

Legislative Council

Thursday, 4 August 1983

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER

Televising: Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths): I wish to advise members that I have today given approval for the ABC to take some film to update their film library for the purpose of future references to the Legislative Council. The cameras will probably be in the Chamber for 15 or 20 minutes.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: STANDING COMMITTEE

Membership: Motion

HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [2.46 p.m.]: I move

That the Hon. J. M. Brown be appointed as a member of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

The appointment of a member to the Standing Committee on Government Agencies is necessary due to the resignation of the Hon. Joe Berinson from the committee as from 2 August.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 3 August.

HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [2.48 p.m.]: The Opposition has already indicated that it is quite happy to deal with the Supply Bill before the completion of the Address-in-Reply debate. Indeed, as I have indicated to the Leader of the Government, the Opposition is anxious to expedite the passage of the Supply Bill, but, as has been customary on these occasions members may make observations on topics which may appear to be unrelated to the Supply Bill. I propose to make a number of observations—which are in fact related to the Bill—on the comments made by the honourable Minister in his second reading speech.

Firstly, I would like to say briefly that I note the revenue fell short of the Estimates by some \$10.6 million, that is, slightly less than \$11 million. The net result was a deficit of \$14.2 million at 30 June. I would like to make the point that this deficit of \$14 million is approximately 0.5 per cent of the expenditure of \$2 339

million—which, in relation to the amount of expenditure is really quite minute and is a relatively good result.

Indeed, it was thought at one stage, as the Minister pointed out, that the deficit would have been higher. The Minister mentioned that when the Government took office it thought that the deficit could be of the order of \$20 million. However, some ominous trends emerged later and the Government believed it might be as high as \$30 million. In effect, it has now been brought back to some \$14 million as a result of applying the interest on miscellaneous funds which reached some \$31 million and which was brought to account during the financial year. That interest amount, of course, is always available and traditionally it is kept in the same financial year.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the honourable members to curtail their audible conversations. Some members are indicating that they are having difficulty hearing the Leader of the Opposition's speech.

Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: As I understand it, it is quite normal for that interest to be taken into account if necessary in order to balance the Budget, and that is what has happened on this occasion. However, it is not usual to take into account the interest accruing for the then current financial year which finally accrues at the end of the financial year and which is traditionally carried forward. As I understand it that is what has happened on this occasion.

The \$37 million which accrued to 30 June has been, it appears, carried forward into the new financial year, and I think this is quite normal. When an amount of some \$37 million credit is carried forward—which, as I say, is normal—it illustrates having a deficit of some \$14 million is not of any great significance at that particular moment in time; that is, at the 30 June.

While the Government has referred from time to time to the inherited deficit—the deficit which the Government inherited from the former Government—when one really looks at the comments made by the Minister, one can see that there are very good reasons for the deficit which occurred. For example, there was a shortfall in various areas where the Government expected to obtain further income. The number of land dealings and associated transactions declined considerably. Although this was apparent earlier in the financial year, the transactions fell off to a greater extent than was earlier anticipated. Similarly, there were outgoings, which could not have been anticipated. The natural disaster payments were \$3 million above estimate, and in regard to the Education Department expenditure, there was

an allocation of \$8.6 million due mainly to higher than expected salary and wages costs.

Those factors which contributed so substantially to the deficit could not have been laid at the door of the previous Government. I am not saying they have been necessarily and directly laid at the door of the previous Government, but references to the inherited deficit—whilst technically correct in the sense that the new Government has not been in office for the full financial year and has necessarily had to take over in mid-stream—nevertheless do seem to cast an aspersion or a reflection upon the previous Government. However, the facts as stated by the Minister in his speech should quite effectively dispel any allegation which might otherwise be thought to be made in that connection.

The only other observation I wish to make is to say that one has to pay some very careful attention to increases in charges by Governments. Middle income families are being hardest hit of all in our community today by any increases in Government charges. There is no special alleviation for middle income families as has been announced for some people in the lower bracket. There is a limit to which the public can be charged, and we cannot go beyond that limit. Governments must learn, just as private industry has had to learn, that they have to trim their needs to the available funds. I know that any Treasurer will say, "Well, we are doing this", but I am saying that Governments must make a special effort in this connection because there seems to have developed an attitude that all the Government has to do if it needs another 10 per cent to balance its books for the year is to increase its charges by 10 per cent.

I am talking in generalities, Sir, but this seems to be an attitude which is prevalent in Government circles. Private industry cannot do that. If private industry seeks to increase its charges, it must face competition from other firms in the same line of business or, alternatively, the customers will find substitute goods or services or make alternative arrangements. So private industry knows very well that it has to institute economies if it is to balance its books and accounts.

However, this reasoning does not seem to have been properly received by some Government authorities which have a monopoly in their particular area. Where there is a Government monopoly, or indeed any monopoly, the public have no alternative. I am referring to such areas as the supply of water, gas, and electricity. I believe it would be a salutary measure for the Government to engage, by contract, private business consultants to overhaul departmental estimates and pro-

cedures. Such an overhaul should be carried out by the consultants in exactly the same way that a public company has to overhaul various sections of its enterprise from time to time when it finds that its costs and expenses are getting out of hand. It is not good enough to do this by internal methods. Outside people should carry out independent performance audits. With a problem such as this, someone must look in from the outside, people who are independent of the establishment, so that a scrutiny of the most minute kind can be applied to Government undertakings in the same way as private enterprise.

With those comments I support the Bill.

HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [2.57 p.m.]: I wish to make some remarks to the measure before the House. Firstly, I am a little intrigued that the wording of the Bill is just about identical to the wording of the Bill that was introduced last year by a different Government, and the same as the Bill that was introduced the previous year also. I thought that this Government would be innovative in its approach to legislation and I hoped that we would have something different in the title of the Bill. I will not repeat the wording of the Bill, but the first five paragraphs are identical to the first five paragraphs of the 1982 Bill. I notice that the previous Government did change the words around a little, but this Government has not done so. The only thing different in the Bill is the sum of money to be raised.

It is interesting to note that the grant of supply being sought is \$1 240 million as against \$1 130 million last year and \$1 020 million the previous year. Each year shows a 10 per cent increase. It is a good round figure this 10 per cent. Perhaps it has a hidden meaning, or perhaps it makes for an easy exercise in preparing the Bill. Certainly it is the first time I have noticed the similarity in the wording, but perhaps it has been fairly common usage over the years.

This Bill seeks an issue of \$1 100 million from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The previous year the figure was \$1 000 million and the year before that it was \$900 million; that is, a 10 per cent increase each year. Once again, we see this magical figure of 10 per cent.

This year the Government expects to allocate \$80 million to the credit of the General Loan Fund. The year before the figure was \$75 million and the figure was the same the previous year. Here we have that magical 10 per cent increase again. Provision is made in the Bill also for an issue of \$60 million to enable the Treasury to make such temporary advances as may be necessary.

Last year the wording in this context was the same, although the figure was \$55 million, while the year before it was \$45 million. That situation is evident generally throughout the Bill.

Further down we have exactly the same wording to the effect that the 1982-83 Budget, which was presented to Parliament on 30 September last, forecast a balanced Budget with both revenue and expenditure estimated at \$2 335 500. Last year the figure was \$2 072 132. By and large, that is a 10 per cent difference once again. This magical figure of 10 per cent seems to crop up quite frequently throughout the Bill.

I admit that, from that stage on, we start to get an explanation for the Budget blowout to some degree last year. However, the Leader of the Opposition has adequately pointed out—I am not going to go over his argument—that it was a minute blowout of approximately 0.5 per cent.

When we look at the matter a little further, we see many reasons are advanced for the Budget blowout, which was \$14.2 million. When the Government assumed office, the indications were that the blowout would be in the order of \$21 million. It has been indicated here that, later on, the Government thought the blowout would possibly be \$30 million.

I would hazard a guess that, when the Labor Party came into office, the figure of \$30 million was a composited addition of the actual deficit forecast of the previous Government plus the cost of fulfilling the promises made by the Labor Party prior to the election.

I am sure the magical figure of \$30 million was arrived at partly as a result of the promises made by the incoming Government having to be met. Those promises may do us all a lot of good, but the Government was elected to office and found it had to add that figure to the deficit. The Government found it could not possibly meet the promises it had made to the public unless it increased its charges.

I distinctly heard that after four months of being in office, the Government had managed to reduce the expected deficit by a certain amount, and I should imagine that was mainly due, once again, to its decision not to meet particular promises it had made, because it thought they were impractical or impossible to implement.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: You have now made two wrong guesses, Mr Gayfer.

Hon. H. W. GAYFER: That may be right. Bearing in mind the way the Bill has been presented to the House with the same humdrum contents, there must be some rather simple explanations for it, otherwise the Government would

have produced an entirely different speech from that which we have heard.

As we examine the Attorney's second reading speech, we find another paragraph which is the same as that in last year's Estimates speech which reads in the following terms—

Looking at the Budget result in a little bit more detail, subdued real estate demand and different economic conditions were responsible for a shortfall.

That was said last year during the previous Government's term of office, but this Government is only adding to what was said would happen last year.

The next observation is the aspect which intrigues me about the entire Bill; and that is that the mining revenue and timber royalties were also less than expected, but these areas were more than offset by increased revenue earned by public utilities largely due to the increased grain haulage by Westrail.

That is a very important factor, because the Government is saying that, if the grain haulage had not been as good as it turned out to be, the deficit would have been considerably higher. Alternatively, the Government may be saying that the costs were so high that it was just as well we had a good harvest with plenty of grain to haul, otherwise the costs would have been considerably higher in terms of freight losses.

On page 4, the Attorney went on to say that, despite efforts to contain expenditure, the overall Budget allocation to Westrail, stateships, and the Metropolitan Transport Trust, was exceeded by about \$8 million in the case of Westrail.

