as defined under the Act?

Mr MacKINNON replied:

- (1) (a) 35
- (b) Nil
- (c) 19
- (d) 15
- (2) (a) 13
- (b) Nil
- (c) 2
- (d) 4
- (3) (a) (i) \$200 000
- (ii) \$50 000
- (iii) \$16 000
- (iv) \$70 000
- (v) \$2.5 million
- (vi) \$10 000
- (vii) \$120 000
- (viii) \$1.1 million
- (ix) \$602 000
- (x) \$1.312 million
- (xi) \$227 000
- (xii) \$242 000
- (xiii) \$1.1 million
- (3) (b) Nil
- (3) (c) (i) \$90 000
- (ii) \$12 000
- (3) (d) (i) \$11 200
- (ii) \$29 000
- (iii) \$32 000
- (iv) \$45 000

- (4) The words "small businesses" are not defined under the Act.

HOUSING: STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Private Industry: Partnerships

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

- (1) What details can he provide of the State Housing Commission's partnerships with private industry in each of the last three financial years?
- (2) (a) What instances can he give of the State Housing Commission entering into land partnerships with private builders to produce package deals for home buyers; and
- (b) at what price are these package deals being made available?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) Partnerships have been entered into for joint subdivisions of land in a number of locations.
- (2) (a) and (b) The land partnership initiative proposes that land would be made available by the commission to developers to finally produce homes at a reasonable price. This matter is receiving current consideration.

COMMUNITY WELFARE: CHILD WELFARE ACT

"Children in Limbo"

183. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) In view of the reference in His Excellency the Governor's Speech to "significant changes to procedures" in respect of children who need the security of a permanent home arising from the "children in limbo" report, will these changes involve legislative action as has been previously inferred in statements by his predecessor, and when will such legislation be introduced?
- (2) What is the current state of progress in the assessment of the "children in limbo" report and what further public consultation is to take place with respect to this report?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) Yes. Legislative proposals are currently being considered.

I am unable to indicate at this stage when such legislation will be introduced.

- (2) The "Children in Limbo" report was released to the public in May 1981. A backlog procedures committee has been set up and is now working on a report. This Committee consists of Government and non-Government members. It will be suggesting ways and means of resolving the placement of those children whose special needs are not currently being met by the welfare system.

A permanency planning working party, consisting of Government and non-Government people is soon to be established. It will make proposals which will minimise the likelihood of further wards of the State being caught up in a system that cannot provide for their special needs.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Mortgage Relief: Commonwealth Funds

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

- (1) What details does the State Government have about the Federal Government's \$20 million housing crisis relief provision announced last week?
- (2) How much of the \$20 million is to be made available to Western Australia?
- (3) Has the State Government agreed to match these funds, dollar for dollar, and when will this crisis relief be available?
- (4) (a) Who will be eligible for this crisis relief; and
(b) on what grounds will it be made available?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) to (4) Details of the proposal have not yet been established.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Mortgage Relief: Tax Rebates

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

- (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 subsequent home buyers facing equally serious difficulties, 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) Full details of the scheme will not be available until approximately 5 April. All enquiries should then be directed to the Australian Taxation Office.
- (2) The State Government has already taken a number of initiatives to assist home buyers, and the problem will be continually kept under review.

EDUCATION: TECHNICAL

College: Geraldton

186. Mr CARR, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Education:

What is the present status of plans and preparations for hostel accommodation to be provided at Geraldton Technical College?

Mr CLARKO replied:

Sketch plans and cost estimates have been prepared. Further work has been deferred pending availability of funds.

TRAFFIC

Driver Education Programme

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

Further to advice from him during 1981 that the then Road Traffic Authority was examining the possibility of introducing a scheme of driver education as a replacement of the disbanded Education Department scheme, what stage has been reached towards the introduction of such a scheme?

