

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 19th October, 1978

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

RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

MR TUBBY (Greenough) [2.19 p.m.]: In making my contribution to the Budget debate, firstly I would like to make a few comments regarding the Budget itself and to compliment the Premier and Treasurer on the responsible and well set-out Budget introduced this year. Its general acceptance by the people of Western Australia indicates that they respect and trust the Court Government and believe that it is running the financial affairs of Western Australia in a capable manner.

Mr Jamieson: The last opinion poll did not indicate that.

Mr TUBBY: Even in its criticism of the Budget during the debate the Opposition has not been strong and it is quite easy to understand that it too must be realising at last that the affairs of Western Australia are being handled in a positive and capable manner.

Mr Davies: What a strange statement.

Mr TUBBY: No doubt some people have experienced disappointment as a result of the Budget, and I would like to discuss some of the disappointments relating to my electorate. First and foremost is the Three Springs Hospital. Each time I have spoken on the Budget debate I have stressed the urgent need for funds to be allocated for the necessary extensive renovations and upgrading of this important hospital in the north midlands area.

During his speech the member for Moore referred to the Moora Hospital. Between the metropolitan area and Geraldton a great need exists for funds to be made available for the upgrading of hospitals. The Three Springs Hospital caters for the Shires of Coorow, Carnamah, Three Springs, Mingenew, the mineral sands town of Eneabba, the coastal towns of Leeman and

Greenhead, and quite a number of localities to the east. Members will realise that this involves a vast area.

I strongly urge that funds be made available as quickly as possible because it is almost three years since the plans and specifications, and the documentation for this hospital, were drawn up.

The hospital at Mullewa was to be upgraded in three stages. Stage 1 was completed towards the end of last year, and stages 2 and 3 are still to be carried out. The completion of stage 1 has placed an additional load on the catering facilities at that hospital, and I urge the Government to give consideration to further funding in the very near future to allow improvements to be carried out.

There is also a need for new nurses' quarters at the Northampton Hospital. I believe the department recognises this need. All in all, so far as my electorate is concerned there is an urgent need for money to be spent on the upgrading of hospitals.

Mr Bertram: Why do they not spend the money?

Mr TUBBY: Another disappointing feature of the Budget was that there was no provision for funds to provide residential accommodation at the agricultural wing of the Morawa High School. This project has been developing for a number of years, and during that time quite a large sum of money has been spent in providing facilities for instruction at the agricultural high school. However, in spite of the large expenditure the school is not fully utilised for the needs of the area. It will not be fully utilised until some form of accommodation is provided. At the moment the school caters only for those students who attend on a day-to-day basis.

A modern piggery has been constructed at the school and now it is able to run pigs as well as sheep. The school has reached the stage of development where it is essential to provide residential accommodation so that the stock can be well cared for and the students can receive an education in a true agricultural atmosphere.

The outlook for crops in my electorate is a lot better than it has been for two years, but the year has not been without its anxious moments. The season was late in starting and some farmers considered it was too late to put in a crop. Consequently, they are in a rather grim situation at the present time, especially in view of the way the season is finishing. However, I am very glad to be able to say that in withdrawing the drought declaration the Government has seen fit to allow shires in those areas still to declare certain areas

of their shires, or particular farms, as drought affected. That will allow consideration of funding which is essential for those farmers to carry on.

We heard the member for Geraldton outline the problems being experienced by the tomato growers in the Geraldton area. I fully support his concern and I appreciate the real problems which are faced by the tomato growers at Geraldton and Greenough as a result of the effects of the spray 2,4-D. As the member for Geraldton said, the situation is particularly bad this year. It has been brought about mainly as a result of the effects of cyclone "Alby" which spoilt the early crop, and created a need for a later crop. The second crop was at a susceptible stage when the majority of the cereal areas were sprayed for noxious weeds.

At one time 2,4-D ester was mixed with water and sprayed on the crops. The water created heavy droplets which did not dissipate into the atmosphere so easily. However, today much of the 2,4-D is being sprayed neat by misting. The neat chemical is sprayed 60 to 80 feet into the air which gives a swath coverage of between 400 and 500 feet. So it can be seen that a fair amount of 2,4-D is being sprayed into the atmosphere. The 2,4-D spray is very volatile which means it does not have to be applied exactly on the crop area. There is a fair amount of overlap, which is a very satisfactory means of controlling weeds in cereal crops.

I welcome the suggestion that an inquiry be held. I think that will help to overcome the problem which confronts the tomato growers in Geraldton.

Mr Carr: Has that inquiry been announced, or is it speculation?

Mr TUBBY: The Minister for Agriculture mentioned, in his reply to the comments of the member for Geraldton, that an inquiry would be held by officers from the Department of Agriculture. I believe he anticipates that the results of the inquiry will be in his hands within a few days.

The tomato growing industry is tremendously important so far as the Geraldton region is concerned. I have heard several figures quoted, but I believe that in its heyday the industry supported about 450 growers. However, I understand the number today is between 50 and 60. A great deal of interest in the tomato industry is being rejuvenated and it would be a great pity to see the industry receive a setback at this stage.

Probably the greatest damage in and around the Geraldton area is caused by contaminated vehicles and clothing. In the early 1950s I was

one of the first farmers to use hormone sprays, and I realised very quickly the tremendous problems that could arise if the sprays were used indiscriminately. Since that early period we have been spraying nearly all our crops with these sprays. Also, we have had probably one of the best rose gardens in the area. So my experience proves clearly that if sprays are used carefully and sensibly, many of these problems can be eliminated. This is my reason for saying that one of the greatest problems is caused by contaminated vehicles and clothing.

I would like to give members some idea of the costs involved in using these sprays. The member for Geraldton quoted the base cost of the various chemicals. However, this morning I obtained a quote for the aerial spraying of 2,4-D. This chemical is mixed with one pint of distillate for each acre to be sprayed, and it works out at approximately \$2 per acre. When other weedicides are applied by aircraft they need to be diluted and dispensed at the rate of three to four gallons of water per acre. The cost of the application of these weedicides was quoted as between \$3 to \$4 an acre. So members can see readily that the difference in the price of the chemical is of great concern.

Another problem is that the other sprays are not as volatile as 2,4-D and they must be sprayed more directly. When vast areas are to be sprayed, it is very difficult always to achieve a complete cover and it is annoying at harvest time to find these infested areas in the crops. In my opinion any inquiries about the effects of 2,4-D must be considered in line with the size of the industry. It seems that this spray will have serious consequences on the tomato industry in Geraldton, but we must bear in mind also that vast areas of the countryside have benefited by it as it is a reasonably cheap and effective means of controlling noxious weeds.

Another matter of concern in my electorate is the effect of the implementation of the Southern Western Australian Transport Study report. There is a great air of uncertainty about this report at present. Just yesterday I was contacted by a representative of the Perenjori Shire Council because of the concern felt in that area. The Mullewa Shire Council is also worried because of the closure of the Mullewa to Meekatharra railway line.

Very shortly it is proposed to discontinue the Friday night train from Perth, so there will be two trains only each week for general goods. The people of this area feel that this is the thin

edge of the wedge. If the report is implemented in its entirety, the railway service will be drastically affected.

One of the recommendations of the SWATS report is that fertilisers be carted to inland depots, and it has been mooted that a depot will be sited at Three Springs. I am not suggesting that a depot at Three Springs is not warranted because that is the centre of a very important cereal and wool producing area, but I do feel that Perenjori, Morawa, or Mullewa ought to be considered also. It will be a further disadvantage if fertiliser no longer is to be carted on this line.

The farmers are hoping for a reasonable harvest, and many are considering replacing their trucks. Many of them like to cart their grain to Geraldton and then backload with fertiliser. However, if this portion of the SWATS report is implemented, in the near future the farmers will be compelled to cart their grain to the nearest Co-operative Bulk Handling facility and pick up the fertiliser from Three Springs. Naturally they are very concerned about this arrangement, and they do not know whether or not to purchase new vehicles; members will appreciate that a considerable outlay would be involved. The farmers are looking anxiously to the Government for some early indication about the particular sections of the report that will be implemented and the programme that will bring it into effect. If the Government made an announcement, it would relieve a great deal of anxiety amongst the farmers in those areas.

In his speech the member for Mt Marshall indicated his concern about salt encroachment in his area. It seems to me that this is a problem throughout the wheatgrowing areas of Western Australia, and unfortunately it is affecting some of the best cereal growing areas. It appears that the salt is taking over on the areas which were the first to be cleared and which were considered to be the best in most of the heavily timbered flats. In many sections of my electorate, thousands of acres of good agricultural land has been lost to salt.

Once the salt takes over, the land is of no use for cereal growing and it is useless for pastures. In most cases it becomes a bare non-productive area. Experienced farmers know that where even a small area of salt is apparent the property is suspect, and not one that they would be interested in purchasing. This is because the salt-affected areas are spreading at an alarming rate and we do not know where they will finish up.

I know that several farmers in the Morawa Shire have grouped together to fight this problem on a joint basis, and I believe this is absolutely necessary; all farmers in the watershed area should group together to control the run-off of surplus water. I believe individual farmers who attempt to carry out their own salt preventive methods without the co-operation of the complete watershed area are almost wasting their time. The Government should actively promote this idea and encourage farmers to form groups. This will result in real improvements in the methods of controlling the problem of salt encroachment.

I know there has been a great deal of dispute over what is the most effective method of controlling this problem. For example, in the Morawa Shire farmers in some areas are adopting control measures recommended by the Department of Agriculture while others are using the Whittington method. Probably, it will be a number of years before the real benefits of these programmes begin to become evident, and it will be very interesting to see which method will turn out to be the best.

A great deal has been said during this debate about unemployment, and its serious effects in country areas, particularly Geraldton. I know at first hand how serious unemployment has been in that area, aggravated as it has been by the drought which has plagued the district for the last two years. Only last week I was approached by a man who has been in business in Geraldton for a number of years and who apparently has done very well. He suggested we should establish workshop activities within the Geraldton region and that young people who find themselves without work in those vital years after they leave school perhaps could engage in some hobby-type activities in a small workshop atmosphere.

He suggested they could be taught pottery, leatherwork, carpentry, silverware, gemstone craft, art, drawing, print framing, metal art, basket weaving, candle making, china painting and crafts of that nature. Such a scheme would not be very expensive to establish and could cater for many people interested in learning these types of skills. Once it got under way, it could be almost self-supporting because much of the produce could be sold. I have given this proposal a lot of serious thought; I believe it is a start. It could be treated as a pilot project and may prove to be very worth-while. It would create a lot of interest for these young people and perhaps would be the means of stimulating their interest to go on and attend technical college or to go into the various apprenticeships which may be offering.

I urge the Minister for Labour and Industry to look very seriously at this proposal. The businessman in Geraldton believed it would have the solid support of the business community of Geraldton and with that type of backing, it could prove to be a very worth-while project which would not cost a great deal. All that is needed to get this project off the ground are suitable premises and equipment.

In regard to unemployment in the farming areas, I see very little ahead which will result in an improvement to the situation which presently exists. Wherever one goes throughout the rural areas one sees farmers making every effort to conduct their farming operations with as little labour as possible. Yet only 20 years ago, almost every farm employed part-time, seasonal workers or permanent employees who worked on those properties throughout the year. Today, one could count almost on one hand the number of farmers with full-time employees. Labour virtually has priced itself out of the market in the rural industries. Productivity is not in the race to keep pace with the high wages and improved conditions demanded today.

It is frightening to think of the thousands of very capable people who are being deprived of the opportunity to work in the agricultural areas. Working on a farm certainly may be hard work but it is very interesting and rewarding. However, I cannot see any immediate improvement in the situation.

In most cases, the machinery used in farming operations calls for employees of great skill and experience. I believe trade unions would be doing a lot of good if they considered channelling some of their funds into the training of people to take over these responsible jobs in the rural industries. If these trained young people were provided, perhaps farmers would look to employing more people.

Mr Davies: What kind of funds do you think they have at their disposal to do that?

Mr TUBBY: Considerable funds apparently are channelled to political parties and that sort of thing; perhaps it could be put to better use by assisting these people to acquire new skills.

Mr Davies: Let us not speak in general terms; let us have some facts. This is a great myth. Trade unions are desperately poor because they charge such low fees and the unionists expect so much in return. Trade unions are run on a shoestring.

Mr TUBBY: The Leader of the Opposition says trade unions charge low fees. I wish he would move around the country areas and speak

to shearers, shed hands and those types of people; their one dread is that they will be pressurised into joining a union.

Mr Davies: It is not a business; there is no profit in it. You can go down and have a look at their returns.

Mr McIver: What about the farming hands' award? What a shocking thing that is!

Mr TUBBY: The Leader of the Opposition must be referring to some of the minor unions, because I know some unions charge fees of around \$80 to \$100 a year.

Mr Grill: The one to which you are referring—the AWU—only recently increased its fees to \$40.

Mr TUBBY: I firmly believe what I have said is true; unions would do a lot more good by looking to this aspect of employment and helping people to acquire new skills and occupations. I support the Bill.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [2.50 p.m.]: It can be said that this is a very dismal Budget which does not create a great deal of benefit for the community. As the previous speaker has said, the unemployed will not receive any help. We see a cut-back in many areas as a result of the Treasurer's Budget. In the time available to me I shall speak on a number of matters, concerning the whole State and more parochial areas.

The Budget has not done anything to generate the economy in any way and it has not given a boost to confidence in Western Australia. It is unfortunate the Minister for Fuel and Energy is not present. I feel he has a responsibility to inform Parliament of the programme for future power generation in Western Australia. All we know is that the Government intends to embark on a nuclear power programme after 1995.

In answer to questions the Minister has indicated that by the year 1982, when the Kwinana and Muja extensions are expected to be completed, the State will have a capacity of 1 800 megawatts. He has indicated the growth rate will be around 7 per cent and that by the year 1990 we will require 3 100 megawatts and by 1995, 5 000 megawatts.

If we are not considering embarking on a nuclear energy policy until 1995 where is the extra power to be generated from after 1982? The Minister has not explained this. The Commissioner of the SEC (Mr Kirkwood) and myself have corresponded through the Press on this matter without any success. The Government has a responsibility to inform the taxpayers of its energy programme. The stations at East Perth

and South Fremantle, which are soon to be closed down, produce power much more cheaply than does the Kwinana station.

Surely the Government does not have a day-to-day policy for energy production. A long-term plan is necessary. I ask the Government to indicate to the taxpayers and the coalmining industry just what the policy will be for power generation after 1982. I hope the Government takes note of what I say, and indicates what are its policies, and just what the State Energy Commission has in mind. I do not wish to dwell on the subject of nuclear power as I mentioned this in my motion calling for the establishment of a Collie coalfield authority.

Again, I would like to know the Government's programme for power generation once the Muja and Kwinana extensions are completed in 1982. After that year we will be requiring thousands of extra megawatts of power and I have been unable to find out from the Government what are its intentions.

