

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 21 September 1983

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

BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Land Drainage Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Tonkin (Minister for Water Resources), and read a first time.
2. Land Valuers Licensing Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Tonkin (Minister for Consumer Affairs), and read a first time.
3. Police Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Police and Emergency Services), and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: TWELFTH DAY

Amendment to Motion

Debate resumed from 20 September.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [2.20 p.m.]: I support the amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion moved by the member for Pilbara. I do so realising that this is probably the most appropriate time for such a motion to come before the House.

Mr Barnett: You mean the member for Nedlands.

Several members interjected.

Mr O'CONNOR: I apologise, I mean the member for Nedlands.

Mr Barnett: You are misleading the House again.

Mr O'CONNOR: It is obvious that members opposite are concerned because of the way in which they are interjecting so early in the day. I would have thought that they would not have properly woken up, but nevertheless they have.

It is appropriate this amendment has been moved because of the total disarray of industries in this State. We need look only at the iron ore industry to see the state it is in and what it has cost this country. The iron ore industry is totally out of control and has had adverse effects on Western Australia.

We need look only at the agricultural industry and the wheat exports to ascertain the problems

which have occurred at Kwinana. It is an example of a vital export industry which has been totally affected by industrial action.

We need look only at the industrial action and the effect it has had on this State, to know that Western Australia is grinding to a halt because of the action being taken by a number of unions.

I smile when I read the ALP policy in connection with industrial relations. I will read it to you, Mr Speaker, because I am sure you would be amazed at what the party has put forward and, in due course, you may wish to take the matter up with your party.

The Labor Party platform contains the following statement—

The next State Labor Government proposes to change industrial law and planning to ensure that—

The object of full employment is paramount and that co-operation between Government employer and unions replaces confrontation . . .

Yet in the short time of only about seven months since it has been in office, this Government has allowed industrial relations to deteriorate to the stage where the situation is having a tremendous effect on the economy and future of this State and its people. Unless the Labor Government gets off its tail and starts to do something, we will lose total respect overseas, and orders for our commodities—which are so vital to the income and future of Western Australia—will decline.

Labor trumpeted the following—

. . . the next ALP Government will do a better job than the current Government without confrontation . . . ALP proposals will remove the confrontation, aim at full employment and maintain community standards . . .

We have all heard the phrase "Nero fiddled while Rome burned"; in this State, we have Burke fiddling while the Pilbara rusts.

Mr Clarko: Well said.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Pilbara will rust to the stage where we might never be able to polish it up again in a way that will advantage the State in the future.

Let us examine the disastrous effects of industrial relations since the Labor Government has been in power in Western Australia. Unfortunately, the figures for the June-August quarter are not available, so I will quote from the December-February figures and compare them with the March-May figures, which are the latest available. The figures are for man days lost per 1 000 man days. For the last three months we

were in Government, the figure was 20.1 man days lost per 1 000 man days. From March until the end of May—the first months of this Government—that figure had more than doubled to 44.5 man days lost. This shows exactly what a Labor Government does when it gets into power. The unions know a Labor Government will not attempt to control them. They know they can do anything they like, and no action will be taken. These disputes have been tremendously costly to this State.

The result of the summit conference of Federal and State Labor Governments and the promise of co-operation has been a deterioration of industrial relations in this State, and certainly a deterioration in industry. We have to look only at the industrial dispute affecting Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. and Mt. Newman Mining Co. Pty. Ltd. to see how poor industrial relations can affect an entire State.

This morning, I heard on the radio—and I believe it is true—that at the moment two-thirds of the ore ships coming to Australia are being diverted to India to pick up iron ore, and the remaining one-third is being diverted to Robe River.

Mr Rushton: It is a disgrace.

Mr O'CONNOR: I agree; it is an absolute disgrace. A major industry is being adversely affected by an industrial dispute, yet the Government is sitting on its tail. It was only when last week I complained about the Government's inactivity that the Minister for Industrial Relations got to his feet and said that the workers should go back to work. However, the Government has done nothing and this State is losing an industry it can ill-afford to lose, an industry which provides not only employment to the work force and export income, but also taxation revenue to the Commonwealth and State Governments. Western Australia receives more than \$80 million per annum in royalties from the mineral industry; so, it is a major contributor to our finances. From iron ore alone, our export income is something like \$1 327 million annually; yet here we have an industry being put in jeopardy because of lack of action by this Government, and because of irresponsible action by union leaders whom we could well do without.

I believe the average worker in the Pilbara wants to get back to his job so that he can provide for his wife and family. What will happen if this dispute continues? That worker in the Pilbara will be without a job; he will be without the facilities to provide properly for his wife and family, and we will find him on the dole queue, with a

lessening number of people in the work force in this State having to provide out of their money to keep him, simply because his job has gone down the drain as a result of the inaction of this Government.

The Labor Government is doing a great disservice to this State; I cannot express too strongly my feelings in this regard. Shortly, one of my shadow Ministers will be discussing the Kwinana grain terminal, and the loss which the industrial disputes could cause in that area. Again, that is a major industry affecting not only the farming community, but also the economy of Western Australia. In mining and agriculture, we have the two biggest industries in this State, both of which are affected by industrial strikes, which can affect the economy of this State, and the workers of Western Australia.

The third industry in jeopardy is the construction industry. Trouble has been experienced in that area for a long time. The Builders Labourers' Federation has been one of the most callous unions this country has ever seen; it has held people to ransom on a number of occasions, has resorted to blackmail tactics, and has carried on in such a way as to be a great discredit to the union movement.

We have some very good unions and union leaders in this State. Unfortunately, a few unions are taking us to the brink of disaster, and it is time this Government did something to bring them to heel, rather than act on advice and instruction from these unions.

It is likely now there will be trouble at the Fremantle power house. The SEC workers' strike a while back was claimed to have been overcome by a couple of Government advisers who were ex-union secretaries. However, they have done little to solve the problems at Kwinana or in the Pilbara up to this stage.

I request the Government to take serious action in this regard. From time to time unjustified claims are made. A group in Albany working on the CBH grain terminal wants to work for five hours and be paid for eight hours. In inclement weather those workers want to receive eight hours' pay, plus one hour's overtime for not working.

Despite the wages freeze, a number of people in the construction industry have had a rise of \$36 a week and the Government has done very little to assist this position.

If the Government intends to appoint all these advisers, it is time they did something worthwhile. It is time the Government thought about the people and the future of the State. It is time the

Government stopped taking action such as that which it took in relation to the Perth City Council garbage workers' strike, when it tried to buy out the members of the garbage workers' union and then, at the last moment, pulled out of the deal, leaving a worse situation than that which existed previously. Lack of Government action in this area is causing us trouble. In the short period of six months, industrial strikes and lost hours have more than doubled in Western Australia.

When we were in Government, the number of days lost through industrial strikes up until February of this year was 20.1 per thousand worked in this State. The figure under this Government for the period March to May has more than doubled to 44.4. I venture to say the situation will be even worse in the next three months; that is, June to August.

I appeal to the Government to get off its tail and do something. Unions in this State are running wild to the disadvantage of the community, but the Government is encouraging this situation by sitting back and doing absolutely nothing. This is costly, not only to the country as a whole, but also to each individual in the community, because if we lose the royalties on iron ore and the like, it will be necessary for taxation from other areas to be increased in order to maintain current facilities. The Government has a magnificent public relations machine. It has a lovely shell, which is totally devoid of any heart. The Government spends all its time working in its public relations area, which covers almost every issue that comes forward, but when one looks for the heart of the matter, one finds there is not one.

The Premier said recently that a review of Government departments would take place, but that is a fraud. I say that, because the Premier ought to move into the industrial relations field straightaway and do something about the position there. The Premier talked about conducting a review of all Government departments. I wonder whether he will review the Fremantle-Perth railway line. Will he ask the officers concerned to review the work of the Government's advisers to see whether in fact they ought to be employed and what they are doing? I believe the Premier will not do this, although he stated he would review every facet of Government.

While Burke fiddles, the Pilbara rusts. It is time members opposite got off their tails, did some polishing up, and considered not only the situation surrounding the unions in this State, but also the way in which it relates to union members and the people of Western Australia who are being affected seriously by the actions or lack of actions on the part of the Government.

I support the amendment.

MR PETER JONES (Narrogin) [2.34 p.m.]: Approximately a week ago we discussed an urgency motion to do with a subject similar to that covered by the amendment, although the motion had specific reference to the Pilbara. Since that time, not only has the position in the Pilbara become far worse, but also the whole question of industrial relations and the Government's position on industrial disputes has been called into question increasingly.

The first problems at Mt. Newman occurred two months ago, but the main problem faced by the State now, which has been brewing in recent weeks, has not been tackled by the Government, as mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition. It was interesting to note that, following the discussions in the Chamber last week, the Minister for Industrial Relations convened a meeting of the unions concerned in the matter.

Mr Davies: But you don't think he did it because of what you directed him to do, do you? He is doing that all the time.

Mr PETER JONES: He had said previously he was not going to interfere.

Mr Davies: He is doing that all the time.

Mr PETER JONES: He is doing what—not interfering?

Mr Davies: No; he is trying all the time to find a basis for a settlement.

Mr PETER JONES: Despite what the Minister said, the outward appearance of this Government's position on the terrible situation in the iron ore industry at present, which is affecting the State as a whole, is that it is doing nothing, because nothing has been done.

Mr Davies: You say that nothing is being done, because as far as you can see nothing appears to have been done, but they don't take you into their confidence.

Mr Old: What is being done?

Mr O'Connor: What is being done? We have had double the number of industrial strikes under this Government. That is what is being done.

Mr Brian Burke: Has the Government done anything with which you agree?

Mr O'Connor: We agree you ought to do something for this State.

Mr PETER JONES: Last week I indicated that, on the very day the urgency motion was debated in this House, I phoned Japan. At that stage both the Mt. Newman Mining Co. Pty. Ltd. and Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. strikes were of a duration of approximately two months. The Min-

ister responsible for the industry had made no contact with the customers. He had not done anything to advise them of the situation in the Pilbara, or as to the action the Government had taken, proposed to take, or would consider taking!

Mr O'Connor: The Government did not tell them anything.

Mr PETER JONES: The reason the Minister did not phone the customers in Japan was that he had nothing to say. I cannot say today that I phoned Japan to see whether, in the last week, the Minister had made up for the error of not contacting the customers previously; but, on the last information available to me, the Minister had made no effort whatsoever to advise the customer of the position and what the Government was doing to try to bring some sanity back into the situation in the Pilbara. I remind the House again that last October, when in Opposition, this Government spelt out clearly its policy on industrial relations in the iron ore industry. That statement was welcomed by the customers.

It received considerable publicity and the Government deserves commendation for at least recognising a problem existed and it was essential it made its position clear. Certainly the position of the Opposition, the former Government, was clear.

On many occasions, we indicated we were interested in standing up for the future of the industry as a whole. Last week and on other occasions, the Deputy Premier indicated he was well aware of the comments I made in Japan regarding this matter. The statement made by the then Opposition, the present Government, last October, which received wide publicity, was that the Labor Party in Western Australia would seek agreement from unions to avoid strikes in the Pilbara. The document went on to say that Government, industry, and unions would work out special agreements with emphasis on productivity and ensuring continued production.

* That statement was welcomed, because at least it represented an acknowledgement by the Labor Party that its position was suspect. The Labor Party's position in respect of industry as a whole and industrial relations, in particular, was suspect, but this statement gave some comfort because it indicated the Labor Party recognised it needed to say where it stood in this matter. The Labor Party indicated its position, but that is where it ended.

Since that time, despite all the efforts made to ascertain that the Government understands what needs to be done and realises how it should go about seeking this consensus arrangement and the

understanding which would prevail, nothing has occurred, bearing in mind that we have been confronted with the greatest strike the industry has had, in terms of its wide-ranging effects.

In 1979 a strike at Hamersley Iron lasted approximately 10 weeks, but Mt. Newman Mining still operated. In 1980 the reverse was the case, and customers were able to maintain—by an adjustment of their shipping schedules—a flow to the various receival points in Japan. Now, for the first time in the industry, we do not have those circumstances prevailing. Mt. Newman Mining company was forced last Tuesday or Wednesday to declare *force majeure*. It could not deliver due to circumstances beyond its control. The reputation of this State was tarnished—we were all tarnished. Whatever our reputation was, it went down the drain this morning after the announcement of further shipping schedule alterations to vessels between Japan and Western Australia—they have been diverted to India.

Mr Jamieson: They won't keep them going there for long. Have you seen the price they have to pay?

Mr PETER JONES: The member is correct. The Indian supply is an emergency supply. The quantity is diminishing and problems with tidal ports, contracts, and various other factors make that supply difficult to maintain. However, other steps have been taken by the Japanese to obtain reliable suppliers. India will not be a long-term supplier, but right now the Brazilian Government has moved to ensure that shipping rates from Brazil will be competitive enough to ensure that additional supplies, above the 24 or 25 per cent that country now provides to Japan, will be supplied at competitive freight rates.

I am sure there are those within this Government who are aware, and their advisers would be able to tell them, that this situation could not have come at a worse time. We have depressed tonnages, price reductions, and retrenchments in the work force in the Pilbara, and on top of that we have the situation of world shipping quoting competitively. It has been able to do so for most of the past year in a way that it has not been able to for some years. Despite the long haul between the Japanese iron ore ports and Brazil, this competitive situation will be to our great disadvantage.

Shipping lines are able to go into long-term charter agreements on terms which match the price from the Pilbara, or even better than that price. Brazil wants to do this, and it is supported by the World Bank and banks in Japan. Of course, it is supported by its own efforts. Any ship

that goes to Brazil to load ore will certainly be loaded.

The Premier has said, as reported in transcripts of interviews he has given in Japan and here, that some of the other nations are unstable suppliers, and he made particular reference to Brazil. The major companies of the world would tell the Premier, if they have not told him already, that companies like Alcoa and some of the Japanese steel mills have had no difficulties with deliveries from Brazil. In fact, we are no longer looked on as a credible and stable supplier, despite our being able to offer a stable political climate in comparison with that of some of our competitors. That is a fact. We are stable compared with some of the emerging third world countries which are rich in raw materials and which seek to take our place as suppliers. They are not yet able to offer the same degree of political stability as Australia, regardless of the political complexion of the Government in power at any one time.

The problem now is that despite the apparent political stability, one side of the political spectrum has clearly indicated that the Government is not the group elected to this House—the Government is those people who sit behind the elected representatives and say what will be done so far as unions are concerned.

The Government is trying to uphold its policy, which was a policy of the previous Government, that there will be no 35-hour week in the Pilbara iron ore industry. Quite frankly, we cannot afford it; not only the industry, but also this State and our nation, cannot afford it at this stage.

Although the Premier has said he supports that policy, he has not lifted one finger to positively and publicly be seen by not only the people of this State, but also by our customers—the overseas people who purchase our products—to enforce that policy. The Minister did call a meeting last week, but he is not prepared to defend those people who want to work and the companies prepared to invest in this State and to provide jobs.

I understand that last week—perhaps the member for Pilbara or the member for Kimberley might be able to correct me—15 families left the town of Newman. That was the publicly-given figure, and I do not know whether more have left. Let us suppose no more than 15 families have been reduced to the situation of saying, "We are off. Simply, financially and economically, we cannot stay". Those families would represent 40 to 45 people when one took into account the number of children involved.

The work force in that area is supported by whatever dole payments prevail and by the char-

ity of other unionists in the State. That might provide some level of succour and assistance, and I am not critical of that, but what sort of basis is it on which to conduct an industry? If the workers went back to work tomorrow, how long would it take them to get back to the same level of economic survival as they had before the disputation? Some have been out of work for seven, eight, or nine weeks, but even workers who have been out of work for a shorter period have jeopardised their financial positions because they have jeopardised the state of the industry.

I have on previous occasions drawn to the attention of the House the fact that the rest of the world watches what we do. The Deputy Premier has drawn attention on occasions in various parts of the world, as I did in recent years, to the fact that we offer a whole range of attractions to people who want to invest in Australia; but at times it has been a hard song to sing.

The previous Federal Government did not help us on many occasions—that is a statement of fact. It stood in the way of a great deal of investment and development in this State. If it had not been for the attitude of the Federal Government, we may well have been a long way further down the track with the aluminium smelter and the associated power house. Instead of supporting us, the Federal Government steadfastly refused for a year to allow us to proceed. That lost us a vital year as things have turned out.

I have acknowledged publicly that we have received no help from the Federal Government. The Deputy Premier is trying to attract investment in this State, particularly with his high technology toys, but we are being quoted overseas as a country with tremendous industrial disputation, a country which cannot provide a stable work force. I need to quote only one of the items in the *Wall Street Journal* to indicate this point. The article stated that the Australian labour scene was then tranquil, but showed signs of becoming more turbulent. Such articles are read by people who can finance investment in this country, and who can be associated with providing funding for the companies that the Government and the Deputy Premier are trying to attract to this State right now.

What sort of questions will they ask when this is the kind of information they are served up? It is right when they say the construction industry comprises a lot of militant unions such as the Builders Labourers' Federation and the Building Workers' Industrial Union, which are set for renewed strike action at a time when the industry is in the doldrums. The article continues and talks

about matters relative to other unions within Australia.

In *The New York Herald Tribune* appears an article about unions being unlikely to accept the 4.2 or 4.3 per cent indexation they are seeking. It says they will want more. The article refers to shorter working week requests, and so on.

We cannot afford at State or national level a Government that is not seen to be doing things. It is not an easy row that they hoe, but it is made more difficult by their own inactivity and incapacity to come to grips with the fundamentals of the union dispute which presently exists in this State.

The Government has surrounded itself with a raft of advisers. I was at a dinner where the Minister for Industrial Relations indicated in conversation that his adviser (Mr McGinty) was almost the herald of a new dawn. He had such a knowledgeable, capable, and well-respected person advising him and helping industry in this State. We are now seeing how helpful he is. We also see how helpful is the Premier's adviser (Mr Butler).

Mr Laurance: Good question.

Mr PETER JONES: The only way he advises in a public way is by going around handing out money.

Mr Court: And to get his own pay cheque.

Mr PETER JONES: That is right. He leaves his office to collect his pay cheque. The problems in respect of the FED & FU during the SEC power station dispute will see us all having to pay. Mr Butler is very visible buying industrial peace.

Mr Parker: \$84 000 out of a budget of \$1 000 million!

Mr Rushton: It should not be there at all.

Mr PETER JONES: Clearly, we have the situation where the Government through its own inactivity is seen to be leading our State at a time of tremendous uncertainty in the industrial development situation internationally. It is hard enough to attract industry to this State at any time, but it is made harder by this State's reputation. Our reputation and the advantages we have to offer are sullied and jeopardised through the Government's inactivity and incapacity to come to grips with the very serious industrial climate which prevails.

We have a situation, despite what the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services said by way of interjection, that the number of man days lost prior to the commencement of the Pilbara and Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd disputes two months ago are in excess of the figure prior to the Government's taking office.

I support the amendment.

MR OLD (Katanning-Roe) [2.54 p.m.]: I rise to support this amendment. I confine my remarks to one facet of industrial unrest; that is, the grain handling dispute currently being experienced at Kwinana which has deteriorated a little further. I preface my remarks by saying that some electors in Western Australia—quite a large percentage of them—have been sweet-talked by the ALP into believing that by putting a Labor Government into power in this State we could expect industrial peace. It was to be far from that. The election of a Labor Government gave the all-clear to militant unions to further promote their unreasonable demands in industries such as the grain industry. The problems being experienced today in the grain industry go back to the body-snatching exercises of the Waterside Workers Federation when, realising that its numbers were being steadily depleted and its muscles lessened, it decided it would move into other fields in order to increase its numbers and its influence in the industrial field. It did this by moving in on the Australian Workers' Union, which union covered all grain handlers to shipside at Kwinana and other outports. It moved into Kwinana in the first place. The case which was heard by the arbitration commission in Sydney was quite long and far-ranging, but despite the efforts and hopes of people within the industry the arbitration commission decided that the Waterside Workers Federation should control the people within the industry back to the terminal. The judgment was such that it could almost be interpreted as giving the *carte blanche* to the Waterside Workers Federation to move further back than the Kwinana grain terminal and actually move into country areas.

Fortunately, so far this has not happened, because the Waterside Workers Federation has been hard pushed trying to wreck the wages freeze by moving into the Kwinana area and demanding some unreasonable conditions. Firstly, the workers wanted an extra \$40 a week for 60 grain handlers and since then they have been looking at reduced working hours. That, of course, is another way of breaking the wages freeze. It is passing strange that the industrial unrest seems to occur on the waterfront, particularly in respect of grain handling, at those times when the industry is most vulnerable.

I now refer to a dispute which occurred in January of this year, which came about during the period when Western Australia was called upon as the largest contributor to the wheat harvest in Australia to supply the bulk of overseas orders. *The West Australian* of 8 January reported—

LITTLE grain was loaded for export from Kwinana yesterday or the day before because of walk-offs by members of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

It goes on further to say—

The union secretary, Mr Ron Inkster, said last night that the parties had been directed by the Arbitration Commission to negotiate an award to be presented for ratification.

On 25 January the same newspaper reported—

Commissioner McGlan referred the dispute involving about 60 Waterside Workers' Federation men to the commission's president, Sir John Moore, to decide whether it should be heard by a full bench.

It is understood that February 3 has been set aside for a possible full-bench hearing.

Commissioner McGlan recommended an immediate action while further hearings were pending.

But the WA secretary of the WWF, Mr Ron Inkster, said yesterday afternoon that overtime bans would remain until details of the hearing could be put to members at Kwinana.

On 1 February in *The Australian* this article hits at the heart of the deal by saying—

THE Arbitration Commission will intervene today in a union wage freeze fight that is bringing chaos to the multi-million-dollar wheat export trade.

At least seven ships are held up by the waterfront campaign and farmers have been told to expect losses of at least \$250 000 because of the disruption.

That \$250 000 was for an unreasonable claim by a handful of workers handling one of the most important export commodities we have. The article goes on—

With most eastern State wheat farmers badly hit by drought, Kwinana has found itself the key export centre for this year's grain harvest.

But the waterside workers are demanding that the terminal's 60 workers receive a \$40-a-week pay rise, and has backed the demand with a series of work bans and instant stoppages.

It was a wildcat exercise because they allowed loading to commence, and when it reached a critical stage, would call it off so that nobody knew where they were, including the shippers. It is quite obvious that the Waterside Workers Federation, having taken over operations at Kwinana, is

now dedicated to seeing that it not only gets "better conditions" for its workers during a pay freeze initiated by a Government in an attempt to help stabilise the economy, but also that it takes over waterfront grain handling in the outports.

A decision was made in Sydney yesterday that pertains to Western Australia, that waterside workers who are handling the grain on ships in the outports, not on the wharves as they do in Kwinana, would be pulled out. That very effectively immobilised all the outports such as Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton. Esperance did not get a mention, and I can only surmise that no ships are berthed there and no work is going on. Again I refer to the timing of the dispute. Co-operative Bulk Handling is endeavouring to clear the seaport terminals after a record harvest last year and after virtually carrying Australia as far as wheat exports are concerned. So now is the time for the waterside workers to strike again.

Four ships are idle and more are coming to Kwinana and the outports. What will happen to them if the waterside workers decide to continue the strike, and there is no indication they will not do that? Those ships will be diverted to the Eastern States if there is any grain to be picked up there, and I cannot say whether there is. Otherwise, they will sit in Gage Roads incurring a great amount of demurrage which is another cost on the producer. The first episode cost \$250 000 and now we are faced not only with the possibility of losses of sales, but also more particularly with demurrage on ships sitting in Gage Roads, because I doubt they have anywhere else to go.

The West Australian of today's date tells the story as follows—

THE export of grain from WA was stopped yesterday as the Co-operative Bulk Handling grain handlers' dispute escalated.

The federal executive of the Waterside Workers' Federation, meeting in Sydney, decided to call all CBH grain handlers out on strike because 60 Kwinana grain handlers were stood down on Monday by CBH.

They were stood down because they refused to accept an offer by CBH to take the matter to the arbitration court. I feel CBH was quite reasonable in its attitude. It cannot legally transgress the pay freeze which is a Statute of this State.

Mr Parker: That is not true.

Mr OLD: Even if the company could do so, it should not do so. Perhaps the Minister can say why my remark was not correct.

Mr Parker: No Statute is in force in respect of a private employer.