Here I hazard a guess again—I may be wrong—to the effect that the recent reopening of the Fremantle-Perth railway line will increase that deficit and certainly a loss will be incurred, which, in turn, will have to be passed on to the users of the railway line.

Indeed, if the grain production is not as high this coming harvest as it was last year—at present there is some doubt about that—members can rest assured that the deficit will either be higher or increased charges will be contained in the Budget to counteract a possible loss.

It is at this point that I begin to wonder exactly what will occur as far as the railways are concerned in order to counteract what may be a deficit this year and, indeed, a larger deficit than last year's. I wonder what sorts of charges may be imposed for the forthcoming harvest, admitting, of course, that there is a contract. I am well aware

of that, but we must also take into account other things which may happen.

I have a question to ask the Attorney. One notices that, as a result of BHP's decision in regard to its operations at Koolyanobbing, it will virtually go out of business. Naturally one would expect a fair amount of trade to be lost to the railways because of that decision, quite aside from the other effects it may have. Perhaps the Minister would like to indicate whether the Government intends to do anything to alleviate the problem at Koolyanobbing. Have any deputations or talks taken place in order to try to do something about the huge costs which will arise from the closure of BHP's operations at Koolyanobbing? If nothing has been done, I am positive the users of rail next year will be faced with a rather heavy slug in order to make up for those losses. We may also see cross-subsidisation of lines, otherwise the Government will be faced with a greater deficit than it expects currently.

I heard this morning over the radio that in respect of this matter the Premier has said he wrote to BHP and that he expects BHP to make up the loss of \$2 million to be incurred as a result of its closing down those operations. The Premier referred to the hardships that will have to be borne by the taxpayers of this State as a result of that closure. I recall that the Premier said he would approach the Prime Minister to ascertain whether he can bring some pressure to bear on BHP to make it realise it has a commitment to that area.

I took the trouble to write down what the Premier said when he was interviewed on this subject. I may have missed one or two words because I had to stop my car in order to take down the remarks. He said, "BHP can't make decisions which cost taxpayers millions of dollars, without it making some form of compensation". The action taken by the Premier is commendable because it is certain that the cost will have to be borne by the taxpayers; and if taxpayers do not bear it directly, the Budget will be affected or increased fares will be imposed on railway users. However, I wish the Premier would adopt this attitude towards other areas in which he and his Government have caused added expenditure to be incurred by the general public—the taxpayers.

It will be interesting to determine where the cost of reopening the Perth-Fremantle rail passenger service will fall in order to balance this year's Budget. The Premier said in a speech he made in another place last night that the ability of the taxpayer to pay must be observed. One must consider also the comments he made in the course of that speech in respect of the employment of 28

Government advisers—I think they are called "advisers". It was interesting to note that these advisers will cost the Government \$869 095, which will represent 0.043 per cent of the cost of employing the 97 000 other public servants.

Hon. Tom Stephens: It is probably about as much as you have cost the taxpayers since you have been here.

Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I do not know about that.

Hon. Tom Stephens: It's a couple of jobs, isn't it, that you have?

Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I do not know, but I think Mr Dowding heads me by about three jobs.

The Premier made the observation last night that, when one considers the cost of these advisers, one must realise that it is only a small amount compared with the savings to be made in the two avenues this Government hopes to follow to increase its revenue. Most likely it will bring in measures to follow those avenues. Firstly, for the time being only 50 per cent of the number of civil servants retiring will be replaced; and, secondly, a temporary cut of the salaries of public servants in certain categories will be instituted. He has said that this will save the Government \$26 million and, therefore, the expenditure of \$869 000 is chicken feed compared with that huge saving the Premier intends to earn for the State. At that point of his remarks I became quite upset. The Premier intends to do to the State through his decisions exactly what he has accused BHP of doing to the State. He claimed BHP would cause an added burden on taxpayers and that it should pay \$2 million into Consolidated Revenue to make up for that burden.

Members may or may not have noticed in today's edition of *The West Australian*, page 5, an article headed "Port bans will cost \$40 000, says CBH". The article goes on to explain that as a result of a Public Service overtime ban inspectors of the Department of Agriculture were not working into the evenings. This loss of \$40 000 must be borne by some people, but the loss was brought about purely and simply by the decision of this Government that civil servants in certain categories would have their salaries reduced. The civil servants in turn retaliated.

How can the Premier say on the one hand that his Government will earn \$26 million for the State, minus a little bit of chaff for Government advisers, yet on the other hand not be prepared to come up with compensation to groups such as CBH which are suffering as a result of the Government's decision? If the Premier wants to practise what he preaches he should call the man-

agement at CBH and say, "I am sorry about that. We caused that problem because we want to make \$26 million. We will send a cheque around tomorrow to cover your losses. That will get you out of your problems". I do not imagine that will happen.

The Premier made great play during this morning's radio interview that he would bring pressure to bear to counteract the moves that have been made. He said quite readily that BHP could not make decisions that would cause a cost to be borne by taxpayers without its paying some form of compensation. That is exactly what I say the Government should do when its policies cause hardships in the community. It is not just the people in this place who are concerned about this situation, but also most people in the community.

Everywhere one goes today one hears one long story after another about the financial problems caused by the Government's inability to handle industrial affairs, an inability which has caused repercussions in industry. As the Leader of the Opposition said, it is about time the Government considered what industry can afford to pay. For example, the Commonwealth Government is faced with a revolt from the mining unions and others over its proposed tax on lump sum superannuation payments. The unions involved with domestic airlines, stevedoring, and many other areas plan a campaign against this tax. We have not been told exactly what that campaign will be, but possibly it will be similar to that adopted by the BLF. Admittedly these unions are Federal bodies, but in Western Australia we have not heard of any move by the Government to try to alleviate the hardships felt in industry.

It was announced in *The West Australian* today, that the BLF members in Western Australia remained on the job yesterday to maintain guerilla tactics. It was reported that Mr Kevin Reynolds said—

Disruption included walkouts, bans on lifting and on concrete pours, go-slows and "all sorts of guerilla tactics".

Surely there is a medium by which the Government and the Minister for Industrial Relations can appease this group because just as much was said in the Labor Party policy, when it went to the people at the last election; an eight-page policy was declared which could apply to this situation. However, nothing has been done, and in fact the situation is becoming worse.

Yesterday in this place the shadow Minister for Industrial Relations asked the Minister for Industrial Relations the following question—

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an application before the Federal court on entitlement on termination of employment?

The Minister answered—

- (1) No. However, there is an application before the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission by the ACTU, known as the "Job Security Test Case" which includes a claim as to entitlement on termination of employment.

Part (2) of the question read—

- (2) Does the Minister know that the application is supported by the Federal Government?

The Minister replied—

- (2) The Australian Government has supported the application in principle only.

Part (3) read—

- (3) Does the WA State Government support the proposals in principle?

The Minister replied—

- (3) The Government of Western Australia has appeared in the proceedings to support the application in principle only.

And part (4) stated—

- (4) Would the WA State Government support a similar application in Western Australia?

To which the Minister replied—

- (4) This is a matter that would need to be carefully considered having regard for all of the relevant circumstances when and if a similar application is made.

He said in answer to part (3), "in principle only" so the rest of the question did not matter. However, the essence of what the Government supports, in principle, does matter; that is, that the Government is supporting the application of entitlements on termination of employment. This does not apply to a specific group of people or one union. The award states quite clearly as follows—

In addition to any other entitlements applying under this Award in respect of termination of employment, an employee whose employment is terminated for reasons of an economic, technological, structural or similar nature shall be entitled to the following.

- (a) The employer shall give the employee not less than three months notice of termination of employment or payment in lieu thereof.

- (b) The employer shall pay to the employee a sum as a redundancy payment calculated as follows:
 - (i) four weeks' pay, plus
 - (ii) four weeks' pay for each completed year of service, plus
 - (iii) one week's pay for each completed year of service when the employee was aged 35 years or over, plus
 - (iv) an additional two weeks' pay for each completed year of service in excess of 10 years' service if the employee is aged 45 years or over.

The Government has agreed in principle to those conditions. That is the information Mr Masters obtained from the answer to his question yesterday. So be it.

So, we read the heading "BLF peace eludes WA" while as a result of a Government decision an amount of \$40 000 is being levied against CBH at Geraldton and the Government says it is saving \$26 million. I say it is not because with its attitude towards industrial relations the Government is costing the community money.

The Government will levy wharfage charges, rail charges, and all sorts of other charges in order to achieve a balanced Budget. A balanced budget could have been achieved much more easily had the Government obtained industrial peace by consulting the people concerned. However, instead we see that \$26 million is being accrued. I cannot understand the reasoning of this Government.

We have seen one of the Government's innocuous documents known as the Supply Bill—written by someone a long time ago; the wording has not changed—rewritten by the addition of some miraculous figure which amounts to a 10 per cent addition. Any fifth-former could have done that, knowing the CPI is about 10 per cent, anyway. Since the ALP formed the Government, some of the expected increases are obviously being screened purposely because of the involvement of the ALP policy.

When one realises these facts, one finds it a little difficult to support the Bill. However, I do not intend to oppose it because of the simple fact that it is the Supply Bill.

I say to the Minister handling the Bill that the last paragraph in his speech is the one I look forward to. He said that with regard to the current financial year the Government has been firmly committed to a responsible policy of planning the

Budget. He said also that discipline will be required and members can be assured that the Government is taking positive steps to achieve that goal. I believe, Mr Minister, that what the Government is doing is merely transferring that loss from the Government's to someone else's pocket.

HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [3.28 p.m.]: I wish to remind members of the House and certainly the public at large that it is not customary for this House to deny supply to the Government, contrary to what has been said in the community and said loudly by members of the Government. This House has never refused supply and this Supply Bill will not be refused, either.

It is interesting to note that the Government continues to cry "wolf"; it is striving to confuse the people.

Several members interjected.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: Those inane comments support what I have said.

Hon. Lyla Elliott: Your previous leader wanted to deny supply to the Tonkin Government.