My next comments will relate to the allocation of funds for medical care in this State. The Budget clearly demonstrates there is a severe cut-back in funding in this area. The answer to a question I asked on the 11th October clearly spells out the problems which this new concept of federalism has thrust upon Western Australia. I asked the following question—

In view of the conditions that exist at the Donnybrook hospital, will he advise why the construction of a new hospital was not included in this year's estimates?

The Minister replied—

Of the \$38 828 000 budgeted expenditure of General Loan Funds for 1978-79 all but \$100 000 is required to complete or continue works already in progress. \$100 000 was budgeted to allow a commencement on the replacement hospital for Leonora, a project of much higher priority than Donnybrook.

It can be seen that all we have in this year's Budget for new works on hospitals is \$100 000. The balance of the allocation is for works already in progress.

Some quite deplorable conditions exist at the Collie District Hospital which has to service a population of 8 000, with people coming from as far east as Darkan and Wagin and as far south as Donnybrook and Boyup Brook. The hospital has only seven maternity beds; often maternity patients have to be placed in the preparation room where there are no windows. The administrator of the hospital has complained but his calls for moves to overcome these problems have met

with no response from the department, for the obvious reason that there is no money available to spend on capital works or improvements to hospitals.

Neither is it uncommon for the maternity patients to be placed in geriatric wards in the hospital, which is a shocking state of affairs. Members will realise I am not reflecting on old people and would know I have a keen interest in them. Nonetheless, the situation is deplorable. I am sure the member for Subiaco would know that this is not a good nursing practice. However, there is no alternative because of the limited maternity accommodation at the hospital.

The maternity section has only one shower, one bath, and one toilet in the ablution block. These maternity patients have to walk 60 metres to that ablution block. The situation needs investigation by the Medical Department.

There is only a very small lounge where the maternity patients can talk to their guests or have a cigarette. The kitchen is located some distance from the main hospital. We have been promised a new kitchen but, unfortunately, the promise has not been kept and meals still have to be brought from the old kitchen, which is situated in the old hospital.

Another problem with the maternity block is that there are large doorways constructed so it is possible to bring in the meals, and this also causes problems for the maternity patients.

There is only one private room available for maternity patients. Any woman having a child and who requires a private ward often is unable to get it. This is a poor situation in a hospital servicing 8 000 people. It is no wonder the administrator of the hospital is complaining to the authorities to have immediate action taken to overcome the problems.

The general ward is overcrowded, and maternity patients often are placed in this ward. There are other problems which I shall not list at this stage. There is insufficient room in the general nursing section. While we have not had any tragedies, everyone is aware that the coalmining industry is regarded as the highest risk industry in Western Australia.

I hope I will never see the day when we have a tragedy in a coalmine; but we must be prepared for it. If a tragedy occurred, we would not be able to cope with such a disaster. Of course, in addition to this, extensions are taking place to the Muja power house where some 450 workers are engaged in a very high risk industry, working

at great heights. There is an urgent need for attention to be given to the conditions at Collie Hospital.

As far as geriatrics are concerned, we have the Silver Chain Nursing Service and a home capable of accommodating 40 people. We have accommodation for 19 geriatric patients only at the general hospital. There is a great need for replanning. My comments probably have application generally throughout Western Australia; but it is obvious that new federalism has cut back the funds available to the Medical Department.

The situation can be seen in the answer to a question I asked of the former Minister for Health, referring to the Donnybrook Hospital. The former Minister is aware of the situation at the Donnybrook Hospital, because I raised this matter last year. The Donnybrook people are hopping mad. I do not know how bad the situation is at Leonora, but if it is worse than the situation at Donnybrook the hospital must be in a shocking state.

The former Minister for Health knows very well the Donnybrook situation. This time last year he told me, when dealing with the Estimates on the 20th October that, "In connection with the concern felt by the member for Collie over the Donnybrook Hospital, I say I do feel for him." The Minister felt for me; but that does not build a hospital, unfortunately. Feelings are no good. We want action, money, and programming.

Without asking the former Minister for Health to be involved in the matter in view of the statement he made, he knows the situation which exists, and it is time the Government took action to overcome the deplorable state of affairs existing currently at the Donnybrook Hospital.

Of course, all our hopes were built up. I do not always believe what I read in the Press, but on the 23rd March this year the Donnybrook people said, "It looks like we are going to get a new hospital at last." They said this because an article appeared in the *South Western Times* on Thursday, the 23rd March, headed, "New Donnybrook hospital a step nearer". When I visited my electorate the people said, "Is that not good? At long last we are going to get a new hospital." The article in the paper reads as follows—

A new hospital for the town is a step closer to reality.

At the last meeting of the Donnybrook-Balingup Shire Council the secretary of the Medical Department, Mr McGrath, presented an approved sketch plan for a new 20-bed hospital for Donnybrook with all necessary back-up facilities.

It continues—

The money has to gain government approval . . .

We read the good parts and then, as usual, the rider appeared at the end. Of course, the rider still exists. All the hopes of the Donnybrook people were in vain. If anyone visited the hospital he would know what I am talking about. The former Minister for Health knows the situation. It is a shocking place to visit, let alone in which to be hospitalised. The conditions could be termed as deplorable.

I hope some action will be taken. It is no good the Government, through the Under Secretary of the Medical Department, saying to the Donnybrook-Balingup Shire, "All is well for your new hospital. It is a step nearer." How long is a step? We found ourselves in this situation at the same time last year; I hope consideration will be given to the replacement of the Donnybrook Hospital and I hope it will be put high on the list of the priorities of the Medical Department.

Mr Crane: You want to have a look at the hospital in Moora.

Mr T. H. JONES: Is it worse than the Donnybrook Hospital?

Mr Crane: Yes.

Mr T. H. JONES: I have not seen it, but if it is worse than the Donnybrook Hospital it must be a shocker. It should be condemned. The Donnybrook Hospital is not far from the stage of being condemned, and if the hospital in Moora is worse, it must be in a dreadful state.

Mr Crane: There are 19 beds for 10 000 people.

Mr T. H. JONES: No doubt the member for Moore will be supporting me soon and saying that more money should be made available to the Medical Department for the reasons I have outlined.

Mr O'Neil: For Moora; not for Donnybrook.

Mr T. H. JONES: I am sure the member for Moore will support me in my general remarks.

Mr Crane: Do they have any coal for their furnaces in Donnybrook?

Mr T. H. JONES: I should like to turn now to the funding of the Education Department. The situation here is similar to that of the Medical Department. In the Budget little money is made available for major changes in schools in my electorate. The Government has mentioned funds allocated for certain schools; but the money has been spent already. Is the Government trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the people in my electorate? If it is, its attempts to do so have failed.

Let us examine what is happening in my electorate. I asked a question on the 4th October and it indicates clearly the Government's policy on the matter, which is that there is little money for schools in this Budget. The question I asked is as follows—

Under the Budget provisions, will he advise the improvements that will be carried out at the undermentioned schools:

The schools to which I referred are all primary schools. The Minister replied—

(a) Eaton primary school—library/resource centre—already under construction;

That is old hat. He continued—

(b) Donnybrook District High—Nil;

I am sorry the Minister for Education is not in the House. The Hon. Sandy Lewis and I made an inspection of the school at Donnybrook last year. He is aware major changes are necessary at this school. The Minister continued—

(c) Collie District Senior High School—pre-vocational centre;

That is to be constructed. It is the only new works. To continue—

(d) Fairview Primary School—three classrooms—already under construction.

(e) Amaroo primary school—6 classrooms—already under construction;

(f) Wilson Park primary school—Nil;

(g) Allanson primary school—Nil.

It is a sordid story. It is not a story of a State on the move. It demonstrates clearly under the new concept of federalism there is a cut back in urgent spending on certain schools in Western Australia.

Mr Bryce: Hear, hear!

Mr T. H. JONES: An example of this is the Eaton school where the children do not have sufficient room under their covered walkway to stay out of the inclement weather in the winter-time.

The Minister knows the situation, but there is insufficient money available. I am glad he has returned to the Chamber. Insufficient money is available to overcome the problems. I am told this matter is on the working programme, but when the work will be completed we do not know.

I should like to raise the matter of sewerage. I mention it primarily on behalf of the Shire of Collie, because the shire asked me to ask a question in this House on the 4th October. My question made a comparison of the Government's policies for Bunbury and Collie, the nearest large town to Bunbury.

Let us have a look at the amounts expended on sewerage in both Bunbury and Collie. I asked the Minister to provide these figures for the years 1968 to 1978 inclusive. The answer was the amount spent in Bunbury was \$6 084 409 and in Collie \$382 528. More importantly, however, Collie is in a catchment area and whilst money is being spent in Bunbury no attention is being given to the problems in Collie. These problems include the overflow of effluent tanks. The Government knows that in Wilson Park, a State Housing Commission area, the effluent tanks have been overflowing into the river. It is time more money was spent on sewerage in the Collie district.

Let us have a look at the treatment we are receiving compared with that given to Bunbury. Over \$6 million has been spent in Bunbury over a period of 10 years, compared with a miserable sum of \$382 000 in Collie.

We all know the importance of the Wellington Dam catchment area. We all know, and we are all concerned about the increase in salinity level in the water in the catchment area; but here is a situation—and I can take any member down and show him—where the effluent, at certain times, is running wild in the backyards of State Housing Commission homes in the town. What is the Government doing about it? What is it spending this year on sewerage to overcome the problem? Reference to the figures contained in the Estimates will indicate clearly that Bunbury is to receive a sum of \$1 005 000 and Collie is to receive a figure of \$142 000.

When are we to look at the reality of the situation; when are we to forget about politics; and when are we to give more attention to urgent matters within the catchment area?

I do not want to say any more on that subject except to register a strong protest, on behalf of the Shire of Collie, about the shabby treatment we have received so far as sewerage works are concerned within the Collie electorate.

I want now to refer to the shocking condition of the State Housing Commission homes in Collie. Whilst the present Minister has occupied his portfolio for only a short time, I feel my remarks have application generally throughout Western Australia.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr T. H. JONES: The parrot has had lunch and has arrived back!

Mr Bryce: And he has not even heard the remarks of the member for Collie yet.

Mr T. H. JONES: Very little major maintenance work is being carried out in Housing Commission areas. I am aware that stoves are being replaced,

and new hot water systems installed, but let us have a look at the condition of the iron roofs of State Housing Commission houses, generally, in Western Australia. I know the situation in Collie, and I know the situation at Carey Park in Bunbury. I know also the situation in numerous other towns through which I travel when I come to Parliament each week. It cannot be denied that not much money has been allocated for major maintenance on State Housing Commission homes.

Mr Sibson: That is not true.

Mr Ridge: We have a \$10 million maintenance programme for this current year. I do not think that is a bad effort.

Mr T. H. JONES: But how long is it since the roof on a SHC house has had a coat of paint? I do not know of one in Collie that has ever been painted, but I do know of many which are beginning to rust through. Rust is apparent in a number of roofs of SHC homes. Are we to allow the rust to take over, or are we to give those roofs a coat of paint?

Mr Tonkin: Perhaps we should pray for a drought!

Mr T. H. JONES: That seems to be the situation! I am aware that money is being spent on stoves and hot water systems, and I know that some general maintenance is being done, but no major work is being carried out.

Mr Ridge: Many homes are being upgraded, right throughout the State.

Mr T. H. JONES: Where?

Mr Ridge: Right throughout the State.

Mr Sibson: In the south-west.

Mr T. H. JONES: I would be very pleased to be told of any roofs which have been painted. I have yet to see one.

Mr Sodeman: That is because of bad local representation.

Mr T. H. JONES: I can say reliably that I know of hundreds of SHC homes where the iron roofs are rusting through. That cannot be denied. I do not know of any roof on a house in my area, or in the other towns which I have visited, where any painting has been done. I have observed that fences have been removed.

Mr Tonkin: The SHC is not painting them in Lockridge.

Mr Watt: Has the member for Collie talked to his regional building supervisor about the problem?

Mr T. H. JONES: I am talking to the Minister in this Parliament. We are in the process of discussing the Budget which makes allowance for

the works I have mentioned, so I take this opportunity to seek a reply from the Minister. Having answered the member for Albany, I point out this is a problem which should be examined.

Unless something is done very soon the houses to which I am referring will become slum areas. There is no problem with regard to new brick homes with new roofs; I am talking about the houses which were constructed when the State Housing Commission was set up. Unfortunately, those houses seem to have been set aside. Except for the usual maintenance very little work is done. I hope the Minister will give some consideration to the problems I have mentioned this afternoon.

Mr Ridge: To put your mind at rest to some degree, could I indicate that at the beginning of this year 751 units were in the course of being upgraded—major upgrading. During the current financial year 1700 units will be upgraded in the metropolitan area, and 850 units will be upgraded in country areas—excluding the north-west. So, that is a good figure and, hopefully, Collie will receive some of it.

Mr T. H. JONES: I will remind the Minister again next year if nothing is done. I will look forward to seeing the roofs painted. The appearance of those houses is not good for the town of Collie. Surely anyone who owns a house with an iron roof would not let it rust away. It is time something was done.

Mr Sodeman: This is the first time you have brought it up.

Mr T. H. JONES: My complaint may not apply to every electorate, but it certainly applies to the Collie electorate.

Mr Ridge: We are really on the job now with the new Minister!

Mr T. H. JONES: In view of the assurance given by the Minister I look forward with interest to some work being done. I will report progress 12 months from today!

Mr Sibson: When I was door knocking in Collie prior to the last election I saw considerable maintenance work being done.

Mr T. H. JONES: I had assumed that with the expansion which is taking place on the Collie coal-field—which is well known to the Minister—we would have had some new homes built during the current financial year. However, not one SHC house is to be constructed at Collie during the next 12 months. Indeed, only four single unit pensioner flats will be constructed. Surely, the Minister is aware that will not create a very good impression, especially in view of the fact that the town of Collie has received very little attention

from the State Housing Commission over recent years. The need has not been there. Without going into the history of the matter, the Minister is aware that it was not necessary to build homes previously. However, the need can be established firmly now.

There is an urgent need for pensioner accommodation. A number of single people are living in homes that are too large for them, while others have no accommodation available.

The next matter I wish to raise concerns the policy of the State Government Insurance Office. It is a policy which I deplore. I do not know whether or not members are aware of the situation, but the SGIO is in the process of referring people who are on workers' compensation to specialists or other medlcos. If the specialist or the general practitioner certifies that the worker concerned is fit for light work, that worker has to find light work or have his weekly payments reduced.

It is unfortunate that the Minister for Labour and Industry is not in the Chamber at present. The situation is that a man who is 63 years of age, and who is on workers' compensation because of a back disability, has to be re-examined. If he is assessed as being fit for light work, he has to find light work. I ask: Who will employ a 63-year-old man on light work? The jobs are not available. It is not the fault of the man concerned that he injured his back, probably while lifting during the course of his employment.

The point I make is that a man of 63 years of age just cannot find light work. Would any member in this Chamber who is an employer employ a man 63 years old in preference to a younger man between 25 and 35 years of age? A number of workers are being reassessed and certified as fit for light work. However, if those workers are unable to find light work their weekly compensation payment is reduced. That is a shocking state of affairs.