Mr OLD: The Minister for Industrial Relations hands out lollies quickly to the unions, and this is where the public are being sadly duped into thinking a Labor Government will keep industrial peace and maintain productivity. It keeps industrial peace by handing out the lollies to those people who are a little militant, but who do not deserve extra benefits.

Mr Court: Do you think they will build another Curtin House?

Mr OLD: It must be time; they sold the last one at a nice profit.

The General Manager of CBH (Mr Green) said CBH had sent a message to the National Secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation (Mr Norm Docker) asking for an urgent review of the situation. He is reported in the newspaper as follows—

Mr Green said that CBH wanted to clear all grain bins in WA before the bumper harvest started in about two months.

Later on, the article states—

CBH has refused to discuss the log of claims, which the company says contravenes the wages pause.

Further on, it continues—

All WWF grain handlers at Bunbury, Albany, Esperance and Geraldton went on strike yesterday because of CBH's action.

I am sorry, I was wrong; Esperance is mentioned.

They went on strike because of a direction from Sydney, not because of CBH's action. We are being controlled in matters relating to this union as is normal, from the east coast.

It is an important dispute for CBH; it is the agent responsible for grain handling in Western Australia, and is protected by a Statute. It is the sole handler of specified grains in this State, and it has to clear the bins in readiness for the expected harvest which we hope will be a good one.

I ask how far this matter is likely to go. I see it as the first step in the takeover of grain handling throughout this State. I have said that before and have been accused of drawing a long bow. The situation has escalated from Kwinana to the outports, and the logical next step as far as the Waterside Workers Federation is concerned is to man inland receival centres. It does not matter what a union is called—whether the Waterside Workers Federation, or any other federation—there is nothing to stop it moving where it considers its legitimate operations are based. The legitimate operations of grain handlers start in the paddock after the grain is harvested. I do not

really expect the WWF to go there because, frankly, the work is too hard.

I am sure the federation has its eyes on larger grain installations in the countryside of Western Australia which today are very efficiently run by CBH because it has a special relationship with the workers in those terminals. The most modern and sophisticated grain handling terminal in Australia is at Kwinana, and it demands a lot of technological know-how. It can be put at risk because certain people think it is funny to say, "You blokes don't work; I will bring in 500 farmers and work it". While I do not doubt the intelligence of farmers, I do not believe they would have been trained in the sophisticated systems at the Kwinana terminal.

Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. offered to go to the arbitration commission with the Waterside Workers Federation. As an employer, I do not believe it could be fairer than that. However, the Waterside Workers Federation has rejected that out of hand so far. I have confidence in the ability of CBH to control its own affairs, and I believe it will do so successfully. However, one matter would probably give CBH a little boost in its negotiations with the union, and that is a bit of moral support, if nothing else, from the Government of this State—a public statement that the Government stands behind CBH in its endeavours to continue supporting one of the greatest export industries in our State.

I support the amendment.

MR PARKER (Fremantle—Minister for Employment and Administrative Services) [3.12 p.m.]: I wish to respond to the amendment on behalf of the Government and indicate that the Government completely rejects the amendment and rejects what was said in support of the amendment by the three members who have thus far spoken.

The member for Nedlands moved the amendment, but he said nothing in its support. When the Leader of the Opposition spoke this afternoon, he made a couple of points, and most of them were taken up in greater detail.

Mr Court: Were you awake last night?

Mr PARKER: Yes, I was.

Mr Court: You had your eyes shut.

Mr PARKER: I can assure the member for Nedlands that I listened to the debate and the few remarks made by the member for Nedlands on this subject.

This afternoon the Leader of the Opposition referred to one or two matters with which I will deal as they come up with the other speakers be-

cause the Leader of the Opposition did not say anything serious about these matters. However, one subject mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition warrants comments from me.

He spoke about statistics. It has been said that there are lies, damned lies, and statistics. The Leader of the Opposition engaged in proving that axiom when he spoke this afternoon and quoted statistics in support of his case. I do not know whether the statistics were accurate because I do not have them before me. I will have them investigated to determine the facts of the matter. If members examine the statistics for the one year of the term of office of the Leader of the Opposition and the nine years of the previous Government, and compare them with the few months that we have been in office, they will find that the result is interesting. The Leader of the Opposition took a three-month period from December-February—a period in which falls the very extensive Christmas-New Year break, which everybody takes. Most people take holidays in that period and many industries are shut down in order to allow their staff to take holidays. It is little wonder—it would be almost inevitable—that there would be an increase in the strike statistics from December-February to March-May, no matter what.

Mr Mensaros: The pre-election period did not have anything to do with it?

Mr PARKER: No matter what Government was in power at the time, it is axiomatic that that would be the position. That is the only point the Leader of the Opposition made to which I need to respond.

I now turn to the comments made by the Leader of the National Country Party concerning the dispute at Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. It is not surprising that the Leader of the National Country Party supports the activities which have been undertaken by CBH in this dispute, because we all know that the Chairman of CBH is a member of Parliament in the Legislative Council and a member of one of the Opposition parties. We all know that he has not been shy of fomenting disputes in the area in order, as he sees it, to bolster the Opposition parties, of which he is a member.

Mr Hassell: We do not all know. Nothing of the sort.

Mr PARKER: I have no doubt that that is what Mr Gayfer did.

Let me go through the history of this dispute—

Mr Peter Jones: Can you prove what you are saying?

Mr PARKER: If members opposite allow me, I could explain how this happened. The Leader of the National Country Party was correct when he said that over the objections of CBH and the Australian Workers' Union, the Waterside Workers Federation, through the due processes of the law in the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission some considerable time ago, obtained industrial coverage for the grain handlers at CBH.

Mr Old: How long ago?

Mr PARKER: It would be about three years ago.

Mr Old: It was 18 months.

Mr PARKER: There is no doubt about it, without going into the rights or wrongs of the situation, the Waterside Workers Federation gained access to the workers. Frankly, that is past history which was debated extensively at the time. Of course, the Waterside Workers Federation had to obtain the overall general industrial coverage, and it had to seek the right to have an award with the employer concerned. That is the conflict which has been going on for some time.

The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act requires the commission, before arbitrating on a dispute, to ensure that adequate consultation processes have been invoked as part of the determination of the dispute. It is not competent for the Commonwealth commission to simply go in, see a dispute in existence, and make an award or a determination in order to resolve the dispute. Since the inception of the Act in 1904, that has applied.

In this particular case—and I am not closely familiar with what happened during last year—early this year the Commonwealth commission, as a result of whatever had taken place before, instructed both parties—the Waterside Workers Federation and CBH—to go away until conciliation had been tried. That was before it was a matter for arbitration. In other words, the commission instructed the parties to negotiate. In fact, the views expressed by the Leader of the National Country Party here this afternoon back up my advice that in certain major respects—the most important respect is in relation to the award—CBH has refused to follow that up with the arbitration commission, and it has refused to negotiate.

It may be that CBH is refusing to negotiate because of the commission's and the Government's policy, both State and federally, in relation to the wages pause, which is currently under way. Whatever the reasons being used, I should make a few points about this abundantly clear. Firstly, they

are negotiating under the aegis of the Commonwealth commission. As I said to the Leader of the National Country Party by interjection when he was speaking, we have not proclaimed those parts of the State Salaries and Wages Freeze Act which related to private industry employers, so there is no legal requirement affecting their ability to negotiate on wages or on any other matter. However, there is one aspect of the case at the arbitration commission level in relation to the wages freeze which it is free to recognise, and that is that under the policy of the Commonwealth commission it was obliged, as a result of submissions put before it by the then Commonwealth Fraser Government—I can recall the debate last December and can recall my reading the position that the Commonwealth Government put to the arbitration commission. The conservative Commonwealth Government could have put to the arbitration commission that there should be no wage increase during the currency of the wages freeze. That was not put to the Commonwealth commission, and the Commonwealth commission could have adopted the position that there should be no wage increase during the currency of the wages freeze.

The commission said that during the wages freeze, and any subsequent return to a more orderly system, wage fixation should be on an equitable basis, and that where there were inequities, they would be dealt with by the commission or the parties, with ratification by the commission at some subsequent stage.

In this case—and I am not sufficiently familiar to know whether there are inequities in the wage structure or conditions structure applicable to waterside workers who are employed by CBH—it is wrong to say that it is prohibited by Statute, Government policy, or commission policy for there to be negotiations and explorations as to whether there are any such inequities or avenues of approach and to resolve them in the context of the making of an entirely new Federal award covering these workers in this company.

Conciliation does not necessarily mean either that conciliation needs to take place simply between the parties, because the Commonwealth commission will always make available, if requested, a commissioner or deputy president of the Commonwealth commission to preside over the negotiations that take place and to give some guidance to the parties as to whether they might agree in terms of exploring whether there is any room to move or whether there is any likelihood of a deal being reached and being ratified. That has happened in many industries under Commonwealth jurisdiction without any Government interference, with the commission simply helping

the parties to reach agreement. Where agreement has not been possible, the commission has arbitrated on the matter in order to determine the appropriate rate, and in many cases there have been wage increases granted by the Commonwealth commission during the currency of the wages freeze to create an equitable position, something which was a linchpin of the former Federal Government's desire to enter into a wages freeze policy and which was endorsed by the commission.

In this case there has been no such attempt. CBH has refused to negotiate either privately or before a Commonwealth commissioner. What it has said is that it will go to arbitration; it will simply go to a court advocacy situation where one party will put a case and the other party will oppose it and the commission will be obliged to adjudicate on the arguments put.

That does not fall within the guidelines of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act and the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The company has refused to engage in that exploratory process with the Waterside Workers Federation.

I understand it is likely there will be proceedings in the Commonwealth commission because the Waterside Workers Federation is able to say that it has been unable to talk to the company. The matter will proceed to the commission in some form for determination; I am not sure what stage this is at or when it will take place.

In the meantime—and this is where I accuse directly the Chairman of Co-Operative Bulk Handling, the member for Central Province in the Legislative Council (Hon. H. W. Gayfer) of directly attempting to foment this dispute—one of the most provocative actions has been taken in the industrial sphere in the last few days, because a letter has been sent out by the company to the individual workers—at their homes as I understand it—stating that if the workers do not sign the letter to indicate they will not at any time in the future participate in work bans or strikes, they will be stood down and not allowed to go back to work at CBH. That approach went out in the nineteenth century.

Mr Clarko: Who said?

Mr McNee: What about industrial sanity for a change? It is okay when it is on your side, but what about the employers' side.

Mr PARKER: That is an action which no rational and sane industrial practitioner would even contemplate.

Mr Clarko: Rubbish!

Mr PARKER: That is something the Industrial Commission would not contemplate.

Mr McNee: As long as you maintain that policy, you will be lost, and you will take the country with you.

Mr PARKER: The views of the member for Mt. Marshall are interesting because they express the true feelings of members opposite. He is in fact saying that if a person says to an employer that he is not prepared to give an assurance that at some stage in the future he will not go on strike, the employer is entitled to sack that employee.

Mr Clarko: Why not?

Mr PARKER: Now we have the member for Karringup wanting to take away this right from workers.

Mr Clarko: I didn't say that.

Mr PARKER: There is no question but that this has been an incredibly provocative action.

Mr Hassell: Provocative to ask a man to fulfill his contract?

Mr PARKER: Opposition members were heard in silence.

Mr Old: You interjected.

Mr PARKER: Only on factual matters.

Several members interjected.

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

Mr PARKER: Not only was Mr Gayfer asking the workers to fulfill their contracts—as the interjections and bayings from members opposite would indicate—but also he was saying that if they did not sign the letter the company drafted, there would be no negotiations and the workers would be locked out. And that is what has happened—60 workers have been locked out.

Mr Hassell: They are already on strike.

Mr PARKER: The people went on strike subsequently.

Mr Hassell: They were holding stop-work meetings.

Mr PARKER: Now the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is opposed to workers holding stop-work meetings; he considers that a form of strike action.

Mr Clarko: Why not?

Mr PARKER: Stop-work meetings have become industrial action which is untenable and unpalatable to the Opposition.

Mr Hassell: When will you support work in this country?

Mr PARKER: The position is that these people are either ignorant, in the case of members opposite, or malicious, in the case of Mr Gayfer. In Mr Gayfer's case, he has deliberately taken action to foment trouble. The most moderate union in this country would not sit by idly and accept this sort of action being meted out to its members by an employer. That is the position with CBH. The company has not received support from the ALP because it is our view the company has deliberately fomented this dispute when its resolution is something very easily achievable.

Mr Hassell: To hell with the nation.

Mr PARKER: The resolution of the dispute is entirely in the hands of CBH. We are not saying that CBH should agree to each or any of the Waterside Workers Federation demands; all we are saying is that the company should engage in negotiations as provided for under the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

I turn now to comment on the disputes in the Pilbara. First, it is proved that the Government has not engaged in the Pilbara disputes for the purposes of posturing and carrying on about those disputes in the manner adopted by the former Government.

Mr Hassell: You have not solved them, either.

Mr PARKER: The former Government did not solve a single dispute in nine years. It did a lot of posturing, ranting, and raving, and it promoted disputes. Its legislation had the effect of promoting disputes.

Mr Hassell: None got to the stage these have reached.

Mr PARKER: There were far more protracted disputes under the previous Government.

Mr Hassell: No ships were diverted to India.

Mr PARKER: The Government is concerned about the disputes. It does not support the position of either the unions in the disputes or the companies at both Newman and Hamersley. The position is that the ACTU has adopted a policy decision which, in relation to the Hamersley dispute, is completely at variance with the action taken by the unions involved in the dispute.

Mr Hassell: What about the TLC?

Mr PARKER: It has taken a different position.

Mr Hassell: Indeed it has; it has taken the one you took.

Mr PARKER: We have expressed our position publicly. We do not believe the line adopted by the unions in the Hamersley dispute is one that can be tolerated in terms of fostering prices and incomes accord or in terms of the Government's

policy or the policy of the ACTU. There is no doubt about that. To say because we have said that and we have not postured in the same way as did the Hon. Gordon Masters when he was Minister and as the member for South Perth when he was Minister, and that we have not been involved in attempting to resolve the dispute, is not true.

The people in Newman have held discussions with the Ministers concerned and my colleague, the Minister for Industrial Relations, has been in constant contact with all parties involved in the dispute. The companies acknowledge that they are by no means blameless, at least they were not at the beginning of the dispute.

Mr Spriggs: Not the Hamersley company.

Mr PARKER: Yes it has, especially in the circumstances that led to the dispute. It acknowledges the fact that it is not entirely blameless in creating the existing circumstances.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [3.31 p.m.]: There is no doubt in the mind of anyone who cares about the affairs of the community and the future of the State, that the industrial relations and disruptions in this State have reached a very grave situation.

In every field of the economy, particularly where there are a lot of employees together in the one working place, where organised labour prevails, employers and employees are placed under enormous stress. We experience this particularly in connection with the militant unions. They want more members to have more revenue from fees to enable them to have more secure jobs as bosses and more power.

The terms of the disputes that come before us now are ridiculous and entirely contrary to the market forces. It would not be experienced in any other free country of the world. The power they want to achieve is not entirely for the union movement, but is also political power.

This Government outwardly wants to be no different from its predecessor. It wants to be mild and calm and to be business orientated as well as honest. It is however, concealing its debts to the left wing of the party organisation and, particularly, to the union movement.

The member for Fremantle has tried to explain the statistics mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition and which are condemning of the Government. He mentioned the period over Christmas last year and early this year and referred to holidays to explain the small number of strikes, but omitted to say that this also happened to be during the pre-election period. During this time, the unions promised the ALP they would not have any strikes in order to obtain an

election result that would favour the ALP. Following the election, the unions have reversed their actions. What has happened is that the ALP is being asked to pay its debts now. Prior to the election, a plea went out by the ALP saying there should not be any strikes. There was none, but now is the time to cash in.

It could be fairly said that the Government is not being honest in these matters and, indeed, is corrupt in respect of its relationship with the unions. Its actions, or perhaps non-actions, are bowing to the wish of its master. If one examines it psychologically one realises that some of the attempts the Government has made are in order to place a veil over this corrupt behaviour, to appear to be honest and to defend itself and its members against any political accusation of dishonesty. For example, the Government members by their salary cuts Bill, are telling the people that they are "good boys"; they are cutting their own salaries and by so doing are being community minded.

The same applies to the proposal for members of Parliament to declare their assets and financial interests. By doing this, the Government is saying that it has clean intentions, but really this is an attempt to conceal the union domination behind every action of this Government. The behaviour of the militant unions today is entirely defying the rules of the marketplace. One would not find any other country with the same economic conditions where unions would be prepared to strike when there is no demand for labour. The Government is making such ridiculous attempts to succeed by not taking any action, just standing by. These strikes will result in lower productivity, loss of contracts, and loss of export earnings for the State. One asks why the Government does not take the appropriate action and why the unions, in these economic circumstances, are achieving what they want by way of disruption.

Going back in history, I can find only two explanations for this. One is that we have extremely left-wing unions which believe that the only way they can achieve their aims is through this type of action. We can read about similar actions by Communist unions all over the world in order to further the Communist objectives.

The other reason is, of course, that they get confidence to do so from the inaction of the Government which is referred to and criticised in this amendment. Instead of going out and trying by whatever means to alter the situation, the Government stands by and does nothing. The result is that everyone, perhaps with the exception of the union bosses, is disadvantaged.

The Government gets away with it now because the Press Gallery is empty and the warnings we are giving between the walls of this Chamber will not reach the public; they will not be publicised, although they will be on record. In due course, the Government will be disadvantaged in the same way as are employees whether in the Pilbara, on the waterside, or somewhere else. I confidently predict that Government utilities, such as the Metropolitan Water Authority and the State Energy Commission, will be the next areas affected. These utilities are places with large conglomerations of workers who are easy to handle, instruct, and drive fear into so that they will do as they are told.

This will rebound on the Government. Ultimately, despite the non-reporting of the honest endeavour of the Opposition to remind the Government it should take action, and despite the fact that in response to my endeavours the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services explains technicalities—which he is able to do as an expert in industrial law, instead of saying, “We are going to do something serious about this matter”—these things will rebound on the Opposition. Wherever we look we find the same situation, as pointed out by the spokesman for agriculture in relation to the Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. situation and the member for Narrogin, referring to the iron ore situation.

With regard to the lengthy strikes in the iron ore industry, the same problems were subject to detailed discussions and warnings by the Opposition, but the Government either does not believe or does not dare to believe, and will not admit to the long-term harm caused by its standing idle. It implies—in fact, it does more than imply—encouragement to those who wish the industrial unrest to continue.

It is no good for the Premier, even if he does it with the best of motives, to say that the Japanese were polite to him on his recent trip. Of course they were polite. Having been Opposition spokesman on industrial development, Mr Speaker, you will know something about the matter; the Japanese are ever polite. When they cancel the last order, they will still be polite. They will not tell the Government it is at fault. The Premier should not believe the situation is bad only when the Japanese come to him and complain about the Government's behaviour. The Japanese will not advise the Government; they will prepare to find an alternative. Indeed, they did that some years ago and those who follow events, either by reading or by participation as I did for six years, will know that the Japanese went to the Brazilians, as the member for Narrogin said. This was in con-

nection with pelletising plants in the Pilbara; at the time both plants were closing down because there was no demand for pellets. Yet at the same time of little demand, representatives from the Japanese steel industry went to Brazil to encourage the building of a new pelletising plant and only a few months later one plant closed in the Pilbara. I have followed this information carefully and there is no way to negate it.

I have tried to warn the Government and have asked questions in the hope that the Minister for Mines might wake up and think about the problems. I have asked questions specifically about the iron ore industry and the chartering of ships. I have not received satisfactory replies. The Government's actions will rebound on it and on the people who elected the Government. It appears to be more and more on a disaster course.

The Government might ask, if it is in the slightest way interested in helping, “What shall we do?” There are different ways to tackle the matter. If anything, the Government should be in a better position to act because it claims, and probably has, a closer affiliation with members of the working class. Why cannot workers be educated, the union bosses disciplined, and the Japanese advised of the industry's present situation? The Premier should not kid himself that the Japanese steel mills prefer this Government to the previous State Government; that is simply ridiculous. However, the Premier can gain the respect of the Japanese—because they are pragmatic people—by going over there and, if nothing else, asking them for advice.

Let me tell members a small true story. When I was in a hotel in Tokyo, I noticed the attendants all wore green ribbons in their lapels. After a while, I became curious and asked an attendant what it meant. He told me, “That means we are on strike”. However, the attendants still worked and earned their salary. Probably, they were on strike because they were not happy about something or the other; but the strike was only theoretical.

These are the things the Premier should learn. We could all learn from the Japanese, because they have a very positive attitude of belonging to each other and of fostering their interest both now and in the future for their children.

Clearly, this amendment is a last-minute warning for the Government. Members opposite should not laugh at it as they so often do about things of this nature put up by the Opposition. Government members can attempt to talk it down or can discuss the issue in a technical way as the member for Fremantle did, by giving us a treatise on in-

dustrial arbitration law, how conciliation is requested, and that sort of thing. However, that is not the solution. The alternative for the Government is to heed the spirit of the amendment—I do not expect the Government to agree with it formally—so that instead of spending all its time pleasing its masters and repaying debts—some might suggest they were bribes—incurred before the election it will make a start in the interests of this State.

This is what the Opposition works for. This is what we want to remind the Government. We remind it sometimes, as I said, only for the record, so that people later on may read the record. I hope that it will not be too late to write it in a tone of, "I told you so". I hope the spirit of the amendment will be heeded and that some day the people will not have to wake up and say that it is too late; we have lost all our exports and we are losing our employment in order to achieve what the Communists want to achieve—the creation of anarchy. They hope to achieve it in this way as they never can achieve it through the ballot box.

I support the amendment.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.51 p.m.]: What a dreadful performance by the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services! Indeed, what a disgraceful performance!

The Minister spoke on behalf of the Government on an amendment concerning a very serious industrial situation in this State. The situation is serious, not only because of the disruption it is causing, but also because of the danger to our industries and to our exports—our vital exports and industries. They are industries which employ thousands of people, and which provide the livelihoods of thousands of people in this State; yet the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services—the man in the Government charged with the obligation of defending, protecting, and expanding employment—spent the whole of his time on some technically-based defence of unions involved in a dispute which is destroying employment. As the member for Floreat pointed out so accurately, the technicality of the Minister's reply will avail him of nothing when the substance of the issue is examined, and when the damage has been done.

The terms of the amendment are that we regret to advise His Excellency that the Government refuses to defend Western Australian industries and workers against the damaging effect of industrial disputation. The Government is doing nothing. The Premier has not bothered to be in the House for this important debate. He has sought to

downgrade the debate; and no doubt the important issues raised here this afternoon will receive less media coverage than the Premier received today when he launched the Labor Party's publicity campaign about voting. The Premier had time to have a Press conference this morning and to dish out his playtime badges. He has been into the House this afternoon wearing one of them.

Mr Laurance: Disgraceful!

Mr HASSELL: However, he has not had time to get down to the issues affecting the iron ore industry—the most important single industry in the State—which is in grave risk of losing its market position. As the member for Floreat pointed out so accurately, the Japanese people will be polite as they take away the State's last order. The Premier has mistaken that politeness—he referred to it several times in the House—for an acceptance by those people, who represent our market, of what is going on here.

A powerful buying group from Japan visited the State in the midst of an industrial crisis in the very industry which they came to observe. They came here at a time when the companies could not fulfil their contract commitments to supply.

We see nothing but a complete shutdown in our growing exports relating to the agricultural industry which is fundamental to the State's economy. We see the threat of further industrial action in the construction industry, another critical sector of the Western Australian economy.

The Government has employed special advisers in industrial relations—one for the Premier and one for the Minister for Industrial Relations. We have criticised those appointments, and we will continue to criticise them, because they were one-sided. The people appointed were committed to a particular point of view, and they represent no attempt at balance or even-handedness in an area which requires great delicacy if any progress is to be made—and progress needs to be made.

We saw the Premier attacking the present system in his speech to this House on 26 July in which he said—

Proposed changes to industrial law and planning will, among other things, ensure that co-operation takes place between Government, employers and unions as a means of overcoming confrontation; that harsh and unworkable penalties are removed; that unions are free to conduct their affairs democratically; that industrial matters are confined to industrial law and that the industrial field is insulated from the intrusion of other legislation which does not have indus-

trial purposes, such as the Trade Practices Act, and that the Western Australian Industrial Commission is given power to re-introduce preference to unionists provisions.