Hon. Garry Kelly: It could deny it.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: This House never stopped supply.

Hon. Garry Kelly: It could.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: If you keep barking it will.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: The point I make is that if the Government keeps talking about something that has never been done and if that is all it does about Government, God help the State.

I would like to refer to one or two matters the Leader of the Opposition referred to as did Mr Gayfer in his meaningful contribution. I say to the Government that not all the wisdom sits on the benches opposite and no matter how wise a Government and no matter how well-intentioned it might be, if it interferes and spends money as has been done—by the spending of people's money; and that fact must be remembered—problems will arise.

Wealth is generated by people who use their skills and efforts to make something for themselves; usually through their occupation whether it be in supermarkets, hospitals, farming, or any other field. So the Government is directly or indirectly using money which belongs to the people and that money should be wisely disbursed throughout the community. It is wasteful to give it to people who perhaps do not need it. Some of the Government's advisers may fall into that category. The people voted for members of Parliament, not advisers.

The people who create wealth exercise discipline within themselves and with the technology they have at their command. They exercise discipline in their approach to their way of life and in the way they do things. People have been prepared to commit their self-discipline to create something and to commit capital. In many cases they have committed it to very risky ventures; they are prepared to take a risk. A lot of ventures turn out to be profitable. There is nothing wrong in making a profit; this State would not be where it is today if that were the case.

The Government siphons off money in taxes and charges; all Governments do that. But Governments are no wiser than the people they serve, and very often are less so. All Governments complain—and this State Government seems to do so more loudly than others—that they are experiencing severe budgetary problems. It is the old gramophone record! As Mick Gayfer pointed out, Governments increase charges to cover up their mistakes.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: They are promising not to.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: I am glad the honourable member reminded me of that.

Tax hikes give a short-term fiscal relief and, in some cases, short-term popular appeal. It is nice to be popular by taxing something, but such taxes have damaging long-term effects on the community in relation to the growth of industry and commerce. The States of Australia are dependent largely on funding for their well-being.

Higher taxes strangle incentive and industries in specific locations. I refer by way of example to the mining industry. It can be stifled and some mining ventures can be strangled out of existence by royalties that are too high or by Government-imposed charges. It is a classic example of how taxes and charges can adversely affect an industry if they are unreasonable. There are other examples which I will not go into now.

The Burke Government has been quick to rape the financial resources of the community and it continues to do so. Prior to the election the ALP said it would not increase taxes and charges on a range of goods and services. It said it would not increase water rates, electricity charges, land tax, stamp duty, bus and train fares and so on. Only last night this House, as is customary, passed a money Bill to increase a tax. It was a Government measure. The Burke Government wanted to impose another tax; it did so, and the legislation has passed through the Parliament. But it is a waste to spend it on such things as the Perth-Fremantle railway.

I represent the south-west corner of the State and I could find uses for that money in many areas. The money could be spent on many projects. Every passenger likely to use the Perth-Fremantle railway will cost the taxpayer something like \$2.35 extra. Mr President, you and I and everyone else in Western Australia will be called upon to pay it. That money could be used to establish police stations at places like Boyanup, Dardanup, and Capel. The Government has undertaken to build those stations in the "Bunbury 2000" concept. I asked a question the other day on this matter and the Government replied "Not yet; it is not opportune". Of course the Government could not handle it yet. It costs too much money to establish such stations immediately.

The Government is trying to pull the wool over the electors' eyes as it did in so many ways before the election. I could ask for the money to be used for the removal of the Picton-Bunbury rail line and marshalling yards, which proposal is supported by most people in the area.

This Government has no intention of reducing taxes; but reducing taxes would stimulate employment and industry and would reduce demand for salary and wage hikes. If taxes on a business venture are reduced, so is demand for wages; greater productivity occurs, and it is much better for the community. This Government does not intend to do that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Honourable members are continuing to carry on audible conversations although I did notice one member who was not.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: It was my good fortune recently to talk to quite a number of people in countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. I made it my business to seek out a good cross-section of the community at every opportunity. Those countries are known for the extent of the welfare state in their communities. They are highly socialised and the welfare system is well and truly entrenched. I will not go into the range of taxes people pay in those countries except to say they are extremely high. It is interesting to note that a move is under way in the community in each of those countries to pay less taxes, to have less welfare and fewer amenities such as libraries, schools and grandiose hospitals. The people are seeking more money in their pockets to spend as they see best in their situation. They are prepared to accept fewer welfare services in return for more money to spend in their own way.

Norway recently elected a conservative Government—the first for some 30 years—which under-

lines the point I am making. The people there are growing tired of the welfare state and being taxed heavily and of the Government providing so many services for them.

I want to refer to a quotation from the ALP's televised policy speech earlier this year which says—

Each week—before you even think about shopping, \$46 has gone from your house-keeping in the State Government taxes and charges.

I wonder how much has been added to that \$46 by the increased charges to which I referred and which the Government said it would not impose on the people. It has imposed them and I believe it is doing a great disservice to the community. I could touch on many matters in this Bill but I will enlarge on some at another opportunity.

The Government continues to suggest that this House is not responsible in respect of money matters. I have demonstrated that it is responsible, and the House has demonstrated that, and I believe this Bill will be passed.

HON. P. H. WELLS (North Metropolitan) [3.38 p.m.]: I rise to speak because I gather this Bill has something to do with that abysmal hole referred to in a speech last night—Consolidated Revenue—which gobbles up money by methods which the Government does not have to explain. That is the explanation the Minister gave last night when he said I should use my imagination as to where the rest of the money raised by the Bill then being debated would go. I am prompted to point out as we consider the Consolidated Revenue Fund that I thought the Attorney General, with his vast experience, would have provided more information. It is a good defence to say that the last people did not do so, but I am three years wiser now in terms of the Parliament.

I want to draw attention to another matter in the second reading speech in which a figure of \$17 million is set down which refers to real estate and the economic climate.

I notice that less money is available from payroll tax and stamp duty of the order of \$16.5 million. That raises a problem in my electorate. As members know, prior to the election the Government gave an undertaking to buy the Whitfords nodes. For some years I have been seeking a resolution of that problem. Under the Brand Government, the road was constructed further from the coast on the basis that the companies would sell land at a special price, and provide various things like primary and high school sites, major roads, and buildings, and that the blocks would be produced at 55 per cent of

their development price. The question of trying to buy the nodes for their preservation began in 1976. At that time, the Wanneroo Shire Council believed it would make a profit of \$2 million from land provided by the then Government. It was hoped that the purchase of the nodes would make them available for the people.

The Government of the day and various Governments since have developed the policy that because they were short of money they would not buy the nodes. The Government is \$17 million down. I ask the Attorney if that is why the nodes have not been bought yet.

We are six months down the track. At the public meeting attended by Brian Burke, we were told that \$12 million was the cost of the nodes. I assume that because we are six months down the track, the cost now would be \$14 million. I do not know what sort of price rise there would be in six months; but I do know that in 1981, when the nodes were valued, they were worth only \$8.5 million. By the end of 1982, the value was \$12 million.

Is the Government in financial difficulties? Is it having the same problem as the previous Government in terms of not buying the nodes? Recently the Minister for Planning (David Parker) made reference to \$20 million. Is he waiting until the price is up to \$20 million? I doubt if that is the truth; but that is the figure that was mentioned.

This matter is terribly important to my electorate. I was not able to wring enough money out of the previous Government; but one should note that that Government did not give an undertaking to buy the nodes.

I am concerned that this Bill indicates the Government is \$17 million down and it will not honour its promise. It did not have the same problem with the railway; but it did have Fred McKenzie pushing it along.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: And that did not cost \$17 million.

Hon. P. H. WELLS: It may well be that it did not cost the same amount of money. As we are six months down the line, I ask the Attorney if the price has risen.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Why?

Hon. P. H. WELLS: Because of the development of the area, there is a fair amount of pressure. If the price rose from \$8.5 million in 1981 to \$12 million in 1982—those figures were quoted by the Leader of the House—I am concerned that by the time we buy the nodes, we will need the Commonwealth Budget to pay for them.

I am concerned that the Government will do what the Federal Government has just done to the "mortgage belt"—the people who elected the Government—because of the high cost of housing. As soon as the Federal Government was elected, it whipped off the housing rebate and added something like \$200 to \$600 to the price of a house in that area. That was a complete about-turn by the Government.

I ask the Attorney: Has his Government done the same in relation to the Whitford nodes as the Federal Government did in relation to the "mortgage belt"? I would like to know if the nodes will be purchased, as promised.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.01 p.m.

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [4.01 p.m.]: By tradition the Supply Bill allows any member to speak on any subject at all. That right has been exercised to the full this afternoon and I do not complain about that. However, I think it is not out of place for me to remind the House of the limited purpose of the Bill. It is a money Bill in a strictly limited sense, and that, I believe, is the answer to the first part of the Hon. Mick Gayfer's address in which he complained about the absence of variety in the Bill and the second reading speech supporting it. Mr Gayfer said he expects a new and invigorating approach to legislation from the present Government. I do assure him he will not be disappointed; as time emerges he will be fully gratified in those expectations.

The Supply Bill, however, does not really call for novel approaches, and in a sense to suggest that it does rather misses the point of what the legislation seeks to do. Certainly the Supply Bill at this stage of the year is simply for the purpose of appropriating a lump sum for the ordinary and continued function of the Government and State services. It involves no new initiatives, nor does it involve any question of policy. To the extent that financial results of 1982-83 are summarised in the second reading speech, that is simply in the nature of factual advice and constitutes an interim report pending the fuller analysis that the Budget papers in due course will provide.

Given the nature of the Supply Bill, I propose to limit my comments in reply to financial questions raised in the course of discussion. The Hon. Ian Medcalf referred to the use by the Government of the term "inherited deficit" in its description of the Budget situation which we faced on coming into Government. He seemed to be suggesting in some way that we were unfairly selective in the language employed.