I was hoping the Minister for Labour and Industry would have been present to provide a reason to show why the SGIO has adopted its present policy. In my opinion, it is to be criticised.

I will now refer to the problem of unemployment in the south-west, particularly as it affects youth. At Collie we have approximately 150 young people unemployed. After some discussion with the officer in charge at Collie last week, I understand the figure could reach 250 at the end of this school year.

There is no prospect at all of employment. This problem does not have application only to the Collie electorate. It is a general problem and one which the Government must tackle because

it is growing. It will worsen because no job opportunities are available for young people in Western Australia.

I have previously put forward the proposition that Government instrumentalities could assist in this respect. The Forests Department, the State Energy Commission, Westrail, the Main Roads Department, and the Public Works Department could offer employment opportunities to some of our young people. As far as my electorate is concerned, apart from a small number of apprentices, I know of no junior labour employed on any Government works. To my knowledge, not one junior is employed at the Muja power station. It is time the Government gave consideration to trying to create work in the Government sector for young unemployed people in this State. I hope the proposition I have put forward will be examined.

I have taken the opportunity to raise these matters during the Budget debate.

MR NANOVIČ (Whitford) [3.21 p.m.]: The debate on this Bill gives members an opportunity to discuss the Budget and its effects on their electorates. The Budget has been well canvassed by members on this side of the House and I would like to add a few remarks.

I compliment the Treasurer on the Budget. He unhesitatingly stated it was a difficult time in which to bring down a Budget, but we find that it will provide many opportunities for the people of Western Australia. In the field of education, where the Government is constantly criticised, many opportunities will be made available. In hospitals and health care the problem is related to the rapid increase in the cost of hospitalisation. State Governments are probably baited into accepting money from the Federal Government, and when they are planning for expansion the Commonwealth Government then says the States alone must carry the burden of development and maintenance of hospitals. This makes budgeting very difficult, because when a programme is under way the Government reaches a point of no return and it must adopt a progressive attitude. This, of course, means draining funds away from other areas.

Over the past few years we have experienced severe drought seasons and cyclones, which have caused considerable hardship right throughout the State. Provision has been made in the Budget to assist primary producers who have been affected by these events. The amounts allocated may appear to be small but they are welcomed by the people in the areas which have been worst affected. However, the public purse has not been drained as it was expected.

It was pleasing to see in the Budget allocations which will have a vital effect on my electorate, and I will refer to them in the Committee stage.

There is one matter I particularly want to bring to the attention of the House, but not by way of criticism of the Government because I appreciate its difficulties. I refer to the development of regional centres, and the important point I wish to highlight is the commitment of the Government to ensuring the success of these centres.

The most outstanding example of decentralisation in Australia is, of course, Canberra. Government departments and employees were uprooted from Melbourne and Sydney and transferred to Canberra. No doubt this was inconvenient for Federal parliamentarians and Commonwealth public servants, and it must also have affected the economy of the cities in which they were living.

In Perth, regional centres are to be developed in each of the corridors. In some instances the corridors already exist and are relying on the Government for their existence. Fremantle is a classic example. Being a port, it was natural that the administration would be established in the area. Midland is another example, with its railway workshops and the abattoir. It would be ludicrous if people working in those industries complained about having to travel to work.

When one looks at the Perth metropolitan area as a whole, it is obvious that large sums of money have been and will be spent to maintain the transport systems which move people to the city in the morning and home from the city in the evening. The city workers contribute little to the viability of the business community in the central business district. They occupy space in offices and parking space, and use the freeways and major roads which are very congested during peak traffic hours.

I believe the Government should be doing something to counteract this trend by locating Government departments in planned regional centres which will be backed up by the private sector. For example, the Education Department occupies a very important site near Parliament House. It is close to the city and the public servants can conveniently utilise the freeways. The department is far enough removed from the city not to have a great effect on the commercial activities in the centre of Perth, and strong objections to the redevelopment of the site have been raised by the City of Perth and the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority.

If the Education Department were to be located in one of the subregional centres, it would ensure a large, stable work force in the area. I am not rubbishing public servants—there are some very

good people in the Public Service—but the move would not be inconvenient for them. They are quite mobile and can be transferred from one department to another with continuity of employment.

Had the department been situated outside the central city area, its employees would be in the same position as the employees of the Fremantle Port Authority. The Government must take measures to ensure the viability, survival, and continued development of the corridors in which the regional centres are situated.

I am sure if the Government took those steps it would help a great deal in respect of decentralising the work force. It would assist people living on the fringes of the metropolitan area and it would assist also those people living outside the metropolitan boundaries. It would make it convenient for these people to go to and from work and would reduce the cost of running their vehicles. Also it would enable them to get to work in a shorter time.

There have been projects in the past—some of them quite recently—where this could have happened. We had the redevelopment of the State Housing Commission building, the proposed building for the Metropolitan Water Board, the Main Roads Department building, and also the Public Works Department building. Opportunities were lost in those cases. It is the responsibility of the Government to ensure that decentralisation is given proper consideration prior to the development of any further Government buildings. If this is done I am sure millions of dollars could be saved on the extension of freeways; probably a single carriageway would suffice instead of a dual carriageway. We should also consider the huge amount of money that could be saved in fuel.

Mr Taylor: Would you like to see the Education Department established at Joondalup?

Mr NANOVIČ: It will be.

Mr Taylor: We hope it will.

Mr NANOVIČ: I think it will be established there.

I am sure the Government is able to give an undertaking that future development proposals will be examined in the light of what I have said to see that this type of planning and development is implemented as soon as possible.

I wish now to turn to another area, although I do not intend to be critical of the Government. I have been talking about the Government supporting the development of regional centres in the corridors. I must now offer some criticism in respect of the Joondalup Development Corporation. The corporation was constituted approximately 18

months ago and prior to its constitution many, many months of planning by steering committees took place under the previous Minister—the present Minister for Transport.

Many months of planning and thought went into the concept of the Joondalup regional centre. However, I believe the corporation has let the Government down badly. The situation has developed to the stage where infighting, parochial attitudes and petty personal conflicts are coming to the fore; and this is doing neither the Government nor the corporation any good.

Mr Bertram: Why does not the Government do something about it?

Mr NANOVIK: I am well aware of the problems that have occurred recently. There are still more problems occurring, and they will continue. The Government was looking for a lot more than the corporation has exhibited to date. When the corporation was directed by its Minister to fulfil certain obligations to the Shire of Wanneroo, this was done with a great deal of bitterness on the part of some members of the corporation. The Government should not put up with this any longer.

I would say the Joondalup Development Corporation is skating on very thin ice, and the Government must seriously consider sacking it and look at some other means to organise the development of the centre. We should be looking at means of ensuring the centre is developed on a proper basis as speedily as possible.

I indicated earlier I would canvass quite a few areas in the Budget when the Bill is in Committee. I compliment the Premier on the wonderful job he has done for the State of Western Australia under extremely difficult circumstances when a very tight rein has been held on the States by the Federal Government. It is to his credit that he has been able to achieve as much as he has. I am sure that when the Budget programmes have been initiated and the works programme is under way the people of Western Australia will realise the Government is still doing an excellent job.

I support the Bill.

MR GRILL (Yilgarn-Dundas) [3.37 p.m.]: I am afraid I cannot entirely agree with the member for Whitford; in fact I cannot agree with much of what he said.

Mr Nanovich: You are naive, aren't you?

Mr GRILL: I wish to demonstrate just how pathetically out of touch is the State Government with one of the most important and historic areas of this State. I refer to the eastern goldfields area.

Mr Laurance: You are terribly naive.

Mr GRILL: I wish to indicate some of the areas in which the Budget is most deficient. The first is in respect of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines, which is presently in a state of crisis. The dean of the school has resigned; the academics—the lecturers, tutors, etc.—seem to have no direction; and the students are disillusioned. Much of this must be laid upon the head of the Government. The problems relate basically to funding. If the State Government, which made a political decision some time ago—a decision with which I agreed—had been prepared to follow through that decision with some political punch and some money, the Kalgoorlie School of Mines would not be experiencing the problems it now faces.

The bureaucracy within the WAIT administration has taken over. This Government does not have the ability to handle its own administration or its own bureaucracy. It does not have the ability properly to negotiate with the Federal Government for adequate funds. It has left the School of Mines in Kalgoorlie high and dry. That is the feeling of the people of Kalgoorlie in respect of the School of Mines, and the attitude of the Government is demonstrably apparent in the Budget.

Sir Charles Court: That is quite wrong. You just don't understand the financing of tertiary education.

Mr GRILL: How is this for some simple arithmetic? Within this Budget \$1 million is allocated for the new federation complex which will entail both the School of Mines and the new technical school for the goldfields area. In a question directed to the Minister he indicated that expenditure in respect of those capital works would be carried out over a period of six years. Am I correct, or am I not correct?

Mr P. V. Jones: That is the question I answered.

Mr GRILL: In this Budget, the Treasurer has announced the figure to be \$1 million out of a total budget of \$12 million. If we carry on at that rate, it will take 12 years, even using fundamental arithmetic, for those buildings to be built. If one takes inflation and other factors into account, and the increased costs of—

Sir Charles Court: You are showing ignorance of the financing of tertiary education. I think you had better have a talk to the Minister. We have been generous in putting \$1 million in.

Mr GRILL: If the Treasurer can demonstrate by facts and figures where I am wrong, I will be grateful.

Sir Charles Court: You should be thankful. We have put in \$1 million they never expected.

Mr GRILL: But that has already been spent. Basically it was spent last year.

Mr P. V. Jones: Could I just make one point?

Sir Charles Court: You are making a fool of yourself.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is not for the school. That is for the technical side, which we are committed to. We are going to provide that. You just mentioned that the WAIT administration showed an inability to deal with the Commonwealth. That is not right.

Mr GRILL: That is not what I said. I said the Minister showed that inability.

Mr P. V. Jones: They do not deal with the Commonwealth at all.

Mr GRILL: The Minister has it all wrong. I said the Minister has shown an inability to control his own administration.

Mr P. V. Jones: This is Commonwealth funding. It has nothing to do with the State Government.

Mr GRILL: And the Minister has shown an inability to deal with the Federal Government, to obtain the necessary finance.

Mr P. V. Jones: The School of Mines is funded totally by the Commonwealth. It has nothing to do with the State Government.

Mr GRILL: It is the responsibility of this State to ensure that the school is funded. The Minister must ensure that the Federal Government—

Several members interjected.

Sir Charles Court: Why do you want to make a political plaything out of something the Government is trying desperately to help?

Mr Tonkin: You are a politician, are you not?

Mr GRILL: I do not believe the Government does not want to help. I am not saying that the Government is not bona fide. All I am saying is that the Government is inept. It has demonstrated—

Sir Charles Court: But we gave them the \$1 million.

Mr GRILL: What I am saying is that the Government has no control over the bureaucracy in WAIT. The Treasurer knows that. That is the aspect of it that really irks me.

Sir Charles Court: You had better have a talk to the Minister later today—

Mr GRILL: What can he do? He has gone back into his shell.

Sir Charles Court: —to get yourself properly orientated about tertiary financing. You are making yourself look stupid.

Mr GRILL: I am making someone look stupid, and it is not me.

Mr Clarko: You must be myopic.

Mr GRILL: Let us move on to the facts—
Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sitting suspended from 3.43 to 4.05 p.m.

Mr GRILL: Prior to the afternoon tea break I was indicating that the funding for the WA School of Mines and the federated college of the eastern goldfields was woefully inadequate; that the Government had lost control of its own bureaucracy; and also that the Government was unable to obtain sufficient funds from the Federal Government to finance a proper school of mining studies in the eastern goldfields.

The WA School of Mines in Kalgoorlie should be, and could be, the premier school—the very first school—of mining studies in the whole of Australia. It has had that reputation in the past and with proper funding and support from this Government and from the Federal Government it should become the premier school once again.

It is up to the Government, having made the political decision to support the WA School of Mines in Kalgoorlie where students can be educated in a mining environment, to ensure its bureaucracy is prepared to support that decision. The Government does not seem to be able to do that.

Within the ranks of the WAIT bureaucracy, and even within the ranks of the lecturers at the WA School of Mines, is a covey of recalcitrant lecturers who do not like living in country areas or who do not like the fact that the WA School of Mines is not part of their own personal empire. They are prepared to subvert the concept of a school of mines in the eastern goldfields.

What hurts me and what this House should be concerned about is the fact that the Government is prepared to stand by and allow this to happen. There are bodies such as the Chamber of Mines, the Institution of Engineers, the Institute of Metallurgists, big mining companies such as Western Mining Corporation, and so on, which wholeheartedly back the concept of a school of mines in a mining environment.

These organisations know that students who graduate from such schools of mines are far better and are worth a great deal more in money terms, because they have been brought up and educated in a mining environment. By allowing the bureaucracy of the State—and the Federal bureaucracy I might add—to subvert a decision which has been made already, the future of the WA School of Mines is in serious doubt. Therefore, the future of

the quality of mining graduates both in the engineering, metallurgical, and geological sense is in doubt. This Government has to decide whether it is prepared to support its own mining industry by way of top class graduates. The only way that can be done is for proper funding of the WA School of Mines to be made available.

If the Government wants to say here and now how it intends to fund the WA School of Mines and how it intends to go ahead with its capital works plan, which I have said already it cannot go ahead with and complete at the present rate, I would be very happy to hear either the Minister or the Treasurer indicate such today. I notice both the Minister and the Treasurer are silent, although their interjections were most vociferous prior to the afternoon tea break.

Sir Charles Court: I know you are not doing any service to the WA School of Mines in what you have said this afternoon.

Mr GRILL: The Treasurer should answer the question. If the Treasurer wants to tell us how the funds will be made available, he should do so.

Sir Charles Court: We are not going to do it by way of interjection in view of the lack of knowledge you have displayed in relation to how tertiary education is financed.

Mr GRILL: I have thrown down the gauntlet. Either the Premier should pick it up or he should keep quiet. He should accept the challenge.

Sir Charles Court: You have a Government which is committed to the WA School of Mines. Why do you not accept it and acknowledge it?

Mr GRILL: I accept it; but I doubt the Treasurer's ability and so does everybody else on the goldfields.

Sir Charles Court: Why do you not go away and find out how they finance tertiary education?

Mr GRILL: If the Treasurer is not prepared to accept the challenge he should leave it.

Sir Charles Court: You are trying to get political capital out of it. You are fast losing a great deal of support.

Mr GRILL: The Treasurer should just leave the matter if he is not prepared to answer.

Another very important area in which the Government has shown itself to be inept is in respect to the reopening of the goldmines of the Golden Mile. The Kalgoorlie Mining Associates announced some months ago, after a great deal of public pressure, after petitions had been circulated and presented to the Minister for Mines, and after representations had been made by parliamentarians in the House and by other people outside the

House, that it would go ahead with a feasibility study for the reopening of the Golden Mile, which is colloquially known as the Fimiston leases.