That is the Government's intention—great emphasis on conciliation and bringing people together. However, what the Premier overlooked—what he did not refer to in relation to the effects of the Pilbara dispute—was the procedures which have already been taken in industrial relations under the existing requirements of the Western Australian Industrial Arbitration Act. Section 43 of the Act requires the commission to endeavour by all means reasonable in the circumstances of the case to settle by conciliation all matters which come before it. That is the first obligation of the commission, and that obligation has been upheld consistently by the Industrial Commission. It has consistently refused to resort to arbitration until the processes of conciliation have been exhausted. That is what occurred in relation to the Pilbara dispute.

Section 42 of the Act requires the parties to proceed in the following way—

42. (1) Every party to a question, dispute, or disagreement relating to an industrial matter shall endeavour to resolve that question, dispute, or disagreement by amicable discussion.

(2) Pending the resolution pursuant to this Act of any matter referred to in subsection (1), it is the intention of this Act that every employer and union concerned and every officer and member of any such union shall refrain from taking industrial action, and, where industrial action has occurred or is continuing, shall endeavour by all means reasonable in the circumstances to prevent that action from being repeated or continued.

That is the law now, and those are the present requirements. The emphasis on conciliation, co-operation, and communication is there already. It is that system which is failing—the very system which the Premier wants to introduce. It is that system which has failed to resolve the Pilbara dispute.

Eventually, having gone through the processes required of it, the Industrial Commission in the conciliation field made not one or two, but several orders for the men to return to work. They did not do so and eventually, after many weeks, the commission moved into the phase of having to deal with the matter by action aimed at deregistration, and even then the Industrial Commission has been extremely lenient in allowing weeks to go by in the face of the utmost contempt of its authority

before the effect of its order will go into operation—before the unions which have so blatantly defied the conciliation and arbitration processes and the orders of the commission will in fact be deregistered.

Today's *The West Australian* clearly sets out the very serious position in this State. On page four, the headline tells the story. It says, "WWF halts WTA grain shipments". On page 52, we see another headline which reads, "Warning to WA by BLF"; that is, the Builders Labourers' Federation which is the most consistently militant and irresponsible union, if it is possible to define that, within the whole of the industrial system.

To cap it off, on page 43, we see the headline, "TLC fully backs threatened unions". It is worthwhile to see what is said in that article. The Trades and Labor Council, which purports to represent the union movement of the State, but which I am sure does not represent the unionists of this State, is reported as follows—

THE WA Trades and Labor Council decided last night to give its full support to the eight iron-ore unions under threat of deregistration.

The TLC unanimously supported a motion that no affiliated union would attempt to gain coverage or to recruit members of the unions threatened with deregistration.

Not one jot of concern for employment has been expressed by the peak union body of this State; not one jot of support has been given by it to the industrial arbitration system. How ironic it is that those unions now under the threat of deregistration should have gone to the Industrial Commission and sought to avoid deregistration so that they could get the benefits of the system, and yet they will not give one iota of support to the authority of the commission or the law under which the commission operates.

The Minister and the Government, charged with the obligation to promote employment, have made no attempt to give any explanation as to what action the Government intends to take to deal with these three serious disputes.

Some understanding must be brought about in this community that people who will not do their jobs do not deserve to have them. There are thousands of people out there who need jobs and who are prepared to work and that was demonstrated very clearly in the garbage strike which occurred in the City of Perth. When the City of Perth sacked its workers at the point of desperation, because they would not go back to work or comply with the recommendations of the Industrial Com-

mission, and then advertised for new workers, it was inundated with applicants.

More of that has to happen, because it is the only way that some sense will be brought into a union movement which believes it can go on taking and taking the benefits of the industrial arbitration system without giving anything in return, even respect for the law and the processes that the law lays down.

Some recognition must be given by the union movement that, if it wants the benefits, it has to be prepared to pay the price and that price is compliance with the law. If the unions do not want the benefits of the industrial arbitration system, if they do not want legally enforced minimum wages, legally enforced minimum awards, legally enforced minimum penalty rates, and legally enforced ancillary benefits they should say so and Governments around the country can repeal the industrial arbitration legislation and let the matters be resolved by the process of contract and agreement.

In those circumstances the right of people to strike and the right to stop work and have stop-work meetings during working hours will be resolved by contracts and, where those contracts are breached, the people who breach them will lose the benefits of that system.

Indeed, there would be many good arguments for the proposition that we would be far better off and would have far less unemployment, yet while we keep the system that we have, there is a need for some measure of responsibility; there is a need for some measure of understanding that the system and the economy cannot survive if the work is not done.

One of the best things that ever happened in the Western Australian industrial arena occurred when the farmers loaded the live sheep for export. The waterside workers could not get back to work quickly enough, because they finally were forced to face up to the reality that, if they were not prepared to do their jobs, somebody else was. That is the only lesson these people understand when they are behaving as they are now.

We have many thousands of good unionists in Western Australia who want to do their jobs—who want to keep their jobs and promote the prosperity that will benefit them and provide additional jobs. The Government has an obligation to those people. The Government has an obligation to take some action to bring about an end to these completely irresponsible and irrational disputes, not necessarily by giving in to one side or the other, not necessarily by seeking to impose draconian penalties; rather the Govern-

ment's obligation is to adopt good reason and good sense and to have regard for the economic welfare of the State and the security of the jobs of the people of the State. However, the Government is not doing so when it allows our vital industries, whether they be mining, agriculture, or construction—the three industries immediately and presently under serious threat—to be completely brought to their knees by irresponsible industrial action of the kind now being witnessed.

The member for Floreat made very telling points in his remarks when he said that the Opposition genuinely hopes it will never have the opportunity to say, "I told you so", because that does not do anybody any good at all. The reality is that critical industries of this State are under threat. The Government has an obligation to take action. It is long past the time when it should have acted decisively. It has done nothing and all its talk, all its policies, and all its promises are seen to be worthless.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [4.12 p.m.]: The amendment highlights the futility of this type of action in trying to achieve anything worthwhile in the interests of this State. There is no question that industrial relations pose a very serious problem in Australia, including Western Australia. There is no question that the lack of a suitable industrial climate tends to add to our costs and to weaken our position.

The amendment does not bring forward one idea which will assist in overcoming those problems.

I have listened with keen interest to the debate on this amendment ever since it started and we have heard the serious situation related. I do not deny that; I agree wholeheartedly that the position is serious, but I have yet to hear advanced by an Opposition member one suggestion which would improve the position.

Mr Rushton: Why didn't you listen to me last time?

Mr STEPHENS: I did listen to the member for Dale. Perhaps I did not understand him. Perhaps he did not make himself clear.

Mr Clarko: Why don't you do that instead of what you normally do? You spend all your time attacking us. What are you in this place for? Your last speech in this House was exactly like that. I was in my office and I thought a member of the Government must be speaking. Then I realised it was you. You spent all your time attacking us.

Mr STEPHENS: The member for Karrinyup is a little like the member for Dale. He is very sensitive.

Mr Clarko: I am not sensitive. You read what you say and you will find there is no distinction between you and members of the Labor Government.

Mr STEPHENS: That is the opinion of the member for Karrinyup, but in the minds of my supporters, a big distinction exists. Those supporters were not even misled by the dirty trick letters which the Liberals have acknowledged they sent out when in Government. They acknowledged that, because, when the now Government produced the same type of letter, the now Opposition said it was a dirty trick.

Mr Clarko: What is your role in this Parliament?

Mr STEPHENS: I do not intend to be sidetracked. The member for Karrinyup has had his say. Why does not he keep quiet and listen?

Mr Clarko: Why don't you talk about the subject instead of spending all your time attacking the Opposition from which you are a rebel and a reject?

Mr STEPHENS: I have not heard any substantive idea put forward in this debate which would help to overcome the problem.

Mr Hassell: Do you agree with this amendment?

Mr STEPHENS: I have made the National Party's position clear on all these occasions. Whether or not members of the National Party support the idea behind the amendment, we will not support any amendment to the Address-in-Reply. We did not do so when the Liberal Government was in office, and we do not intend to do it now, because we believe it is the wrong approach to adopt.

Had Opposition members been listening—

Mr Hassell: I heard what you said.

Mr STEPHENS: —they would have understood that we support the fact that a serious industrial problem exists in Western Australia. We do not deny that. I have agreed with virtually all the speakers on the Opposition side. However, what have they done? All they have done is outline the problem which is known to everybody. We should be seeking a solution to the problem. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that the Government has an obligation to the people. Certainly it has an obligation to the people—

Mr Hassell: And it has not fulfilled it.

Mr STEPHENS: Yes, that is right.

Mr Hassell: Then you support the amendment?

Mr STEPHENS: I will not support the amendment. This Parliament has an obligation to the

people to seek solutions. If the Government is falling down on its job, surely it is the role of this Parliament to put ideas to the Government which it might latch onto and try to implement.

Mr Hassell: The Parliament doesn't govern.

Mr STEPHENS: No, but the Parliament is the representative of the people. That is the point we are trying to make. If this amendment were carried, what would it achieve? No positive suggestion has been made in the amendment. All it does is acknowledge, as I certainly acknowledge, that there is a serious industrial problem in the Pilbara.

During the campaign leading up to the last election, I wondered about the problems associated with industrial relations. Of course, I do not have the simple answer to those problems. I put forward the proposition that a Royal Commission be established to investigate industrial relations. Sir Charles Court, a Premier of this State, agreed that such a commission was necessary, but what did he do about it?

Mr Court: He retired.

Mr STEPHENS: That is correct; apparently he found it was in the too-hard basket and he got out.

Mr Fraser, the previous Prime Minister of Australia, made a similar suggestion.

Mr Crane: He retired too.

Mr STEPHENS: Yes, he more or less retired compulsorily. We should put forward possible answers to the problems associated with industrial relations. I have not been able to provide the answers, and I make no apology for that. The Liberal Party in its nine years in office in this State did not have the answers. Do Opposition members say that this State did not experience industrial relations problems during their term in office? Did they solve all the disputes that took place? I am waiting for an answer.

Mr Hassell: Whoever said that?

Mr STEPHENS: I will wait for the answer. I am not inundated with replies, and that is the reason for my rising to speak. We should put forward practical ideas to solve these problems. I support the Opposition in its saying that a problem exists, but our voting for this amendment will not achieve any solution.

Mr Hassell: No, you will not support it.

Mr STEPHENS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition always tries to twist things around. When his leader writes a letter which is obviously a dirty trick, that is okay, but when the Deputy Premier writes a similar letter, it is not okay.

With his standards, how can we believe anything he says?

Mr Hassell interjected.

Mr STEPHENS: I sit here to represent the electorate of Stirling, and that is what I try to do. Apparently I do so reasonably successfully because the people of that electorate have supported me for the last 13 years.

Mr Cowan: You weren't terribly upset when we wouldn't support any amendment put forward when you were in Government. Now you are in Opposition you seem to have a reason to criticise.

Mr Hassell: Don't you want to debate the issues in Parliament?

Mr STEPHENS: We are debating them.

Mr Hassell: What nonsense.

Mr Cowan: There is a difference between a debate of something and the putting forward of a substantive motion.

Mr STEPHENS: It is very easy to rise in this place to criticise.

Mr Hassell: This is a legitimate parliamentary process. Why don't you support it?

Mr STEPHENS: If I could be permitted to interject—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would be surprised at this stage if the member was actually making a speech. When members read *Hansard* they will probably find no more than 10 per cent of the speech can be attributed to the member who has the call. I would appreciate members reducing the number of interjections so that the member on his feet can make his speech.

Mr STEPHENS: Apparently we have a slow learner in the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The whole object of my contributing to this debate was to draw attention to the futility of what the Opposition has tried to do. If the amendment were carried, it would achieve nothing. Not one worthwhile suggestion is embodied in the amendment that the Government may or may not apply to the situation.

Mr Hassell: Last week we moved a motion and the Government actually did something because of it.

Mr STEPHENS: Did it?

Mr Hassell: You didn't notice?

Mr STEPHENS: No.

Mr Hassell: That was convenient.

Mr STEPHENS: This same attitude of the Liberal Party sowed the seeds of its defeat at the last election; Liberal Party members could not be

told anything, so the people showed their displeasure at the ballot box.

Industrial relations represent a serious problem in our society, and something must be done about that problem. For years and years we have heard nothing but talk. Suggestions have been made, one by no less a person than Sir Charles Court, and another by Mr Malcolm Fraser, the previous Prime Minister. We should have a full-scale inquiry into industrial relations. In that way, we would be able to obtain a full diagnosis of the problems, and we could use that diagnosis as a blueprint for a fresh start.

We should dispense with amendments to the Address-in-Reply and move substantive motions for the solving of these problems.

I represent a rural area, so I know that the people in that area will have their livelihoods affected by the industrial disputation in the grain industry and in the north, and indirectly it will affect the whole community. We are interdependent in this State; the actions of one party affect all other parties. When we consider the analysis of our economic situation, we realise that although Australia enjoys a good standard of living, that standard is slipping back. It is rather disguised by the existing standard of living, but the fact is that in the last few years, compared with OECD countries, Australia has slipped from the fourth to the fourteenth position, and it is still slipping. It is high time we took action to try to overcome these problems. One way would be to adopt a realistic industrial relations policy, a policy that would lead to greater industrial harmony while recognising the rights and interests of all sides to a dispute.

MR TRETHOWAN (East Melville) [4.23 p.m.]: I recall recently hearing one of the few touches of levity in this House appreciated by both sides. It occurred when the Minister for Water Resources was answering a question concerning the improvement in the level of water storages in the Darling Range. Somewhat with tongue in cheek, he took credit on behalf of the Government for the heavy rain that occurred this winter. I hope he did not believe the Government was responsible; I hope he said that with tongue in cheek.

I know that any other member of this House would not seriously credit the Government with the ability to produce quantities of rain at will. In other words, the situation that occurred was as a result of forces outside the control of the Government; therefore the Government could not—and this was agreed as one could see by the humour generated—take credit for that advantage. Unfor-

unately, I did not hear Government members laughing when the Premier made a similar remark a number of times by interjection. He made the comment that the improved state of industrial relations over the last six months was due to his administration. That is just arrant nonsense. The fact is that the general level of industrial dispute has dropped, but not in response to forces within the control of this State Government. It has dropped as a result of the serious economic situation in which this country finds itself.

It has dropped because the majority of people in the work force, the majority of unionists, are commonsense about their livelihoods. They know that a large number of employers at present find themselves in a stressed situation, one that could force them into laying off members of their work forces or even going into liquidation should any frivolous action place extra cost burdens on them, or create the loss of sales or markets.

I have a great respect for the commonsense of general people in the work force when they recognise the serious economic situation we face. They do not want to find themselves out of a job, and most do not want to see their mates out of a job. That is why there has been a general drop overall in the level of industrial disputes, but there have been some significant exceptions to this.

Members of militant unions—if I may use that term—took industrial action which on a rational basis would appear contrary to the interests and long-term economic benefits of their members directly involved. I am sure in these situations the majority of union members in this State would not support such actions. It would not be commonsense or to the benefit of those unionists employed.

I refer to the garbage strike at the Perth City Council, the disputes in the Pilbara at Hamersley and Mt. Newman, and the dispute at CBH. The actions taken have been generally contrary to the interests of union members directly employed in those areas, and against the interest of the majority of people employed in this State.

If the ability of this State to export is attacked—such as an attack on the competitiveness on the world market of our iron ore industry—in the long term the ability of this State to continue to employ people is attacked. Not only are people on the mine site affected, but also are those in the general community, particularly those in the engineering industry. When the ability of one of the major industries, such as the grain industry in this State, is attacked, not only are the people directly employed, say, on the grain terminal, attacked, but also the people who form the whole of the in-

dustry are attacked, and that goes to the very core of employment throughout this State. What has amazed me is that, given these obvious facts, the Government has taken a public stance of inaction.

Mr Bridge: That is being supported by the workers themselves. What do you say to that?

Mr TRETHOWAN: How is that support expressed?

Mr Bridge: The workers have said so.

Mr TRETHOWAN: Is that action supported by all workers in this State? Is it supported by the national body?

Mr Bridge: I am not talking about the national body.

Mr TRETHOWAN: Has the ACTU supported the action of the workers in the Pilbara? Has the Industrial Commission supported the actions of the people in the Pilbara?

Mr Bridge: You are talking about specifics.

Mr TRETHOWAN: I am talking about the general interests of workers in this State. Nearly one-third of the work force depends on the mining industry either directly or indirectly.

Mr Bridge: The Pilbara miners support the action we have taken.

Mr TRETHOWAN: Does the Government support the actions of those workers?

Mr Bridge: No, not at all. I am not saying I am the person capable of fixing this dispute, so why should I buy into it?

Mr TRETHOWAN: Obviously members opposite will not do anything because they do not know what to do. All they will do is stand aside. This is the attitude of the Premier and the Deputy Premier. It is the attitude that Premier Wran took in NSW in relation to the dispute at Kurnell refinery where a crippling wage demand was made by workers, a demand which flowed eventually throughout Australia bringing havoc to many sectors of industry. He stood aside and said, "I can do nothing about it".

Mr Bridge: Tell us what we can do about it.

Mr TRETHOWAN: The Government is in a position to produce publicity which will put moral pressure on the parties to resolve the dispute.

Labor Governments will not stand up to those sections of the union movement which put pressure on them, and to the State Trades and Labor Council although the position taken by that body is contrary to that of the national union body.

Statements were made this afternoon by the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services which I find shocking and which I hope people throughout the State will find shocking.

He said clearly that it was all right—it was acceptable—for unions to undertake a series of guerilla warfare campaigns in the industrial sphere. He said it was acceptable not to go to the arbitration commission, but to put pressure on employers through guerilla warfare. However, it was not right for the employers in the middle of a dispute to seek an undertaking that the guerilla warfare tactics were outside the conciliation and arbitration process. I do not think any reasonable person would support that view because they are not one-eyed like the Minister. They are not so totally on the side of the left of the union movement as is the Minister.

They believe that if unionists of a radical kind engage in guerilla warfare against an employer, it is equally right that an employer who is seeking conciliation and arbitration and wants to place the dispute before the Industrial Commission, should seek to protect himself against those union tactics which are outside the scope of the normal processes. The union tactics are nothing less than gangsterism.

Mr Jamieson: Would you like them put in gaols which are already overfull?

Mr TRETHOWAN: I did not say that. I said it was reasonable for an employer to seek an undertaking from his work force that it will not engage in guerilla warfare tactics if those employees wish to remain in work. The employer is prepared to go to the conciliation and arbitration process, but the unions at Hamersley and Newman in the Pilbara, and at CBH, are not seeking a legal way to put their claims.

Mrs Buchanan: Rubbish!

Mr TRETHOWAN: The unions are acting outside the scope of the commission and against the recommendations of the national body of the trade union movement. For a Government to stand back and wash its hands of the matter and say there is nothing it can do, and no pressure it can bring to bear, is unbelievable to the majority of people in this State. It falls short of what people have come to expect of Governments representing their rights and interests. Perhaps they should learn now they have a Labor Government that will look after the interests of small-time groups and not the interests of the broad population. It will pander to the interests of the far left of the trade union movement rather than represent the interests of the majority of employed people, whether or not they are unionists.

It was stated earlier, and I cannot help but agree, that the non-action of this Government appears to be the result of a series of commitments made before it came to office.

Mr Pearce: Rubbish!

Mr TRETHOWAN: The Government has a series of debts to this section of the union movement; otherwise I cannot understand the lack of public statement and condemnation, and lack of action to endeavour to force a solution to the dispute.

Mr Pearce: Force is the solution in industrial relations, is it?

Mr TRETHOWAN: The Minister for Education's knowledge of industrial relations is sadly lacking. In industrial relations, all solutions are a matter of force—a balance of forces it is true, but a matter of force nonetheless. In this country we have opted for a long period of time—

Mr Watt: It is all right for unions to use force, but not for Governments.

Mr TRETHOWAN: The Minister is following the same line as the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services. It is all right for unions to engage in industrial terrorism, but it is not all right for employers to seek to safeguard themselves despite the fact that they are approaching the legal body constituted to solve disputes.

Mr Pearce: You are quick to exacerbate industrial disputes for political purposes, as your Government always did.

Mr TRETHOWAN: I am seeking to put the interests of the majority of people of this State. I am not standing aside and washing my hands of the matter.

Mr Pearce: Your interest in industrial disputes is in proportion to the closeness of an election or by-election.

Mr TRETHOWAN: It is obvious to people watching the actions of the Government that it is caught on the horns of another dilemma because the State TLC is supporting unions in the north whereas the Federal ACTU is not. The unions are in contravention of the Industrial Commission and the conciliation process. The Government stands in the middle because it cannot afford to take sides and back the State Industrial Commission and the ACTU because it would run foul of its supporters in the TLC and the left wing of the union movement. It cannot back off completely because the people of this State would see it in its true colours.

Mr Brian Burke: You are in cloud cuckoo-land.

Mr TRETHOWAN: The Government deserves censure over these disputes of a serious nature. It cannot claim the advantage of the general diminution in industrial conflict because that is a factor of the economic climate. When presented with a challenge and a difficult problem, it has stood

back because it cannot reconcile the various forces bearing upon it to take action. It cannot support the side which will benefit the majority of Western Australians because of the selective interests of the other side with which it has a long-term relationship and to which it has commitments.

Because of that, I have pleasure in supporting this amendment condemning the lack of action of this Government in respect of the very damaging nature of the current industrial disputes.

DR DADOUR (Subiaco) [4.40 p.m.]: We have a dilemma on our hands, and it faces both the Government and the Opposition. This problem should be shared by both sides.

I have attempted to ascertain how the strike started and what it is about, and I refer to *The West Australian* of 14 September in which an article appeared under the heading, "More stood down in Pilbara". It states—

THE Pilbara iron disputes took a turn for the worse yesterday when the Mt Newman company laid off 900 workers in Port Hedland.

The total company work-force of about 2000 at the Newman mine site and at Port Hedland has now either been stood down or is on strike.

Striking members of the Electrical Trades Union have asked the WA Trades and Labor Council to seek urgent talks with the joint venturers, Seltrust, Amax, Pilbara Iron and BHP.

About 350 electrical workers went on strike at Newman eight weeks ago over a demand that apprentices should continue in employment for six months after their apprenticeships with the company were completed.

But when the mine electrical workers were joined by 100 members of the ETU in Port Hedland, shipping was brought to a halt a week ago.

A spokesman for Mt Newman said that the decision to stand down all the men was taken after the ETU had refused to guarantee that some progress for a return to work would be made at a meeting tomorrow.

That is what the strike is about in Mt. Newman which has caused the stand-down of 2 000 workers.

I feel extremely sorry for the families of workers because they suffer more than anybody else.

Mr Bridge: We share that concern.

Dr DADOUR: I share the responsibility of getting these people back to work. I will deal with what I believe should be done to achieve that end.

The principle is that the workers' families are those who suffer immediately. They are paying off homes—some here in Perth—and the men are working for big money up north to meet their commitments. Hire-purchase payments must be met, and so on. A number of people who have not worked for 10 weeks are in trouble and some could lose their homes as a result. That is the real tragedy for the small person, but there are others.

When one looks at how long it has taken to build up goodwill and sales in Japanese markets, one sees that the presence of the Japanese buyers here during the dispute did not do us any good at all. The inscrutable Japanese will always absorb the total effect of what is happening, and they have done so, and as a result are getting more iron ore from Brazil and other areas. That is a tragedy; we are losing goodwill.

A number of people in the town of Port Hedland must be suffering—the shopkeepers and others who live off the people who work at the mine. There is also a loss of royalties to the Government which are badly needed.

The Government should do what some committees have recommended and set up special tribunals on the spot to deal with these problems when they first arise. They should be nipped in the bud as quickly as possible, and these tribunals must be the answer. It is no good our having penal clauses in the conciliation and arbitration system because this is not a police state. We cannot enforce penal clauses so it is stupid our having them; they will only antagonise the workers further.

A means must exist by which we can get together and devise the best arrangement for our system—whether it should be a permanent system or some other, I am not sure. If we had special tribunals and people on the spot in the Pilbara and other areas, they would be able to deal with disputes when they arose, and they would never reach the proportions of the current dispute.

I realise that the Minister for Industrial Relations is having a devil of a time trying to bring the parties together. I know he is sincerely trying, but still he should try even more. A consensus must be reached so the work can be commenced as quickly as possible. I feel sorry for the people in Newman and the other towns in the Pilbara for what is happening at the moment. The Government must act very quickly.

Mr Blaikie: It is a matter for absolute urgency for the State of Western Australia.