The fact is that it was an inherited deficit; it developed in the life of the last Government, and we copped it as we came into Government. I add at once, as the Premier did immediately the true picture emerged it was not a question of condemning the past Government or even blaming it for the position in which we found ourselves, it was simply a matter of stating the facts. To argue whether the deficit was inherited or not inherited, or simply emerged, is not really helpful. That does not eliminate the deficit nor does it help to eliminate the difficulties which go with that deficit. It is true, again as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, that the estimated blowout was variously estimated at between \$21 million and \$30 million. I stress to the House that those estimates were not made by the Government at a political level; they were estimates by the Treasury based on its knowledge and expertise.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the eventual deficit of \$14 million as minute. That may be a reasonable description of the amount involved when related to the total revenue and expenditure of the State, but it is a totally misleading description when the deficit is related to the fact that State finances require a balanced Budget. Unlike the Commonwealth we cannot simply get into deficit situations and get ourselves out of those problems by floating loans at will. Eventually deficits catch up with a State, even if they can be absorbed for one, two or three years. In the end the money must be found to bring the Budget back to a balanced position, and if that last resort is necessary it can only be adopted by utilising capital or loan funds. When we come to an analysis of the State's account, which the Budget papers will provide, it will clearly emerge how dangerous the latter course would be. As well, the fact is that the inherited deficit was not only dangerous in itself, but also dangerous for the financial trend it reflected.

In the financial year 1982-83 the position is that for a number of months State revenues and expenditures were roughly in line with the Estimates presented at the time the last Budget was brought down; but then there was a sudden decline in income, which has continued. There has also been a continuing increase in expenditure on existing programmes. For the information of Mr Gayfer, this increase has had nothing at all to do with new initiatives. The continuing increase is based on existing programmes.

The deficit potential for the 1983-84 year, which emerges from an examination of this situation, is truly frightening and has been the cause of serious measures the Government has already adopted, and we will need further measures to be

adopted which will no doubt be detailed in the Budget. That having been said, the fact remains that the Bill represents the requirements of the ordinary purposes of the Government for about the next six months; it is the traditional form of supplying the funds necessary for the continuation of State services.

Again I welcome the recognition by a number of Opposition members that this Bill falls within the category of Bills which ought to be passed irrespective of the peripheral complaints members might wish to raise at this time.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), and passed.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Assembly Personnel

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 3 August.

HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [4.14 p.m.]: This Bill, put simply, is to dampen the effect of the extremes of valuations in respect of rates imposed by local authorities. I make it clear at the outset that the Opposition supports the Bill; we wish it a speedy passage through this House.

I am aware that some local authorities—very few, I know, but they are important because they are concerned with ratepayers—desire to use this legislation in order to phase in valuations during this rating year. We agree with the content of the Bill, although we have some reservations about what was not in it as distinct from what is in it.

The ability to phase in valuations over three years is fine, but it does not go far enough because some hefty valuations and heavy increases could still occur in particular areas. We would have preferred to see a ceiling limit of 33 1/3 per cent on the increase in each financial year, at the discretion of the council.

I note in the Minister's second reading speech he gave an assurance that this matter would be considered by the Government and I trust it will be done soon. We do not agree that not enough time would be available to have this provision included in the Bill because it is an optional matter; most of the local authorities in Western Australia have decided to go ahead and strike their rates without waiting for the relevant requirement in this Bill.

Another matter we would have liked to see included in this Bill is a clear definition of the ability of a local authority to take instalments on its rates. I know the Minister will probably tell me that under section 237 of the Local Government Act the local authority is given the right to make decisions or by-laws in regard to the manner of collection and payment, and it has discretion as far as discounts are concerned. We believe it would have been better to have spelt that out clearly in this legislation so that councils would have the option of taking the payment of rates in either one, two, or four instalments.

The proposition we advance is that the ability to charge for specific services within a local authority should have been included to allow local authorities to make by-laws in regard to which charge they would like to levy on their ratepayers.

It must be remembered that local government by-laws must be approved in this Chamber and the other place before they can be enforced. I am aware that many charges are laid down in the Local Government Act for such matters as cross overs, dog licences, etc., but extra autonomy and responsibility should be given to local authorities so that they do not have to rely on the items set down in the Act.

Amendments covering these areas have failed to receive acceptance in another place and it is not our intention to move amendments in this place because we do not wish to delay the passage of the Bill. However, I ask the Government to consider the facts I have enunciated, and especially the matter of the 33 1/3 per cent ceiling limit.

I think it is reasonable that the Minister should tell us exactly which local authorities are waiting for this legislation before striking their rates. I am aware of one council which is waiting for this legislation and I would like to know whether other councils are in the same position.

The problem of rating is one that will be with us all the time and is a matter which needs constant review because valuation increases cause some horrendous effects on the rating of local

authority areas. This Bill will sort out that problem.

We support the Bill.

HON. G. E. MASTERS (West) [4.20 p.m.]: I want to speak briefly on this legislation, because Mr Pratt has covered most of the points I wished to raise. We are pleased that the Government has seen fit to adopt initiatives similar to those adopted by the previous Government in respect of the Metropolitan Water Authority. I commend the Government for taking this initiative.

One local authority in my electorate waiting on the passage of this legislation is the Shire of Mundaring. I commend that shire on its initiative and enterprise and of course for anticipating and providing for the special needs of its ratepayers. The Mundaring electorate has special problems because it has small settlements and is a diverse area. The shire anticipated the successful progress of this legislation because it had lengthy consultations with its Legislative Council representatives.

Mr Neil Oliver and I have held lengthy discussions, over a period of time, with council members so the council had reason to anticipate the successful passage of this legislation through the Legislative Council.

I say that to demonstrate the great value of local representation of the Legislative Council; that council and its ratepayers saw fit to take this action because the council held discussions with its local upper House representative demonstrates the value of local representation to overcome problems of this nature and I am sure there is always value in local members undertaking similar discussions to test the water and ascertain people's thoughts and ideas.

I commend that council and the Government for what they have done.

HON. PETER DOWDING (North—Minister for Mines) [4.23 p.m.]: I thank honourable members opposite for their support. I cannot give Mr Pratt an answer to his request for a list of local authorities which are awaiting the introduction and passage of this legislation. Mr Masters has suggested one and I expect that there are some others in that area. Mr Graham Edwards made the suggestion to the Shire of Wanneroo originally, which was adopted and which now forms part of this legislation. I am sorry I cannot provide the information. However, after the Bill is passed the member can request those details and I will arrange for the Minister for Local Government in another place to provide them.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Hon. John Williams) in the Chair; Hon. Peter Dowding (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5 put and passed.

Clause 6: Section 548A inserted.

Hon. P. H. WELLS: I rise because this is the clause which affects a valuation and this was the original subject of discussion the Opposition had with the Shire of Wanneroo and the Shire of Stirling in the early days. As a result of that discussion a report was made available to the Government and two recommendations of that report were accepted—this being one of them. I do not say this is the be-all and end-all. I was led to believe that three shires were waiting for this legislation to be passed but I believe the Shire of Mundaring is now the only shire awaiting it.

Another question that has been put to me concerns a block which has been cut in half but as a result of the new valuation one owner will pay twice the rate the other owner pays. I do not know that there is an easy statistical solution to overcome that problem but I mention that matter because it has been referred to me by a shire.

All the shire councils I have spoken to have said that this legislation is desirable and acceptable but only one shire in the State was able to hold back the striking of its rate until the passage of the legislation. The Shire of Wanneroo could not wait any longer because interest was costing it \$10 000 a week. The cost to the Shire of Swan—in terms of interest rates—was something like \$8000 a week. I indicate that other shires were interested but could not wait.

I thank the Government for accepting the proposals put to it; and hopefully the people of Mundaring will be able to benefit from this. The legislation has my support.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. Peter Dowding (Minister for Mines), and passed.

PETROLEUM PIPELINES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

HON. PETER DOWDING (North—Minister for Mines) [4.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The principal Act which this Bill proposes to amend provides the legislative framework to govern the construction and operation of pipelines for the conveyance of hydrocarbons from production sites to areas where they will be utilised.

Provision is made in the Act for an annual fee to be charged in respect of a pipeline licence and a fee upon the registration of a devolution in title to the licence. It provides also a security for due compliance with the conditions under which a licence is granted and the provisions of the Act. These fees have not increased since the Act came into operation in 1969 and it is considered that they should now be updated to present monetary values and generally brought into line with similar fees under the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982 and the Petroleum Act 1967.

This will entail an increase by a factor of three so that—

the annual fee for a pipeline licence increases from \$12.43 per kilometre (this odd amount is the result of metrication) to \$40 per kilometre;

the registration fee on a devolution increases from \$10 to \$30; and

the security required upon the grant of a licence and upon a transfer in title increases from \$20 000 to \$60 000.

These fees and securities will then be identical with those charged in respect of petroleum pipelines under the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act. In addition to the increase in fees under the Act, various fees are levied under the regulations; application fees, registration fees, etc., and these also will be increased by a factor of three, to come into operation commensurate with the amendment Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. N. F. Moore.

HIGHWAYS (LIABILITY FOR STRAYING ANIMALS) BILL

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [4.32 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In introducing this Bill, I refer to some of the background which has led to the need for legislative action.

The law in question originated in England some two centuries ago and is commonly referred to as "the rule in *Searle v. Wallbank*". The effect of the rule is that owners and occupiers of land adjoining a highway are under no duty to take reasonable care to prevent their animals from straying on to the highway. It followed that owners were not liable for any damage or injury caused by such animals.

I might add that the rule is not limited to roads which were formally designated as "highways", but also applies to streets, lanes, bridges and, in fact, any place which is open to be used by the public for passage.

In 1976 the Supreme Court of Western Australia, in the case of *Thomson v. Nix*, reached the conclusion that conditions in Western Australia were so different from those which had applied in England that the rule in *Searle v. Wallbank* did not apply in this State. Instead, liability for injury or damage caused by stock straying on to the highway should henceforth be governed by the general law of negligence.