The feasibility study was proceeded with very slowly and I can understand the company was not able to bring out its report by the 30th June as promised. I personally telephoned the managing director of the company and stated that, as long as the study was being proceeded with, there would be no objection from the unions in Kalgoorlie, the Labor Party or the general public. There were in fact no objections.

However, when the report came out in late July it was handed to the Government and what did the Government do with it? The Government did with it as it does with most of the reports it receives. It pigeon-holed the report and kept it secret.

If there is one issue in the eastern goldfields which is of prime importance to the people, it is the reopening of the Fimiston leases. That is the one burning issue within the goldfields at the present time. It is an issue upon which the Government has been absolutely silent. The Government has remained silent even after receiving the report from KMA. On the other hand, the company has kept the report quiet also in spite of the fact that the managing director was quoted in the newspapers only a few months ago as saying that it was high time the public became more involved and were better informed as to what is happening on the Golden Mile. The company produced a report and suddenly decided it would keep it secret.

Once again, public pressure was placed upon the company. The company resisted. It refused to make the report available and when that public pressure became irresistible the company decided it would release the report; but it would release it at its annual general meeting in November of this year. This is a matter of burning public importance and yet the company has delayed releasing the report for several months. It hides behind the fact that its shareholders have to be informed first. That is just a blind, because the real facts are that if the company wanted to release the report all it had to do was release it to the Stock Exchange and to the Press at the same time. That would have complied with the provisions of the Companies Act.

The Government has been complice in the keeping secret of that report and it is still complice in the keeping secret of it until November of this year. I do not know why.

For months the Chairman of Directors of KMA said, "Once the price of gold reaches \$170 an ounce and stays at that price for some time, there should be every reason that the Fimiston leases should reopen." They are the comments which

have been made for months and they have probably been made for a year. The price of gold at the present time is approximately \$192 an ounce and it is rising.

In my view the Government has a moral responsibility to the people of the goldfields, in view of the fact that we have lost 2 000 mining jobs over the last two years, to ensure that the Fimiston leases reopen as soon as possible. That is a moral responsibility upon this Government; but what does it do? In complicity with the company, the Government keeps this particular report secret until November of this year. I would have thought the Government would be placing pressure upon the company to release its feasibility study. I would have thought the Government would be prepared, if the company was not able properly to evaluate its study, to spend some of its own money and use some of its own expertise to evaluate it. It appears none of these things has occurred and the Government can only be condemned for its inaction.

The third matter I would like to raise is the question of State Batteries. Some months ago, at Meekatharra originally, the Minister for Mines said there would be a review of charges for State Batteries, and he repeated the announcement at other places until he was finally reported in the Press. The Minister could not have made the announcement at a more inopportune time when 2 000 men were out of work in the mining industry in this State, with very little opportunity for them to find work. Apart from the reopening of the Fimiston leases, the only real opportunity was for them to go into small shows, and that was feasible on the basis that the price of gold was rising. It was as a result of the small mining shows in the past that many of the eastern goldfields areas have stayed alive. However, the survival of that small industry must rest on the State Batteries as a cheap and economic means of treating the gold won from the small shows. Many of them are marginal because all the best ore was taken years ago. So much of the remaining ore is low grade. Therefore the cost of treatment should be kept fairly low.

Even though the Government was subsidising the cost of State Batteries to the extent of something like \$1.8 million a year, any increase in charges at that time would have been wrong and would have been against the interest of the public, of the eastern goldfields industry, and the people who work in it.

However, at this very time the Minister announced that he would review State Battery charges and he hinted they would increase by 100

per cent, making the increase something like 600 per cent in a period of three to four years.

Mr Mensaros: Have you ever bothered to make a comparison of the battery charges and gold prices going right back to the beginning—to the end of the last century—and work out the proportion the charges represented of the then gold prices?

Mr GRILL: I accept the point, but the Minister should accept my point which is that the timing of the announcement was entirely wrong. If he wants to equalise charges going back 60 or 70 years, he should not do it suddenly when there is a downturn, but should wait for an upturn. The Minister was right in delaying the decision in respect of the increase, but he has not said he will not go ahead with it.

Mr Mensaros: I did not announce an increase. That is a mistake. What I did was what you have always asked the Government to do. I openly discussed the matter with the prospectors. I told them the proposal and asked them what they thought about it and the member for Yilgarn-Dundas was there. I received the comments very nicely and I realised the situation so I did not announce anything. I discussed it with the prospectors. Open Government—that is what you want. When we do it you say we should not have.

Mr GRILL: With respect, that is rubbish.

Mr Mensaros: That is exactly what I did.

Mr GRILL: The Minister indicated categorically that the charges would be increased. He said it to me personally. He would remember the conversation.

Mr Mensaros: I said that we had discussed it with the prospectors—

Mr GRILL: The Minister discussed it with me.

Mr Mensaros: —and it would be a higher charge.

Mr GRILL: I issue the challenge now: Is the Minister prepared to say whether or not the charges will be increased?

Sir Charles Court: You want to go back to the courtroom in Kalgoorlie.

Mr GRILL: I am waiting. What is happening?

Sir Charles Court: Go back to your legal practice in Kalgoorlie and do your Perry Mason stuff up there.

Mr GRILL: The Minister has left the small prospector in limbo, because the Minister will not tell him whether or not the prices will be increased. He will not even say so here and now. A moment ago he spoke about open government. What about giving us some of it? I will suggest

why the Minister will not tell us. The motive is that the Government has boasted that it has not increased and will not increase taxes and charges under the Budget. The reason he is not increasing the State Battery charges now is that if he did so he would make that boast look sick. However, in a couple of months he will put them up. If he does not intend to do so let him tell us now.

Mr Clarko: Do you expect him to leave the charges at the present figure forever?

Mr GRILL: I do not.

Let me deal with something equally scandalous; that is, water restrictions in the goldfields areas. In July, last year, before any other part of the State was placed on restrictions, the eastern goldfields and the other areas served by the goldfields water supply scheme were placed on severe water restrictions. At the end of September this year the Government announced that people in the metropolitan area would have their restrictions lifted, but at the same time the Government indicated it was not able to lift the restrictions on water use in the areas served by the goldfields water supply scheme.

I know that from time to time the Government is critical of unions, but it is sticking very closely to the old union adage, "First on last off". That is exactly what it has done with regard to the goldfields. It placed them on restrictions first and they will be the last to have their restrictions lifted in spite of the fact that the goldfields has a much harsher climate than is experienced by people in the metropolitan area.

In addition the goldfields people do not have access to any groundwater whatever and they have a much lower rainfall. I might also add that when the goldfields water supply scheme was established Lord Forrest emphasised that people east of Northam would have to pay higher charges for their water and, in fact, they have done so ever since. It was also promised that water would not go to areas west of Northam. That particular promise was made, but subsequent Governments broke it. I do not argue about that because times do change.

Why is it that the people in the goldfields, having paid extra fees—they are still paying extra costs for their water and have done so over the years—should be the first on and last off when it comes to restrictions?

The fourth matter with regard to which I feel the Government is to be condemned is in regard to the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital, which is a major regional hospital. It is probably the most important one outside the metropolitan area, but it is a collection of run-down, motley buildings which, in many cases, should have been replaced

50 or 60 years ago. It does not compare with the standard of the hospital buildings in the metropolitan area or in any of the other major regional centres. In many ways it is a disgrace and it is long overdue for replacement.

During the long period of the neglectful Brand Government, many parts of the hospital fell into bad repair, but during the Tonkin Government a plan was drawn up for a multi-storey building to house the whole of the hospital complex. Before the plan could be put into effect the Government changed, and what happened then? The plan was scrapped.

Subsequently a new plan was drawn up indicating the concept had changed. It was not then going to be a high-rise building, but would be constructed on one level. Then there was a sting in the tail. Different parts would be constructed at different times over, say, a period of 10 years or so.

That was bad enough, but when we asked the Minister when a start would be made on the hospital, he was silent and has been to this day. There is nothing in the Budget to indicate that any sort of start will be made on the hospital. I will challenge that Minister to indicate when a start will be made on the hospital.

Mrs Craig: He is not here.

Mr GRILL: I suggest that if he were here he would have no answer.

The last and perhaps the most disgraceful of all the Government's bungling in the goldfields relate to the regional prison which is more than a disgrace. It is a health hazard. A visiting magistrate, on his normal inspection, said that the living conditions of the inmates were a disgrace and he indicated that if the United Nations were made aware of the situation there would be a public scandal. That is what he said.

I have inspected the prison and there are something like 18 or 19 men crammed into one fairly small room at night. It has a very low ceiling and in the corner of the room there is a WC completely open to the rest of the room. At night 18 or 19 men sleep in close proximity to the WC.

Mr Coyne: It has a door on it.

Mr GRILL: It has no door.

Mr Coyne: It is screened.

Mr GRILL: It is screened, but there is no door and at night men sleep within two or three feet of it. Once again, the Tonkin Government drew up plans for a new regional prison, but again it went out of office before those plans could be implemented. What happened then? Nothing was

done about the plans. Although it has not been officially announced, I understand the plans are being scrapped, and what are we left with? The Government showed no initiative in respect of the regional prison in Kalgoorlie.

Some time earlier this year the Boulder Shire approached the Chief Secretary with a plan for a minimum security prison on a block of land in a central position between Kalgoorlie and Boulder. The proposal was that the Boulder Shire Council would raise a loan of something like \$1 million to be used to build a minimum security prison. There would then be a contract with the Government under which the Government would lease it back at a rental sufficient to cover not only the interest payments on the loan, but also the capital amortisation of the loan itself. At the end of the period—I think it was something like 20 to 21 years—the property would belong to the Government. It is a scheme under which the Government does not have to provide any capital funds for the establishment of a minimum security prison in Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

What worries and irks me about the situation is that when the scheme was announced it was presented to the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder as a *jait accompli*. No-one knew anything about it until the Chief Secretary arrived at a reception at the Boulder Shire Council to announce the plans, by which time they were completely developed. The scheme was presented as a package by the Chief Secretary to the people. The only persons who knew anything about it were those associated with the Boulder Shire Council. It came as a tremendous surprise to the members of Parliament for the area, the Kalgoorlie Town Council, the Mayor of Kalgoorlie, and all other people imaginable.

A few moments ago the Minister for Mines spoke about open government. That particular decision was the antithesis of open government, and what will happen as a result of that?

The people reacted as I knew they would react, and as it was predicted they would react. Although this particular scheme was a good one and it was one that I supported, the people of Kalgoorlie and Boulder said, "The Government swore our own councillors to secrecy over the policy." In a referendum held a few weeks ago, the people knocked it back overwhelmingly. That is our open Government. It is a Government of conspiracy and deceit. That is not the way to run things. The particular scheme I referred to would not have come to a sticky end if the Government had not taken such a course.

Mr Clarko: You are stretching a long bow to say that is conspiracy and deceit. You would be the only one in Australia to believe that.

Mr GRILL: Perhaps the word "deceit" was wrong, but certainly it was a conspiracy.

Mr O'Neil: Whose option was it to release information of plans which involved borrowing money by the Boulder and the Kalgoorlie councils?

Mr GRILL: It was up to the councils.

Mr O'Neil: That is right. Do not accuse the Government of being secretive.

Mr GRILL: But who swore the councils to secrecy over that?

Mr O'Neil: Not me.

Mr GRILL: The person sitting next to the Deputy Premier might know something about it.

Mr O'Neil: This was a proposal put forward by the councillors.

Mr GRILL: That is not what they told me. The councillors told me that the Government had said they must keep quiet about it, and each one of those councillors was sworn to secrecy.

Mr O'Neil: I never attended a meeting of the Boulder Shire Council, or wrote to it.

Mr Barnett: He does not trust you to swear you to secrecy.

Several members interjected.

Mr GRILL: I am afraid that is the sore and sorry position. The Budget exemplifies the fact that the Government has lost contact almost completely with the people of the eastern goldfields, and I am very unhappy about that situation.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [4.32 p.m.]: I wish to make a few comments on the Budget, and I am very pleased to see that it is a balanced Budget. I realise that the State Government is in a different situation from that of the Federal Government when it comes to financing the Budget, and it is necessary that we live within our means. This is quite obviously what we are doing with a balanced Budget.

I was disappointed that I could not find any provision for the creation of a fund to assist country areas in the provision of buildings for cultural activities. Some time ago the Government was quite progressive in creating the Community Recreation Council fund to assist various areas of the country with grants for sport.

I have mentioned this matter before in the House, and I will go on mentioning it until the Government sees its way clear to create such a

fund also to assist local authorities on a ratio basis to finance suitable halls and structures for cultural activities.

Decentralisation is supposed to be a very important theme of this Government, and it has been advanced also as being important in the eyes of other Governments. Unfortunately, the Government has done more talking about it than taking action. If decentralisation is to be really effective, it is necessary to encourage people to live outside the metropolitan area, and this means we must create employment opportunities. We should review the whole system of incentives with a view to really encouraging businesses to establish outside the metropolitan area.

The cost of living in country areas is another problem which should be tackled. It should not be any dearer to live in country areas than it is to live in the metropolitan area. All such incentives will assist the situation, but it is also necessary to provide other facilities which are important in terms of what I will call the quality of life, and I refer particularly to education and cultural activities.

By and large although not perfect, I believe education in country areas is at least reasonable. However, there is still a fair way to go in regard to the provision of cultural amenities for the people. It is in this area that the Government should have created a fund; at least it should make a start. It could start off modestly with something like \$1 million advanced on a ratio basis. If local governments also contribute their share, this money could go a reasonable way. I say this because the Government has been very generous in assisting cultural activities in the metropolitan area, and while I am certainly not criticising it for what it has done, I believe it has rather lost sight of the needs of the country people.

I am pleased also to see that the Government decided against higher taxation. Perhaps I would be more pleased if some of the increases to taxes and charges over the last few months had not been so high. I suppose we must accept that with the current rate of inflation charges will go up, but I question the necessity to increase them as much as they have been increased.

I agree with the Treasurer when he said during the Budget speech that the public rightly is tired of so much of their income going to Governments by way of taxation, and they are demanding greater stewardship of their money. Most members would agree that they have found their constituents feel this way, and if we look at the figures we see why.

In 1972-73, 25 per cent of the national income was taken up by taxation; that is, Federal, State, and local government taxes. By 1974-75 this had

reached 33 per cent of the national income. I cannot be authoritative about the present figures, but I understand at the moment it is something like 37 per cent of the national income. This means that for every \$100 of the national income, the Federal, State, and local governments are taking \$37. We can understand why the people are feeling oppressed by the weight of such heavy taxation.

Another way to illustrate the increasing cost of government is to look at the growth in the number of people employed by Governments in Australia. In 1973, 1 164 000 people were employed by government. By 1976 this number had grown to 1 433 000—an increase of 23 per cent. While the Government employment figures have increased by 23 per cent, the private sector figures have dropped by 4 per cent. After all, it is from the private sector that a large part of the taxation is raised.