Dr DADOUR: I am trying to be as honest about this as I can. I accept some of the responsibility, as a member of the Parliament.

The Government has been considering the idea of having special tribunals in the Pilbara or anywhere else where large numbers of industries are located. That is so the problems can be dealt with quickly and effectively. I would like that put into effect.

I support the amendment.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [4.46 p.m.]: I support the amendment.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Surprise!

Mr CLARKO: I notice the member for Kalgoorlie came in here two hours late. Is he working shorter hours?

Mr I. F. Taylor: I was in here first. We have a very good arrangement.

Mr CLARKO: I am pleased the member is working shorter hours.

I was not surprised that the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services expressed his incredulity at the fact that a letter should be sent to individual workers in regard to this dispute at the Kwinana grain terminal. For the life of me, I cannot see how he can be disturbed at the suggestion that an employer should write to his employees and put to them a proposition designed to overcome the blackmail that has been going on in regard to that terminal. The people in the grain industry tried to prevent the Waterside Workers Federation from moving into the industry. Regrettably, they were unsuccessful because the Waterside Workers Federation has had a long history of militancy, which began because the conditions on the wharves in the early days of Australia were harsh. That bred a set of leaders who began to fight initially for proper improvements in wages and conditions; but eventually, during the war, the Communists particularly achieved control over the wharves and proceeded to fight for conditions and other matters which are not appropriate for their level of skills and training.

We have a situation in Western Australia in which the Labor Government platform, which was brought down in September 1982, reads—

A State Labor Government will support union campaigns for a shorter working week with no loss of pay.

That is the platform of the ALP, and the reason given is that this will both preserve current jobs and open up new job opportunities. What sort of ridiculous logic is that?

If a small business had 19 men working for 38 hours a week, and the weekly rate of hours was reduced to 36, the business would then need 20 men to do the same amount of work. It would have an increase of five per cent in its work force. Unquestionably, that would raise its labour costs by that amount. If a firm with 1 000 men reduced the number of hours from 38 to 36 a week, it would need about 200 extra men. If the men earned \$300 a week each, that would cost the firm \$60 000 a week extra in wages, apart from payroll tax and so on, which is charged on that. Huge sums of money are represented by that; and yet the current Government includes in its platform the undertaking that it will support union campaigns for a shorter working week with no loss of pay. It says it will provide more jobs.

Without question, in economic times like those we have now, if a firm is required to pay five per cent more for labour, in fact it will shed labour. That will exacerbate the worst unemployment period Australia has experienced other than that endured during the great Depression in the early 1930s. The Government's argument is fallacious, and it should not have made that point in its platform.

That has come to pass, to some degree, in that the Premier has indicated that he does not support the workers of the Pilbara in their claim for a 35-hour week. I understand that the Minister for Industrial Relations has said also that he does not support this cut; but that, by the way, is in direct contradiction to his own platform. He is quite right in opposing a reduction in hours.

Without a doubt, the people of the Pilbara work in one of the harshest geographical climates in the world. The companies went out of their way to build the most modern mining towns one could imagine; and they tried to give them a high level of amenity, whether it be by way of recreation facilities, tree-lined streets, or whatever. The companies tried to provide all these things to offset the harsh climate and the remoteness of the region. For that, they have received from the unions claims which are, by world standards, excessive.

It was a dreadful blow for Western Australia today to find that the Japanese had diverted ore carriers to India to take ore load which should otherwise have come from Western Australia.

Two years ago, wage rates in Australia rose by 17 per cent. This dramatic increase took place at a time when Australian productivity was declining, when markets were shrinking, when capital costs were increasing rapidly, and when interest rates were rising sharply. The result of the 17 per

cent increase in wages two years ago was that last year unemployment in Australia rose from 500 000 to 750 000—a level of unemployment which, as I said a moment ago, was never reached other than at the time of the great depression. One man's pay rise became another man's job!

When the unions put forward their log of claims, it is incumbent upon the Government to take cognisance of the state of the economy, to take cognisance of the state of the industry; and it is incumbent upon the union to take cognisance of the general level of wages and conditions at the particular moment relative to other workers in comparable positions before the unions make unreasonable demands, and before, as they do in many cases, they subsequently ignore the decisions made by the Industrial Commission, and proceed to the next dreadful step of a strike.

The Government's inept handling of the Perth City Council industrial dispute has been mentioned already by my colleagues. It was almost Gilbertian, the way the Minister for Industrial Relations offered some \$300 000 to be supplied from the wages pause. Many people would say that the cost would really have been \$1 million. Members will recall the Minister made the offer at a very interesting time, which he subsequently called off at noon on one particular day some seven minutes before the matter, apparently, was resolved by the interested parties.

The point I have been trying to make about shorter hours is that shorter hours become a cost to our community if the wage rates remain the same. That is borne out by the newspaper clipping I have from the *Western Mail*, which reads—

WOULD-BE tea ladies hopeful of getting the seven new jobs planned by the State Government can forget it—the plan has been dropped.

An official announcement that the “jobs for the girls” programme has been abandoned is unlikely to be made within the next fortnight, but government and union officials said this week the decision had already been made.

The plan has fallen through because of the failure of negotiations over the introduction of a 38-hour week for tea ladies.

About 60 of those people are in the employ of the Government. The article continues—

Under rules governing the introduction of shorter working hours, employees have to accept trade-offs so that no extra costs are incurred.

That was one of the conditions in regard to these matters when we were in Government. It is interesting that it is still a condition under the present Government. The newspaper article continues,—

It is believed the tea ladies refused to accept a changed system of paying their wages as one of the trade-offs proposed by governments negotiators.

Introduction of the 38-hour week would have meant the tea ladies working the same daily hours as before, but being given an extra day off each month.

To fill in the gaps caused by the days off, the Government calculated it would need an extra seven tea ladies—three full-time and the others part-time.

The additional cost in wages was estimated up to \$40 000 a year.

This is not the right time, in the current economic circumstances in 1983, to start fiddling with working hours. Quite clearly, the tea ladies did not want the changed hours, fortunately; and that saved us some \$40 000. The Government says, “We will increase jobs,” but, in this case, seven more jobs would have been created at a cost of \$40 000 of the taxpayers' funds.

As many of the taxpayers are employers, if their income is reduced, they will have less money available to pay out to their employees, so we will have a contraction of the labour market. All we have heard by way of industrial relations from this Government is what I will call “hand in the pocket” industrial relations.

Mr Barnett: You would know all about that.

Mr CLARKO: I know the member for Rockingham is very good at billiards.

Higher living costs have been caused by the actions of this Government, which said it would keep charges down, but it put them significantly above the inflation rate. The public utility increases were of the order of 15 per cent to 16 per cent; and they were much higher than the anticipated inflation rate of 10 per cent.

In addition to the workers having to pay out the higher utility charges, they will be faced with the levy of one per cent for Medicare. The workers who have this burden imposed upon them currently are catered for more than adequately by the existing system; and in my opinion most of them will also continue with private medical benefit schemes, so health care will be at a higher cost. Their position will be much worse in terms of the charge to be made on the workers.

Mr Laurance: What is the Minister for Mines doing about it? The same as his colleagues—nothing.

Mr CLARKO: At the Federal level, the Labor Government has tried to put its hand into the superannuation pocket. It is seeking to do that, not just with the wealthy airline pilots, but also with the ordinary people—people on ordinary levels of income who have been in superannuation schemes. The Labor Government's hand is poised to dip right into the pocket and to take what the ordinary people have saved so carefully over the years.

These people have been in superannuation schemes perhaps at the expense of buying a new car, perhaps some new clothes, perhaps at the expense of something extra for their children. Many workers make significant contributions to their superannuation schemes. The Government will ensure that they lose the money. The only place left to put the money will be under the bed, because the Communists and the Labor Party are together in the bed, with perhaps the National Party. Mr Fraser said, "Beware of your savings; put them under the bed". He was right. But what about the rip-offs in terms of the asset test—it should be "acid" test—on pensioners.

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope the member relates his remarks to the amendment.

Mr CLARKO: I am trying to show that the industrial relations policy of this Government, hand in hand with its colleagues in Canberra, has been to put additional burdens on workers, and this has meant that the workers have had to strive for higher wages to offset these burdens.

I have never read anything more laughable than comments appearing in the Press by Federal Labor Ministers saying to pensioners, "Don't worry, your jewellery, your wife's wedding ring, will not be included in the asset test. You will be allowed to have a motor car; that won't be included. Your small dinghy won't be included". Heaven forbid, this is 1983, but it seems we are already in 1984. Perhaps that is what the Labor Party wants and what it has in mind; perhaps next year it will say that the things that were excluded in 1983 will be included in 1984; perhaps cars, jewellery, and our pocket handkerchiefs will be included in the asset test. The ordinary working man, saving in the present to provide for the future, has to cop all this.

The greatest evil in Australia is militant unionism, and the cause of this greatest evil is compulsory unionism. Compulsory unionism leads to fear and intimidation; it adopts the English system of sending people to Coventry if they are not part of

the system. It compels people to belong to a group instead of encouraging or persuading them to belong to a group.

In every job I have had where a union has been involved, I have belonged to that union. I was the president of my student council when I was at teachers' college a long time ago. I am supportive of unions, but I am not supportive of many of the militant unions that exist in Australia today, many of which are led, regrettably, by people from the British Isles. It is the English disease that has been the greatest canker of the union movement in Australia. It has not been the people from the southern European countries who have been the problem in terms of militant unions; rather, it has been the people from the British Isles, unfortunately.

The reputation of the Australian union movement has been tarnished by these extremist leaders with their extravagant demands. Ordinary Australians have been intimidated by these people. If any member opposite questions my comments about people from the British Isles, I invite him to listen to various union people asked to speak on the "AM" programme and others and to see then how many of them have genuine Australian accents. My hair stands on end when I listen to Senator McIntosh. Is he an ordinary Australian? No fear.

Mr Brian Burke: Senator McIntosh is a Scottish migrant.

Mr CLARKO: But he cannot speak Australian, can he? That is all I am saying.

Mr Brian Burke: You are incredible.

Mr CLARKO: I suppose the Premier's great grandfather could not speak Australian either. Nor could mine.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you on some racist rampage today?

Mr CLARKO: I am not being racist. If I said my mother is English, that is not being racist. The Premier should try the word "ethnocentrist"; it covers the subject much more effectively.

These militant union leaders do not care about the personal feelings of their Australian members. Unionism is a worthy concept, but in many cases it has turned into a monster, with its wildcat strikes, its rolling strikes, and its concrete pour stoppages.

Finally, in the last couple of minutes remaining, I want to comment on what I believe Australia needs if it is to have a better industrial relations system. First, it should have voluntary unionism; people should be won rather than drafted into unions. Secondly, union claims for higher wages

and conditions must be based on reasonableness; unions must be responsible. Thirdly, we need a first-class system of industrial and arbitration commissions which have the capacity to bring the parties quickly together and where conciliation can take place in a good atmosphere so that wise decisions can be made. When finally there is arbitration, the parties should abide by the decision or accept penalties if they do not.

Unions, especially militant unions in Australia, should reassess their attitude to the strike weapon. Industrial disputes should not be able to bring a State to its knees. There should be no capacity to strike in the power industry, the water industry, or the transport industry. None of these essential services in modern communities should be allowed to be taken away by strike action. Appropriate penalties should apply in industrial disputes.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [5.06 p.m.]: I have listened to the comments from members on this side of the House, and like my colleague, I have agreed with most of what has been said. I also agree that, while the speakers gave an excellent recital of what has happened in the area of industrial relations, none came forward with a cure for Australia's industrial problems. One exception in the comments made were the remarks of the member for Karrinyup, who made a remark about my party having socialist views. The member for Stirling made our policy very clear.

Mr Stephens: No wonder he cannot see the problems in our community if that is his view.

Mr COWAN: We have always advocated that there should be a judicial inquiry into the whole issue of industrial relations. If that represents a socialist policy, we are in pretty good company; we are in the company of Sir Charles Court and Malcolm Fraser.

Mr Clarko: It was an aside. You were not here to hear your colleague speak.

Mr COWAN: I was here, and the member should also be aware that our offices have recently been provided with PA systems which allow us to hear—sometimes regrettably—the debates that take place.

Mr Clarko: He began with an attack on members of the Opposition, and that is the reason I made the interjection.

Mr Stephens: I didn't attack members of the Opposition.

Mr Clarko: As he always does.

Mr Stephens: I outlined the fact that they were not putting forward any cures.

Mr Clarko: I made some suggestions.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COWAN: If the Opposition regards our call for a judicial inquiry into the issue of industrial relations as a socialist policy, it is intimating that this is also true of the policy of two former leaders of State and Federal Liberal Parties.

Some time ago we had a debate in this Parliament about productivity, of which a major ingredient is harmonious industrial relations. I draw members' attention to the fact that Mitsubishi-Chrysler in South Australia, when Mitsubishi first took over the Chrysler plant, introduced some Japanese management techniques which increased the productivity of the plant by a ratio of almost 3:1 and which I understand have almost entirely removed industrial disputation—certainly confrontation—from the plant. It is this aspect to which we should be addressing ourselves. These are matters which undoubtedly would be highlighted in any recommendations by a judicial inquiry into all aspects of industrial relations.

Another point I want to make is that the record of the previous Government is one I find quite interesting. This is my tenth year as a member of Parliament. I have faced four elections in that time, and the Liberal-Country Parties were the Government at three of those elections. In the year before each election, the Liberal-Country Party Governments introduced legislation to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act, amendments which those Governments considered would be a cure for the industrial relations problems of Western Australia. Regrettably, none of those amendments provided a cure, and I do not think any Government member at the time really regarded them as a cure. They saw them as a means of provoking animosity and of providing demarcation in the community, which would clearly polarise the public from members of the union movement.

Mr Brian Burke: We still get people like the member for East Melville carting out the same old tripe that didn't work for nine years when tried by the previous Governments.

Mr COWAN: The Premier should not isolate the member for East Melville. The member for Karrinyup commented about ending compulsory unionism. I understood that that amendment was made two years ago.

Mr Brian Burke: It was done twice.

Mr COWAN: It was done by the previous Government.

Mr Clarko: We didn't achieve it because of Commonwealth factors.

Mr COWAN: The member's Government introduced the amendments.

Mr Clarko: We did the State bit.

Mr COWAN: Has it worked at a State level?

Mr Clarko: To a degree; people are no longer in when they want to be out. People who work for doctors are no longer dragooned into the Federated Clerks Union of Australia as they were before.

Mr Brian Burke: The most moderate right-wing union we have, one which has never caused a problem.

Mr Clarko: That does not matter. You must be a clown. People should not be in unions if they don't want to be.

Mr COWAN: I do not have statistics with me, but it can be demonstrated that the amendments introduced to provide for voluntary unionism in this State had no effect whatsoever.

The Federal industrial law will play an increasing role in industrial relations in Western Australia, particularly since the social workers' case in the Federal court. Eventually we will see a single industrial arbitration court in Australia; we will have no State industrial arbitration system at all. All we will have will be a Federal system.

Mr Trethowan: Do you support that?

Mr COWAN: I have mixed feelings. I am aware that most industrial disputes at the moment are caused by problems within unions or between unions—demarcation disputes. The CBH dispute is a classic example. I favour some single form of industrial arbitration system, if that could be introduced; by the same token, knowing that the industrial court would make its decisions in either Sydney, Melbourne, or Canberra—I have a great aversion to that and have mixed feelings about it—there is no question but that many industrial disputes are caused by industrial demarcation or by interunion arguments as I mentioned in relation to CBH. There could be a benefit and a disadvantage in this.

Mr Trethowan: Is it not true that the State court has a greater record in solving disputes than has the Federal court?

Mr COWAN: I am not in a position to answer that question, so I cannot comment on it. My other point is a matter of industrial relations and is certainly a domestic one. Mr Deputy Speaker, I hope you will allow me to finish my remarks. The relationship between the Opposition, the Liberal Party, the National Country Party and the other conservative party, the National Party, is noted by its absence. I point out to the House that there needs to be greater cooperation between these groups, because the rank and file membership of our party and the NCP is moving

towards unity. I point out to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and to the member for Karrinyup that, in the near future, if they talk about coalition they may indeed have to start talking about developing a slightly better relationship with us.

Mr Old interjected.

Mr COWAN: I would like the member for Katanning-Roe to make his interjections audibly.

Mr Old: I said I think you are a bit ahead of yourself.

Mr Evans: Come on, kiss and make up.

Mr Old: Are you getting a bit lonely down there?

Mr COWAN: The problem the member for Katanning-Roe will soon face is a very real one. He has to decide whether to become a Liberal or whether to follow the directives of the rank and file of the NCP and join a united rural party.

Mr Clarko: Is this about industrial relations?

Mr COWAN: Of course it is. That is why I asked the Deputy Speaker for permission to comment on it. He has given me licence to do so.

Mr Clarko: I don't think he has.

Mr COWAN: I want to finish on that note. During the time I have been a member of this Parliament nothing was put forward by the Opposition when it was in Government in the way of amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act which lessened or resolved industrial dispute.

Mr Clarko: Voluntary unionism was the start.

Mr COWAN: A great deal can be said for the employers and the employees who have been able to sort out their own disputes. The best example that I could find is that of Mitsubishi-Chrysler in South Australia. Nevertheless, despite the fact that it is really an argument between employers, employees, and the umpire—the Industrial Commission—this Parliament should take some steps to do something about the problem. It should conduct a judicial inquiry, and the recommendations of the inquiry should be considered by the Parliament. I certainly do not believe that a political point-scoring exercise, which an amendment to the Address-in-Reply really is, will achieve anything of any great value in helping to resolve, either of the two disputes which we have heard about today—the one relating to the Pilbara iron ore industry and that relating to CBH.

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [5.19 p.m.]: I rise to support the member for Nedlands' amendment. Both the Federal and State Governments had pre-election promises to work towards total employment. It is highly commendable that

we are facing this situation by trying to come up with ways to overcome the problem and to work towards total employment.

Another pre-election promise was the removal of confrontation to allay strikes. This is also quite commendable, but in this day and age of high unemployment and low productivity we must let commonsense and sanity prevail to get Western Australia and Australia moving again. Would members believe that the Government has employed ex-union people as its advisers? One would expect it would be able to lead us to believe that we could keep unions from having strikes, but unfortunately this is not so. Since the election of both Federal and State Labor Governments, we have had nothing but disruption and antisocial, economy-destroying strikes, strikes which will not only lead to greater unemployment, but will also lead to the downfall of the high standard of living Australia currently enjoys. We have democratic arbitration courts to sort out disputes, but unfortunately the unions are not abiding by their decisions. In their undemocratic way, they tend to give the nod for the strikes to continue. Since the induction or installation of both State and Federal Labor Governments earlier this year, we have had nothing but strikes. The Government claims to have a rapport with unions. On the day the Prime Minister was sworn in, a strike was called in South Australia. It was not to celebrate Mr Hawke's becoming Prime Minister—they probably were not even interested in who was the Prime Minister; they just wanted to exert their pressure or power on the companies by behaving in a heavy manner. Maybe the same happened in Western Australia.

The West Australian of 19 March 1983 reported as follows—

BURKE MUST CHANGE VENUE

THE Premier, Mr Brian Burke, has had to alter venues slightly as a result of industrial action by building-trade unions in pursuit of a 36-hour week.

Mr Burkett: 62 per cent, 21 September.

Mr BRADSHAW: Those Governments were elected on the promise that they would get Australia moving again. From the start, this Government has had an abysmal record in stopping the unions from striking. The Government should have attempted to get them around the conference table in the appropriate arbitration system to enable buildings to be erected without the fear of strikes to appease their own ends. Every time Western Australia has a strike, the price must be paid. Jobs are lost which, in turn, increases employers' costs, which, in their turn, are passed on

to the consumer in one way or another. This leads to more wage demands, and it goes on and on.

There is a possibility that strikes such as the grain handlers' strike and that at the Pilbara will lead to permanent loss of the markets that we currently hold throughout the world. People requiring our iron ore want a regular supply, not a stop-start one.

Sir Charles Court made a comment in *The West Australian* on 7 August 1983. This man has had a tremendous record over the years for getting the country going, developing our north-west, and creating a greater export market as well as thousands of jobs. The article reads as follows—

The former State Premier, Sir Charles Court, warned yesterday that strikes could threaten Australia's economic recovery.

The globe-trotting Sir Charles, who flies to the USA this week for an international convention on the world economy, said overseas observers now regarded strikes as a symbol of Australia's unreliability as a resource supplier.

His warning came as 3000 Pilbara iron ore workers began industrial action in support of claims for a 35-hour week and a strike of 150 Electrical Trades Union members dragged on in Port Hedland.

Go-ahead

The former Premier coupled his criticism with a plea for WA's stalled \$640 million uranium project at Yeelirrie to go ahead.

Sir Charles said: "Australia is not yet in a position to take full advantage of any revival because we haven't sorted out our industrial situation.

"We've got a position where, when even the Federal Government acknowledges that unemployment is going to get worse, we've still got unions demanding more.

"Any strike at any time is foolish. It achieves nothing in terms of permanent benefit.

"We have yet to realise we are in a highly competitive world and its going to be much more competitive from now on."

Western Mining Corporation faces a \$35 million loss if the Federal Government refuses the go-ahead for the Yeelirrie project in the northern goldfields.

Shelving the project could cost 500 permanent jobs.

Sir Charles who negotiated export contracts worth millions of dollars for WA in the

iron ore boom, said: "Yeelirrie is ready to go now."

"Don't let us assume that the world recession is such that there are not good prospects around. There are prospects around and Yeelirrie is the classic example."

He said that without WA's mineral resource developments the current recession would have left the nation "stone motherless broke".

The following article appeared in the *Sunday Independent* of 11 September 1983—

WA'S STRIKING iron ore miners have just talked themselves out of future job prospects. Japanese steel mills have begun diverting their iron ore carriers away from Australia to Brazil.

We now have the situation where the iron ore carriers are being diverted to India. Not only do strikes have a detrimental effect on job prospects, but also they have an effect on export demands and the recovery of Australia's productivity which could also lead to physical violence as occurred in the garbage strike earlier this year. We should avoid violence at all costs.

I support the amendment.

MR CRANE (Moore) [5.27 p.m.]: I rise to support the amendment before the House and in so doing add my support to the comments made this afternoon. I do not want to condemn the Government in any way, rather—

Mr Tonkin: But you are going to, anyway.

Mr CRANE:—I suggest there ought to be co-operation. Often in this place I have expressed concern at what is happening to Australia as a result of industrial disputation, and it has been mentioned today. I will not refer to Press cuttings to enhance my story; we know them well enough.

Mr Tonkin: Go on, be a devil!

Mr CRANE: Mention has been made of two strikes which are presently causing great concern. One was referred to by the member for Katanning-Roe; namely, the CBH dispute at Kwinana and the troubles which are being caused by disruption there. The other, of course, is the industrial strike in the Pilbara with the iron ore companies. I have spoken on many occasions about problems we have in Australia with strikes in the grain handling business. I am particularly concerned because I am directly associated with this, not only from my own business point of view, but also in respect of those whom I represent in this place. Without a doubt, strikes in Australia are costing us our future. Australia is being bankrupted by people, many of whom do not bother to

give any thought to the damage they are causing by their actions.

The suggestion has been made today that perhaps there should be a judicial inquiry to ascertain whether a solution could be found upon which we as a Parliament could act. If this can be arranged, I will certainly support it. At least it would be an effort to do something. I am concerned at the evidence which is always before us, particularly that which arose recently when we imposed the wages freeze.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr Speaker, I notice the time and seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of the sitting.

Mr Tonkin: You would be lucky!

Leave granted.

Debate (on amendment to motion) thus adjourned.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 p.m.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Constitution Amendment Bill.
2. Electoral Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND ASSISTANCE AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Parker (Minister for Employment and Administrative Services), read a first time.

WINE: GRAPE SPIRIT EXCISE

Standing Orders Suspension

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [7.17 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Notice of Motion No. 4 relating to grape spirit excise to be considered prior to the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

Question put.

The **SPEAKER**: To be carried, this motion requires an absolute majority. I have counted the House; and, there being no dissentient voice, I declare the question carried.

Question thus passed.

Motion

MR EVANS (Warren—Minister for Agriculture) [7.19 p.m.]: I move—

That this House urges the Federal Government to reconsider the imposition of the grape spirit excise because of its inequitable application which disadvantages the fortified section of the wine industry concentrated on the Swan Valley.