Following that decision, the Full Court of the Supreme Court of Victoria decided, in 1978, that *Searle v. Wallbank* still applied in Victoria.

The High Court, also in 1978, decided that it also applied in South Australia. In both these cases the courts expressed doubt as to the desirability of the rule. Their decisions nonetheless had the effect that the whole subject of liability for straying stock became uncertain so far as Western Australia was concerned.

The rule has long been regarded as an anomaly in the law of negligence. It was abolished by Statute in New South Wales in 1977 and in the United Kingdom in 1971.

There have been various proposals for reform of the law in this State. In 1969, the Law Reform Committee—the forerunner of the Law Reform Commission—recommended that the rule be abolished.

However, with the subsequent decision in *Thomson v. Nix* it was generally thought that legislative action was no longer required. When the validity of this decision came into question as a result of the inconsistent decisions to which I have referred, the WA Law Reform Commission was asked to report.

With some minor exceptions, the Bill which is now before the House is based on the recommen-

dations of the Law Reform Commission of June 1981. The Bill has one main operative clause divided into four parts. I will deal with each in turn.

The first part states that the rules of the common law relating to this matter shall be considered never to have formed part of the law in this State. Accordingly, the Bill is retrospective in its effect. However, this is not open to the normal arguments against retrospectivity.

As the law is so unclear, it would be difficult to maintain that parties, such as farmers, graziers and insurance companies, have relied on *Searle v. Wallbank* and based their conduct accordingly. Indeed, even now, they would be most unwise to do so. Moreover, a person who has deliberately refrained from preventing his stock creating a danger on the highway, in the hope that he may be protected by some archaic law, is little deserving of sympathy.

In any event, the second part of the clause makes it clear that the retrospective abolition of the rules of common law will not affect any judgment given by a court before the coming into operation of this Bill, nor will they affect any subsequent appeals from such judgments.

The third part of the clause states that a court shall determine the liability in tort for damage caused by animals straying onto the highway solely according to the law of Western Australia relating to liability in tort for negligence, or intentional acts, or omissions.

The fourth part follows from the third. Where a court is determining liability it may take into account, among other matters, the general nature of the locality in question, the nature and amount of traffic using the road, the common practice in the locality in regard to fencing and warnings to users of the road about the likely presence of animals, the cost of fencing, and the extent to which users of the road in the particular locality would expect to encounter animals. As members would be aware, fencing of property and farming practices differ greatly in a State the size of Western Australia. By adopting the factors mentioned, a court will be in a position to make its own evaluation of the requirements and customs of any particular area.

This Bill, when enacted, will clarify the law to be applied in Western Australia and remove the uncertainty which has existed for a number of years.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. V. J. Ferry.

DOG AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [4.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is consequential to the Highways (Liability for Straying Animals) Bill.

The Dog Act, amongst other things, provides that the owner of a dog may be liable to damages for an injury done by that dog. As dogs are covered by the Highways (Liability for Straying Animals) Bill it has been necessary to legislate to avoid the situation in which a person who is bitten by a dog that has strayed onto a highway would find it more difficult to obtain redress from the owner of the dog than would those who are bitten at places away from a highway.

This means that, regardless of the locality where a dog causes direct injury or damage to clothing—that is, directly attacks the person—action for redress may be taken under section 46 of the Dog Act.

This will retain the existing stricter liability of the owner of the dog, which that section imposes, wherever a personal attack of this kind occurs.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. P. G. Pental.

PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.37 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is introduced to clarify the position in relation to the observance of the celebration day for the anniversary of the birthday of the reigning sovereign or, as it is more commonly known, the Queen's birthday holiday.

The second schedule to the Public and Bank Holidays Act presently provides for the holiday to be observed on the second Monday in October.

A Cabinet decision made in 1981 resulted in the holiday being celebrated on the first Monday of the Perth Royal Show.

As a consequence of that decision the Public Service regulations were amended in 1981 to effectively remove the Public Service holiday in the Royal Show week, and at the same time the bank holiday previously granted to bank employees for the Perth Royal Show was abolished.

As the position now stands, it is necessary to proclaim the holiday each year to coincide with the show, bearing in mind that the first Monday will fall on 3 October, 1983; 1 October 1984; 30 September 1985; 29 September 1986, and 5 October 1987.

The variance in the date shown in the second schedule—the second Monday in October—to the actual celebration has led to confusion and misunderstandings. Manufacturers of diaries and calendars and many organisations rely on the present wording of the second schedule as a firm guide in identifying the actual day of the holiday.

The amendment as proposed provides for the Governor to proclaim a suitable day each year. In adopting this approach it will ensure that the date is readily ascertainable by publication in the *Government Gazette*. As mentioned in my opening remarks, the Bill is designed to clarify the situation and eliminate confusion which has arisen in the celebration of this holiday.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. G. E. Masters.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FOURTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 2 August.

HON. C. J. BELL (Lower West) [5.03 p.m.]: In speaking to the Address-in-Reply I would like first to congratulate you, Mr President, on your re-election to the presidency of this Chamber. It is very fitting that you should continue to occupy the Chair, and I am sure you will do so in your usual competent manner. I would like, too, to congratulate the Hon. Des Dans on his appointment as Leader of the House. I am sure he will capably bring the business before the House and keep it in good order. I must thank the Opposition generally for allowing me the opportunity to speak today when my family is in the Gallery.

I shall follow the usual practice and comment briefly on matters affecting my province. I am pleased to have been elected to represent the people of Lower West Province, and I thank the electors of that province for their confidence in me.

I come to the House with a background of farming. I have worked a dairy farm since 1962 on my own account and I grew up as a dairy farmer before that.

I have represented Western Australian dairy farmers at a national level since 1974 until my election to the Parliament. I have represented the Australian dairy farmers on the Australian Dairy Corporation from 1976 to 1978 and the Australian Dairy Industry Advisory Committee from 1978 to 1983.

As a new member I am naturally very aware of the tremendous responsibility placed on me by the electors to adequately represent their interests, their wishes, and their desires for the whole community that constitutes Lower West Province. I express my very real pleasure in being able to share the responsibility of the province with such an able member as the Hon. Ian Pratt. He has already assisted me greatly in becoming more familiar with the processes that will ensure an effective parliamentary representation for our electorate. Undoubtedly, like all new members, I have much to learn and I promise to make every endeavour to continuously upgrade my learning.

It is appropriate for me to make some reference to my predecessor in the Lower West Province. Mr Neil McNeill was, I believe, a tremendous representative of the people of the province. I do not think there is any need for me to extol his abilities and the high esteem in which Neil was held by members of the House. I know since I have been here that he was obviously held in high regard by all members of the House and by the staff of the Parliament. His is a very hard act for me to follow, but, be that as it may, the Parliament will make a judgment on whether I am in any shape or form able to fill the shoes of Neil McNeill. I extend my appreciation to Neil for the work he did assisting me to achieve the opportunity to represent Lower West Province.

Recently I took the opportunity to read Neil's maiden speech to this House given on Wednesday, 4 August 1965, some 18 years ago. I think it is appropriate that I should reflect on some of the matters Neil raised at that time and to consider what has happened over those 18 years. The industries to be found in the province are really much the same. Agriculture was the foremost industry at that time, with the dairy industry, the fruit industry, the vegetable growing industry, and meat production. These industries remain in the province today in much the same form as they were 18 years ago, other than for the adoption of much technology that has occurred since Neil made his speech.

The agricultural industry has a need for substantial research and extension. The electorate contains the majority of the temperate irrigation areas of Western Australia and contains also

significant areas of low fertility soils. These two areas need to be addressed.

First, the irrigated lands of the south-west for 30 years have made very little headway in the improvement of productivity. Irrigation procedures are still the old grade check-bank layouts. There is common acceptance that as much as 25 per cent of the water currently used runs off into the sea because of the inadequacies of the system. In my opinion this is unacceptable and it is an area that requires positive action.

Recently we have seen an awareness emerge of the potential for modern technology in this area, and I speak particularly of laser land forming for irrigation areas. This is a whole new technology for agriculture in irrigation areas. I shall expand on this by referring to northern Victorian irrigation areas, where one can start to appreciate some of the possibilities, exciting possibilities, which lie in front of us.

Using laser technology with computer backup it is possible with extreme accuracy to grade land so finely that it is possible, by the elimination of highs and lows by the continuous levelling of the land, for water to traverse the land at a constant speed without any waste, so that we do not have any wet or any dry patches of land. This therefore creates a tremendous saving in the amount of water used. In fact, the assessment is that as much as 50 per cent of the water normally used can be saved and this means it is possible to use this water saving either for increased productivity on the farm or for opening up new areas to irrigation.

Further, with the computer backup it is possible to institute what is known as "whole farm layouts". No other method is available to a farmer to grade the land to such a fine degree that the water, once it is moving across the land, can be caught at the other end and recycled until ultimately it is totally used on the property. That eliminates the 25 per cent effective waste which was always involved previously. A farmer must get water to the other end of an irrigation bay if he intends to grow grass over all that bay.

The effects of this technology are quite dramatic in the area of labour. Very few people really understand the tremendous labour used by producers of agriculture in irrigation areas. Under the old system, irrigation areas might be as small as a house block. One property in northern Victoria, prior to the introduction of new technology, had 132 separate bays. This meant the farmer had to go to each of those bays either to open or to shut them every two hours, because that was

how long it took for the water to get from one end of the bay to the other, this being the result of not being able to control the length of the land form. Such a farmer had to have only small patches to use the water effectively. That farm changed from having 132 bays to just 20 bays with a minimum of 12 hours before re-attending to the water in that area. Normally on an irrigation farm the water is turned on and it runs for 24 hours a day. A farmer does not go to bed and leave everything. Under the old system a farmer would have to tear off down to the bottom of the various bays in the cold—and even in summer it can be very cold—to change the water from one bay to the next. With the 12-hour system a farmer does not have to get up more than perhaps once or twice in the night, depending on when he started.