Of course part of the increase in cost of government is brought about by the increasing demand for services by the people. However, it is not always the increasing demand; I am afraid sometimes the increasing costs are brought about by the auctioneering that goes on at election time with the various political parties trying to raise the bets in the hope that they will win a few more votes. One way and another these services or handouts are being increased.

Costs are also increasing because of the greater amount of administration. I entered Parliament in 1971, and it is interesting to have a quick look at some of the areas in Western Australia where there has been an increase in the cost of government since that time. In 1971 members did not have electorate or parliamentary offices. We have these now, and certainly I am not criticising the policy. However, I am pointing out the increased cost to the Government of their provision. Rent, electricity, and wages to operate these offices is now costing about \$500 000.

Mr T. J. Burke: These offices are provided for your constituents.

Mr STEPHENS: I am not criticising the policy. The Bureau of Consumer Affairs has been established, and the Budget indicates that this costs something like \$460 000 a year. The Ombudsman costs about \$160 000 a year, and then there is the added cost of regional administration. The Budget indicates that the Office of Regional Administration and the North West now costs something like \$1 440 000. I was interested to note that the Budget provides for the payment of six regional

administrators, whereas in answer to a question I asked in August, 1977, I was told that there were seven regional administrators.

I would be interested to know the reason that we now have six regional administrators only.

The Office of Regional Administration and the North West has grown quite rapidly. In addition to a regional administrator at each office, there is also a deputy, a research officer, and of course typing staff. This contributes to what I consider to be a fairly large allowance in the Budget.

In the first instance the concept of regional administration excited attention, but these administrators appear to lack any real executive power. Their role seems to be to make administration more visible rather than more regional. In being a little critical of the regional administration set-up, I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not criticising any of the people holding these offices. I am commenting purely philosophically. I have the utmost confidence in and respect for the regional administrator in Albany, and no personal criticism is intended or implied in any way.

These regional administrators, while costing so much, have no real autonomy. They have access to Ministers, but so do local members. I can see that a great deal of their work only duplicates the work of local members. There are many instances of overlapping and this causes extra expense. I can remember one extreme case about 12 months ago when a constituent approached three politicians in the area and the local regional administrator as well. If that happens on other occasions, a tremendous amount of duplicated work must occur.

Mr Pearce: A side effect of malapportionment. I would say.

Mr STEPHENS: If we wish the whole concept of regional administrators to be effective, these officers must have autonomy, otherwise the whole project is a waste of money. It would be much less costly to appoint a liaison-type officer to co-ordinate the various departments within the regions. We would possibly achieve better service in this way, and certainly we would save money. Any money we could save in this way could be applied and used to effectively assist decentralisation. Certainly it would produce far more effective results than those we are obtaining for the money expended at the moment.

I have just very briefly outlined the costs that have increased since the time I first entered Parliament.

I do not think we need stop there. I believe there could profitably be a review of the whole system of government, be it Federal, State or

local government. Anybody who becomes involved in the various aspects of government would realise a tremendous amount of overlapping occurs between the three arms of government. If this situation were rationalised in a sensible way with say, local government acting as agents for the State Government or the Federal Government as and when appropriate, and with the State Government acting as agents for the Federal Government considerable economies could be effected in the costs of administration. That may well be the subject of another debate at a later stage.

We could go even further and review the whole procedures and performance of Parliament itself with a view to increasing its efficiency and effectiveness. I do not believe Parliament today actually is geared to the sophistication of the present century, never mind the 21st century, and an overall review of our procedures and approach is highly desirable and would improve government for the people.

In this area, I must confess I am far more sympathetic now to the committee system of government than I was previously. Every person is entitled to change his mind and I have changed mine.

One of the reasons for this change of view was my involvement in the South Coast Fisheries Study. We all know this study was instituted purely and simply to take the heat off a very bad decision by the Government; it was in the nature of a diversionary tactic.

At the same time, however, I believe it was a very fruitful exercise. Although I criticise where I believe criticism is required. I am always ready to pay credit where credit is due. Although I was a member of that committee, I believe I can say it was a very efficient and effective body and I hope the Government takes some notice of its recommendations; certainly, I will be watching with interest.

I say in all sincerity that one of the reasons the study was so effective was the excellent work done by the chairman of that committee, the member for Cottesloe (Mr Hassell), and he is to be congratulated.

The work of that committee showed what could be done when discussions took place between members of the various political parties outside the glare of the public arena. If this type of approach could be introduced into a committee system of this Parliament and we attacked the various problems facing us with the same spirit, it would lead to a far more efficient performance by this Parliament.

It is possible the Executive arm of Government—I do not criticise only the present Executive; I believe the same would apply to the Opposition, were it in government—tends to favour keeping back-bench members in a fair degree of ignorance; this makes the task of governing a little easier. A committee system would enable back-bench members to take a more involved part in the business of governing the State.

Several members have referred to the unemployment problem, and I should like to add something to what has already been said. I am pleased that at long last the realisation is getting through to the Government that the unemployment situation is far worse than simply being a matter of a few dole bludgers trying to get by on unemployment benefits. I believe it has been in a serious situation for some time.

Regrettably, with our advancing technology we appear to be reaching a stage where we may have to live with an unemployment rate of around 6 per cent or 7 per cent. Because of that, I was very pleased to hear that the Victorian Government had taken the initiative in calling together the Federal Government and all the State Governments to discuss ways and means of overcoming the problems of unemployment.

They are very real problems, particularly for the younger generation. The figures for September, 1978, reveal that of the 6.2 per cent of the work force who are unemployed, 52 per cent are in the 15 to 24 age bracket. So, it is the young section of our community which is bearing the heaviest brunt of unemployment, and this does not augur well for the country.

I do not profess to have the answers; however, I believe two particular areas need immediate consideration and research. I refer firstly to encouraging earlier retirement. I emphasise the word "encouraging" because I believe it is the individual's right to make his own decision in such a matter. Ways and means should be found to superannuate or pension-off a worker at an earlier age, thus creating vacancies at the other end of the scale. I realise, of course, that steps would need to be taken to assist these newly-retired people to involve themselves in various activities which would maintain their interest.

The other aspect which needs immediate consideration is the restructuring of the taxation deductions to encourage the mothers in the work force to stay at home and look after their children. Once again, I reiterate that it is the individual's right to decide whether she will work. At the same time, however, it is in the State's interest to encourage mothers to remain home to look after

their children rather than spend all day at work, leaving their children in the care of somebody else or at a child minding centre.

Attention to these two areas could assist in making available more jobs for our young people. It is far preferable to have a young person going straight into the work force after leaving school than to continue in employment a person at a late stage of his life. I do not deny it is the right of these people to go to work. I know that some married women work for therapeutic reasons. Others who are in the middle and lower income brackets unfortunately are forced through economic circumstances to leave their children and go to work and it is in this area that taxation concessions should be allowed to permit these people to remain at home.

I refer now to the regrettable matter of the teachers' strike, which is of concern to us all.

Mr Jamieson: It is obvious you have not been talking to the students. They think it is the best thing since Coca-Cola.

Mr STEPHENS: They would be the only ones. It is regrettable that this situation has occurred; certainly, there would be no winners here. I do not intend to condemn the teachers for their actions. I feel the Government should have been a little more concerned with adopting a worker participation type of approach; it should have discussed these proposals with the teaching staff.

It is all very well to say that the school year is the prerogative of the Government. But surely any alterations to the system should be to the benefit of the children who are being educated and should be the subject of consultation with representatives of the teaching staff.

Mr MacKinnon: They were consulted.

Mr STEPHENS: I question whether that is the case. It seems to me that what has happened is that the Government has decided it is going to give children an extra two days' holiday each year. If that is the case, I cannot see why it would not have been more appropriate to leave the end of the school year as it was and give the children one or two days off before the school recommenced the following year.

I believe the individual principals should be given a degree of latitude in deciding which teachers they want to start earlier. I am perfectly aware that in most instances in my area, for years the principals have returned to school a day or so before the commencement of the school year to prepare for the new school year.

The Government seems to be quite pleased that all teachers did not support the union's strike call. However, I do not think the Government can take any pleasure from that situation because my experience, once again in my own area, is that nearly all the teachers support the union on its stand; they simply have not agreed to go out on strike.

Mr Jamieson: The temporary teachers are in a bit of difficulty.

Mr STEPHENS: That is true, but I am referring now to the permanent teaching staff. Numerous teachers have contacted me expressing support for the union, and I have had quite a few letters. One letter came from a teacher claiming to be a supporter of the present Government. The letter states as follows—

I feel you should know the feelings of the local teachers. At a recent meeting (very well attended for once) of our local branch there was no-one who *wanted* to strike but the meeting was unanimously in agreement with the Union's desires for arbitration and much greater consultation with and consideration by the Government and the Education Department.

That is typical of the type of approach I have received and it indicates clearly that the union has the support of its members. However, they feel that in the interests of the children they should not go out on strike, but should remain at work.

Mr Shalders: Can you give an example of any other employee who has arbitration over his actual holiday dates?

Mr STEPHENS: No, I cannot; however, the Government certainly should have allowed the matter to go to arbitration in the interests of education and especially, in the interests of our children.

Mr Clarko: It clearly has been.

Mr STEPHENS: The member for Karrinyup's idea of "clear" and mine obviously are different because if the matter had gone to arbitration the situation would not have gone as far as it has where for the first time in many years some teachers have decided to take the extreme action of withdrawing their labour.

While on the subject of education I wish to refer to a matter concerning the Parents and Citizens' Associations throughout Western Australia. All members would be aware of the tremendous contribution these organisations make to education, particularly in the field of providing finance

for the various facilities; hopefully, they also have been involved in the other side of the educational scene.

It is therefore with a considerable degree of concern that I mention the treatment the Flinders Park Parents and Citizens' Association received from the Government. Flinders Park School, of course, is the newest school in my electorate. It is situated in the Shire of Albany and I recommend that any member who happens to visit Albany should go and see it. It is situated in a beautiful location overlooking Oyster Harbour and we are very pleased with it.

The school had the advantage of having a P & C association before the first brick was laid, which is rather unique. This being the case, the association was able to advance ideas in the planning stages which worked to the benefit of all concerned.

The association was invited to tender for the landscaping of the grounds and it did so. It was helped in that one of its members had expertise in the landscaping and nursery professions. After tenders closed the P & C was told it had submitted the lowest tender, although not by much. At the local level its members were told they would be successful, but subsequently the tender was let to another person whose tender was \$75 more—not a great difference, but nonetheless he did submit a dearer tender.

The association was told this occurred because of an approach to the Government by a politician in Perth who indicated the man's livelihood was at stake. Apparently he said that the successful tenderer was in business whereas the members of the P & C were merely volunteers.

To add insult to injury, the P & C was told if its tender had been \$1 000 lower it would have been given the contract. In other words, the Government showed no principle and was prepared to use the P & C members as cheap labour; but while their tender was close to the other the Government preferred to give it to the private enterprise man.

If the Government is to use P & C associations to provide funds for schools it should treat them decently and, in an unbiased manner, accept tenders they advance. Of the \$5 325 tendered by the P & C it is estimated \$4 000 would have been clear profit as its members intended to volunteer their labour. The rest was to have been used to provide plants, etc.

So that is \$4 000 they now have to raise by other means to assist in equipping the school library. I hope the Government looks at this sort of situation and gives P & C associations in other areas more favourable consideration.

In my electorate the RTA is referred to as the road taxing authority because its emphasis seems to be on collecting money rather than protecting the people who use the roads.

Mr Nanovich interjected.

Mr STEPHENS: This is a matter of a philosophical approach. I believe the RTA is more concerned with raising money; the control of the roads is incidental to it. The position should be reversed; it should be more interested in the road carnage.

Have members ever seen an RTA vehicle parked near a bend, double white lines, or a dangerous intersection in an effort to apprehend dangerous drivers? I certainly have not. The RTA is more interested in parking at the bottom of a hill and catching someone who has exceeded the speed limit. Its members are only catching speedsters.

Are they likely to reduce the road toll if they catch a person doing 75 kilometres an hour in a 60 kilometre speed limit area on a four-lane highway when there is no other car about? It would be of more use if they were to look for people doing perhaps 100 kilometres in a 110 kilometre area, who are prepared to pass over the double white lines. It is the impatient or irresponsible driver the RTA should be after.

Mr Clarko: Surveys done in the United States show that—

Mr STEPHENS: I have read all those.

Mr Clarko: What does that prove?

Mr STEPHENS: It does not prove anything. When we make comparisons we must ensure they are appropriate comparisons. Obviously the density of traffic in the US is far heavier than here.

When the debate on the establishment of the RTA was dragging on in the Parliament much emphasis was given to the fact that if the work was taken from the local authorities the carnage on the roads would be reduced. There was a temporary reduction, but this does happen at times. Overall the establishment of the RTA has had no real effect. In answer to a question I asked on the 5th October this year, I was told that the RTA received fines for traffic offences as follows—

	\$
Year ended 30th June, 1976	2 108 257
Year ended 30th June, 1977	2 402 706
Year ended 30th June, 1978	2 212 689

That is the amount received from traffic infringements. It can be seen that the Government has received revenue of more than \$2 million a year.

At the time of the last election there was a degree of discussion in the Press about the RTA's policy of having its officers "bring in the money". During my door-knocking campaign I spoke quite casually to two RTA officers who naturally enough wanted to remain anonymous. They were very sympathetic to the man in the south-west who had made the claim. They said there was no written order, but the implication was there that this was what they had to do.

I want the RTA to change its approach and be more concerned with catching dangerous drivers and less concerned with bringing in the money. In this way we might see a downturn in the road carnage.

Allied with this I would like to see the use of more unmarked vehicles.

Mr Bryce: Hear, hear!

Mr STEPHENS: If drivers do not know that the vehicle behind them is being driven by an RTA officer they are more likely to act as they would normally do. In this way the officers could catch the impatient driver who is the biggest menace on our roads.

Mr Clarko: Speeding and alcohol are the two major factors.

Mr STEPHENS: The member has made his speech.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr STEPHENS: I always thought it was only in the socialist State that the individual existed for the benefit of the State. I always felt that we free enterprise people had the State for the benefit of the individual, but I now have my doubts as a result of something occurring in the Albany area at the moment.

Some time ago the PWD wanted to buy a block of land adjacent to the Department of Agriculture in order to extend that department. I am happy the department is to be extended, but I am not happy with the means the Government is using to effect this. Three-quarters of an acre of land next to the department became available something like 18 months ago. There was a small house on the land but the owners had died and the land and house were in the hands of an estate. The PWD approached a spokesman for the estate who indicated the asking price for the land was \$27 000. The department was prepared to offer \$20 000.

This was unacceptable to the estate and the department then asked for figures to prove that \$27 000 was the true value of the land. There

had been no recent sales in the immediate area and the estate was unable to provide any such proof.

Mr Watt: The figure given by the department is much different; it was much closer to the asking price.