It is rather propitious to move such a motion at this time as several moves have been made in this regard already, and were this House to support the motion, it could conceivably have some effect on requests for consideration of this matter which are being made to the Federal Treasurer.

To date, the Premier has had discussions with the Federal Treasurer and I have discussed the matter with the Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Mr John Kerin). A letter from my office has been sent to Mr Kerin and representations were made at a meeting between the Minister for Primary Industry and the industry in Melbourne on Monday last. The representations were despatched by courier to ensure they arrived in time.

It is necessary that the imposition of this grape spirit excise be considered further. I shall indicate its significance. For the first time the Federal Government in its recent Budget imposed an excise on grape spirit, which is used mainly for the production of fortified wine and brandy. Several difficulties are experienced with this tax. First and foremost, fortified wines must be kept for some years before they are sold by the maker. This is necessary to improve the quality of the wine, and makers of the finest fortified wines keep them for up to 20 years before they sell them. Therefore, some wines being sold by the makers today could be 21 years old.

During the storage period, certain losses are incurred as the spirit evaporates and this forms part of an ongoing cost to the industry. The higher the grape spirit excise, the higher the cost of the spirit, and the costs to producers. The excise has several effects, the first of which is its impost on the producer and manufacturer. It is expected this tax will increase his costs by approximately 35c a bottle for the finished product, and that is a fairly substantial amount.

In addition, there is the loss through evaporation of the spirit, and that can be as high as 30 per cent over a length of time. Any producer who has to pay the excise, as is required to be done at the point of the distillery, will be encumbered with carrying that additional cost, which means generally an interest rate on the working capital

the producer is using. For that reason it is an unsatisfactory type of excise on an industry that is struggling at this stage.

The consequences of these difficulties are as I have indicated. The capital requirements of the fortified wine makers will be increased in the order of up to 35c a bottle. This could conceivably run into thousands of dollars for an individual, and it could have the effect of creating a degree of unemployment.

The measure creates particular difficulties for Western Australia, the Swan Valley being the main centre of production of fortified wines. The valley produces a higher proportion of fortifieds than the wine growing areas of other parts of the State. Most of the wine makers in the Swan Valley operate on a family basis; they are small family businesses, and each of these will have a difficulty in facing the additional cost entailed through the impost of this excise.

I suppose, too, every member of the House would know that market conditions are tough at present and that the increased price required to cover the cost of the excise—more particularly the cost of the excise for a number of years—will worsen the situation.

In Western Australia we have a difficulty in meeting the competition, particularly of areas such as South Australia where wines can be grown under irrigation and where the yield of the berries is much higher, which means the viability of the SA operation becomes more attractive. But even so, South Australia will find a difficulty similar to the one that will be experienced here in Western Australia.

The quality of wine in the Swan Valley can hold with most fortifieds in Australia, and to that end it is important that the quality level be maintained. If it is not, it could mean a discouraging of production of the higher quality fortified wines; alternatively, it could force them out of the market. This in itself could lead to a production of a cheaper quality wine at a time when the industry is and should be working towards a higher quality article. It would also make it difficult to develop potential markets, either export or home.

The Federal Government currently is reconsidering the excise that was announced in the Federal Budget. The Federal Minister for Primary Industry was optimistic that it might be possible to do something to alleviate the position that can be envisaged. Hopefully the passing of a motion such as this calling on the Federal Government to reconsider its position may just strengthen that reconsideration sufficiently to ensure that some further action is taken.

While I am not suggesting an alternative, I do not know whether a general wine tax should be imposed. That could bring about exceeding difficulties for the comparatively new table wine industry which has developed so rapidly and with such distinction in the south-west of this State. That is not to be considered as an alternative at this time; it is simply a matter of pointing out the difficulty facing the industry, and the case has already been established; but I feel that to strengthen it, it would be a very worthwhile gesture to be able to show that such a motion as this was passed in this House. It is for that reason I commend the motion to members.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [7.27 p.m.]: I support the motion.

The **SPEAKER**: Order! The motion will have to be seconded.

MR O'CONNOR: I have no objection to doing that, so I do second the motion.

The wine industry in Western Australia has been a major but not large industry for a long time. In the Swan Valley, where I resided for quite a number of years, we have the area most affected by this tax. It is an area that initially lived off the vines and the land generally.

While I support the motion, I believe it would not have been brought forward had the Mundaring by-election not been in the offing.

Mr Tonkin: That is unkind.

MR O'CONNOR: It is fair comment. I say this because there has been very little Government action on this issue right from the beginning.

Mr Evans: That is not correct; there has been substantial action in the best and strongest possible manner.

MR O'CONNOR: Mostly from the Opposition and not from the Government.

Mr Evans: There was immediate contact with Canberra.

MR O'CONNOR: I listened to the member's contribution quietly; I hope he will show the same courtesy to me.

Mr Evans: If you stick to the same degree of veracity, we will get on just fine.

MR O'CONNOR: I will make comments that I feel are fitting. Had it not been for the Mundaring by-election, this motion would not be before us today. It is virtually a gimmick brought forward because it suits the Government politically.

Mr Wilson: Why are you supporting it?

MR O'CONNOR: Because I believe the motion is a good one.

Mr Evans: Why didn't you support the distillery last year when you had the chance?

MR O'CONNOR: The Government has shown a lack of action in this area. At the time of the increase in the tax when the Federal Budget was introduced, we saw the South Australian Government making some noises and trying to indicate the effect the tax would have on its industry. The Government of Western Australia was slow; it seemed to have little interest in this matter until it knew it would be confronted with the Mundaring by-election.

The Opposition acted very differently. We acted at an earlier stage in an effort to achieve the results which the present motion is trying to achieve and with which we will try to help the Government as far as possible.

As far back as 21 June, when there was talk of this legislation coming through to affect wine-growers in this State and the rest of Australia, I wrote to the Prime Minister in the following terms—

Dear Prime Minister,

I view with concern reports that the Federal Government is considering either a new or increased tax on wines as part of the 1983/84 Budget.

Western Australia has an expanding grape growing and wine producing industry that is now beginning to export products inter-State and overseas.

The market is extremely competitive and can only be exploited if encouragement is given to those who are prepared to invest and experiment.

The bright future of our wine producers would be irreparably damaged if further imposts were placed on an already hard pressed industry.

I seek an assurance that Treasury will not be placing an extra burden on Australian produced wines.

I did this on the basis that the Prime Minister and the Federal Government had previously promised that a tax of this nature would not be imposed on wines. I believe the Federal Government deserves censure for yet another broken promise, but it is not my intention to move an amendment to this motion to censure the Federal Government, which I believe deserves censure. When winegrowers have an undertaking from the Prime Minister or from the Federal Government that a tax will not be imposed on a particular type of commodity, normally one could expect to be able to take

cognisance of that undertaking. However, it is yet a further broken promise.

I mentioned the date 21 June, because at that stage the Government appeared to be taking no action. Therefore we as an Opposition moved in an effort to assist the winegrowers in this State. I received a reply from the Prime Minister on 12 July. He said the comments had been noted and the matter referred to the Federal Treasurer (Mr Keating). I did not leave it at that. When the Federal Budget came out, I immediately telexed Mr Keating on behalf of the winegrowers of this State in an effort to have this decision reversed.

Mr Watt: When was that?

Mr O'CONNOR: This was on 26 August. My telex to Mr Keating read as follows—

Following my pre-Budget representation in June I protest strongly against the imposition of a tax on fortified wines and ask you to reconsider the matter urgently.

I indicated the serious effect this would have on the Swan Valley, and I pointed out it would jeopardise a co-operative distillery in the Swan which, I indicated, produces about 90 per cent of the fortified wines in this State. While the south is extremely important and an expanding section as far as the wine industry is concerned, I had particular concern for those who were affected mostly by this impost.

On 4 September I again telexed Mr Keating indicating to him how concerned the Opposition was at Government's ill-timed proposals. We know the result of that particular issue.

I believe the motion brought forward by the Government is one which we should all support, but I indicate very clearly that it was the Opposition which made the initial moves in the State, both before the Federal Budget brought in the tax, and certainly straight after it. Therefore the Opposition moved along the lines suggested some months back.

I also saw the Leader of the Federal Liberal Party (Mr Peacock) on behalf of the winegrowers in the Swan indicating to him our concern and seeking and getting support from him in an effort to make the Commonwealth change its mind in this area. I do not know how many members of this Chamber are aware of the work and effort of people in some of these vineyards. They are generally very small operators. Most of them have small yards, work extremely hard, and have another job to keep themselves going. Their families help them operate these vineyards in many cases, and their income is certainly not very great. This sort of tax can affect adversely an operation such as that, one which in many cases is barely vi-

able today. These families deserve some assistance. A tax like that could have an adverse effect on a distillery on the Swan, and the Government at fault is the Federal Government for, first of all, making a promise, and then reneging and going back on the promise made prior to the election. If the State Government can be blamed, it is for its lack of activity in that field.

This motion has the support of members on this side of the House.

MR PETER JONES (Narrogin) [7.36 p.m.]: I support the Leader of the Opposition in his seconding of the motion. The purpose of this is to make certain the subject is aired so that the truth and the importance of the way in which the Federal Government has imposed this levy on a section of the wine industry when it said it would not do so is clearly understood. It is a pathetic little motion. Fancy moving a motion which does not even seek the repeal of this wine tax! If the Government does not want it, why can it not ask the House to request the Federal Government to get rid of this tax altogether? Later in the motion, the Government is saying it wants to reconsider it because it has an "inequitable application which disadvantages" the fortified section of the wine industry. Does the Government want the whole industry to be taxed?

The simple fact is that the Federal Government made a promise. The Prime Minister promised in New South Wales—I think it was at Griffith—prior to the Federal election, that there would be no tax on any segment of the wine industry. That was a reassuring statement, not only for the winegrowers in this area, but also for winegrowers throughout the country. Now we have a situation where this Government has come along to the House asking the Opposition to help it out of a mess. It is asking the Opposition to help it push forward its case.

Mr I. F. Taylor: You can oppose the motion.

Mr PETER JONES: Why would we want to oppose a motion which is trying to do something, pathetic as it is?

I would like to make it clear, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, that it is ridiculous that the Government should ask the help of the Opposition. We need to remind the Federal Government of the promise it made that there would be no tax at all. It must be an embarrassment to the Government to be confronted with this sort of situation at a time when very significant promises have been made with regard to the area producing fortified wines in this State, the area within the Mundaring electorate.

On 23 August the former member for Mundaring spoke in this House about the beneficial effects of the ALP's decision. He posed this by way of a question to the Deputy Premier, who responded in full flight by saying that the Federal Government should have been congratulated for the policy it had adopted and the decisions it had made in regard to the wine industry. Indeed, he referred to the policies to give beneficial growth in the wine industry, and the encouraging stance of his Government for the growth of the fortified wine industry in the Swan Valley.

The next day, 24 August, the same member said that as there was no wine tax imposed by the Federal Budget, he sought the Premier's comments. The Premier responded, as members can read in *Hansard*, that he had made representations to ensure that this tax-free status would remain. He referred to the continued tax-free status that would help the wine industry in Western Australia.

The simple fact is that the Government did not even know the tax had been put on by the Federal Budget until that tax was brought specifically to the Government's notice. Government members were even in the position of answering questions in this House on the basis that they believed there was no tax. A short time later the Government asked the Opposition to help it to get off the hook.

Mr Hodge: Did you know at that stage there was a tax on fortified wine?

Mr PETER JONES: It was in the Budget.

Mr Hodge: It wasn't clear to you though, was it?

Mr PETER JONES: Was it clear to the Minister?

Mr Hodge: All other wines were exempt.

Mr PETER JONES: The tax on the spirit was listed. It was a former ALP Government which started the rot in relation to this taxation of the wine industry by bringing in a tax on brandy some years ago.

Mr Tonkin: I heard it on the night of the Budget. The fact is that there was a lot of speculation about a tax on table wines and we were referring to that. There was a concession on table wines.

Mr PETER JONES: The Minister ought to read what the Deputy Premier said in respect of fortified wines in answer to a question asked on 23 August, and he should refer to the Premier's remarks of 24 August about the continuing tax-free status of the industry.

The first assault on the industry was an excise on brandy brought in some years ago by a Labor

Government. At that time, the tax was \$3.60 a litre, which, following the recent Federal Budget, is up to \$16.20 a litre. There had been no tax on fortified wine, but this Federal Government brought it in at a level of \$2.61 a litre. However, that is the tip of the iceberg. On advice given to me by the industry I expect it will be increased to \$2.70 by February-May when the crop is harvested.

Members interested in this will be aware of some comments made on 13 September in the "AM" programme, the transcript of which refers to the effectiveness of two things: Firstly, it refers to the Federal ALP Government's promise which was broken. Secondly, it deals with what the tax would mean to the industry. Wines will be able to be imported without the importers having to pay the impost demanded of local growers by the Federal Government. This impost must be paid at the time of production, before the wines go into storage for some years. Usually they are stored for six, seven, or eight years before the producer obtains his return. Whether the producer is an operator in his own right, or is a member of a co-operative, he will have to pay the impost several years in advance of his selling the product.

Mr Evans: It is up to 20 years.

Mr PETER JONES: That is correct, but I understand the average is seven or eight years, and the lowest would be about six years.

The Government wants us to help it rescue the industry, and the Government has spoken about its assistance to the wine industry. We are all aware of the promises made in regard to the still for the Swan Valley.

Mr Gordon Hill: Grapegrowers would welcome it.

Mr PETER JONES: The still is not referred to in the motion, and one wonders how many people will be able to use this still. How many will be left in the industry to use it if, as I assume, the Government's discussions at this time with the industry, or a particular company are successful. The Government has been clever to mislead in so far as its commitment to the still is concerned. On 20 July it said that \$400 000 was available; it said the Government was committed. As you and I both know, Mr Speaker, the funding arrangements are not complete, which is far from the indications in the Press announcement of that day and the subsequent advertisement. In answer to a question we were told the amount represents an estimated cost to establish a distillery and that confidential talks were continuing. We know talks are continuing, and are being conducted with a specific company, because the Government is

trying to get out of providing this still; it is trying to get the company to provide it.

Mr Evans: The company made the approach, and it has to be given a chance.

Mr PETER JONES: The Minister for Agriculture has confirmed that the Government is discussing the still with a specific company. In all fairness, I will not mention the name of that company negotiating with the Government to buy a still; but this means the commitment that the Government made on 20 July, and subsequently confirmed, may not come about. It never gave details; it just gave a smudgy impression of what would happen by talking about approximate values. It merely said that the still would probably cost a certain amount. Under that arrangement it could be that the Government will not provide anything, and certainly no determination will be made until after 8 October.

The Government is seeking our assistance to try to get the Federal Government to change its mind. I can well understand why. If we read what has been discussed in this Chamber in the last week or so, we realise it largely relates to the Government's not taking positive steps in a range of matters in which it should be giving leadership. We are in the middle of a period when the Government is doing nothing about an industrial dispute. Industries are not just grinding to a halt, but have halted as a result of the Government's impotence, unwillingness, or inability to take on the unions regarding the iron ore industry in the Pilbara. The Government broke a promise and it is seeking the help of the Opposition. On that basis we will try to give our help.

In October 1981, 18 companies received some \$80 000 from the former State Government to assist in the marketing of their products and the holding in the Eastern States of a wine exhibition called "Expovin". It was incredibly successful. It was so successful that the following year only four companies took part in the marketing and only some \$10 000 was requested from the Government to stage an exhibition in Melbourne. The reason for only four companies wanting the assistance was that the success of the previous year's marketing meant many companies had had their total productions committed. They were committed commercially, so quite clearly they did not want to participate in the following year's Eastern States Expovin. The previous Government also facilitated and encouraged the formation of a Western Australian Grapegrowers and Wine Producers Association in 1981. The Government assisted in its promotion and gave it considerable support.

Mr Gordon Hill: When you are talking about the achievements of the previous Government, can you indicate whether or not—

Mr PETER JONES: All I am saying is that things were done.

Mr Gordon Hill: Will you indicate whether or not you supported the distillery in the Swan Valley?

Mr PETER JONES: I can tell the member exactly what the situation is. He has been told in this House previously.

Mr Wilson: Say it.

Mr Gordon Hill: "Yes" or "No"?

Mr Wilson: You won't admit it.

Mr PETER JONES: The interesting thing is that the feasibility study which was also available to the previous Government and on which the decision regarding whether or not a distillery would be supported was made—

Mr Wilson: You didn't support it?

Mr PETER JONES: That is right. It was not supported at that time.

Mr Gordon Hill: You still don't support it.

Mr PETER JONES: The decision not to support it was made on the feasibility study. The interesting thing is that, despite all the questions that are asked in this House, the Government will not give the information that is contained in that feasibility study.

Mr Gordon Hill: But you haven't answered the question.

Mr PETER JONES: I did answer the question because I said we did not support the establishment of a distillery based on the feasibility study at that time.

Mr Gordon Hill: Do you support it now?

Mr Tonkin: Do you support it now?

Mr Gordon Hill: Are you supporting it on the same feasibility study?

Mr Tonkin: We are supporting it, full stop.

Mr Gordon Hill: The answer is obvious.

Mr PETER JONES: The Deputy Premier has now said that his reason for not supporting a distillery on the previous feasibility study was because the Government did not accept the figures contained in that study.

Mr Gordon Hill: We had a feasibility study carried out and it was proved to be viable.

Mr PETER JONES: The member is talking about another feasibility study?

Mr Gordon Hill: A submission was put forward by the grape growers' association. This submission

was also forwarded to the Government. We had it assessed by top economists and the assessment showed it was economically viable. With the same information, you rejected it and you still reject it.

Mr PETER JONES: The members should check the answers the Deputy Premier has given because he said the studies did not contain the same information. He said that the feasibility study which was commissioned and available to the previous Government was in relation to a lesser quantity of wine or product. This in turn implies that the Government now considers there will be a much greater volume of product available to the distillery.

Mr Wilson: You are knocking it now.

Mr PETER JONES: I am not knocking it now. I am pointing out the difference between the two feasibility studies.

Mr Gordon Hill: You knocked it last year and you are still knocking it.

Mr PETER JONES: If the two feasibility studies were the same and contained the same recommendations, the member is disagreeing with the Deputy Premier who said—he would not produce the figures for the final assessment, but clearly we know what they are—the figures show there would be twice the product going to a still than that dealt with in the previous feasibility study. The Government will not produce the figures.

Mr Laurance: Secret Government!

Mr Tonkin: You are always knocking the Swan Valley.

Mr PETER JONES: I am not knocking the Swan Valley at all.

Mr Old: You won't get that remark in the newspaper.

Mr PETER JONES: I hope that satisfies the member for Helena.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER JONES: I have outlined the difference between the two studies. Because no Government member will answer the questions about this still, I do not even know how competent or how detailed was the second study that was undertaken.

Mr Tonkin: Look at the Government; would we take notice of an incompetent study?

Mr Old: Do you want an honest answer?

Mr PETER JONES: The Government is asking us to help it out of the hole it is in.

Mr Wilson: We are not asking for that.

Mr Tonkin: We could pass this without your assistance.

Mr PETER JONES: So that the Minister who keeps interjecting is clear on this, I will put it on record again. The previous feasibility study and the figures contained in it—those figures which the Government will not now produce—did not support the establishment of a still. Those figures were given to us, but the present Government now says those figures were wrong and that much more product will be available, although it will not tell us how much. It will not give us the cost or the annual operating loss or what the taxpayer will have to pay on an annual basis.

All it will say, because it has now got into a hole about the whole situation, is that it is now having negotiations with a company. It is a fact. It is now trying to ensure that a particular well-known winemaking company will get the Government out of the mess it has got itself into because it went too far in making those promises, for reasons that I thought would be clear to everybody, the promises it made about its plans and about the \$400 000.

Mr Jamieson: Why be a hypocrite? If you don't like the motion, say so.

Mr Wilson: We don't need your vote.

Mr Jamieson: Oppose it. You don't need to explain it. We have listened to all your accusations.

Mr PETER JONES: We are happy to support the principle that is involved here.

Mr Wilson: Well, stop whingeing and get on with it.

Mr PETER JONES: It must be hurting these members to have to come and ask for our help.

Mr Wilson: We don't need your help.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETER JONES: The Government brought this motion forward.

Mr Jamieson: You oppose it.

Mr PETER JONES: Of course we support the principle of getting rid of a tax that the Labor Party said it would not bring in anyhow and a tax that this Government did not even know it brought in or introduced. We have heard the Premier go on about tax-free status which he says is publicly known.

Mr Tonkin: Watch your blood pressure.

Mr PETER JONES: I hope that the principle the Minister for Agriculture has enunciated in introducing the motion—the principle of getting the Federal Government not just to reconsider, but to repeal, the tax that it has imposed—is successful for the sake of the wine industry.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr PETER JONES: Not only is it unnecessary, but also it is a pretty cheap revenue-raising measure which the Labor Party said it would not impose. Clearly, the principle of the motion ought to be supported and successfully considered or at least considered by the Federal Government and then supported by it. It should be repealed. Unfortunately, at the meeting of the wine and grape producers' association in Adelaide I discovered by people's comments that they seemed to have no faith whatsoever in the Government. Indeed, they signalled a far worse thing. I quote from the transcript as follows—

The Government—

That is the Federal Government.
is unlikely to succeed—

That is to say, the proposition of total repeal.

To continue—

—because it would mean no revenue until the wines went on sale.

That relates to what the Minister for Agriculture indicated as the impost being collected by the Federal Government at the time of production rather than at the time of sale. The transcript continues—

It is now clear that the Federal Government is likely to suggest that if the producers want that—

That is to say, at point of sale. It continues—

—then by the time it has matured and is ready to be sold it will be subject to the tax.

In other words, wine that was produced prior to the Budget, making it subject to that tax.

That is something which the industry does not want and against which it should fight. What it is signalling is a 2.5 per cent tax on all wine, a fall-back position, which will come into operation immediately as a replacement measure. I hope the Minister is aware of that. I do not know whether his discussions with the Federal Minister on Monday—

Mr Evans: It was on 31 August that those discussions took place. It was one week after the Budget had been brought down.

Mr PETER JONES: The Minister had said it was Monday.

Mr Evans: The meeting to which you referred was held in South Australia, and I am aware of it.

Mr PETER JONES: I presume the meeting was held on 12 September?

Mr Evans: The options were discussed last Monday by industry representatives in Melbourne.

Mr PETER JONES: The industry is signalling that it has not been able to persuade the Federal Government that the fall-back position of a 2.5 per cent tax on all wine should not be accepted. Although the meeting was held, the wine industry might have to accept the outcome.

It appears the industry may have to fall back to a 2.5 per cent tax on all wine. I quote again from the transcript as follows—

The irony of that is that the industry will be asking for the very thing it didn't want in the first place and the very thing that the Labor Party promised not to introduce.

I am not saying that the Federal Government will introduce this tax, but it has been signalled from the Wine and Brandy Producers Association that it may occur.

I am happy that the Minister for Agriculture is not only aware of the concern of the Wine and Brandy Producers Association, but also is not seeking support from the principle of this motion. The wording of the motion is pathetic. He has also said that his Government does not want the fall-back position of 2.5 per cent tax on all wine, because it would be disastrous to this State, not only to the Swan Valley, but also to wine growing areas throughout Western Australia and Australia.

The point I make is that some years ago the Labor Government brought in an excise on brandy, and it rose from approximately \$3 to \$16 a bottle.

In supporting the principle of this motion, I hope the Minister is not only successful, and the Government adheres to its promise—which is no tax—but also that the fall-back position on the wine and brandy industry will be opposed by the Government. If it is unsuccessful, and it seeks help, I am sure we will be able to help it.

MR CRANE (Moore) [8.04 p.m.]: I agree with the member for Narrogin's comments when he said that the wording of this motion is pathetic.

My reason for taking part in this debate is that I feel I can move a worthwhile amendment. This is the result of the experience we have had while in Government over the years. It is the Opposition's responsibility to help the Government out in matters like this.

Several members interjected.

Mr CRANE: Last year grapegrowers in the Chittering Valley, which is part of my electorate, approached me about the building of a distillery in the Swan Valley. Some grapegrowers from the Swan Valley also approached me because they realised that I was an active member and would do

something for them. The member for Narrogin mentioned that a feasibility study did not support the establishment of this distillery.

Mr Peter Jones: The one we had last year?

Mr CRANE: That is right, and I am as concerned as he. New figures have been released and I hope they will support the building of the distillery in the Swan Valley.