In our irrigation areas we are still growing the same grass in the same manner as 20 years ago. We must put more effort into breeding and into research to understand the possibilities in this area. It is traditional to produce between 14 000 and 16 000 kilos of dry matter per hectare per annum and yet Victorian research has shown recently that it is possible to produce 48 000 kilos per hectare, and that is outside a laboratory. We need to examine this area; we need to review whether pasture is the most beneficial way to use the land and the water or whether the multiple crop use is possibly a viable alternative for some of our land. This means we must have varieties bred in our research institutes to fit the climatic and soil conditions. The situation is that we talk of crops for the south-west high rainfall area, but we are talking about crops bred for under 20 inches of rainfall. They suffer tremendous disadvantages when grown in 35-inch or 45-inch rainfall areas. These crops cannot cope with the high water potential in the properties.

The sand plains, which extend from the southern areas of the metropolitan area, are generally considered to be low fertility soils. They stretch right through the south-west, yet they lie in an area of high rainfall, the most valuable asset this country has. However, we have not yet managed to adapt ourselves to the south-west soils so that we get any significant benefit from them. If members look around the metropolitan area they will realise that it is generally considered better to build houses on this soil rather than to use it to produce crops, but we have too many acres of this soil in the south-west to do that.

Recently a good deal of specialised research has gone into considering the problems we have faced in the past when we have constantly attempted to grow the same pasture species grown on other more productive lands, but which have usually

failed. We are now looking at some of the possibilities associated with this problem. One solution is to look at alternative crops.

Another alternative, which is probably of more significant interest, is the new work being done with the "wettability" of soils. Many people will have noticed what happens with some soils when a bucket of water is poured on them; the water runs off. The soil is like glass. During the last 12 months research has taken place into this problem and this research will have to be followed up. It is a very extensive problem, but I see great potential where this research has taken place. We have a significant chance of benefiting from improved use of land in the high rainfall areas of the south-west. This is, however, an area of research which needs to be gone into, much further.

Eighteen years ago Neil McNeill said that the timber industry was enjoying a boom. Unfortunately the boom has passed. Over two decades the problem of dieback has emerged and has severely disrupted our timber industry.

While much research has gone into the disease, it appears that the control measures so far have resulted in only a controlled slowing down of the spread of this problem. We need to acknowledge the real importance of the timber industry, and I think it is probably fair to say that we need also to review some of our current attitudes in these affected jarrah forest areas. In areas where we have effectively abandoned any thought of jarrah reforestation we need to consider whether to introduce non-susceptible hardwoods to replace the productivity which formerly existed with our magnificent jarrah tree.

The mining industry is a relatively new industry. It was just starting 18 years ago and now it is a very important industry in the south-west coastal plain. The mining industry has made tremendous advances. The majority of the alumina industry lies in my province. With the advent of the alumina industry, many towns have expanded tremendously. I would mention Waroona, Boddington, Pinjarra, Mandurah and Harvey as areas which have felt the effect of the expansion of this industry. In the long term the electorate looks to the further processing in the alumina industry to create much needed jobs in the electorate. We will see a tremendous spinoff in the areas of Bunbury and Collie.

It was also very heartening to me to read yesterday's *Daily News* report indicating the continuing efforts of the Government to successfully conclude the previous Government's initiative for a smelter in the south-west. This is one of the most desirable things that could happen; it will

help mop up many of the unemployed and will bring more money into those towns in the south-west area.

Another issue addressed by Mr Neil McNeill was the issue of Federal-State relations and, of course, it is a coincidence that this issue is once again a burning topic among the people today. In regard to the formation of a federation I now quote from comments by the Hon. Neil McNeill reported in *Hansard* of 4 August 1965 as follows—

If I may refer to those times, not the least of the motives behind federation was the desire of the States at that time for protection, firstly from overseas influences—whether it was from military or economic circumstances—and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, from other States in terms of their commercial interests. Under no circumstances was the Commonwealth to become a dominant partner in federation; and, in the minds of those who framed the Constitution, the rights of the States were to be protected.

One of the weapons that was perhaps forged by the founders and which has since turned out to be a most effective weapon in establishing the paramount position of the Commonwealth has been the Constitution itself in one way, because a legal document does not have ready adaptability in cases of future needs and cannot necessarily meet the future needs which may not at all times be anticipated. This is so in another way because almost invariably, and by virtue of its position, the Commonwealth may attempt to exploit the Constitution for its own ends, whatever they may be; and the onus then remains on the State or States to challenge the validity. That has happened on numerous occasions.

We must have a proper rethink of the situation presently facing the people of Western Australia. Clearly, with the recent High Court decision of a majority of four to three, the position of the States is once again under threat by the Commonwealth's attempting to exploit a situation to achieve its own ends.

My province is made up of in excess of 30 separate communities. These are not communities lying side by side with a common focal point, but 30 separate communities, each with its own problems and needs, separated by significant distances. This causes considerable problems to a member of Parliament when attempting to service the needs of his electorate in an acceptable way. I believe it is essential that all electors know that

their member of Parliament is available for direct face-to-face contact. Naturally, an electorate spreading from Armadale to Australind and out to Wandering, with over 30 community centres scattered over the whole area, is a very travel-committed electorate.

It is my intention to endeavour to continue to service the electorate on a face-to-face basis and I will resist anything which will inhibit that objective.

With the very rapid expansion of the urban population in Mandurah, I think the time has now come for a vigorous move to be made towards the provision of a hospital there. Mandurah is a major population centre which currently has no hospital facility; in fact, Mandurah people have to opt to go to either Pinjarra or Rockingham for hospitalisation. That can no longer be accepted in a town the size of Mandurah with a rapidly increasing population; in fact, it presently has the highest growth rate of all non-metropolitan communities in Western Australia. That does not mean that I see the Pinjarra Hospital being phased out; it simply means that the Pinjarra Hospital will serve Dwellingup, Waroona, and Pinjarra. Those towns are also rapidly expanding and will continue to do so with the expansion of the alumina industry.

Other areas need to be looked at in terms of the provision of public services. The Waroona Primary School has been in a substandard condition for a number of years, and it is about time something was done to rectify that situation. I was recently at the Boddington school. It is clearly an old school in an expanding area which accommodates many new people; however, the classrooms and recreation facilities provided at that school would not be acceptable in a major urban population centre.

Another aim which should be considered is the need to co-ordinate the regionalisation and industrialisation in the Mandurah, Murray and Waroona communities. Please note, I say "co-ordinate", not "regulate".

Very real concern exists—it appears to be quite a legitimate concern—that the Mandurah-Murray-Waroona area will be overlooked in the enthusiasm of "Bunbury 2000".

I noted with some dismay that the announcement of the allocation of moneys for the Mandurah by-pass earthworks was made by the members for Bunbury and Mitchell and not the local member. No direct communication was made with other local members. This clearly causes me concern because the fears expressed by many people in the community may well be true.

Clearly, Lower West Province is a very productive area of our State which contributes greatly to the wealth and welfare of Western Australia. It is imperative that the industries of agriculture, mining, processing, and tourism be given incentives to increase their productivity and profitability and thus further increase the job opportunities and welfare of the region, with consequent benefits to the whole of our State's economy. These industries are the foundation of our living standards, and we must never forget it.

Members: Hear, hear!

[Applause.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. G. J. Edwards.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [5.23 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 16 August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.24 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

WATER RESOURCES

Agaton: Government Policy

74. Hon. W. G. ATKINSON, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the policy of the Government in relation to the Agaton water scheme proposal?
- (2) What is the present position in relation to the development of that proposal?
- (3) What action does the Government propose to take in relation to the scheme, and what consultations are being undertaken in relation to its future development?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) The Government has not yet formally considered its policy in respect to the Agaton project but since becoming the Minister for Water Resources, I have become conversant with details of the project and the difficulties of funding its construction.
- (2) and (3) The previous Government concluded that the \$60 million cost of the project was of such magnitude that the

State could not fund the construction from its own resources and, as a result, an approach was made to the Commonwealth Government in 1979 for financial assistance under the national water resources programme.

The Commonwealth Government required certain aspects of the submission to be reviewed and a joint Commonwealth-State committee of officers examined the proposal and reported in September 1980, amongst other things, that a detailed economic cost benefit study should be carried out to determine the relative merits of the Agaton project and the alternative option of augmenting on-farm water supplies in the north-east agricultural area. This study was co-ordinated by the Treasury Department and involved officers of the Departments of Agriculture, Public Works, and Industrial Development and Commerce.

The cost-benefit study report was prepared and a seminar was held at Dalwallinu in November 1981 to explain the findings of the report and discuss further options. The report concluded that the costs of the Agaton scheme far exceeded the net benefits and that the scheme was not economically viable.

The report also concluded that the development of on-farm water supplies is far more attractive in terms of costs and benefits but the farmers are not prepared to accept that this option is a satisfactory alternative.

In view of the farmers' views and the adverse cost-benefit report, alternative forms of funding the project involving a degree of farmer contribution has been explored in more recent times.

In the meantime, and since taking office in March, the present Commonwealth Government has announced that although it will continue the national water resources programme during 1983-84, its continuation into future years is under review. The State's ability to obtain Commonwealth funds for the project is thus now in some doubt and there seems no alternative but to await the outcome of the Commonwealth review.

As I have indicated, the development of the scheme depends almost entirely on the availability of funds. The present

need for strict budgetary control, the number of important projects competing for the available funds, and the very high cost of the Agaton project itself, makes its early commencement unlikely. Nevertheless, the Minister has been impressed with the arguments submitted in support of the project and is exploring all possible avenues of access to funding for its construction.