Mr STEPHENS: I rang the spokesman for the estate only last night and I am quoting the figures he gave me. The department eventually offered \$22 500 and once again it was told that the offer was not acceptable.

A Mr Joyce saw that the land was ideal for his purposes—he wanted to set up a physiotherapy unit—and so he offered the estate \$25 000. This was accepted.

It should be remembered that the department had had the best part of 18 months to come up with an acceptable offer. It was not prepared to pay the asking price or to go through the process of litigation and so on to dispute the value of the land. Mr Joyce was then approached to sell the land. He offered to sell half, but was told by the department that this was not acceptable.

Mr Watt: It was more than half.

Mr STEPHENS: It was a good section of the land anyway. The department wanted the lot. Mr Joyce had spent a little money on improvements and he said if the department wanted the lot he wanted the market value. When asked what that was he said he would have to check with a real estate agent. He did this and was told it was between \$32 000 and \$35 000.

He offered the land to the department for \$33 000. This was unacceptable to the department. It said it was an unrealistic figure and it intended to resume the land. In certain cases I can go along with the idea of the Government needing the powers to resume land to be used for public utilities such as roads, etc., but here we have a situation where the land was available for 18 months and the Government procrastinated and tried to beat the owner down to an unrealistic price. Now that another gentleman has come in and bought the land the Government suddenly has decided it will apply a resumption order.

Mr Watt: Did he lodge a final objection?

Mr STEPHENS: He certainly lodged one through me. He assured me the objection had gone to the Minister. I wrote to the Minister and received a reply indicating consideration would be given to the objection when it was received.

An important principle is involved and I hope the Government will not ride roughshod over the rights of this individual. At present I do not think he has been given a fair go.

I would like to mention to members that I am now a member of the National Party. I was rather intrigued by an article in today's paper in which it was stated that the NCP hopes for unity in the future. I do not know why it is talking about unity in the future. I thought it was united now with the Liberal Party as one organisation. I do not know what it has in mind.

Mr Clarko: Has your party any factions?

Mr STEPHENS: No.

The article also stated that the NCP members were not likely to let the party be destroyed because there was no guarantee that any new party would take its place.

We have news for the NCP. We guarantee we have taken its place. With regard to letting the NCP be destroyed, it has destroyed itself. It has been completely submerged by the Liberal Party, and they are both as one. That is the basic reason the National Party came into existence. I can assure members, and certainly the echo from the back bench, that we will be around for many years to come and we will make our mark in this State.

With those comments I support the Bill.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Bateman.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

COLLEGES BILL

Second Reading

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Education) [5.51 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. On the 26th June this year, the Government announced that the teachers' colleges, presently constituted under the Teacher Education Act of 1972, would become self-governing institutions and the Western Australian Teacher Education Authority would be disbanded. Subsequently the Government also indicated that self-governing post-secondary education colleges would be established in the Pilbara, and the legislation now presented provides the framework for these developments.

The Bill will also enable the Government to create other similar colleges when such action is required, or to amalgamate or close colleges where

considered necessary. The closure of the Graylands Teachers' College, previously announced, will be carried out using powers under the proposed legislation.

The Bill before the House empowers the Minister for Education to establish and maintain such colleges as are necessary for post-secondary education. These colleges may be created as entirely new institutions, or may be based on an existing institution, or merger of institutions, or parts of an existing institution. In addition, the Minister for Education will be able to close a college.

Colleges established under this Act will be corporate bodies and, subject to ministerial approval, will be able to provide such courses in advanced education and/or technical and further education as may be required and approved from time to time. By arrangement with other institutions, they may also provide additional courses.

The governing council of a college will comprise a maximum of 15 members, seven of these being appointed by the Governor and being representative of education, the professions, and industrial, commercial or other community interests. In addition, there will be two persons who are members of the full-time academic staff of each college and who are elected by members of that staff in such manner as is prescribed by Statute; one member elected by students to represent the student body; and two other members appointed from time to time by the Minister on the recommendation of other members of the council.

The Governor will appoint the first chairman of a council for a period not exceeding three years, and will also appoint the chairman of any interim council establishment to enable the development of any new college. The chairman must come from those who are not members of the staff of a college.

The councils' functions and duties will be similar to those of other tertiary and higher education institutions, and they will be able to make statutes and by-laws to regulate the affairs of the colleges. Each college council will employ its own staff; and, subject to the Act and any relevant award and agreement in force under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912, the terms and conditions of employment of staff of the college shall be such terms and conditions as the Minister for Education, on the recommendation of the council, approves. This provision will ensure that there is uniformity in conditions of employment between the colleges, as the Government, in company with the Academic Staff Association and the colleges, seeks to ensure that competition between the colleges for the recruitment of staff

based on the offering of more generous allowances or conditions of salary, shall not be allowed to occur.

In extraordinary circumstances, and on the advice of the Western Australian Post-Secondary Education Commission, the Minister for Education may transfer staff from one college to another.

Provisions for superannuation are similar to those provided in the present Teacher Education Act, with the modification to provide that the Minister for Education may establish and administer a scheme to continue the present Western Australian Teacher Education Authority superannuation scheme to which many teachers' college staff belong. A board of trustees, which includes staff members who are members of the scheme, will be established to administer the operations of the superannuation scheme.

Financial provisions are similar to those previously provided in the Teacher Education Act.

The Bill proposes that each college may have its own academic, and its own other salaried, staff associations. Membership of student associations will not be compulsory and provisions relating to student funds are as presently exist.

Transitional provisions re-establish the present teachers' colleges under this Act and provide for transfer of staff, preservation of rights of staff and general continuity of operation of the teachers' colleges. These provisions also provide for the existing colleges to be identified by name within the Statutes, and also provide that, from the date of proclamation, the Western Australian Secondary Teachers' College will become known as Nedlands college.

The Bill is a landmark in post-secondary education legislation within Australia, and will provide the vehicle by which all aspects of post-secondary education, including technical and further education, may be developed and extended to the regional areas of Western Australia.

As indicated above, the Bill provides for the disbanding of the Western Australian Teacher Education Authority. The Government wishes to record its thanks and appreciation for the work of the chairman, (Mr H. W. Dettman), the chief executive officer (Mr Durston), and the members and staff of the authority. Since its inception, the authority has played a significant role in the development of various constituent colleges, and has extended to each college an increasing degree of autonomy which has prepared college administrations for the next stage of their development which is achieved within the legislation now being presented.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Pearce.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR BATEMAN (Canning) 15.58 p.m.): In a spirit of co-operation I have only a limited amount of time to address myself to this Bill, so I will be fairly brief in my comments. Sitting here over the last few weeks, all I have heard is a great deal of praise lumped on to the Government so I think in fairness some praise should be given to members of the Opposition who have done a particularly good job in the preparation and delivery of their speeches during the Budget debate.

Mr Bertram: Hear, hear, a very worth-while and justified comment.

Mr BATEMAN: I wish first to refer to the serious problem of traffic overcrowding which is occurring at Albany Highway, Cannington. Recently I directed to the Minister a question on this matter seeking the number of vehicles passing through a certain section of Albany Highway, between Cecil Avenue and William Street.

The traffic counts were taken between the 23rd August and the 31st August, and the figures are as follows: The hourly rate on Monday was 1 184, with a total of 17 790 vehicles passing through that section for the day; on Tuesday the total was 14 450; on Wednesday, the total was 13 455; on Thursday, it was 18 690; on Friday—which I suppose was pay day—the total was 19 480; and, on Saturday, the total was 18 360. That indicates the volume of traffic travelling on that road.

I asked whether the Government was prepared to construct an overpass or an underpass, or a similar pedestrian crossing, on the Albany Highway outside Boans, Carousel. The Government maintained that it was quite happy to provide some finance. However, it maintained that the Canning Town Council should provide some finance also. The Canning Town Council said that the crossing was not warranted as there was a median strip in the centre of the road. This median strip caters for people crossing from the buses on that busy highway. It is used by people shopping at the Carousel centre, and at the other shops in the area.

The main objection by the council was that there are not enough people in the Cannington area to warrant it. However, the people who

shop at the Carousel centre do not come only from Cannington; they come from Gosnells, Kenwick, Maddington, and Beckenham. These people use the buses every day. They walk out in front of the bus. Drivers find, as I have found myself, that they cannot see the people walking out. Someone there will be hurt seriously one day. There have been many mishaps, and many motorcar accidents.

The Town of Canning has a town planning scheme No. 25 which provides for the construction of an overway in that position. However, they still will not have a bar of it. I believe something should be done about it.

As the member for Stirling suggested this afternoon, we should do more to curb accidents on the road. If one drives down the Albany Highway in the outside lane—that is, the one nearest the kerb—one feels that the telephone poles are going to jump out into the middle of the road and one is going to collide with them. They are right on the kerb. One looks down the line of them as one looks from the car.

If one drives in the "suicide" lane—the one on the inner side—the cars are driving against one another. I defy the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Police and Traffic to drive on that highway to Armadale without breaking a traffic rule. It is not simple. The milk trucks travel on the centre line. It is difficult to pass them. I am amazed that more accidents have not occurred along that particular section of the road.

Something should be done to widen the roads, because the trucks are becoming wider. The roads appear to be becoming narrower.

Mr Rushton: What about an alternative route?

Mr BATEMAN: Do not interrupt. I have limited time. I should have free rein tonight, Mr Speaker.

I ask that the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Police and Traffic do something about this situation. They should have a look at the situation, and have an investigation made. I do not know what they can do about those telephone poles. They do jump out into the middle of the road as the motorist is going past!

Mr Sodeman: More so on Friday nights!

Mr BATEMAN: I recommend that something be done about it.

I will now deal with an aspect of local government. In the *Daily News* of the 9th October, 1978, there is an article headed "Why councilors get their image . . .". As far as I am concerned, members of the Real Estate Institute of WA should not be allowed to be members of a

council. In addition, I feel that councillors should be given some form of moiety or some form of attraction to become councillors. That would make it more worth while for the ordinary layman to become a councillor. The ordinary working man cannot afford the time to be a member of a council. It is only people such as ones in real estate who become involved in council affairs because they can afford the time.

These people have prior knowledge of where subdivisions are going to be allowed. I do not say that they misuse their office; but one never knows!

I have very interesting quotes from the article I mentioned before. The first one is as follows—

Mr Wood gave statistics from 41 councils in WA at a conference in Perth for health surveyors.

The quote continues—

Mr Wood was presenting a paper on "The Politics of Local Government."

Of course, he goes on and on and on. The report continues—

He said that in the present State Parliament 11 member of the Assembly and 13 members of the Council had served, or were serving, in local government and all but two were members of the Liberal and National Country Parties.

Seven of the State's 25 premiers had been in local government.

That report indicates that 22 members of the Liberal and National Country Parties have been in local government. Two members from the Labor Party have also been in local government. That indicates there is a predominance of Liberal representation in local government.

Mr Coyne: It is our training ground.

Mr BATEMAN: It must be the breeding ground or the training ground of the Liberals.

Mr MacKinnon: How many teachers do you have?

Mr BATEMAN: That is their way to obtain Liberal endorsement and to serve in the Parliament.

Mr Coyne: How many trade union people do you have?

Mr BATEMAN: I become upset when I read in the paper about the penalties for offences. In *The West Australian* on Saturday there was a report of a man being sentenced to two years' gaol for assaulting a man and stealing 50c from him. When I was young, I stole something from a boy at school, and he knocked me flat on the ground—knocked all the wind out of me. He was not the one who received the "cuts". I was the

one receiving the "cuts", and I deserved them. Something has to be done about this aspect of sentencing. Something has to be done about the sentences being handed down by the judiciary—the magistrates and the judges. The sentences that they are handing down are very worrying. It is unfortunate that the Minister who deals with this matter is in another place. Something must be done about it.

Another problem worrying myself and thousands of other people in this State is that of the silent invasion through our north. This is more rightly a Commonwealth matter but it does affect every member of Parliament and taxpayer in this State.

I consider myself a humanitarian—perhaps that is why I am a member of the Labor Party—and I feel that everyone should have a feed, be treated humanely, have a bed to sleep in at night, and be generally succoured. It troubles me to see these people coming to Australia and arriving in the north without permission. Something should be done about this.

If Gough Whitlam were Prime Minister we would be getting kicked left, right and centre by members of the Liberal Party; however, nothing is said about doing anything at the moment.

People in my electorate raised a petition and presented it to the member for Tangney (Mr Shack). It reads as follows—

We, the undersigned, do petition you to take our grievances to the Hon. M. J. MacKellar, Minister for Immigration, on our behalf.

Our grievances being:—

- (1) That in our considered opinion the illegal immigrants entering Australia, via Darwin, popularly called "Boat People", are not actually true refugees.
- (2) As Taxpayers of this country we object to our taxes being used to assist these illegal immigrants, especially in view of the thousands of British residents who are anxious to come to Australia being refused entry because of lack of employment.
- (3) We further object to the possibility of our Nation being infected by exotic diseases (typhus, leprosy), and many other tropical diseases which may be carried by these illegal immigrants.
- (4) We further object to the ease with which these people are able to apply, and receive, housing; food and social

security payments when such stringent and rigid rules are applicable to the Australian work force.

We all realise that our present unemployment problems will be aggravated. To continue—

- (5) As many of these illegal immigrants have ample "Universal Tender" (Gold in various forms) when they arrive, why hasn't the Government made some arrangements for a re-payment scheme to be initiated for those in receipt of services rendered.

I agree wholeheartedly with the sentiments embodied in that petition.

We must assist these people who have come to Australia in their boats. They are an unhappy lot. I would add that if I were in their position I would not run away from my country; I would stay and try to sort things out. I believe we should accept them and give them food and clothing, and then return them to their homeland where they could eventually sort out their problems.

They will cause problems if they stay here. They aggravate the unemployment situation and there have been instances of them fighting amongst themselves. It is a sad situation and one about which I feel strongly. I have a great deal of sympathy for them. As a humanitarian I will do everything possible to help them in an endeavour to return them to their own countries and their own way of life. In view of the time I shall merely say that I support the Budget.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

COLLEGES BILL

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Marine Navigational Aids Act Amendment Bill.
2. Liquor Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
3. Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

STATE FORESTS

Revocation of Dedication: Council's Resolution

Message from the Council received and read requesting the Assembly's concurrence in the following resolution—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 20, 27, 37 and 47 laid on the Table of the Legislative Council by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 12th October, 1978, be carried out.

House adjourned at 6.13 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

MINISTER FOR LANDS AND PUBLIC SERVANTS

Air Travel

1991. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands and Forests:

- (1) On how many occasions during the 29th Parliament has the Minister for Lands and Forests—
 - (a) travelled overseas;
 - (b) travelled interstate;
 - (c) used intra-state air facilities;
 - (d) used charter aircraft?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of air travel of all public servants within the Minister's department during the last financial year in respect of—
 - (a) overseas travel;
 - (b) interstate travel;
 - (c) intra-state travel;
 - (d) air charter travel?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) See answer to question 1981.