Without belabouring the House—because we have been here for a long time—I want to move an amendment to the motion, which will help the Government in this situation. It is a positive amendment that would seek to delete the words “reconsider the imposition of” in line two of the motion and substitute the word “remove”.

I believe the amendment would positively assist the Government, and I believe there should be more co-operation in the House rather than opposition. We should co-operate with each other in order that motions of this kind might lead to legislation which will be of benefit to Western Australia.

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment—

That the motion be amended by deleting the words “reconsider the imposition of” in line 2 of the motion with a view to substituting the word “remove”.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [8.07 p.m.]: I support the amendment moved by the member for Moore.

Mr Wilson: Don't you think it is strange to be supporting an amendment when you seconded the motion?

Mr O'CONNOR: The Minister for Housing is a smart alec. We are supporting the motion and, if the Government wants a battle, we will provide it.

The SPEAKER: Order! Before the amendment can come before the Chair, it must be seconded.

Mr O'CONNOR: I second the amendment.

Points of Order

Mr TONKIN: Surely, Mr Speaker, it is not competent for a member to second an amendment to a motion that he has already seconded? When a member seconds a motion, it indicates that he agrees with it and he cannot turn around and say that he agrees with an amendment. If this were to occur, we could have an absurd situation. We could have a dozen amendments with the same person seconding all of them. We could get into a procedural mess. I refer to a ruling by a previous

Speaker, which was ridiculous. Sir Des O'Neil seconded a motion and then moved to amend it. I believe that is bad practise. It is a matter of procedure and we do not want to be disruptive. However, I think we should have some kind of order in this matter.

Mr CLARKO: On a further point of order, the Opposition is prepared to change the seconder, and I would be happy to second it instead of the Leader of the Opposition. The Government should understand that the Leader of the Opposition seconded the original motion in order to assist the procedure of the House.

Mr Tonkin: Do you mean he did not second it?

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: The Government has indicated that it is happy for me to second the amendment. We are wasting the time of the House and I suggest I be given the opportunity to second the motion at the end of this point of order.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr CLARKO: I second the amendment.

The SPEAKER: The amendment has been seconded and I now call on the Leader of the Opposition.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [8.10 p.m.]: I support the motion, but I believe there is no reason I am unable to second the amendment if a good amendment comes along. I see nothing wrong in what I did. Members opposite, as well as those on this side, would expect a person to support or second an amendment to a Bill if he believed it was better than the original.

We are asking the Commonwealth Government to go back to the position that prevailed initially, adhere to the promises it made, and give the grapegrowers what was intended—no taxation on this wine. The amendment is a creditable one.

I know the Prime Minister will be here during the week and rumours are rife that when he is here a decision will be taken and an announcement made to give some advantage to winegrowers because of the coming Mundaring by-election. I believe they should have the advantage of what was promised in the first place. I support the amendment.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [8.11 p.m.]: We prefer the wording of the motion which calls on the Federal Government to reconsider the imposition. The reason is that it is a budgetary matter and we believe that, in approaching another Government, we should ask it to reconsider a matter. It is not right for this Par-

liament to interfere with the budgetary considerations of another Parliament. It is outside our constitutional control and it would not be right for the Commonwealth Parliament to start giving us instructions as to how we should frame our Budget. There would be a lot of objections if the Commonwealth Parliament passed a motion which told us how to frame our Budget. All kinds of constitutional implications would arise.

It may seem a little word change, but the fact is we are urging the Federal Government to reconsider the imposition. We are not directing it to do so. Constitutionally, we are not competent to do so, and I do not believe we should get into this minefield.

Mr O'Connor: Wouldn't the motion you have put forward require it to alter its Budget?

Mr TONKIN: It asks the Federal Government to reconsider its Budget.

Mr Peter Jones: We are only urging the Federal Government, not commanding it.

Mr TONKIN: All right. In that case, can members tell me the difference between our urging the Federal Government to reconsider the imposition, and our urging the Federal Government to remove the excise?

Mr Peter Jones: It is very simple; the Federal Government is left in no doubt. We do not want reconsideration; we want it repealed. The Federal Government should give us what it promised.

Mr TONKIN: If, as the member has pointed out, the essence of the motion is to urge, and both forms of wording urge the Commonwealth Government to reconsider or remove, all the opposition is doing is playing with words.

Opposition members: No we are not.

Mr TONKIN: I believe it is all right for this House to urge action on behalf of the Government. After all, if the Federal Government is to remove the excise, it will have to reconsider it. Obviously we are getting into a childish game of one-upmanship. The Opposition could have accepted the Government's motion, but has decided to play with words in the most trivial way, and this Parliament has more important things to do than play with semantics. For that reason, I urge the House to reject the amendment.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [8.15 p.m.]: I indicate our support for the amendment.

Mr Carr: It was their turn to get your vote this time, was it?

Mr STEPHENS: If anybody is being pedantic, it is the Leader of the House. To "remove" is a little stronger than to "reconsider", and on that basis I believe the amendment is well-founded. I

would like the Government to rethink the matter, and, if it does, we will not be wasting the time of the House at all.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 20

Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Clarko	Mr O'Connor
Mr Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushton
Mr Coyne	Mr Spriggs
Mr Crane	Mr Stephens
Mr Grayden	Mr Thompson
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Trethowan
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr McNece	Mr Blaikie

(Teller)

Noes 25

Mr Barnett	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bateman	Mr Tom Jones
Mrs Beggs	Mr McIver
Mr Bertram	Mr Pearce
Mr Bridge	Mr Read
Mrs Buchanan	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Terry Burke	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Burkett	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Mrs Watkins
Mr Evans	Mr Wilson
Mr Grill	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Hodge	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Tubby	Mr Bryce
Mr Hassell	Mrs Henderson
Mr Williams	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Brian Burke
Dr Dadour	Mr Parker

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [8.19 p.m.]: I support this motion. I represent a young, growing, and thriving wine industry area. Although the excise we are debating will not have a great impact on this region because very little fortified wine is produced there, concern exists about this matter because growers had been led to believe that no excise would be imposed on wine, and they believe the newly-imposed excise on fortified spirit is a step in that direction.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, the wine industry in most instances comprises small growers, and those small growers in the region do much to aid decentralisation. There are many winegrowers in my electorate and in the electorates of the members for Vasse and Moore. The winegrowers make a considerable contribution to the economy of those areas. It is essential that we maintain the wine industry in a viable state. Costs have to be met and should be contained; any additional impost could adversely affect the viability

of the industry. This applies also to industries complementary to winegrowing, such as tourism. Perhaps the wine industry is complementary to tourism, I am not sure, but that industry also assists the small country regions. The transport industry is also associated with the wine industry. All of these things are of considerable benefit to the rural community.

I have been told by representatives of the Western Australian Grapegrowers and Wine Producers Association that it receives virtually no assistance from the Federal Government. I understand the Wine and Brandy Corporation of South Australia is funded by the growers themselves and the only assistance received from the Federal Government is a maximum of \$750 000 on a dollar for dollar basis from the industry. In absolute terms it is perhaps a comparatively small industry but it is basically self-supporting; it contributes considerably to the economy of small country towns, and I think it is exceedingly important that the industry be maintained in a viable state.

Amendment to Motion

For that reason I hope the Government will accept a small amendment to the motion which is as follows—

That the following words be added to the motion—

Additionally we urge the Government to refrain from imposing any excise on table wine.

That will draw to the attention of the Federal Government our concern at the imposition of additional tax on the table wine industry which could affect the industry's viability.

Mr Carr: We also think motherhood is good. Would you like to add those words?

Mr STEPHENS: The motion states—

That this House urges the Federal Government to reconsider the imposition of the grape spirit excise because of its inequitable application which disadvantages the fortified section of the wine industry concentrated on the Swan Valley.

As the motion is worded the Federal Government could easily say "Yes, we will reconsider the matter and impose excise tax on the table wine industry". Surely the amendment is a logical extension to the motion. That is the reason I would like the Government to accept the amendment I have advanced.

I hope that the Government will maintain the spirit of co-operation it has shown on other oc-

casions by accepting this amendment in the spirit in which it has been advanced.

Mr COWAN: I second the amendment.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [8.25 p.m.]: I advise the member for Stirling that crawling will get him nowhere; I refer to all those nice words about the Government. We will deal with each amendment on its merit.

Mr Stephens: I am encouraged by that comment because this amendment has merit.

Mr TONKIN: The Government can find no quarrel with the amendment. We are certainly not in favour of the imposition of excise on table wines and for this reason the Government is prepared to accept the amendment.

I want to put the record straight as far as the Government is concerned in relation to the suggestion by the member for Narrogin that we have not been very active in respect of this matter.

Mr Peter Jones: I did not say that.

Mr TONKIN: The member did not?

Mr Peter Jones: The Leader of the Opposition referred to that. I drew attention to the fact that you were not even aware that a tax had been imposed on fortified wines.

Mr TONKIN: I was aware of that on the night of the Budget.

Mr Peter Jones: There were other Ministers, including the Premier, who were not. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about how negative you had been, and how active he had been on this matter.

Mr TONKIN: I am sure members would know that we have been very active. Mr Troy has been to the Eastern States—

Mr O'Connor: He is not even a member of the Government.

Mr TONKIN: No he certainly is not but he is our candidate for Mundaring and he is concerned about the wine industry. He went to the Eastern States without financial assistance from the Government. He paid his own way and while in the Eastern States had long discussions.

Mr Clarko: Tom Herzfeld will still beat him.

Mr TONKIN: That may be so. If it was not illegal I would have a side wager but, as the member for Karrinyup knows, that is contrary to the laws of this State, so I will not offer a wager on the subject.

Mr Clarko: That is like saying you are going to rob a bank but you won't because it is illegal to do so.

Mr TONKIN: I said I will not take a wager.

Mr Clarko: You said you wanted to take a wager.

Mr TONKIN: I said if it was not illegal I would, but as it is illegal I will not.

Mr Clarko: That is like saying you are going to rob a bank but you won't because it is illegal to do so.

Mr TONKIN: I am sure the member for Karrinyup is impressing some of his colleagues—

Mr Clarko: You would look good in a balaclava.

Mr TONKIN: I wonder if he really believes he improves the standard of debate by his behaviour.

Mr Clarko: You are very rude yourself.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TONKIN: I wonder if the member for Karrinyup thinks this House is dignified by "tit for tat". If I am rude, I should not be. But if I am, the member for Karrinyup thinks it is okay for him to be rude. That is very childish. The member should look at some of the remarks he has made in *Hansard* and realise they are of a very childish and spiteful nature.

Mr Clarko: Look at your own.

Mr TONKIN: I will. Mr Troy the former member for Mundaring has been very active and he recently went to the Eastern States. It was suggested at one stage by the Opposition that the Government had assisted him financially but I understand that was not so. The Minister for Agriculture who moved the original motion has also been very active. Within a week of the Budget he had discussions with Mr Kerin, the Federal Minister for Primary Industry. The Minister has also corresponded with Mr Kerin. The Premier has contacted the Treasurer, Mr Keating. I believe the Government has been active in this matter.

We have a burgeoning wine industry in Western Australia. It would be a pity if Government action prevented its growth. We know how parlous the position is for small businessmen and business women and the Government certainly does not want to make it difficult for businesses to be successful.

On behalf of the Government I indicate that it is prepared to accept the amendment. It goes beyond the motion, but in no way does it negate the motion; it merely adds something, and we agree no tax should be imposed on table wine.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [8.30 p.m.]: I support the amendment, and I take this opportunity to comment on some of the remarks made by the Leader of the

House. He mentioned Mr Troy's visit to the Eastern States in connection with this matter. Without a doubt, that was a gimmick. The next gimmick will be when Mr Hawke arrives here next week and announces the Government's decision.

The Leader of the House mentioned that the Government has taken certain action. It was slow in taking that action; and the initial action was taken by the Opposition. Belatedly, the Government took up the challenge.

Mr Evans: That is not so. The Budget was on 23 August. We took action within a week.

Mr O'CONNOR: We moved on 21 June. The Government waited until after the horse was out, and then it closed the gate.

Mr Evans: Did you know the excise would be on wine spirit then? Of course you did not.

Mr O'CONNOR: Why did not the Government get in like the Premier of South Australia and try to do something beforehand? Why did the Government not try to do something as did the Opposition? It waited until it was too late.

Mr Evans: You did not know this was on. Within a week, we discussed it with the Minister for Primary Industry.

Mr O'CONNOR: I do not intend to take much time on this issue, and I am trying not to. I have already read a letter I wrote on 21 June to the Prime Minister, asking that action be taken; but the Minister for Agriculture says, "Yes, but we took action"—more than two months later! The Government reckons it is not slow!

The Government is supposed to look after people in an area such as this; but it is obvious that it became interested only after the Mundaring by-election became a fact.

Mr Evans: But it was known in the Budget.

Mr O'CONNOR: I would have preferred the original amendment moved by the member for Moore as it would have called for the removal of the tax that has been imposed. However, I support the amendment moved by the member for Stirling and indicate the support of members on this side of the House.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [8.32 p.m.]: Mr Speaker—

Mr Thompson: You are not going to oppose the amendment?

Mr COWAN: That sort of interjection merits no reply; but members on this side of the House may very well be classified as socialists because they are about to support a National Party amendment.

We appreciate that both the Government and the Opposition are prepared to support the amendment. Clearly, the wine industry in Western Australia is a young industry. It is at the stage where it needs as much support as it can have.

I was disappointed to hear the member for Narrogin speaking in glowing terms of the \$80 000-worth of support given to the wine industry the year before last.

Mr Peter Jones: That was for one exhibition.

Mr COWAN: When I think of the number of people employed in the wine industry in Western Australia, and the amount of capital that has been invested in the industry by a series of individuals, I am a little disappointed to learn that that sort of support is given to the wine industry. If that is compared with the type of support being lent to Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd. by way of freight subsidies and everything else, which amounted to something like \$500 000 to keep open the Koolyanobbing mine when only 80 people were employed at the Koolyanobbing mine, the difference is apparent.

The wine industry is a very young one, and it needs assistance during its formative years. When the Government is prepared to accept an amendment, take that amendment and the original motion to its Federal counterpart, and make certain that no taxation is imposed upon the industry, perhaps the Federal Government will hold off for some time.

Let us consider the wording of the motion. It used the words "inequitable application". If the Federal Government were to say, "No, we cannot support this", and if it were to give an equitable application of the tax, it could apply an excise on table wines. Of course, that is the last thing we want.

It is not my place to stand as an advocate for the wine industry. The people who represent the various wine-producing areas can do that very well. However, I know that the Western Australian Grapegrowers and Wine Producers Association has extended an invitation to the Premier to attend its next meeting on 9 November. I hope that the Government regards the industry highly enough that if the Premier is unable to accept the invitation, he will ensure that the Minister for Agriculture is present at the meeting so he can understand precisely the position facing Western Australian wine producers.

The industry is certainly a young one, and those involved have invested much capital in it. They take the long view; and everyone appreciates that the wine industry has a very slow return on capi-

tal. The producers would be pleased to know that they have the support of the Government, firstly, in their opposition to the application of an excise on fortified wine, and, secondly, in relation to the considered application of excise to table wines.

I support the amendment moved by the member for Stirling.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [8.36 p.m.]: I desire to make some very brief comments on the amendment, which it is my intention to support.

It is important that this House recognises the importance of the wine industry. As I said last night during the Address-in-Reply debate, the area I represent is a relatively new wine-producing area, but it is growing in importance and stature, not only in Western Australia, but also throughout Australia. It is important to realise that the industry is made up of many small producers. We have one or two large vineyards such as Sandalford and the Leeuwin Estate; but the greatest proportion of the area is concerned with small vineyard operations.

All the people involved in the industry are firmly of the view that an excise on table wine would be a critical impediment to their development. It would be critical to the extent that it could force some of the producers, if not most of them, out of business. It could severely curtail their operations, big or small.

In recent times, for reasons known to most members of the House, I have been spending some time in the Swan Valley. It was interesting to see the large number of small winegrowers scattered throughout the viticultural area. One only has to imagine what would happen if a tax was imposed on those growers. Some of the growers have five, six, eight, or 10 acres, and the imposition of a tax on them could well mean the ruin of their industry.

The amendment is well chosen and well founded; and it is deserving of the support of the House.

Amendment put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: ELEVENTH DAY

Amendment to Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR CRANE (Moore) [8.40 p.m.]: Prior to the tea suspension I was about to refer to legislation passed in this House at the end of the session last year when we were in Government. That legis-

lation pertained to the wages freeze. In March of this year, in the early life of the present Government, Parliament was recalled and similar legislation was passed, although it went somewhat further than that passed by the previous Government, and controlled prices as well as wages.

I shall draw attention to a matter of great concern to me, which is probably one of the reasons the amendment has been moved.

The SPEAKER: Order! Would members who are making speeches in other parts of the Chamber please have regard for the member who is on his feet and the *Hansard* reporter, who is endeavouring to record his remarks.

Mr CRANE: Thank you. Mr Speaker. I do not speak often in this place, so members should not deny themselves the opportunity to listen to such a fine address.

My concern is that almost immediately after the Government passed its wages and prices freeze legislation, the Minister for Labor and Industry made what one could call a sweetheart deal with certain Government employees—I believe they were bus drivers and employees of that nature.

We debated that legislation through the night only to find before the ink had dried on the paper that it was broken by the Government which introduced it. That is a ludicrous situation and brings to mind the saying about Dracula minding the blood bank. It certainly appears this Government is not able to mind the blood bank.

We are very concerned about the industrial strife which has wrecked this country. I use the word "wrecked" in an affirmative way, because we have lost countless billions of dollars of income through industrial disruption, particularly in the iron ore industry.

I mentioned the wheat industry earlier. As a farmer, I am aware of the difficulties one has to overcome in the production of wheat in Western Australia. Farmers can handle the vagaries of the weather—droughts and things of that nature—and all else being equal, they can compete with the rest of the world and grow wheat more cheaply than can anyone else. However, with the harvest coming on and the crops being ready in another six weeks or two months, we find we will probably be faced again with serious industrial disruption in the handling of our grain.

Unfortunately grain cannot be left in the fields. The weather will quickly cause it to shed, or fire or hail problems will occur. Therefore, the grain must be harvested very quickly.

Mr Watt: Did you say the grain cannot be left in the fields?

Mr CRANE: Some people use the word "paddocks". It depends from which county in England one comes.

Before I was so rudely interrupted by the member for Albany, I was referring to the difficulties experienced in reaping our harvest. We can overcome those difficulties, but we cannot overcome the problems caused by disruption on the part of the Waterside Workers Federation. We shall probably be faced with those problems in the near future.

I have already mentioned the loss of revenue suffered by this country as a result of industrial disruption in the iron ore industry. How many times have we passed legislation here in the honest belief that it would help us fight industrial chaos; but all our efforts have failed? We are fast reaching the stage in this country where the people have had enough.

We have known for some time that a seminar of Public Accounts Committees is to be held in Western Australia. I learnt tonight that seminar may have to be postponed because of a pending air strike, as a result of which members from all over Australia will not be able to get to Perth.

How many times have we had to suffer this sort of disruption? Frequently people plan to go away on holiday only to find the aircraft are not operating. We have really had enough.

A few years ago it looked as though we would experience problems in the export of live sheep. Fortunately the farming community took the bit between its teeth and it was obvious it was in command of the situation.

A similar situation is festering now and it is to be hoped it does not bubble over, because farmers are almost ready to storm the Bastille. We do not want that to happen, because no one wins in those sorts of situations. We want the Government to give support where it is warranted and that sort of support is certainly warranted in many instances, particularly the two to which I have referred; they are the grain-growing industry and the iron ore industry in the Pilbara.

The Government must intervene and bring stability to our State. It is the only way in which we, as a nation, can prosper. For too long now the militant unions have disrupted our industries. If they are allowed to continue in that vein, with complete disregard for the arbitration system, we shall be in even greater trouble. If the arbitration system is allowed to operate and if its findings are adhered to by all parties involved, it will go a long

way towards alleviating problems created by industrial disputes.

Unfortunately many unions will agree with the findings of the Industrial Commission only when such findings are made in their favour. When the findings are not in favour of the unions, they frequently resort to industrial action which is illegal. The Government must show strength and leadership and make it mandatory for such unions to abide by the decisions of the Industrial Commission.

Until this is done no industry can have confidence in employing people. The other day I quoted a few very wise words of Abraham Lincoln, and—

Mr Pearce: If they were wise, they were not likely to be original.

Mr CRANE: I shall quote those words again, because I believe they ought to be in the Bible of all Governments, regardless of their political colours. The words were, "You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer". This is precisely what the unions have done for years. They have disrupted industries to such an extent that the wage payer can no longer afford to pay the wages.

Not many years ago, we could go into any of the shops in Perth and be met with a kindly smile. I do not intend to mention in detail the sorts of things one sees on the television programme "Are you Being Served?" However, when one entered shops a few years ago, one was usually greeted in a kindly manner.

Where in the metropolitan area today can one enter a shop and be served by a counterhand? I do not believe that is possible. Coles and Woolworths used to have shop assistants to serve people. Now people enter shops like babes in the woods, look around to try to find somebody to provide assistance, pick up the articles they want, and make their way to the person on the till. In other words, the customer does all the work, pays at the till, and goes away.

At the same time as this has happened, the burden of unemployment has increased. The reason for that can be found in the words I quoted a moment ago: "You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer". That is what has been done and, as a result, business houses can no longer afford to employ people.

Mrs Buchanan: Rubbish!

Mr CRANE: It is not rubbish. The member for Pilbara does not know what she is talking about.

Mr Jamieson: You don't even understand the system.

Mr CRANE: I understand it all right. Perhaps the member for Pilbara would be able to stand up and tell me why businesses do not employ people any more.

Several members interjected.

Mr Bertram: Because they have machines and computers.

Mr CRANE: Businesses do not have machines that go around shops pulling things off the shelves and handing them to people. The people who used to work in the shops are not working in them any more because employers cannot afford to pay them. It is as simple as that.

Several members interjected.

Mr CRANE: I have made my mark in this world and I am quite happy about it. I do not even have to work any more, to be perfectly honest. I suppose there is no reason that I should be worrying about these things, but I do worry; I worry for our children and the children not yet born. They will not have much of a future if industrial strikes are allowed to prosper as has happened in the past.

Mr Jamieson: How will you cure it? Put them all in gaol?

Mr CRANE: I do not say we should put them all in gaol. While there are laws in the land, they should be obeyed. It is a responsibility of Government to ensure that the laws are obeyed. This is where the Government can play its part.

Several members interjected.

Mr CRANE: Mr Speaker, would you like me to go up another octave? I can assure you I will be heard.

Mr Pearce: You won't be understood.

Mr CRANE: I am always understood, and I have made my point, which was a very tender point. It certainly raised some hackles. Again, the laws of arbitration, once decisions are made, must be obeyed.

Mr Jamieson: But what do you do if they do not obey? Put them in gaol?

Mr CRANE: Of course not. We should deregister the unions. The jobs should be taken from the strikers and we should call for other people to take their positions. We should declare their positions are vacant. We would not have to do this for long, but we must do it. It would not be very long before people got the message. The problem is that they have been getting away with this for so long, and we ourselves have been just as much to blame in many instances for allowing this to happen.

Mr Jamieson: You are a stupid old fool!

Mr CRANE: The member can call me stupid and he can call me a fool, but I object to his calling me old!

I have explained what Governments can do. However, because we have a Government in cohorts with the union movement—this is where it gets its support and its money from—it has to show allegiance to it. The Government would gain tremendous respect from the public if it were to take a strong stand on these issues and show it was responsible and willing to be a leader in the country prepared to play its part to make our country prosper. Until that time, which I hope is not too far away, we will be going further behind the eight ball.

We are all losing our incentive to work. It is all very well for the stupid old fools to sit in this Parliament most of the time and to show they do not have the intelligence to understand what I am trying to say, and because they do not have the intelligence, to want to interject to cover up their abysmal misunderstandings.

Mr Jamieson: You have to attack the unions every time.

Mr CRANE: I do not attack them; I support them. The reason the trade union movement is so strong is that the workers were exploited by the employers for many years.

Mr Jamieson: Because of fools like you.

Mr CRANE: Those employers did not show much consideration for these workers.

I would be the first to agree that unions do a tremendous job in gaining better conditions for workers. I support that sort of action very strongly; I always have done and I always will do so. However, I do not support unions using their muscle when they go further than what they should be doing.