Mr HASSELL replied:

Research stage to develop the necessary refinements and respective roles of the departments involved including establishing the manner in which the scheme will be financed.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

GAMBLING: WILLIAMS COMMITTEE REPORT

Premier: Request for Deletion

33. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

Referring to the ABC programme "Nationwide" last evening when it was stated that before the presentation of the Williams report to the joint Government parties the Premier attempted to persuade members of the committee to delete from the report their recommendation that existing Northbridge gambling clubs be licensed, I ask the Premier—

- (1) What are his reasons for doing so?
- (2) Why did the committee not respect his wishes?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) I remind the Leader of the Opposition that I did advise the committee, but had no meeting with it.

GAMBLING: CASINO

*Establishment:
Discussions with Government*

34. Mr CARR, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he or any member of the Government or anyone acting on behalf of the Government, entered into formal or informal discussions with members or representatives of any groups desirous of establishing a casino in Perth?
- (2) If so, who has been involved, what was the nature of the discussions, and what conclusions were reached?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) Many people have discussed the matter with me and many members of our party. No arrangements have been made with any company, nor will there be, nor do we envisage that the Government will proceed with any arrangements in connection with a casino. At this stage, the matter has not been decided by Cabinet, nor by the party room, and there is no assurance that a casino will be brought into the State.

TRANSPORT: ROAD

Trains: Stock Cartage

35. Mr STEPHENS, to the Premier:

With respect to requests to the Minister to over-rule a decision not to license road trains for stock carrying from Armadale to Albany, I ask—

- (1) Is the Minister aware that a considerable number of people believe that human life is of greater value than the possible financial saving to Borthwicks?
- (2) Is he aware that stock transporters in the great southern region at present back-load stock to Borthwicks at a rate per head lower than the amount which will be charged if road trains were to be used?
- (3) Is he aware that road trains into the area could affect the viability and/or increase transport costs in the region?
- (4) Is he aware that if a greater proportion of stock in the region were purchased direct by Thomas Borthwick & Sons there would be no need for road trains?
- (5) Can the Minister give an assurance that road trains will not be licensed in the foreseeable future?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (5) No final decision has yet been made on this issue.
The extension of the use of road trains in the southern part of the State is currently under review.

GAMBLING: CASINO

Tenders: Worldwide

36. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) As indicated on the "Nationwide" programme last night, did he suggest or insist to members of the Williams committee on gambling that they recommend that tenders for a casino in Perth be called worldwide?
- (2) If so, what were his reasons for doing so?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was not listening.

Mr Bryce: I was listening to "Nationwide" last night, too.

Mr O'CONNOR: He was not listening to me here today. I have already stated in a reply to the member for Geraldton that I had no discussions with the committee.

Mr Bryce: Or the committee members?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order!

Mr O'CONNOR: Collectively, no. Of course, I have—

Mr Brian Burke: Individually? Did you suggest it to one or other of them?

Mr Bryce: That is what you were accused of last night.

Mr O'CONNOR: I have not, nor have I had meetings with the local people from the other side of the line. I suggest the Leader of the Opposition and his brother discussed the issue in a Chinese restaurant!

Mr Bryce: You really love his brother!

Mr O'CONNOR: The Leader of the Opposition can easily say that is not true by signifying he did not have such a meeting.

Brian Burke: I am not saying that is not true, but I have had meetings with so many people who have had meetings with you!

TRADE UNION: BUILDERS LABOURERS' FEDERATION

Strike Pay

37. Mr CRANE, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Premier seen reports on a pay-off of \$297 000 to the Builders Labourers' Federation as strike pay?

- (2) What does his Government intend to do in cases such as this?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I thank the member for Moore for some brief notice of the question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Government has written to the Commonwealth Government to ascertain whether taxation has been imposed on the moneys involved. We are concerned about blackmail being used in a matter such as this. Consideration has been given as to whether this company and others acting in sympathy should be excluded from Government contracts.

GAMBLING: WILLIAMS COMMITTEE REPORT

Breach of Confidentiality

38. Mr CARR, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the allegation on last night's "Nationwide" programme that operators of Northbridge gambling clubs have had access to the Williams report on gambling and that they have on more than one occasion discussed it? Does the Premier know whether this is correct?
- (2) If he does not know, what inquiries does he or the Liberal Party propose to make to ascertain whether such a serious breach of confidentiality has occurred?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) I heard of this only this afternoon and obtained a copy of that report which, in many cases, is totally inaccurate. I am ashamed that people such as those could make such totally inaccurate statements on the air and to the people of the State to whom they have a responsibility for accuracy.