TELEVISION: OLYMPIC GAMES

Telecast

90. Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that in 1980 the then Government, in order to provide a direct television coverage of the VFL grand final and the Melbourne Cup to the south-west region, paid Channel 7, through the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, \$180 and \$68 respectively?
- (2) In view of that action, will the Government pay the necessary fees to provide coverage of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games to Geraldton and the north-west region, which will otherwise be unable to receive a direct telecast of the games, as the ABC has no rights in the telecasting of these events?
- (3) If "No" to (2), will the Minister contact the Federal Treasurer requesting financial support from the Federal Government to allow the people residing in the Geraldton and north-west region to receive a telecast of the games?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The Government is prepared to make representations to the appropriate Federal Minister to have the available TV coverage of the 1984 Olympic Games transmitted to the country areas of WA which may not receive this coverage through their normal transmission.

ABORIGINES: MARRA WORRA WORRA ABORIGINE CORPORATION

Mr Stephen Hawke

93. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister with special responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs:

What is the position that Mr Stephen Hawke currently holds with the Marra Worra Worra Aborigine Corporation?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

This is not a matter falling within the Minister's portfolio. I suggest the member seeks the information from the person or corporation referred to.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN: PREMIER

Political Adviser

105. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Is Mr Butler, employed as an adviser to the Premier, still the Secretary of the Painters, Decorators and Signwriters' Association?
- (2) Did Mr Butler, at any one time, hold both the positions of union secretary and Government adviser, and when did this practice cease?
- (3) What remuneration does he receive as an adviser, including expenses and car?
- (4) Is the Premier aware of the remuneration received by Mr Butler as Secretary of the Painters, Decorators and Signwriters' Association?
- (5) How much of his time does Mr Butler devote to his—
 - (a) Government adviser's duties; and
 - (b) union duties?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) and (2) Mr Butler has taken one year's leave of absence from the date he was employed by the Government.
- (3) The member is referred to the ministerial statement tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, 3 August 1983.
- (4) No.
- (5) Not applicable.

BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY CO LTD.

Subsidy

106. Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Is it correct that the Premier has written to the Prime Minister expressing concern at the suggestion that BHP receive a substantial subsidy?

(2) If so, will the Leader table the letter so that the Premier's reasons may be better understood by this House?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) and (2) No, but the Premier sent the following telex to the Prime Minister on Tuesday, 2 August 1983—

Hon. R. J. L. Hawke, A.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister.

The Western Australian Government notes reports that very substantial aid is proposed for BHP's steel division.

I respectfully draw to your attention BHP's announced decision to close its Koolyanobbing operation in Western Australia. I urge you to consider BHP's position in the light of its decision regarding Koolyanobbing which will cost Western Australian taxpayers millions of dollars and cause unemployment.

Brian Burke,
Premier of Western Australia.

ROTTNEST ISLAND: BOARD

Membership: Former Chairmen

107. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that former Labor Minister, Hon. Lionel Kelly, Chairman of the Rottneest Island Board 1953-59, was later appointed a member of that board by the incoming Liberal-Country Party Government?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that a former Labor Minister, Hon. A. D. Taylor, former Chairman of the Rottneest Island Board, was appointed a member of the board by the incoming Liberal-National Country Party Government after the 1974 elections?
- (3) If so, why has the Premier and Minister for Tourism not followed the practice on this occasion of appointing a member of the outgoing Government to the board?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Hon. A. D. Taylor was deputy chairman under Hon. H. D. Evans (Chairman).

- (3) The Government has acted to ensure that the board is fully equipped to undertake its tasks. However, if any member of the Opposition has any contributions to make, I am only too happy to receive them.

BUILDING INDUSTRY: BUILDERS' REGISTRATION ACT

Amendment

108. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Does the Government intend to amend the Builders' Registration Act to extend its provisions to more areas of the State?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) when will the Bill be introduced into Parliament; and
 - (b) what areas are proposed to be included?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Cabinet has approved a draft Bill for printing and introduction as soon as it is available;
- (b) initially the whole of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority area and the Shire of Mandurah; other major areas are under consideration. However this initial amending Bill will quickly overcome the ludicrous situation perpetuated by the Court Government which, for mysterious reasons, in 1979 nominated a most peculiar area—that is, the Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage and Drainage Board area as at 11 July 1969. This has the effect of including one side of a Mundaring street but excluding the opposite side, including the forests surrounding Jarrahdale but excluding the Jarrahdale townsite, excluding the areas of Baldivis, Wellard, and Singleton in the Rockingham Shire, and including part of Ballajura but excluding a significant part of the same rapidly developing area; these are only examples; there are also several other significant areas excluded.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS: "THE ENTOMBED WARRIORS" EXHIBITION

Video Tape and Film

109. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for the Arts:

- (1) As a means of promoting maximum interest in "The Entombed Warriors" exhibition, currently displayed at the WA Art Gallery, will the Minister, in conjunction with the Minister for Education, arrange through Mr Bob Edwards, Director of the International Culture Association of Australia, for video tapes or copies of the film "The Entombed Warriors" to be made immediately available for distribution to WA schools?
- (2) Will the Minister ensure that video tapes or copies of the film are available to schools in remote areas of the State?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes. The making of videos for country areas has been under consideration for some time, and we are seeking the co-operation of the Education Department on this particular project. We are presently assessing the likely success of such initiatives with a pilot project already under way in the Kimberleys.

110 and 111. *These questions were postponed.*

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

Mr John Kobelke

112. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Has a Mr John Kobelke been employed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet?
- (2) If so, will the Premier advise—
 - (a) the title of the position to be filled by Mr Kobelke;
 - (b) the salary and allowances payable;
 - (c) the term of his contract; and
 - (d) the name of the Minister to whom he is responsible?
- (3) Will the Premier table a duties statement for the position to be filled by Mr Kobelke?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) (a) to (d) The member is referred to the ministerial statement tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, 3 August 1983.
- (3) The officer shall perform all such duties consistent with the purpose of the employment as the Premier shall from time to time direct and without limiting the generality of such duties shall include—
- undertaking special research and investigations into matters concerning the responsibilities of the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet;
 - assisting with the preparation of reports and submissions required by the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet from time to time;
 - liaising with senior officers of the State Public Service on behalf of the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet;
 - consulting with the Premier's personal office on matters affecting the performance of Government policy.

113. *This question was postponed.*

SUGAR INDUSTRY: ORD RIVER

Government Policy

114. Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Agriculture:

What is the Government's policy in respect of sugar cane growing and processing on the Ord River?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

Labor recognises the exciting potential sugar appears to have for commercial crop production on the Ord. Labor fully supports the recently commissioned "implementation study" for an Ord sugar industry and the establishment of such an industry if it is shown to be economically and agriculturally viable.

115. *This question was postponed.*

BRIDGE

Gwambygine

116. Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Transport:

In the interests of the safety of York school children, and following much

publicity last year, and the fact that both the Government and Opposition parties made pre-election utterances that a new bridge or crossing would be constructed at Gwambygine across the Avon River, when is the work to be implemented?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

There are a number of bridges over the Avon River between Beverley and west Toodyay of which Gwambygine is one that have reached the stage where consideration must be given to their replacement or otherwise.

So far as the overall road system is concerned, a crossing of the Avon River at Gwambygine is considered to be of much less importance than other locations.

The replacement of the old bridge over the Avon River at Gwambygine by either a new bridge or a flood crossing has been considered. Due to the high costs involved and the very low potential usage, the expenditure is hard to economically justify.

Alternative arrangements have been made for the operation of the school bus which is no longer dependent on crossing the river at Gwambygine.

Notwithstanding the above, the matter is still under active consideration and I hope to discuss the matter with the member shortly.

RAILWAYS: ELECTRIFICATION

Bunbury-Kwinana

117. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Transport:

(1) In accordance with the election promise made by the Government in its "Bunbury 2000" concept, does the Government intend to proceed with a rail electrification programme for the Bunbury-Kwinana line?

(2) If so—

- (a) will the programme include branch lines to Collie, Calcine, and Jarrahdale; and
- (b) what will be the time scale for, and the cost of, each section to be converted to electrification?

- (3) What will be the anticipated cost of providing appropriate rolling stock to service the new system?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Studies indicate that justification for electrifying the Kwinana-Bunbury railway will occur in the period 1988-94. Taking into account the period required for a full feasibility study and construction period, the State Government is approaching the Commonwealth Government for funds to conduct a proper design and feasibility study.

- (2) (a) Yes;

(b) approximately three years after completion of the design and feasibility study, which itself would take about two years. The cost of each section will not be known until completion of the design study. Overall construction cost is estimated at \$70 million in December 1982.

- (3) The cost for electric locomotives would be about \$25 million.

118. *This question was postponed.*

EDUCATION: "PEACE" COURSE

List of Suggestions

119. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Education:

In an article in *The Western Teacher* of 8 July 1983 on "Peace Education", a list of suggestions is given for teachers of younger children. One of these suggestions is to "Plant a garden together. Grow vegetables. Resite the snails and caterpillars instead of killing them." Will the Minister advise whether or not this suggestion has come from the Education Department?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

The Western Teacher is the journal of the State School Teachers' Union of WA. Questions concerning the editorial content of the journal should be directed to it.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Como: Canteen

120. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Attorney-General representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has his department's attention been drawn to the inadequacy of the stove in the canteen of the Como Senior High School?

- (2) If so, what action is likely to be taken to replace this facility, and when?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) The Education Department's attention was drawn to this problem on 28 July 1983.

- (2) The Public Works Department will be requested to replace this facility in the near future.

RIVER: AVON

De-snagging

121. Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) As a consequence of information gleaned from the recent above-average high rainfall in the upper Avon catchment area and the subsequent river flow, has it been ascertained if any further de-snagging would be of benefit to the river course?

- (2) If so—

(a) what is to be the nature of the proposed work; and

(b) what is the scheduling for such work?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Consultants were engaged towards the end of last year to undertake a major flood study of the Avon River system. This study, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year, will identify the need, if any, for flood control measures. Details of the recent above-average flows in the Avon have been conveyed to the consultants.