HOSPITALS: AMBULANCES

St. John Ambulance Association: Geraldton, Bunbury, and Albany

2013. Mr TUBBY, to the Premier:

How many St. John Ambulance drivers operate the ambulance service in the following towns:

- (1) Geraldton—
 - (a) full-time (paid);
 - (b) part-time (paid);
 - (c) voluntary?

- (2) Bunbury—
 - (a) full-time (paid);
 - (b) part-time (paid);
 - (c) voluntary?
- (3) Albany—
 - (a) full-time (paid);
 - (b) part-time (paid);
 - (c) voluntary?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The St. John Ambulance Association has supplied the following information—

- (1) (a) and (b) 1.
(c) 3.
- (2) (a) 7.
(b) and (c) Nil.
- (3) (a) 2.
(b) Nil.
(c) 12 to 14.

HEALTH

Medical Practitioners: Geraldton

2014. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Which hospitals other than the main teaching hospitals have resident doctors?
- (2) How many resident doctors are there at each such hospital?
- (3) How senior are the residents at each such hospital?
- (4) What are the working arrangements for co-operation or support from the local private medical practitioners in each case?
- (5) Are these arrangements working satisfactorily?
- (6) When did the Government last give consideration to appointing resident doctors to the Geraldton regional hospital?
- (7) What were the reasons for not appointing residents to Geraldton at that time?
- (8) What is the last known attitude of Geraldton's private medical practitioners to the suggestions of locating residents at the Geraldton regional hospital?
- (9) What changes in circumstances are needed before the Government will appoint resident doctors to the Geraldton regional hospital?

Mr Ridge (for Mr YOUNG) replied:

- (1) Kalgoorlie, Rockingham, Carnarvon, Derby, Port Hedland, Wyndham.

- (2) Kalgoorlie 3
Rockingham 4
Carnarvon 1
Derby 1
Port Hedland 4
Wyndham 1.
- (3) Intern or junior resident level at Kalgoorlie-Rockingham.
Junior resident level at other hospitals indicated.
- (4) In Kalgoorlie, the local private medical practitioners have a supportive and supervisory role. While this is also generally true of Rockingham, Fremantle Hospital accept responsibility for medical supervision. The question is not applicable in the north-west.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) September 1978.
- (7) The need for local medical practitioners to accept the supportive and supervisory role required and financial considerations.
- (8) Local practitioner support was not clearly indicated.
- (9) Local practitioner support and availability of finance.

HEALTH

Smoking

2015. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is there any legislation which gives him power to prohibit smoking in confined public places such as aircraft?
- (2) If "No" what legislative amendments would be needed to provide that power?
- (3) Will he please give consideration to such a step?

Mr Ridge (for Mr YOUNG) replied:

- (1) No, the regulations under the Health Act relating to smoking refer only to public buildings as defined in that Act.
- (2) All matters relating to aircraft are under the control of the Commonwealth Government.
- (3) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Form Distribution

2016. Mr CARR, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that certain forms relevant to specific Government departments and instrumentalities may not now be sent

out on request by the relevant departments but must be distributed only through the Government Printing Office or the Information Centre?

(2) If "Yes"—

- (a) does this apply to all forms and all departments;
- (b) will he please explain the rationale behind this decision?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) No uniform practice is adopted in connection with the availability or distribution of forms for Government departments or instrumentalities, and no policy directive on the subject has been issued by my Government.

However, if the member has any specific instance in mind, I would be pleased to have the matter further investigated.

(2) Answered by (1) above.

MINING: IRON ORE

Northern Mining

2017. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Has the Government received a request from Northern Mining for an extension of the agreement covering the Murchison iron ore development?
- (2) If "Yes" will he please indicate what is proposed and the Government's attitude?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The application is being considered and I am seeking advice from the Mines Department and the Department of Industrial Development.

HEALTH

Public Health Department: Survey

2018. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Health:

Will he please table a copy of the report which was delivered to a medical conference in Perth last month concerning a Public Health Department survey in Geraldton last year?

Mr Ridge (for Mr YOUNG) replied:

No, the talk given was on the preliminary results of a report which is, so far, incomplete.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS: REPAIR AND SERVICE WORK

Preference on Apprenticeship Basis

2019. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Has the Government considered introducing a preference clause for firms employing apprentices when seeking repair work or other service work for Government departments along the lines applying when tendering for Government contracts?
- (2) If "Yes", what was the outcome?
- (3) If "No" to (1), will he consider it?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) to (3) The existing preference scheme has been specifically aimed at the building industry and has not applied to other areas.

At this time the scheme is being examined by Government and industry representatives with the view to possible amendments.

When the situation is clarified and finalised the new scheme will be kept under close review to see if it is effective; if the result is favourable the Government would be prepared to explore the possibility of introducing a similar type scheme for other areas of industry.

SHOPPING

Geraldton Auction Mart and Secondhand Furniture Dealers

2020. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Was *The West Australian* accurate on the 27th September, 1978 when it reported that:
"This week the Department of Labour and Industry gave permission for small secondhand furniture dealers to open on Sundays."
- (2) If "Yes" how does he reconcile this permission with his refusal to allow a small secondhand furniture dealer, namely Geraldton Auction Mart, to continue to hold Saturday afternoon auctions as it had done for the last 15 years?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) By notice in the *Government Gazette* of 22nd September, 1978, and pursuant to section 88 of the Factories and Shops

Act, secondhand furniture was included as goods approved for sale by "small shops" as defined in the Act.

- (2) Section 93 of the Act specifically prohibits the sale by auction of any goods usually sold by retail in shops during the hours when, under the provisions of section 85, shops are required to be closed. This does not apply to sales by auction of cereals, hay or chaff or of secondhand furniture and household effects conducted in any dwelling house.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Numbers Game: Venues for Validating Machines

2021. Mr CARR, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Did the Totalisator Agency Board at any stage give consideration to proposals to set up validating machines for the "numbers game" at places other than Totalisator Agency Board shops?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) what types of other places were proposed;
 - (b) how many other places were proposed;
 - (c) has the proposal now been dropped;
 - (d) if "Yes" to (c), what are the reasons given for dropping the proposal?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) No.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

WA Museum: Geraldton Branch

2022. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Government has allocated funds for renovation of the old railway station building in Geraldton with the intention that it be used as a branch of the W.A. Museum, but has allocated no funds to enable the museum to be established?
- (2) If this is not the correct position, will he please explain what is the position?
- (3) When is it intended that funds will be made available for this museum to be established?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) Funds for the renovation of the old railway station building, Marine Terrace, Geraldton, were provided in the

Western Australian Museum's CRF allocation for 1977-78 and the Commonwealth's national estate programme for the same year; \$51 000 and \$5 000 were provided respectively. The work is due to be completed this financial year and is seen by the trustees as a preliminary stage of development of a branch of the Western Australian Museum in Geraldton.

- (3) Funds for the further development of the branch will be considered when reviewing priorities for the 1979-80 fiscal year.

LAND: NATIONAL PARKS

Classification

2023. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

Further to question 1703 of 1978:

- (1) (a) What is the purpose, size and class of reserve No. 32853;
 - (b) in what authority is this reserve vested?
- (2) (a) What is the purpose, size and class of reserve No. 31302;
 - (b) in what authority is this reserve vested;
 - (c) what is the official name of this reserve;
 - (d) when is it expected that the Environmental Protection Authority's recommendation that this reserve be upgraded to class "A" status, as endorsed by Cabinet on 20th October, 1976, be implemented?
- (3) (a) What is the purpose, size and class of reserve No. 28393;
 - (b) in what authority is this reserve vested;
 - (c) when is it expected that this reserve will be upgraded to class "A" status, as endorsed by Cabinet on 20th October, 1976?
- (4) In regard to reserve No. 29149, when is it expected that the Environmental Protection Authority's recommendation that this reserve be upgraded to class "A" status, as endorsed by Cabinet on 20th October, 1976?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) (a) National park comprising about 435 906 hectares excluding rivers. Class "B".
 - (b) Vested in the National Parks Authority.
- (2) (a) National park comprising about 2 680.637 7 hectares.
 - (b) Vested in the National Parks Authority.
 - (c) Drovers Cave National Park.
 - (d) This reserve was proclaimed Class "A" on the 25th January, 1978 and a notice to that effect appeared in the *Government Gazette* of the 3rd February, 1978.
- (3) (a) Preservation of natural formations—Pinnacles comprising about 11 951 hectares. Class "C".
 - (b) Vested in the National Parks Authority.
 - (c) The inclusion of this reserve in the proposed new Class "A" Reserve has not proceeded due to the existence of mining tenements.
- (4) This reserve is recommended for inclusion in the proposed Nambung National Park Class "A" with Reserve 28393, but action has not proceeded for the same reason explained in 3 (c).

HOUSING: RENTAL

Maintenance

2024. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is it a fact that the State Housing Commission has adopted a policy of refusing to pay for the clearing of blocked drains in rental homes and is insisting on tenants paying for such work?
- (2) Is it a fact that the State Housing Commission has adopted a policy of refusing to have internal painting of State Housing Commission homes done when it is necessary and is insisting on tenants paying for such work?
- (3) Will he supply me with a full list of maintenance jobs that the State Housing Commission is now refusing to perform on its homes?

- (4) If the State Housing Commission is going to opt out of its responsibility in respect to routine maintenance of rental homes, will he undertake to introduce some form of financial assistance to pensioners and other low income tenants who are forced to pay for expensive plumbing, painting and other maintenance jobs?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) No, and in "The Tenant's Hand Book", given to each ingoing tenant, the tenant is advised that—

blocked drains from the sink, wash troughs, basins, bath or shower, to the main outside drainage line, where caused by insufficient care in their use, and all blockages of this nature, are a tenant responsibility. The same applies to blocked pedestal pans.

Commission plumbing contractors are asked to state cause of blockage on their account form. Exceptions are made where circumstances are not as above; i.e., in most "flat" accommodation where a blockage may be difficult to place on a particular tenant, and where a tenant has only occupied a short period.

- (2) No, but internal painting is only being carried out by the commission where absolutely essential. This results in refusal to many requests where paintwork is in an average condition only. All vacant properties are brought to a clean and reasonable condition for ingoing tenants.
- (3) No essential maintenance is refused, such as work needed to maintain health standards, tenant safety, appliance efficiency, reasonable comfort and asset protection. Only work resulting from insufficient care of the property such as general damage, broken glass, damaged flyscreens, cleaning of chimneys, flues, drain blockages, fuses caused by faulty equipment, misuse of electric elements, household pests, clothes line damage, lost keys, is regarded as tenant's liability.
- (4) The commission has not opted out of its responsibility in respect to routine maintenance of rental homes, and will, in fact, expend approximately \$10 000 000 on maintenance this financial year. There could be no demand on

tenants to pay for expensive maintenance other than work resulting from insufficient care of property, as described in (3), and where the tenant wants a better standard of painting than the commission is able to provide from the limited funds available.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLES

Exhaust Emission and Fuel Alternatives

2025. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In view of no significant changes being apparent in air pollutants resulting from emission control devices on motor vehicles in Australian cities over the past few years, could the Government reconsider the use of such devices?
- (2) What is the observed decline in kilometres travelled per litre of petrol used by a medium sized car fitted with an emission control device?
- (3) How much more efficient is a diesel engine compared to one powered by petrol or L.P. gas in burning potential pollutants?
- (4) Would he investigate the possibility of allowing country motorists to disconnect such devices?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes, insofar as we can do this in isolation bearing in mind that cars are mass-produced for sale Australia-wide.
- (2) No definitive figure is available but indications are that it is about 5 per cent. As announced, the Government has instigated tests in co-operation with Hamersley Iron to look at this.
- (3) Diesel engine exhausts contain very low levels of the pollutants which are subject to legislation. LPG engines appear able to comply with emissions regulations without additional equipment.
- (4) Yes, if the outcome of the tests mentioned in (2) shows that there would be advantage in this.

TRANSPORT: ROAD

Seatainers

2026. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Transport:

In each of the years ending 30th June 1976, 1977, 1978—

- (1) How many permits were issued by the Transport Commission for the road transport of seatainers from Albany to Perth?

- (2) What was the yearly tonnage involved?
- (3) What commodities were involved?
- (4) Why was Westrail unable to handle this type of traffic?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) to (4) To extract information to answer the member's question, which is of a generalised nature, would involve diversion of a considerable amount of manpower resources from other essential work.

If the member cares to specify the companies to which his question refers, I will arrange to obtain the information.

TIMBER

Royalties

2027. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Forests:

In each of the preceding three years to 30th June 1978—

- (1) What was the total royalty received on timber used for—
 - (a) sawmilling;
 - (b) woodchipping;
 - (c) other?
- (2) What were—
 - (a) the total costs of the department;
 - (b) the direct cost of forestry operations?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Royalty received has been as follows:

		\$
(a) Sawlogs for sawmilling	1975-76	4 246 190
	76-77	4 158 832
	77-78	4 563 669
(b) Logs for woodchipping	1975-76	72 951
	76-77	279 598
	77-78	322 134
(c) Other royalty	1975-76	422 244
	76-77	795 100
	77-78	776 293

- (2) (a) Total departmental expenditure was:

	\$
1975-76	12 723 293
76-77	15 189 151
77-78	16 922 922.

- (b) Direct cost of forestry operations was:

	\$
1975-76	7 953 216
76-77	8 423 253
77-78	8 892 602.

HEALTH: DENTAL THERAPY CENTRES

Mundaring Electorate Schools

2028. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Health:

Further to my question 253 of 1978, is he now in a position to advise when the following schools will be served under the school dental services programme:

- (a) Bullsbrook District High School;
- (b) Wooreooloo primary school;
- (c) Upper Swan primary school;
- (d) Toodyay District High School?

Mr Ridge (for Mr YOUNG) replied:

The school dental service is being extended to all schools as quickly as possible. Commencing dates for individual schools are influenced by a number of factors such as the availability of staff, finance and the supply of equipment and materials.

Under the circumstances, I am not able to give firm commencing dates for individual schools.

MINING

State Batteries

2029. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) When is the Government going to say one way or the other as to whether it intends to increase State Battery charges?
- (2) Why is it taking the Government so long to make a final decision on the matter?
- (3) Is the Government having second thoughts about implementing higher charges?
- (4) What factors does the Government have under consideration in respect of the proposed increases?
- (5) What is the Government's policy on State Battery charges?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) to (5) The Government so far has only indicated that with the increasing costs to service batteries and the consequent increase in losses to general revenue the present charges cannot be expected to remain on the same level forever. It also indicated the grossly distorted relation between the price of gold and the battery charges.

The matter to bring this relation to a more equitable level taking the cost of running the batteries into account and yet to pursue the unchanged policy of encouragement to prospectors through comparatively low charges is still under consideration.

RAILWAYS

Profits, Losses, and Loans

2030. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What annual profits or losses have Western Australian Railways made over the last 20 years?
- (2) How much interest on loans has the railways had to pay over each of those 20 years?
- (3) (a) Have any Western Australian Railways loans been written off by the Government over the last 20 years;
- (b) if so, when were they written off;
- (c) what were the amounts written off?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) to (3) The information requested in (3) requires considerable research. I will forward the member answers to all of the questions as soon as this is available.