This is where Governments have to be strong, where they have to step in and tell the unions they have gone far enough. The member who moved this amendment and I are afraid that this Government does not show a great deal of intestinal fortitude in this area. I am not saying that it will not learn and eventually do something. I am certainly asking it to do something. If it does, it will get all the support it needs from this side of the House. I will be the first to commend it for taking action. Last night I commended it on the things it has done of advantage to the State. I am not one-eyed; I am not backward in handing out praise where praise is due. However, I am not prepared to sit here, the place to which I was elected, and idly watch the Government let the State be dragged down to poverty through the Government's own inactivity. This is what will happen if we do not take a stand now, a very effective stand.

For all these reasons, I support the amendment.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tonkin (Leader of the House).

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SUPERANNUATION

National Scheme

1121. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has the State Government played a part in Commonwealth proposals for a national superannuation scheme?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) in what way;
 - (b) what stage has been reached in the formulation of such a scheme; and
 - (c) what further developments are expected?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Not as yet.
- (2) Not applicable.

LAND

National Park: Jarrah Park

1124. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) Does he intend to reserve for a national park part of the northern jarrah forest?
- (2) If so, how much?
- (3) What effect on the alumina industry would result from a national park being declared?
- (4) Would the timber industry be greatly affected to such an extent as to eventually cause job losses with a national park declared of the size proposed by the campaign to save native forests reported in the *South West Times* of 18 August 1983?
- (5) Has the Forests Department been consulted as to whether there should be a national park in this area?
- (6) If so, what is their attitude?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Informal discussions are continuing about the nature and extent of possible reservations in the northern jarrah forest.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).
- (4) No.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) They are able to manage any forest areas for the purposes determined by Government policy.

HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

Expenditure

1128. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What amounts of money in addition to the Consolidated Revenue Fund Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ended 30 June 1983 were spent in that year on—
 - (a) Public Health;
 - (b) Hospital and Allied Services;
 - (c) Mental Health Services;
 - (d) WA Alcohol and Drug Authority; and
 - (e) Nurses Board of Western Australia?
- (2) On what items was the additional money spent?
- (3) What was the source of the additional money in respect of each item?

Mr HODGE replied:

	\$
(1) (a) Public Health	4 026 333
(b) Hospital and Allied Services	26 751 859
(c) Mental Health Services	3 552 554
(d) WA Alcohol and Drug Authority	19 794
(e) Nurses Board of Western Australia	nil
(2) Various capital works.	
(3) Sources of funds are—	
General Loan Funds	31 050 887
Lotteries Commission Funds	2 415 859
Infrastructure Borrowings	
(Net)	883 794
TOTAL	34 350 540

LAND: AGRICULTURAL

Release: Government Policy

1133. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it fact that he told a seminar on land release in Western Australia at Muresk on 24 March 1983, that his Government "has no argument with the general principles of releasing further land for agriculture where this is appropriate"?
- (2) If this is so, why has the Government decided not to release any further land for agriculture for the time being?

- (3) When is the Government likely to consider any more rural land releases in this State?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Government has appointed a Cabinet subcommittee (and working party) to review agricultural land release policy. The terms of reference include consideration of procedures necessary to ensure that any decisions to release Crown land for agriculture are appropriate.
- (3) Consideration of further rural land releases will depend on the recommendations of the Cabinet subcommittee on agricultural land release review.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Canning Vale: Replacement

1135. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Where is the site in East Canning Vale that has been identified as the possible location for the school which is to replace the Canning Vale primary school?
- (2) Are any other sites under consideration for this replacement school?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) In east Canning Vale, now called west Thornlie. The site is located in the general area bounded by Murdoch Road, Warton Road and the north-eastern boundary of the Thornlie locality. This area was formerly part of the locality of Canning Vale.
- (2) No.

TRAFFIC: DRIVERS

Right-hand Turn Indicators: Overtaking Procedure

1143. Mr P. J. SMITH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Is he aware that it has become common practice for some drivers of heavy haulage trucks to display their right-hand turn indicators as a signal to following traffic that it is safe to overtake?
- (2) Is this practice approved by the police?
- (3) If "No" to (2), will he undertake to investigate whether action should be taken to halt or change this practice?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) Yes, believed to be becoming more frequent.
- (2) No.
- (3) Yes.

HEALTH: CANCER

Hyperthermia

1144. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware—
- (a) that Medical Electronics Corporation of Colorado, U.S.A., issued a brochure in April this year setting out that the company was "currently making the most cost-effective RF hyperthermia systems in the world" and that its research and development programmes had provided it with "state-of-the-art Food and Drug Administration approved diathermy equipment" and that this equipment had moved it towards the commercialisation of a total hyperthermia operator system line of ultra-high frequency equipment which includes the 434 MHz Tronado purchased under an agreement with Erbe, Germany;
- (b) that it was stated in the brochure that "System 434, our new generation of cancer hyperthermia treatment equipment, has been installed and is treating 6 to 12 patients daily at its initial installation";
- (c) that it was further stated in the brochure that the company's accomplishments made it "a leader in the electromedical equipment technology and an industry leader in hyperthermia (the 'New Modality') in cancer therapy with an estimated \$500 000 000 market"?
- (2) Is he aware that Dr Ned B. Hornback, MD, who is head of Indiana University Medical School, the largest in the USA, is on the board of advisers of the Medical Electronics Corporation as Chairman, Department of Radiation, Oncology and Director of Hyperthermia?
- (3) In view of the apparent acceptance in the U.S.A. of hyperthermia as a new modality in cancer therapy will he im-

mediately endeavour to bring about a change of attitude of the boards of Government hospitals and St. John of God Hospital to the use of hyperthermia in Western Australia?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) to (3) The member would appear to be referring to an advertising brochure. His comments are certainly of considerable interest and I will ensure that they are referred to the Cancer Council and the special committee concerned with the Tronado trials. I am quite confident the Cancer Council will acquaint the medical profession and boards of hospitals of any promising advances in the treatment of cancer.

ROAD: FREEWAY

Mitchell: Off-ramps

1145. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the request by the City of Stirling to the Main Roads Department to include on/off-ramps in the Mitchell Freeway at Beach Road, Carine, been rejected?
- (2) If "Yes", would he provide the detailed reasons for this decision?
- (3) If there is room in the freeway reserve at Warwick to provide sufficient area for buses to enter and leave the freeway, why is there no room for other vehicular traffic to do likewise at Beach Road?
- (4) Why should not the Mitchell Freeway be linked to Marmion Avenue by the existing Beach Road rather than by the unmade north perimeter highway link which will cost over \$1 million?
- (5) Will he prevent an egress or ingress road from the Mitchell Freeway linking with Duffy Road, Carine, which would possibly destroy the residential amenity of the residents of Duffy Road and adjacent areas?
- (6) Will he reconsider this problem and agree to provide on/off-ramps in the Mitchell Freeway at Beach Road and thereby minimise the amount of vehicular traffic passing through the adjacent residential suburbs?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Although a formal request has not been received from the Stirling City Council, the question has been discussed recently between officers and has been examined in some detail. The Main Roads Department has concluded that the connection is not feasible.
- (2) It is contrary to the metropolitan region scheme. It cannot be achieved without compromising freeway design standards and hence safety, and also an option to provide separate space in the central median for a future public transport rapid transit system. To overcome the central median problem, and while still compromising design standards, a much greater width of freeway reserve would be required involving the resumption of some 15 new houses.
- (3) Buses will not be able to enter or leave exclusive bus lane facility in the freeway at Warwick Road.
- (4) Answered by (2).
- (5) At a later stage there will be connections between the freeway and the proposed north perimeter highway, but stage V does not provide such connections to the north perimeter highway and hence Duffy Road.
- (6) No. Stage V will not increase traffic through the adjacent residential suburbs.

POLICE: WARWICK

Parking

1146. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Correspondence from him respecting additional off-street parking bays at the Wanneroo police complex, brought the response that the Public Works Department was now preparing plans to meet that request. His letter stated completion of this work "may take some time"; would he kindly outline for me when it is expected the work will be undertaken and completed?

Mr CARR replied:

It is assumed the member means the Warwick police complex. A sketch plan and estimate are currently being prepared by the Public Works Department. Commencement of the work will be dependent on the allocation of funds in the

forthcoming minor works and improvements programme. Once commenced, the work is expected to take three to four weeks to complete.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Warwick: Transportable Classroom

1147. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it fact that a transportable building currently used for special music classes at the Warwick primary school, is to be shifted from the school?
- (2) If "Yes", where is it subsequently intended to hold these classes at the school?
- (3) If the answer to (2) is either—
 - (a) to the effect that no permanent music room is intended and classes merely shift from room to room; or
 - (b) by locating the music classes in an unsuitable "withdrawal" or similar area,

will he take the necessary action to retain the transportable building at the school?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (3) Enrolments at Warwick Primary School are expected to decline by the equivalent of two classes in 1984, hence the temporary classroom will be available for removal. A spare classroom will be available in the main school buildings for music if the school wishes to organise in that manner.

1148. *This question was postponed.*

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Advertising: Public Survey

1149. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Was a Government sponsored public survey completed last week on cigarette and tobacco advertising?
- (2) What firm undertook the survey?
- (3) In what way was the survey carried out?
- (4) What were the results of the survey?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Chadwick and Martin Consultants Pty. Limited.

- (3) Four field workers utilising face to face interview techniques, questioned 160 males and females between the ages of 18 to 60 at four metropolitan shopping centres.

The aim of the survey was to measure consumer response and attitude to various components of the smoking and health campaign.

- (4) 69 per cent agreed with the ban on tobacco advertising and 31 per cent disagreed with the ban, and three per cent strongly disagreed with the ban.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH (REHABILITATION)

Staff: Shortage

1150. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that the new \$3.2 million day hospital at Shenton Park is not being used to its full advantage due to lack of staff to assist severely disabled patients?
- (2) Will funds to appoint the additional staff required be made available to the hospital in the forthcoming Budget?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) The new day hospital was commissioned to the maximum of the staff and funds available at the time it was opened and is providing more service and care to disabled persons than the area which it replaced.
- (2) Increased staffing to this area will be a decision for the hospital administration at Royal Perth Hospital once their budget allocation is known.

HOSPITALS: MEDICARE

Increased Demand: Reimbursement

1151. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Were reimbursement arrangements in respect of additional funds to meet any increase in hospital activity or any loss in revenue incurred by the State hospital system as a result of the introduction of Medicare discussed at the two recent Health Ministers' conferences?
- (2) If so, what aspects were discussed?
- (3) Was he given specific assurances?
- (4) If so, what were the assurances?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The main aspects discussed were possible shifts from the private to the public sector and the impact of changes in non-fee paying patient numbers following the introduction of Medicare.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) That the State would be financially compensated on an agreed basis as a result of increased public sector activity, a loss of revenue from a reduction in the percentage of private patients in public hospitals and increased medical costs associated with an increased percentage of public patients in public hospitals.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

Patients: Heart Attacks

1152. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that at Royal Perth Hospital, heart attack patients wait up to a month for tests on exercise equipment in the absence of approval to appoint a part-time nurse to supervise the patients?
- (2) If so, what is the reason for the absence of approval in the appointment of a part-time nurse?

Mr HODGE replied:

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

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

Isolation Beds

1153. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many isolation beds are available at Royal Perth Hospital?
- (2) Are there occasions when these are insufficient?
- (3) Is the present number of these beds deemed sufficient?
- (4) How are extra beds provided when required?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Five—Royal Perth Hospital Group (Located at Royal Perth Rehabilitation).
- (2) to (4) Isolation beds are used for infectious diseases and the beds provided are

sufficient under normal circumstances. Additional accommodation is taken over in an adjoining ward, or in single rooms, in periods of peak demand.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

Clinical Immunology

1154. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that at Royal Perth Hospital inadequate accommodation and facilities in clinical immunology put laboratory staff at risk?
- (2) If so, what steps are planned to rectify the problem?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Conditions in the laboratory have been reported by the hospital as being sub-standard, but not necessarily dangerous, provided care is taken.
- (2) (a) The hospital chief engineer is currently investigating what structural modifications can be made.
(b) Special equipment is on order.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

Radiology: Equipment

1155. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the average age of the major items of radiological equipment at Royal Perth Hospital?
- (2) What is the normal life expectancy of such equipment?
- (3) Is the replacement of the equipment planned?
- (4) If so, when?
- (5) If not, why not?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Less than 5 years—11
5-10 years—13
11-15 years—15
over 15 years—2
- (2) Mechanically 8-12 years but technologically less than that.
- (3) Equipment is replaced progressively as funds permit. \$675 000.00 was spent on replacement of radiological equipment last financial year.
- (4) and (5) See (3) above.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

North Block: Delay

1156. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Apropos his answer to question 1060 of 1983 respecting Royal Perth Hospital north block, what maintenance work is required on the existing steel and concrete framework?
- (2) What alterations are required to the concrete slabs for the proposed new lift shafts?
- (3) How much mechanical and electrical work is required to complete the final design work on north block?
- (4) What is involved in planning the additional car park and completing the total site plan for the Wellington Street complex for presentation to the committee?
- (5) What will be the approximate cost of (1) to (4)?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Due to the former Government's lack of commitment, delays in proceeding with this major project mean some attention to slab reinforcing steel will be necessary and surrounding concrete areas repaired.
- (2) Changes in major traffic flows resulting from a March 1983 planning review will require the cutting of existing concrete floor slabs and a central relocation of three lift shafts.
- (3) Architectural work on the revised planning has now reached the stage where mechanical, electrical and other services consultants can now proceed. Negotiations are in progress regarding these appointments. Extensive mechanical and electrical work is required to finalise the design work resulting from major alterations agreed in March 1983.
- (4) The car park, which will be necessary to release space for contractors on the north block site, has yet to be designed although discussions with relevant authorities have taken place. Subject to funding becoming available in the 1983-84 capital works budget, design work will proceed in the current financial year.

The site plan for the total development has been agreed in principle by the hos-

pital board and will now be presented to the appointed steering committee.

- (5) The work involved in items (1) to (4) above is estimated to cost \$2 million.

HOSPITAL

Kellerberrin Memorial

1157. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What were the nursing staff establishment figures at the Kellerberrin Memorial Hospital for the years—
 - (a) 1981-82;
 - (b) 1982-83?
- (2) What are the current figures?
- (3) What were the inpatient bed averages for each of the above years?
- (4) Has the Department of Hospital and Allied Services received a request from the board of management of the Kellerberrin Memorial Hospital in respect of restoring the nursing staff establishment at the hospital to the levels obtaining for 1981-82?
- (5) (a) If so, was the nursing staff establishment restored to the level requested; and
 - (b) if not, why not?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) 16.24 FTE;
- (b) 15.35 FTE.
- (2) Actual at 18.8.83—13.92 FTE.
- (3) 1981-1982: 15.66;
- 1982-1983: 14.82.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) (a) Because of the decline in patient numbers, staff numbers have not been restored to establishment.
- (b) The situation will be closely monitored and reappraised if patient numbers increase.

1158. *This question was postponed.*

STRATA TITLES

Act: Amendment

1159. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Is it intended to amend the Strata Titles Act in conformity with Law Reform Commission Report No. 56 in respect of

the matter of present inequity on the allocation and valuation of strata titled properties?

(2) If so, when?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) and (2) The Attorney General is considering all aspects of the Law Reform Commission report and expects to be in a position to introduce legislation in 1984.

HEALTH

Duplicating Fluid: Precautions

1160. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Are any precautions being taken in Western Australia to prevent a repetition of the problem which occurred in Queensland recently when 36 Aboriginal boys and men drank toxic duplicating fluid?

(2) If so, what are the precautions?

(3) If not, why not?

Mr HODGE replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Duplicating fluid is required to be labelled with special warnings under schedule 5 of the Poisons Act.

In addition, Public Health Department staff alert Aborigines of the dangers associated with consuming any substance which is dangerous to health.

(3) Not applicable.

HEALTH

AIDS

1161. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Have any acquired immune deficiency syndrome cases been diagnosed in Western Australia?

(2) If so—

(a) how many have been diagnosed;

(b) when and where did they occur?

Mr HODGE replied:

(1) and (2) Not to my knowledge. The disease is now statutorily notifiable under the Health Act and there have been no notifications to date.

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Cigarettes: Mail Order

1162. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Treasurer:

(1) Is the Government aware of plans by an Adelaide businessman to mail order cigarettes to Western Australian smokers?

(2) Does the Government intend to oppose this scheme?

(3) (a) If so, what legislation would be applicable;

(b) will the Government introduce new legislation if no existing laws are applicable?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) and (3) (a) and (b) As advised in my second reading speech of 26 July 1983 the position will be monitored and if necessary all possible action will be taken to prevent avoidance or evasion of the statutory licence fee.

WATER RESOURCES

Excess Water: State Housing Commission Tenants

1163. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

(1) What action, if any, is being taken to recover the outstanding amounts for consumers of water beyond allowance by State Housing Commission tenants?

(2) Who is taking the action, the Metropolitan Water Authority or the State Housing Commission?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Metropolitan Water Authority—

(1) Overdue amounts in respect of consumption beyond allowance by State Housing Commission tenants are recovered direct from the State Housing Commission by the Metropolitan Water Authority. The State Housing Commission undertakes the recovery action against the tenant.

(2) State Housing Commission.

Public Works Department—

Not applicable to country area water supplies.

WATER RESOURCES: EXCESS WATER*Rates: Outstanding*

1164. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the aggregate amount of the outstanding charges for domestic consumers of water beyond allowance (excess water) for State Housing Commission tenants?
- (2) What percentage does this amount represent of the total beyond allowance charges for all State Housing Commission tenants?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Metropolitan Water Authority—

- (1) \$246 400 as at 16 September 1983.
- (2) Not known. State Housing Commission amounts are only segregated when they become overdue in order that a report of these accounts can be sent to the Commission.

Public Works Department—

This question is not applicable to country area water supplies.

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND*Groundwater: Levels*

1165. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Could he please give the available reports by the Metropolitan Water Authority on ground water levels during the last six months, and as a comparison also make available equivalent levels at about the same times during the last four years?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The MWA prepares tables on water level information on a six monthly basis, after the maximum or minimum water levels have been recorded for each year. A copy of issue No. 12 incorporating minimum water table levels for 1983 is tabled. This issue lists levels recorded at the representative sites as far back as 1961.

HEALTH*Registration Fees*

1166. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Referring to a recent circular letter issued by the Public Health Department (Radiological Council)—would he please say in detail by what percentage did individual fees increase for the registration of prescribed apparatus, electronic products and premises?
- (2) What is the aggregate amount these increases are expected to yield in revenue for the full year?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Prior to the new regulations coming into effect on 21 August 1983, there were no registration fees for irradiating apparatus and there were no prescribed electronic products and premises, so it is not possible to give a percentage increase.

The licensing application fee from 1958 to 1983 was \$6.00 with a \$2.00 per annum renewal fee. The licence fee is now \$10.00.

- (2) An amount of \$25 000 has been estimated as the revenue which will be gained in a full year, however, the actual amount will not be known until the end of the financial year.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS*Liquid: Canada*

1167. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Does the Minister know of the negotiations by Dome Petroleum about establishing a liquid natural gas to liquefy natural gas produced in Alberta, Canada, and exported to Japanese utilities?
- (2) If so, to what extent is this endeavour expected to have any influence on the signing of contracts and timing of delivery of the Western Australian North-West Shelf liquid natural gas to Japan?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The question is not understood.
- (2) Not applicable.

SUPERANNUATION*Accrued Liability*

1168. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Could he please give the estimated (or if actuary figures are available, the exact) accrued liability for the employer's (the Government's) contributions to superannuation of eligible employees by—

- (b) the Metropolitan Water Authority;
 - (b) the Public Works Department,
- either as a whole or if available, country water undertaking part of the Engineering Division separately?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (a) Metropolitan Water Authority actuarial figures as at November 1982:
 - present value of pensions being paid \$14.3 million
 - present value accrued to existing employees \$48.6 million
- (b) Superannuation pensions for both wages and salaries staff are met directly from CRF funds. The information as requested is not separately maintained for the department.

WATER RESOURCES: RATES*Pensioner Concessions*

1169. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the estimated total value of revenue lost on account of pensioners' concessions by the Metropolitan Water Authority in 1983-84?
- (2) How much of this is going to be refunded by the Treasury to the Metropolitan Water Authority?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) \$4.4 million.
- (2) Nil.

WATER RESOURCES: METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY*Plumbing Industry*

1170. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has the review, undertaken to go ahead during the previous Government into the involvement of the Metropolitan Water Authority in the licensing and other

regulatory functions of the plumbing industry been continued?

- (2) If so, has it been concluded?

- (3) If "Yes" to (2)—

- (a) what are the conclusions;
- (b) are any statutory or regulatory amendments planned?

- (4) Generally, has the previous Government's policy been implemented to have lesser instead of more involvement by the Metropolitan Water Authority in the control of the plumbing industry generally and of the manufacture of plumbing fittings particularly?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The review has been continued. This has included inviting other bodies likely to be affected by any possible changes to discuss the review.
- (2) No. The review is proceeding and involves examination of the MWA Act and by-laws.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) No. Implementation of the policy of lesser involvement in the plumbing industry, whilst continuing to be the policy of the Metropolitan Water Authority, is dependent upon effecting amendments to the MWA Act and by-laws, and on a programme of revision of Australian standards of manufacture of plumbing fixtures, fittings and installations.
This programme of revision is being carried out in consultation with other major capital city water authorities.

WATER RESOURCES*Installations and Plants: Inspections*

1171. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is he going to continue the practice started during the previous Government of inviting members of Parliament to visit various installations and plants of the Metropolitan Water Authority?
- (2) (a) If so, what are his plans; and
(b) will such visits coincide with the board's inspections of such plants, etc.?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) (a) and (b) Planning of the visits is in the formative stages. Members will be advised when the itineraries have been finalised.

AGED PERSONS: FRAIL

Subsidy: Criteria

1172. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Health:
Will the State Government be altering the criteria for the State frail aged subsidy following the announcement of the proposed changes to the provisions for personal care subsidies announced in the recent Federal Budget?

Mr HODGE replied:

The State frail aged subsidy is currently only payable when the applicant is not eligible for Commonwealth personal care subsidy.

Discussions are taking place between Commonwealth and State Government officers regarding the revised conditions on which the Commonwealth's personal care subsidy is to be based.

When this position is clarified, consideration will be given as to whether it will be necessary to modify the criteria for the State frail aged subsidy.

AGED PERSONS

Home Support Schemes

1173. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:
- (1) Does the Federal Government offer financial assistance to the State Government for the operating of home support schemes for the elderly on a 2:1 ratio?
 - (2) If "Yes", does the State Government participate in any such schemes?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This question should be directed to the Minister for Health.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Somerville Estate: Kardinya

1174. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

When will a primary school be built in the Somerville Estate, Kardinya?

Mr PEARCE replied:

As soon as possible.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

Pipeline: Geraldton

1175. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has tender 10404-14-181 for the gas metering system on the Dampier to Perth pipeline been let?
- (2) If so, who was the successful tenderer?
- (3) Was the successful tenderer a confirming tender bid or otherwise?
- (4) What percentage of the contract work will be completed in Western Australia?
- (5) Who were the unsuccessful tenderers?
- (6) What was the successful tender price?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) The contract for the gas metering systems for the Dampier to Perth natural gas pipeline has been approved to be placed with Petrogas Gas Systems b.v.
- (3) The successful tender conformed with the specification.
- (4) Twenty per cent.
- (5) Other tenders were received from:
Arrow Engineering Inc.
Geosource Inc.
Honeywell Pty. Ltd.
Maloney Pipeline Products Co.
Nova International Consulting Ltd.
T. O'Connor & Sons Pty. Ltd.
Proser Processes and Services Inc.
J. B. Rombach GMBH & Co.
Sembawang Engineering
- (6) Tender prices are confidential to the tenderer and the commission.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Energy Appliances: Competition

1176. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Referring the Minister to question 602 of 1983 respecting energy appliances, can the Minister now advise me the results of the examination he has undertaken into the matters I raised in that question?
- (2) If not, when will this examination be complete?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) As soon as possible.

FUEL AND ENERGY: COAL

Tonnage

1177. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines, Fuel and Energy:

- (1) How much coal is it estimated that the State Energy Commission will take from Collie coal producers for power generation during the years ending 30 June 1984, 30 June 1985 and 30 June 1986?
- (2) If he will not provide these tonnage details, why not?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) In year ending 30 June, 1984, 3.4 million tonnes of coal will be taken from Collie coal producers for power generation. Year ending 30 June 1985 it is estimated that the quantity will be 2.86 million tonnes, and for 1986, 2.88 million tonnes. However, these figures, can only be approximations at this stage, since work is constantly proceeding with regard to load/generation prediction.
- (2) Not applicable.