- (2) (a) and (b) The nature and scheduling of necessary flood control measures, if any, will be determined after an evaluation of the consultants' report.

HOSPITAL

Dalwallinu

122. Hon. W. G. ATKINSON, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that when the managing secretary of the Dalwallinu Hospital is next transferred, no replacement will be appointed, and that the Dalwallinu Hospital will be managed by the managing secretary of the Wongan Hills Hospital?
- (2) If so, will the Minister give the reasons for this decision being made, and advise the Shire of Dalwallinu accordingly?
- (3) If not, will the Minister investigate this matter and advise the Shire of Dalwallinu as in part (2)?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) Consideration of the desirability of appointing a managing secretary with administrative responsibility for both Wongan Hills and Dalwallinu Hospitals was discussed with both board chairmen prior to the appointment of the current occupant of the post of managing secretary, Dalwallinu Hospital. Those concerned were informed that the need for a full-time appointment would have to be carefully reviewed when next it became vacant.
- (2) It is considered that the combined activity and workload of both hospitals does not warrant two separate administrative appointments and that the day-to-day management of both hospitals can be competently handled by one managing secretary. Similar management arrangements already exist and are operating satisfactorily in other comparable situations—for example Quairading and Corrigin Hospital Boards, and Bruce Rock and Narembeen Hospital Boards.
- (3) I have not been approached by the Shire of Dalwallinu on this matter, and I would be pleased to respond to any inquiry they might wish to make.

FIRES

Shannon River National Park

123. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for the Environment:

Who will be responsible for fire control in the Shannon national park when it is created?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

The Premier has announced that the Shannon River Basin will remain under the Forests Department's control and management pending the outcome of a review by the task force on land resources management. Meanwhile a working group is developing a strategic working plan. In this context, fire control presently remains the responsibility of the Forests Department.

Longer term arrangements will depend on the working group's considerations and other land management recommendations.

RAILWAYS: BUNBURY-PERTH

Rapid Transit

124. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In accordance with the election promise made by the Government in its "Bunbury 2000" concept, when will a rapid transit inter-city passenger rail service between Perth and Bunbury be implemented?
- (2) What will be the frequency of service?
- (3) Is it still expected that the rail service will involve speeds up to 130 kmh or has this estimate been modified?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) 1986-87.
- (2) and (3) The frequency and speed of the rail services will depend on the outcome of a current study being conducted by Westrail.

FERTILISER: NITROGENOUS

Price

125. Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Has there been a reduction in the price of nitrogenous fertiliser as a consequence of devaluation of Australian currency?
- (2) If not, what justification does the company CSBP & Farmers Ltd. have for maintaining the same price?

- (3) Is the Minister prepared to ask CSBP & Farmers Ltd. why superphosphate prices on a per tonne basis fluctuated during the month of March?
- (4) Is the Minister aware that, despite the fact fertilisers are purchased on an advance order basis, shortages occurred, particularly in the di ammonium phosphate fertiliser which is not manufactured in WA?
- (5) Can the Minister investigate this matter to ensure the company is not creating an artificial shortage for one product so that primary producers are forced to purchase a locally manufactured but more expensive alternative nitrogenous fertiliser?
- (6) As Western Australian primary producers are the biggest users of superphosphate and use a high volume of nitrogenous fertiliser and contribute significantly to the economy of this State, will the Government give support to the case against the imposition of anti-dumping duties erroneously imposed on di ammonium phosphate?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) to (6) The information required to answer this question is not known at this time. I undertake to have the matter investigated by the Prices Commissioner, after which I will write to the member.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: ACT

Farm Purchases

126. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

What articles, being purchased by farmers, does the Minister intend to bring under the Consumer Affairs Act?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

All goods and services.

RAILWAYS

Bunbury-Picton: Line and Marshalling Yards

127. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Transport:

What progress has been made on negotiations to remove the Bunbury-Picton

railway line and associated marshalling yards?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

A positive decision has been taken, in consultation with the City of Bunbury, to move the railway out of the central business district. Meetings have been held between Bunbury City Council, South West Development Authority, and Westrail to work out plans on which to proceed. From these meetings it is expected that over the next four to six weeks the council will come forward with alternative use proposals for the railway marshalling yard area; and proposals for re-locating railway functions will simultaneously come forward from Westrail. The Minister expects to be in a position to make public announcements later in the year.

The Bunbury City Council has consulting planners working on the project and Westrail has appointed a high level study group.

PASTORAL LEASES: EAST PILBARA

Development

128. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Lands and Surveys:

- (1) Has the Minister received a letter from the group, Advance Marble Bar, relating to the future of the pastoral-rural industry in that area?
- (2) Does the group advocate the opening up of vast areas of vacant Crown land in the East Pilbara for development as a pastoral lease primarily running cattle?
- (3) Has a decision been made on applications currently before his department in this regard?
- (4) If not, when will decisions be made?
- (5) Is the Advance Marble Bar contention correct that many areas, involving millions of acres, are viable areas for cattle production and, as such, should be released by the Crown for development?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Yes, a letter dated 5 May 1983 was received.
- (2) The group stated that many areas involving millions of acres are viable areas for cattle producing and therefore

should be released by the Crown and allowed to develop.

- (3) No.
- (4) Pastoral Board investigations are current.
- (5) The Minister replied to the letter from the Advance Marble Bar group on 15 June 1983, indicating its view that there are millions of acres which are viable for cattle production is not shared by the Departments of Agriculture and Lands. However, it has been indicated to the group that if it provides details of its investigations they will be passed to the Pastoral Board for evaluation.

LAND: NATIONAL PARK

Shannon River: Timber and Woodchipping Industries

129. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Forests:

If the Government created a national park in the Shannon Basin, where will the resources come from, as projected in working plan No. 87 of 1982, to guarantee the woodchip and timber industries?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

From the remainder of the hardwood forest and from the supplementary pine planting programme.

FAMILY ALLOWANCE

Conversion Scheme: Implementation

130. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of his pre-election undertaking to institute a family allowance conversion scheme, and that a special fund of \$10 million will be set up to enable the scheme to be implemented?
- (2) Can the Minister advise the House when this scheme will commence?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The implementation will be subject to budgetary constraints.

STATE FORESTS

Working Plan No. 87

131. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Forests:

What is the Government's intention in relation to the Forests Department working plan No. 87 of 1982?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

The Forests Department general working plan No. 87 will be maintained as the current management plan, subject to appropriate amendments required to accommodate changing circumstances.

RAILWAY

Boyup Brook-Katanning: Reopening

132. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Transport:

Is it the Government's intention to reopen the Boyup Brook-Katanning railway line?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

No decision has been taken as yet on the future of this line.

HOUSING: LAND

Sale

133. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Did the Minister give a pre-election undertaking to raise \$30 million by selling to local private developers around one-fifth of the State Housing Commission land holdings in order to finance policy promises?
- (2) Will the Minister advise the House how much of the estimated \$30 million has so far been raised from the sale of State Housing Commission land holdings in the metropolitan area?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Government has appointed a private consultant who is currently completing a report on the appropriate marketing strategy to ensure implementation of the Government's policy.

EDUCATION

Swimming Lessons: "In-term"

134. Hon. W. N. STRETCH, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Education:

In view of the Government's pre-election commitment to re-introducing "in-term" swimming lessons during school time in the summer terms, will the Minister—

- (1) Assure the House that such lessons will be re-introduced?
- (2) Expedite arrangements urgently, so that staff can be organised for these lessons to start during third term 1983?
- (3) Publicise his intentions, so that country parents particularly know where they stand?
- (4) Immediately tell this House if the full set of 11 swimming lessons is not to be re-introduced in WA schools this summer so that parents know where they stand?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) to (4) This Government is committed to the reintroduction of the previous programme of 11 lessons for primary school children in the in-term swimming programme. Final budgetary decisions will determine whether this programme will be restored in November 1983.

Until these budgetary decisions are made it is not possible to inform schools and parents of the programme length for the coming summer period.

Whatever the decisions on this matter the information will be made known to schools and parents at the first opportunity.

LAND

Board: Chairman

135. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Lands and Surveys:

With reference to the answer to question 73 given on Wednesday, 3 August 1983—

- (1) What prompted the decision to conduct a review into the positions of chairmen (2)?
- (2) Did Mr Tozer carry out his functions as a chairman satisfactorily?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) and (2) The present Government examined the composition of the Land Board and chairmanship as a result of representations to various members of Parliament and the Lands Department.

As mentioned in the reply to question 73, following this review Cabinet determined that Mr Tozer's services were no longer required.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

Staff Replacement Policy

41. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Industrial Relations:

- (1) Is his department subject to the Government's stated policy of replacing only 50 per cent of the staff who resign or retire?
- (2) Does the Premier exercise personal control over staff replacements?
- (3) If not, who does?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) to (3) All Government departments are subject to the 50 per cent rule. I exercise control over my departments and naturally that 50 per cent rule must be applied with commonsense, and it is.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Staff: Replacement Policy

42. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Leader of the House:

The Leader of the House said that all Government departments conformed to the 50 per cent rule. Therefore, I ask—

- (1) Is he aware that it does not seem to apply to the Education Department and the departments under the control of the Minister for Health, according to public statements?
- (2) Has the situation changed since recent newspaper publicity?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) and (2) As was the practice of Mr Masters when a Minister in the previous Government, I ask him to place questions on notice to those Ministers

involved and I will gladly obtain their answers.

LIBERAL PARTY

Advertising Agency

43. Hon. FRED McKENZIE, to the Leader of the House:

Is he able to inform the House—

(1) Which firm was the Liberal Party political campaign advertising agency during 1981-82 and 1982-83?

(2) What Government advertising contract payments, if any, were made by the Government to this firm for each of the respective financial years referred to?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

(1) D'Arcy McManus and Masius Pty. Ltd.

(2) For 1981-82, \$138 291.

For 1982-83, \$198 500.