Mr Laurance: Hear, hear!

Mr O'CONNOR: I intend to have discussions with some of my people in connection with it. If they or anyone did receive a copy of the report, I have no knowledge at this stage of who gave it to them.

Mr Brian Burke: I am happy to say I have met a lot of people, most of whom tell me they are friends of the Premier.

Mr O'CONNOR: Did you meet with a group of eight on that evening?

Mr Brian Burke: I met with two of them and they told me they were good friends of yours, actually.

Mr O'CONNOR: I thought the Leader of the Opposition would say something like that. Did he ask them for a donation? He is worried about it, is he?

GAMBLING: CASINO

Malaysia: Genting

39. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Premier at any time had discussions with anybody associated with the operations of the Genting casino in Malaysia?
- (2) If so, what was the substance of those discussions and with whom did they take place?
- (3) Does he have any knowledge of any efforts by this group or anyone associated with it to obtain permission to operate a casino in WA?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) I have been to Genting, as I have been to every other casino that I know of within shooting distance from this State.

Mr Bryce: A bit of a gamble!

Mr O'CONNOR: I have met the people involved, but have had no discussions with them to the extent indicated by the Leader of the Opposition; nor would they receive any consideration above anyone else, if that is what he is indicating. If a casino were set up in this State—and I do not say it will be—independent people will be making the decisions, anyhow.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Oath of Office

40. Mr STEPHENS, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that the ministerial oath of office includes *inter alia*, "to act without fear or favour"?

- (2) Has the Minister ever issued instructions that certain members of Parliament be excluded or removed from an invitation list being compiled through one of his departments?

(3) If "Yes" to the above—

(a) for what reason?

(b) Is such action consistent with the ministerial oath of office?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes, the oath to which the member refers reads as follows—

I will do right to all manner of people after the Laws and Usages of the Realm, without fear or favour, affection or illwill.

- (2) and (3) I will be pleased to investigate any specific circumstance regarding departmental invitation lists if the member will let me know the details. If the member is alluding to discussions on Government policy, however, it is not normal practice to issue general invitations to such meetings.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

Premiums

41. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is it correctly reported in this evening's issue of the *Daily News* that third party insurance premiums are to be raised again soon?
- (2) What will be the amount of increase in view of the fact that premiums were raised by 50 per cent in 1980 and 25 per cent in 1981—increases far above the inflation rate?
- (3) Is the Government intending to do something about the spiralling MVIT premiums in order to give some relief to long-suffering Western Australian motorists?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (3) I am aware of the proposed increases only from what I have read in the Press today. My reading indicates that the MVIT did not forward the proposal for increased premiums to the Government; therefore I am unable to help the member.

The increasing amounts being awarded by courts to those people who are victims is a problem. No Government has any power to direct a court at any time as to the amount of payment it should or should not make to a victim of an accident. Many of these awards are made some eight years after an accident, and this is a difficult problem because the premiums were paid to cover awards that are made eight years later.

I have had no approach from the MVIT for an increase in premiums.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Legislation

42. Mr McIVER, to the Deputy Premier:

Would the Deputy Premier please elaborate on his reply to my previous question in relation to the joint venturer, and when legislation will be introduced in this session? Would he advise whether legislation will be presented before the House rises on 13 May or in the spring session?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The next step with the joint venturer is for the legislation and the agreement to be approved by Cabinet. It must get over that hurdle and then it would be my intention to introduce the legislation this session. If Parliament allows its passage, it will be completed this session and we would be in a position to introduce the change by 1 July.

FEDERAL BUDGET: INTERNATIONAL OIL PRICES

Effect on Strategy

43. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the danger posed to Commonwealth Budget strategy by the threatened cut in international oil prices?
- (2) Can he detail the likely impact of this on State finances?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes, I am aware of the danger.

- (2) No. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to place the question on the notice paper I will ensure that an investigation is made and I will report to him on this matter.