FUEL AND ENERGY: FUEL TAX

Impact

1178. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What impact, in dollar terms, will the recently increased Federal fuel levy have on the State Energy Commission's operating costs?
- (2) How will these increased costs be met by the State Energy Commission?
- (3) Has the Minister, or the Government, lodged any objection to this increased levy?
- (4) If so, when and in what form?
- (5) What response, if any, did the Minister or Government receive to this approach?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) Estimated fuel levy charges for 1983-84 total \$7.5 million. Approximately \$2.25 million is due to the increases announced in the recent Federal Budget.
- (2) All energy commission costs are met from revenue.
- (3) to (5) The Government has made several written and verbal approaches to the Prime Minister and Federal Government Ministers in an attempt to obtain

exemption from the levy for the State Energy Commission.

MINING: COAL

Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd.: Writ

1179. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines, Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is it a fact that the State Energy Commission writ against Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. issued on a Monday but that no details were given of the writ until the following day?
- (2) Is this normal practice when the State Energy Commission issues writs?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The writ was issued in accordance with the rules of the Supreme Court.
- (2) See (1).

MINING: COAL

Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd.: Writ

1180. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines, Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Did the Minister approve of the action of the State Energy Commission in issuing a writ against Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. prior to its issue?
- (2) If so, when did he give this approval?
- (3) Was the approval in writing?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The Minister noted the commission's decision to issue the writ prior to it being served under the Act. He is not required to approve of the issue of writs by the commission.
- (2) The matter was referred to the Minister prior to the issue of the writ.
- (3) Not applicable.

TELEVISION

Commercial: Additional Channel

1181. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the recent announcements that a third commercial television channel may be licensed to operate in Western Australia?
- (2) Does the Government support this proposal?

- (3) In light of the announcement, will the Government reconsider its plans to dispose of land held by the State Housing Commission in Dianella for media complex purposes?
- (4) If not, where will a third commercial channel, if granted a licence to operate in Western Australia, be able to establish its facilities?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.
- (4) If a third commercial channel is granted a licence the acquisition of a suitable site for its facilities is a matter for the channel to resolve.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rockingham: Decision

1182. Mr MACKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government had discussions with the Rockingham Shire Council, the Rockingham Chamber of Commerce or other organisations about the completion of a study of economic development in the Rockingham region?
- (2) If so, has a final decision been made to proceed with the study?
- (3) If not, when will this final decision be made?
- (4) Have any terms of reference been finalised for the study?
- (5) If so, would he provide me with these terms of reference?
- (6) Who will fund the study, if it has been decided that it will proceed?
- (7) Who will carry out the study?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Answered by (2).
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Discussions are in train with five consultants selected from those who expressed interest in carrying out the study. The terms of reference will be made available as soon as a consultant is awarded the work.

- (6) The study will be funded by the State Government. The Rockingham Shire Council is considering contributing.
- (7) Answered by (5).

SHOPPING: CENTRES

Leases: Inquiry

1183. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Adverting to his answer to question 1034 of 1983 respecting shopping centre leases, what specific funds have been provided as indicated in his answer?
- (2) What is the specific fee being paid to Mr Clarke, and which is referred to as the "normal consulting fee"?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) I refer the member to my answer to question 962 of 1983.
- (2) A maximum of one-third of the funds budgeted for this inquiry have been allocated to meet Mr Clarke's remuneration.

LAND

National Park: Jarrah Park

1184. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Adverting to his answer to question 1033 of 1983 respecting a proposed jarrah forest national park, will he please detail the policy of his Government as referred to in part (2) of his answer?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The Government's policy is to ensure adequate reservation of forest for the purpose of conservation and recreation in the jarrah forest.

EDUCATION: NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Funding

1185. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Adverting to his answer to question 1142 of 1983 respecting Government funding for independent schools, what formula is currently being used to determine "needs" basis by the Schools Commission when it made recommendations

for Government funding to independent schools?

- (2) What part of my question, or what comment of mine, constitutes a "deliberate untruth", as stated in his answer?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The Schools Commission is a Commonwealth authority and, as such, the State has no role in how the commission might determine its priorities in relation to non-Government schools.
- (2) The member's question contains a deliberate statement distorting the answer to question 1091(4). That the Commonwealth is rationalising its building programme for schools in no way implies a reduction in the overall funding available. The assertion is undoubtedly intended to engender disharmony between sectors of education.

MINING: DIAMONDS

Lake Argyle: Stage 2

1186. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Does he agree with the substance of a news item in the *Western Mail* of Saturday, 16 September, referring to the negotiations for stage 2 of the Argyle diamond project?
- (2) If not, what are the items of disagreement?
- (3) Who has been conducting the negotiations for the Government?
- (4) What role has been played by officers of the Premier's department?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) to (4) Negotiations on all major proposals are virtually complete and outstanding minor matters are being resolved now to enable a detailed public statement by both parties shortly.

This should clarify all matters to the satisfaction of the member.

1187 to 1190. *These questions were postponed.*

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Inquiry: Budget Provisions

278. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Will "the committee to review all Government functions and all the services it provides" be given the opportunity to review the Government's Budget before it is brought down and commits the Government and taxpayers to a lot of expenditure which the Government apparently thinks may be unwise or inefficient?
- (2) If not, will he explain why the committee which is to review all Government functions is not to review this particular function?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The Leader of the Opposition knows that the Budget is a confidential document prior to its delivery in this Parliament. I am not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition is saying that the Budget should be widely broadcast prior to it being delivered in the Parliament, but that would not be the predicted course of the Government.

I do not know whether it is the fact that this Government has decided to look at itself and to monitor its own performance to determine whether it has efficiently allocated its resources which is causing the Opposition such anguish about this matter. It is a straightforward review of the functions of Government—more comprehensive than in the past, it is true—and it is something the Opposition should wholeheartedly support.

It is true that when in Government the Opposition was loath to allow people to look at the way it was conducting the affairs of this State. We are not of the same mind. It is patently absurd for the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that the Budget should be reviewed.

Mr O'Connor: I asked you and you said "all Government functions".

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is patently absurd and I am surprised that the members sitting behind the Leader of the Opposition do not ask him to desist from these questions.

Mr Clarko: Do not crow, say "No".

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Budget is obviously a confidential document that has never been scrutinised prior to its delivery in Parliament. I guess the Leader of the Opposition is saying that the Opposition is not capable of reviewing the Budget because that is why it is brought to Parliament, and Parliament has the job of reviewing it. As far as I can ascertain, the Leader of the Opposition is saying that the Opposition is questioning that it does not feel it can adequately review the Budget. The functions review committee will not be asked to dissect the Budget prior to our allowing the Opposition that opportunity.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Amendments

279. Mr BURKETT, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) How many amendments have been moved to the Address-in-Reply so far this year?
- (2) How does this compare with previous years?

Mr Thompson: Is the question in your own handwriting?

Mr BURKETT: Yes, it is my own handwriting and I went to school at Maylands. If the member for Kalamunda would like a copy of the question I will make it available to him.

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) In answer to the question by the member for Scarborough—

Several members interjected.

Mr TONKIN: Shut up for a while and listen to the answer.

Several members interjected.

Mr TONKIN: So far 11 amendments have been moved to the Address-in-Reply and it is above any number as far as I have been able to research.

The average number of amendments moved to the Address-in-Reply over the last 18 years has been 3.3 and this year we have had 11. Five of the amendments were moved last night and that shows members how trivial and childish the Opposition is.

On these amendments alone there have been 103 speakers. It has clearly wasted the time of the Parliament. We want to have reasonable sitting hours and want to rationalise the sittings of Parliament, but with this lack of co-operation from the Opposition it will soon be impossible for this House to operate satisfactorily without guillotine measures.

EDUCATION

Political Activities

280. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Education:

Would he confirm that my interpretation is correct, that in previous statements made in the Parliament he has mentioned that educational institutions in Western Australia are not to be used for political purposes?

Mr PEARCE replied:

I have made it clear that with regard to the discussion of political matters in a classroom situation, I have adhered to the guidelines laid down by the previous Director General of Education (Dr Mossenson). Schools are to be encouraged to deal with controversial subjects in an impartial way in order to provide a balance on different points of view that prevail on any particular issue.

In several instances I have acted to ensure those sorts of guidelines are imposed on various pressure groups in the political and social arena—some of which I agree with and some I disagree with so there is a balance of impartiality.

If the member has any knowledge of instances where this has not occurred I would ask him to give me the details and I will take the necessary action.

REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS

Initiation

281. Mrs BUCHANAN, to the Premier:

I refer to criticism of the Government by the member for Floreat in *The West Australian* concerning the number of inquiries set up by the present Government. I ask—

Is he able to advise how many inquiries were undertaken between 1980 and 1983.

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

Yes, a recent comprehensive survey of inquiries and studies conducted between 1980 and 1983—

Mr Rushton: Why have you not replied to my question? I want the details for recent times, I do not want them backdated.

Mr Pearce: Some members are more effective than others.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —has indicated that more than 124 inquiries were undertaken—at a conservative cost estimate of almost \$7 million.

I wish to separately table a list of types of inquiries.

However, in response to a parliamentary question last year by me to the then Premier, I receive a list of inquiries conducted since 1974. Forty-nine inquiries were listed, including 19 for the period 1980-82.

The then Premier appears to have conveniently overlooked more than 105 inquiries.

Several members interjected.

Mr Tonkin: Shame, he should resign. No, on second thoughts keep him there.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: However, I wish to make the Government's position clear with respect to inquiries.

Inquiries are a necessary part of the decision making process. Rather than making ill-informed decisions, the Government has undertaken a number of inquiries and studies in major policy areas, including education, land use, industrial relations and Aboriginal land rights.

I might mention that the Beazley committee of inquiry has already attracted national attention and has earned for itself a national reputation.

Mr Clarko: While it is inquiring?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Yes, while it is inquiring; numerous approaches have been made from other States about it.

Mr Pearce: There were 1 600 written submissions at the last count.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Yes, 1 600 written submissions have already been received.

Such inquiries are being undertaken in the normal course of good government. There would no doubt be much criticism, and rightly so, if the Government had gone ahead and made important policy decisions without adequate consultation and without an adequate information base.

When the Opposition criticises the number and cost of such inquiries, it has a short memory. In its last three years in office, more than 120 inquiries were conducted, at a cost of almost \$7 million, not including salaries of many of the government officers involved.

However, it would appear that recommendations from only about half of the inquiries were acted upon, the rest being deferred or "under consideration".

EDUCATION

Political Activities

282. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

Following the reply by the Minister for Education to the question asked by the member for Albany I ask—

- (1) Will the Premier tell the House whether he used any facilities at the University of Western Australia to produce television advertisements for the Australian Labor Party in relation to electoral changes, or in relation to any other matter?
- (2) If he did so, will he please explain to the House how he justifies this use of an educational institution for party political purposes?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I do not know how many times political parties have produced advertising with school children being photographed with schools in the background, but the direct answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question is simply that we filmed a commercial in the study of the Dean's of the Law School at the university which touched upon electoral reform. It may be of interest to members to know that prior to the last election some of our best commercials were filmed in the dean's study.

I am able to advise members that the quality was good and the commercials were persuasive. I do not consider that by filming the commercial in the dean's study we were somehow or other influencing the education of the law students. In fact, it may interest members that as a result of a rather rowdy social occasion proceeding while we were filming the commercials we could not proceed to record them. On the first occasion available we returned to complete the commercials. There is nothing to hide about that.

Several members interjected.

Mr Hassell: Is that how the Dean of the Law School uses the facilities at the university?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I would presume that if the Liberal Party had asked to film commercials in the dean's office it would have been permitted to do so. There is nothing untoward about what we did and I thank the dean for his co-operation and kindness.

MANJIMUP CANNING CO-OPERATIVE CO. LTD.

Government Assistance

283. Mr READ, to the Premier:

Is the Premier able to advise what assistance the Government has agreed to give to the Manjimup fruit cannery?

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The Government will provide up to \$820 000 to subsidise expected cash losses for the 1984 to 1988 production seasons.

Government guarantees to enable the cannery to get seasonal advances for its working capital needs will continue over the five years.

The Government will also pay the cannery's full subsidy entitlement of about \$821 000 under the current four-year supplementary programme.

Since 1972, government has helped the cannery with \$3 284 455 in subsidies and grants, in addition to loans and loan guarantees.

Mr Clarko: You said this would be available last time, didn't you?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The new five year programme will allow the cannery to plan ahead.

However, no more aid will be provided after the programme ends.

Mr Clarko: Is that because you will not be there in 1988?

WAGES: CUT

Medical Officers: Meekatharra

284. Mr COYNE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the two resident medical officers in Meekatharra are extremely irate at the Government's proposal to relieve them of 10 per cent of their salaries under the Temporary Reduction of Remuneration (Senior Public Officers) Act?
- (2) Is he aware that Dr Richard Thurlow sees the imposition of the salary cut as an abrogation of a contractual agreement between the Government and himself, in respect of the supply of medical services in the Meekatharra region?
- (3) Does the Minister realise that the implementation of this decree will provide a cessation of medical services by the officers concerned to a large part of the Murchison region?
- (4) Is he aware of the great difficulties that have been encountered over the past years in providing a thoroughly reliable and stable medical service to the Murchison region?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) The hospital secretary at Meekatharra advised the Department of Hospital and Allied Services yesterday of the dissatisfaction of the doctors at Meekatharra with the 10 per cent temporary salary cut.
- (2) Dr Thurlow has the opportunity to make application under section 7 of the Temporary Reduction of Remuneration (Senior Public Officers) Act if he suffers financial hardship from the application of the Act. The Act affects all persons in receipt of remuneration from Government who earn above \$29 500 per annum.
- (3) If both medical officers withdraw their services for the reason of the application of this State-wide Government policy, medical services could be affected. If

this does happen, Government will make all possible efforts to obtain replacements.

(4) Yes.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

East West Promotions

285. Mr GORDON HILL, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

- (1) (a) Adverting to question without notice of 4 August 1983 about a firm known as East West Promotions, has the Department of Consumer Affairs received any further complaints;
- (b) if so, what form have the complaints taken?
- (2) (a) Are Jennifer Anne McCoy and Norman Ian Cheetham still directors of Tamarin Holidays Pty. Ltd. which runs East West Promotions;
- (b) is the department aware of any problems in relation to the treatment of staff by McCoy and Cheetham;
- (c) if so, what types of problems are being experienced?
- (3) (a) Have there been any problems with a product sold by East West Promotions known as Bontex;
- (b) if so, what type of problems have been experienced?
- (4) What remedies are available to consumers who experience difficulties with East West Promotions?

Several members interjected.

Mr TONKIN replied:

We are concerned about what is happening to elderly people, even if members opposite are not. My reply is as follows—

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Numerous complaints have been received since I last addressed the House on East West Promotions. I have also been advised that there have been many telephone inquiries from consumers about the operations of East West Promotions. Recently the department has received details on three separ-

ate contracts, involving similar circumstances to those outlined previously—that is, the mental wearing-down by the salesmen of elderly folk who subsequently sign contracts. In one particular case a gentleman paid \$800 deposit and as yet has not been able to gain a refund. In another case an elderly widow who paid only a small deposit on her contract is now under severe pressure to disgorge the balance which is understood to be in excess of \$2 000.

- (2) (a) Yes, Jennifer Anne McCoy and Norman Ian Cheetham are still directors of Tamarin Holdings Pty. Ltd. trading as East West Promotions.
- (b) Yes, a disturbing detailed report made under oath concerning harsh and unconscionable requirements as to employment and misleading statements about expected income has recently been received from a former employee of McCoy and Cheetham.
- (c) The types of misrepresentations made to employees or prospective employees take the form of exaggerated promises of large weekly incomes which in reality fall well short of the figure promised, even where specified sales objectives are achieved.

A former employee of Modern Style Home Improvements, a firm which until recently was run by Thibe Pty. Ltd. and in which both McCoy and Cheetham were directors, has advised that he was required to sign an employment contract acknowledging that he was indebted to Modern Style Home Improvements for a sum of \$700, being training costs. The contract required the employee to repay the \$700 if he left within a 12 month period. Also young girls employed for canvassing work were required to sign employment contracts ac-

knowledging indebtedness to Modern Style Home Improvements. When employees, either male or female, became aware of the hopeless situation they were in and the fact that they were not likely to earn anywhere near the income promised they attempted to leave the firm. I have been advised that in the case of some young girls, Jennifer McCoy had threatened them with legal action on the employment bond contract. Although the basis of this threat was legally tenuous, in many cases the young girls continued working because of the threat of action. The department's informant advised that he had seen "several girls reduced to tears by this tactic yet it appeared to have no effect on McCoy and she insisted they keep working". Some apparently had the courage to leave but many others kept working for as little as \$50 a week gross with the threat of a law suit over their heads.

Information to hand indicates that both McCoy and Cheetham show a total lack of regard for other people's feelings and situations using standover tactics to keep staff.

- (3) (a) Yes.
- (b) Consumers have experienced problems which are usually either related to the representations made as to the type of coating they are to receive or the quality of the finish of the coating. A recent example of these problems was illustrated by an elderly Floreat Park gentleman who was shown product "A" as being the type of finish his home would receive. However product "B" is the result of the work actually performed by East West Promotions and as members will see from the samples which I hold for inspection it falls well short of the quality he would

reasonably have expected to receive. In fact, product "B" was peeled off one of the walls less than 24 hours after it was applied.

- (4) Under new door to door sales legislation consumers will be afforded a seven day cooling-off period in cases where they enter into contracts subsequent to a visit by a canvasser who arranges appointments for salesmen to call later. With respect to false or misleading statements to prospective employees concerning future earnings the Government's new Trade Standards Act—a matter on which the previous Government failed to act—will, *inter alia*, address itself to that very issue and in fact will carry a heavy penalty provision for any person or company who makes false or misleading statements concerning wages, salaries, commissions, etc.

LOTTERIES

Soccer Pools: Western Australian Agent

286. Mr HASSELL to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services.

- (1) Is or was one of the Government's advisers the Western Australian agent for the company with which the State Government is negotiating to establish soccer pools in Western Australia?
- (2) If that adviser was or is the agent, did he introduce representatives of Australian Soccer Pools Pty. Ltd. to the Government?
- (3) If that adviser is or was the agent is he to receive any payment or benefit from any arrangement which might be made between the Government and Australian Soccer Pools Pty. Ltd?

Mr PARKER replied,

- (1) To my knowledge no such agent is an adviser to the Government and to my knowledge no adviser to the Government is such an agent. No one has raised the matter with me before.
- (2) The person with whom I have had discussions in relation to Australian Soccer Pools Pty. Ltd. is Mr Harry Beitzel, who would be well known to many people in the community. Mr Beitzel has been to see me on, I think, two or three oc-

casions on his visits to Western Australia and I understand that he has also seen the Leader of the Opposition on one of those occasions. Mr Beizelt has made appointments in the normal way.

(3) Not applicable.

RAILWAYS

Mt. Barker

- 287. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Transport,

(1) Are there plans to further downgrade Westrail facilities at Mt. Barker?

(2) If "Yes"—

(a) what are those plans;

(b) will the Minister give an assurance that the Plantagenet Shire Council will be fully consulted before an official decision is made?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) and (2) (a) I personally indicate that under the present Government there has been no downgrading of Westrail facilities at Mt. Barker. I am advised that Westrail is studying the possible elimination of train-crossing facilities at Mt. Barker.

(2) (b) Yes, I am quite willing to give that assurance but I would request that the Plantagenet Shire Council actually contact me formally.

EDUCATION: STUDENTS

Gifted and Talented: Programme

288. Mr P. J. SMITH, to the Minister for Education,

(1) Further to a question asked last Thursday relating to a Press report on the gifted and talented students' programme, has he seen the article headed, "Minister denies gag" in last Saturday's *Weekend News*.

(2) If "Yes" was the article accurate?

Mr PEARCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of his question, which enabled me to extract the article concerned. My answer is as follows—

(1) and (2) I had to tell the House last week that a report in the previous *Weekend News* which alleged I had gagged the head of the gifted and

talented students' programme was totally untrue—as it was—and, in one respect, I was pleased to note the *Weekend News* at least had the decency to repeat close to verbatim the answer I gave to the House. However, the newspaper then took it upon itself to carry on with a claim made by the reporter, Mr Alan Hale, about a conversation he allegedly had had with the head of the gifted and talented students' programme. From my own knowledge, I cannot explain what is the truth of that conversation from either end, except to say that, firstly, the allegation, whether it be made by the head of the gifted and talented students' programme or by the reporter concerned, that I or the Director General of Education gagged the head of the programme continues to be totally untrue.

Mr Clarko: Was a letter written by Dr Vickery to Mr Atkinson?

Mr PEARCE: Yes, Dr Vickery did write a letter to the head of the programme. I have seen the letter, and I assure members it does not in any way constitute a gag on that officer or indeed an instruction to him not to make comments to the Press or to anybody else.

Mr Clarko: Do you think Mr Atkinson may have misunderstood the letter?

Mr PEARCE: I do not concede that is the case because I do not know—because I was not present—whether the record of the conversation given by the *Weekend News* is an accurate one.

Mr Clarko: You said last week that, "under my direction" the programme had grown enormously, or words to that effect. Did you mean that as Minister, I had actually issued a direction? What did you mean by, "under my direction"? That was the centrepiece of one of your arguments: That I had gone out and promoted the programme so that it expanded enormously.

Mr PEARCE: I was simply suggesting the gifted and talented students' programme grew while the member for Karrinyup was the Minister for Education.

Mr Clarko: But you used the word "direction". Perhaps it was the wrong use of the word.

Mr PEARCE: Okay, I am prepared to say that while the member for Karrinyup was Minister for Education, he had no control over the gifted and talented students' programme.

Mr Clarko: But that is not true. A lot of your teachers are going to be very disturbed about you.

Mr PEARCE: I personally think that is one of the problems. That is why I have instituted a review. The point I wish to make with regard to the *Weekend News* article is this: I saw that article as being personally damaging because I am not the kind of person who gags people. Indeed, I have lifted restrictions imposed by previous Ministers; that is, I have stopped the practice whereby articles in the *WA Education News* which deal with ministerial statements or comment on ministerial matters are given to the Minister for approval before they are published in the paper.

Mr Clarko: They did not come to me.

Mr PEARCE: I will bet they did. I stopped that practice. I said I did not need to see articles of that sort, because I did not want to impose censorship.

Mr Clarko: That is false.

Mr PEARCE: However, my point in regard to the article in the *Weekend News* is this: There was an ethical and professional obligation upon the reporter of the *Weekend News* to check with me or Dr Vickery for at least a denial of or comment on that kind of allegation before it was run, from a single source, on hearsay in the paper.

We have been damaged by this degree of unethical conduct and I am most disappointed the editor of the *Weekend News* would take it upon himself to defend the conduct of professional journalists in that manner. One can only wonder as to the situation which prevails at the *Weekend News* in the way of professional ethics.

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Inquiry: Hospitals

289. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Will the committee which is to review all Government functions and the services it provides give high priority to an

assessment of whether the allocation of staff and resources at the Government teaching hospitals represents an efficient use of available resources?

(2) If not, why is this important matter not being given priority?

(3) When does the Premier expect the committee to get around to investigating that important subject?

Mr HODGE replied:

(1) to (3) I assume that the Hospital and Allied Services Department, the Public Health Department, and Mental Health Services will all be subject, in due course, to investigation by the committee that is to be established. I do not see those bodies as being exempt from that review and I look forward to that in due course. As the Minister responsible for those departments I shall welcome that inquiry when, based on its priorities, the committee decides they should come under close scrutiny.

TELEVISION

Public Television (WA): Funding

290. Mrs BEGGS, to the Minister for the Arts:

Has he obtained an opinion on the legality of making a grant to Public Television (WA) from instant lottery funds, as queried by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition recently?

Mr DAVIES replied:

I thank the member for some two days' notice of the question. It seems the Opposition asks questions which require very detailed answers, and members cannot get all questions to relevant Ministers in one day.

The answer to the question is as follows—

Two issues were raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The first referred to the incorporation of the organisation and the second referred to funding. In regard to the first matter, the Attorney General has indicated that about a fortnight ago he approved of the incorporation of the organisation and, on the second matter in a written opinion to the Attorney General, the Solicitor General advised it was his view I might properly make the proposed distribution.