HOUSING: WELFARE

Additional Commonwealth Funds

44. Mr WILSON, to the Premier:

- (1) Why has the Premier and his Honorary Minister for Housing gone quiet over the past few weeks on the proposal put by the Housing Ministers and Premiers to the Federal Minister for Housing and Construction for an extra \$200 million for welfare housing to restore the 53 per cent cutback in Federal funds for this purpose over the past three years?
- (2) Has the State Government acquiesced to the Federal Government in this area?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) I would have thought that the member for Dianella would be aware of the concern this Government has for people who require welfare housing. He should be aware also that we have done more than any other State in Australia in our attempts to overcome the problems. The Honorary Minister for Housing at present is in the Eastern States meeting with other ministers to discuss this problem. As far back as July efforts were made to obtain funds to assist in the housing field—

Mr Wilson: You have been quiet over the past few weeks.

Mr O'CONNOR: We have pressurised the Commonwealth Government—

Mr Wilson: That is not so.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is news to me, because as recently as last week I was criticised by the Leader of the Opposition for an article I had placed in the newspaper indicating some of the Government's efforts to improve the housing situation in this State. I expressed our concern about the effects of welfare housing cutbacks. I have no argument with the member for Dianella about the cutbacks. The situation does worry us and we are doing all we can. The Honorary Minister will be

discussing this problem at the conference tomorrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: WANNEROO SHIRE

Crown Law Department: Opinion

45. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Local Government:

Can the Minister explain how a legal opinion, prepared by the Crown Law Department, relating to land dealings by former Wanneroo shire councillors—which the present Wanneroo Shire Council sought from her—was made available to dissident ratepayers for a recent ratepayers' meeting?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

I believe that opinion was made available at a time when I was not the Minister.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

North-West Shelf: Purchase by SEC

46. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) How much gas has the State Energy Commission contracted to purchase from the North-West Shelf joint venturers?
- (2) What price will be paid for the gas?
- (3) How much of the gas that the State Energy Commission has contracted to purchase does it have customers for?
- (4) Who are the customers, and how much gas is each committed to take?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (4) I thank the leader of the Opposition for notice of the question which he rang to my office, but unfortunately I have been unable to obtain the details at this stage. Some work is involved in obtaining the details, but if he wishes to place his question on notice I will obtain the answer.

PUBLIC SERVICE: PUBLIC SERVANTS

Members of the Opposition: Access

47. Mr TONKIN, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it the Government's policy that civil servants shall not speak to members of the Opposition?
- (2) Is he aware of the prescription of the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Consumer Affairs which forced the cancellation of an appointment I had with the Consumer Products Safety Committee?
- (3) Will he investigate the matter and enunciate his Government's policy on the matter?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) It would be rather ridiculous for a member of Parliament who had a wife working in the Public Service to be unable to speak to her! However, that may be better in some ways. That instruction was not given by me.

HOUSING

Low Income Earners: Assistance

48. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Before the Prime Minister made his recent statement regarding proposals to assist low income earners to obtain housing, did he make any contact with the Premier personally or with the State to give any pre-advice as to what he intended to do?
- (2) Have we requested the Commonwealth Government to take part in a television programme to explain that Government's policy to the people of Western Australia?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes, the Prime Minister did contact me to let me know that something would happen and that a statement was to be made. He did not give me any details of it; therefore, I was unable to give the full details of the scheme that was to be put forward.
- (2) No.

TOWN PLANNING: SCARBOROUGH
BEACH

High-rise Development

49. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

Further to his answer to question 123 I ask—

- (1) When and by whom was the Environmental Protection Authority requested to report?
- (2) To whom will the EPA report be given?
- (3) Will he table a copy of the EPA report?
- (4) Will site development and construction be permitted pending delivery of the EPA report?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) On 19 March 1982 by the Conservation Council of Western Australia.
- (2) If the EPA makes a report, it will be to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment as required under section 56 of the Environmental Protection Act.
- (3) This will be decided when it is known whether the EPA intends producing such a report.
- (4) This is a matter for the local authority.