WATER SUPPLIES

Goldfields: Pumping Stations

2031. Mr GRILL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Why is it thought necessary to further automate pumping stations on the Goldfields water supply scheme?
- (2) What net annual savings will there be as a result of the Government's present proposals to automate pumping stations on the line?
- (3) How will the said savings be made?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) To obtain better operational control at reduced cost.

- (2) \$200 000 per annum initially.
- (3) The automation will provide improved control of the goldfields system and maximise the use of existing facilities, thereby delaying the need for major improvements.

POLICE

Gold Stealing

2032. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) How many houses in Norseman have been searched by the gold stealing detection squad of the Criminal Investigation Bureau during the last 12 months?
- (2) How many arrests have been made or charges preferred as a result of or in connection with the aforementioned charges?
- (3) At what time in the day or night were the aforementioned searches made?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) 11.
- (2) 7 arrests—8 charges.
- (3) (i) 12 midnight
(ii) 6.30 a.m.
(iii) 7.15 a.m.
(iv) 6.30 a.m.
(v) 6.30 a.m.
(vi) 10.30 a.m.
(vii) 7.00 a.m.
(viii) 12 midnight
(ix) 11.35 p.m.
(x) 1.15 a.m.
(xi) 2.15 a.m.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Harbour and Rivers Sections: Geraldton and Fremantle

2033. Dr TROY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Public Works Department to close its harbours and rivers section in Geraldton?
- (2) Have any employees in Geraldton been told they are to be dismissed?
- (3) How many men in the Fremantle harbours and rivers depot have been told they are to be dismissed?
- (4) Is it the intention to dismiss any men from the harbours and rivers section in Fremantle?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Maintenance of marine facilities in Geraldton is still being carried out by the Public Works Department under the direction of the district engineer.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) and (4) Twenty.

2034 and 2035. *These questions were postponed.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Wanneroo Shire: Firearms Factory and Cadet Corp

2036. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Has an application been made to the Wanneroo Shire Council by one Captain B. Corse for permission to establish a small arms factory in the area?
- (2) Has the Wanneroo Shire Council been approached to use ratepayers' money to sponsor a cadet corps for male youth between 14 and 18 years so that such youth can be trained in weapons handling?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) I have no knowledge of these matters. I suggest the member direct his questions to the Shire of Wanneroo.

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE

Flour Millers: Trucks

2037. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

To whom was the Government cheque(s) made payable for the use of trucks involved in carting flour during the flour mill dispute in 1977?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

I would refer the member to the reply to question 1783 of Tuesday, the 3rd October, 1978.

GOVERNMENT LOANS OR GUARANTEES

WA Made Goods

2038. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

What steps are taken to ensure that Western Australian manufactured products are used where practicable in projects to which the Government gives loans or guarantees?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

Companies are called upon to give every opportunity to Western Australian firms to provide goods and services, and this objective is followed up by the Government.

PRISONS

Inmates: Study Leave

2039. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

How many prisoners in Western Australia are on full-time study leave?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

Three.

PORT: FREMANTLE

Dockers

2040. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Did Commissioner Cort following enquiries recommend to the Government that the present level of 68 men be retained for the casual dockers roster in Fremantle?
- (2) Did he also recommend that the guaranteed earnings fund be paid by a levy against all shipping using the port?
- (3) Will the Government move to implement the commissioner's recommendations?
- (4) What is the attitude of the Chamber of Shipping representing ship owners in this matter?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Following his initial enquiry, Commissioner Cort's findings indicated that for the time being there should be no reduction in the present level of casual workers, except by voluntary retirement, but following a subsequent hearing stated it was evident the number of casual workers should be reduced.
- (2) Yes, with some qualifications.
- (3) The Government will not impose a levy for this purpose on all shipping entering Fremantle Harbour as this would be inequitable to those not using the services provided by the dockers and would also make Fremantle more expensive from the point of view of tonnage charges than Sydney or Melbourne, resulting in the possible loss of employment in the port.
- (4) I have had no communication from the Chamber of Shipping as to their present attitude.

LAND

National Park: Cape Range

2041. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Further to question 1842 of 1978 what is the present status of the remainder of the land that Cabinet agreed should be included in the Cape Range National Park?
- (2) If any part has been leased—
 - (a) under what section of the Land Act has this action been taken;
 - (b) (i) to whom has it been leased;
 - (ii) for what purposes;
 - (iii) under what conditions and terms;
 - (c) why was not the area added to the National Park as recommended by the Environmental Protection Authority and so endorsed by Cabinet?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Freehold, leasehold, vacant Crown land and reservations for various purposes.
- (2) (a) and (b) Under section 114 Messrs G. F. and E. J. Lefroy had a prior lease, of portion of the area, for pastoral purposes under conditions prescribed in part VI of the Land Act.
 Under Section 117 M. G. Kailis Gulf Fisheries Pty. Ltd. had leased a bore and tank site for a ten year term expiring 30th September, 1984 at a rental of \$10 under standard departmental conditions.
- (c) The existence of mining tenements has so far precluded reservation for National Park purposes.

LAND RESERVES

"A" Class: Cockburn Sound

2042. Mr TAYLOR, to the Premier:

With respect to a speech given by Mr Michael Kailis to a meeting of the W.A. Marine Services Association and reported on ABC News on Friday morning 13th October—

- (1) Is it a fact that Mr Kailis said that he had been assured by the Premier "that a ship building company would

he given the go-ahead early next year" at Jervoise Bay, Cockburn Sound?

- (2) Did he give such an assurance?
- (3) What type and tonnage of construction is likely to take place?
- (4) Is not a Government committee, including a Minister representing Cabinet, still investigating the future of an "A"-class reservation in Jervoise Bay and under the control of the Town of Cockburn?
- (5) Has he pre-empted the findings of this committee in dealing with Mr Kailis direct?
- (6) What association, if any, has Mr Kailis with any future desired use of the "A"-class reserve?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) I am not in a position to verify what Mr Kailis stated at a meeting of the WA Marine Services Association regarding the Jervoise Bay proposal, as I was not present on the occasion referred to by the member.
- (2) The development at Jervoise Bay has been discussed with Mr Kailis on a number of occasions. I have made it clear that I believe it is important that a ship-building complex be developed, but it would be irresponsible of me to make a firm commitment prior to detailed planning and environmental studies having been completed—especially as there has been close consultation by the appropriate Minister with the local authority.
The studies are at an advanced stage.
- (3) Vessels for the fishing industry and the offshore oil servicing industry with vessels of certain types up to 3 000 gross registered tonnes.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) No.
- (6) Mr Kailis represents the shipbuilding and allied industries interests which are vitally concerned with module construction in the area and in the development of the existing small shipbuilding industries.

MAGISTRATE

Albany

2043. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

Further to his answer to my question without notice on Thursday last (see page 3809 of *Hansard*)—

- (1) Was the magistrate at Albany present when the search warrant was executed?
- (2) Did the said magistrate have knowledge of the fact that the said warrant had been obtained?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Police did not have any contact with the magistrate over the warrant.

It is not known whether he had any knowledge of it as all contact was with the officer responsible for the custody and care of the documents, the Clerk of Courts.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MINING: BAUXITE

Alcoa's ERMP: EPA Report

1. Mr Davies (for Mr H. D. EVANS), to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Did the EPA recommend that the draft ERMP by Alcoa not be accepted by the Government in the form in which it was submitted?
- (2) Did Alcoa submit amendments to its ERMP in line with the EPA's recommendations and were these accepted by the Government?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2)—
 - (a) what were the amendments which Alcoa made to its ERMP for presentation to the Government;
 - (b) who considered the amendments which Alcoa made to its ERMP?
- (4) (a) Did the technical advisory group of the EPA consider the amendments which Alcoa made to its draft ERMP?
 - (b) If "Yes" to (4) (a), what were the amendments and recommendations of the technical advisory group?
 - (c) If "No" to (4) (a) why were the amendments of Alcoa not referred to the technical advisory group?

(5) (a) Did the EPA consider the amendments which Alcoa made to its ERMP?

(b) If "Yes" to (5) (a) what were the recommendations of the EPA to the Government?

Mrs Craig (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes, and these were accepted on the recommendation of the EPA.

(3) (a) As set out in the document tabled by the Premier in the House yesterday.

(b) The EPA to ensure they conformed to EPA recommendations.

(4) (a) There was no need because the amendments were to conform with EPA recommendations.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Because they were designed to meet the requirements of the Environmental Protection Authority.

(5) (a) Yes.

(b) The EPA recommended that the Government accept the amended ERMP.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Wanneroo Shire Council

2. Mr NANOVIK, to the Minister for Local Government:

I regret very much that my question is without notice.

Is the Minister aware that all members of the Wanneroo Shire Council have received a letter from the solicitors representing the Joondalup Development Corporation threatening to take out an injunction against the council if work on its new administration offices does not cease forthwith?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

Yes.

STATE FORESTS

Aerial Surveillance and Burning

3. Mr Williams (for Mr BLAIKIE), to the Minister representing the Minister for Forests:

(1) Would the Minister table the report by the Director General of Transport outlining proposals for the Forests Department to purchase aircraft for fire surveillance and fire control?

(2) How many aircraft are involved, what is the type and the total cost?

(3) Who will be responsible for the servicing of the aircraft—the Forests Department or the successful tenderer?

(4) How many aviation companies were invited to submit tenders, what are their names and what is the result of their tender?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

(1) The report is an inter-departmental document and common courtesy would require prior reference to the Director General of Transport. I shall advise the honourable member as soon as possible.

(2) Four aircraft are involved; the accepted aircraft type was Piper PA 18 Super Cub at a total cost of \$126 491.

(3) Following exploratory inquiries, public tenders will be called for service.

(4) Tenders were called for the purchase of the aircraft in accordance with Tender Board procedures and the successful tenderers were Ansett General Aviation.

MINING: BAUXITE

Alcoa's ERMP: EPA Report

4. Mr Davies, (for Mr H. D. EVANS), to the Premier:

(1) (a) Were the amendments to the draft ERMP made by Alcoa examined and commented upon by the technical advisory group of the EPA before they were accepted by the Government and, if so, what were its comments?

(b) Were these amendments examined by the EPA and, if so, what were the comments and recommendations of the EPA to the Government?

(2) If "No" to (1) (a), did the Government make it known to the Commonwealth Government that the technical advisory group of the EPA had not examined and commented upon the amendments of Alcoa to its draft ERMP?

(3) (a) What were the amendments which Alcoa made to its draft ERMP?

(b) Have these amendments been made public and, if not, why not?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) (a) There was no necessity because the amendments were in response to the EPA's requirements.

The TAG was selected and commissioned by the EPA for a specific purpose and having made their report their function ceased.

- (b) Yes and their acceptance recommended because they conformed to EPA recommendations.
- (2) There was no need because the amendments conformed to the EPA recommendations and this was advised to the Commonwealth.
- (3) (a) and (b) As set out in the document tabled by me in the House yesterday.

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Industrial Dispute: Number Involved

- 5. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:
Does the Minister have the figures with regard to teachers who went on strike today?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Yes, I have some figures for today which show that something like 66 per cent of primary school staff and 53 per cent of secondary school staff were present in schools. No schools closed at all.

SECURITY INDUSTRY: ASSISTANCE AND SECURITY CORPORATION

Flour Millers' Dispute: Trucks and Staff

- 6. Dr TROY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

My question without notice arises from the reply to a question on today's notice paper, in answer to which I was referred back to question 1783.

Is the Minister aware that at the time the cheques were made out to the Assistance and Security Corporation, no such corporation existed?

The SPEAKER: I can hardly allow a question to be asked of a Minister representing another Minister who is not in the Chamber. Therefore, the question is disallowed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: BAYSWATER SHIRE COUNCIL

Dismissal: Inquiry

- 7. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Local Government:

Is the Minister aware of a 13-page document which was distributed to all members of Parliament today and signed by

five of the dismissed councillors in the Shire of Bayswater claiming that they had been denied the precept of democratic law in the right to be heard before conviction?

If she has, would she indicate her attitude to their request for a full and open inquiry because three of the people who signed the document did so as justices of the peace. If they have breached the law the people are entitled in trust of justices of the peace to have those qualifications removed from those gentlemen.

Mrs CRAIG replied:

I was not aware of the document, and I have not seen it.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

GROW WA

- 8. Mr WILSON, to the Treasurer:

Can the Treasurer say what progress has been made in the further consideration which is being given to the request from "GROW, Western Australia" for Government assistance?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I advised the House some time ago—I think the Leader of the Opposition was one of those who asked a question, and the member for Mundaring was another who was in touch with me, and some others—on the approach by the Treasury to assist this organisation in making a submission. That submission has been dealt with and the advice of the result has been sent to the organisation. Whether it has actually been received I am not sure, but certainly I signed it some days ago.

MINING BILL

Law Society

- 9. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Has the Minister received a copy of what purports to be a section of the minutes of a meeting of the subcommittee of the Law Reform Society on the 10th October in which the committee expresses an opinion in regard to certain sections of the proposed Mining Bill, and where the committee expressed its intention apparently to take up the matter with the responsible Minister?

First of all, has he seen that document, and has he had any representations from the Law Reform Committee? If so, what action has been taken?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

I have—I suppose like every member—received in an envelope on my desk a sheet of paper to which the Leader of the Opposition refers.

As it is on my desk, I take it—according to the internal rules of the House—that it has been distributed by a member by means of the attendants. Otherwise, it would have been stamped and sent by post.

With regard to the second part of the question, my understanding is that this document is not from either the Law Society or any of its subcommittees or councils. My understanding is that on its own volition a subcommittee of the Law Society brought up this question and when it was referred to the council, the council stated that it was a matter within the policy decision sphere of the Government and not a question with which it ought to be concerned, and it would not take up the matter.

Therefore, this document, according to my understanding, bears no official substance whatsoever. Apparently it was sent by someone who was not authorised to do so.

The SPEAKER: I would like to say something about the document that was the subject of the question just asked by the Leader of the Opposition.

Before speaking about that, I want to speak about the general matter of the distribution of letters and messages to members.

Recently a Minister complained to me that a message he had been anxiously awaiting was delivered to the main entrance prior to 5.00 p.m. on a particular day. The Minister left the Chamber soon after that time and did not receive the message until he arrived in the House the next day at 4.30 p.m.

I have instructed the staff that in future, where a message or a letter is to be delivered to any member of this Chamber, that letter or message is to be delivered personally by the attendants to the member concerned. In the event of

the attendants being unable to deliver it because the member is out of the building, the Clerks are to retain the letter or message, and as soon as practicable have it delivered to the member's office.

Having issued that instruction only yesterday I was rather keen to find out from the Clerk today how a letter appeared on my desk. I notice the same letter appeared on the desk of every other member of the Chamber. I have been advised by the Clerk that no member of the staff distributed the letter to which I refer. I want to make it clear to members that if they wish to disseminate information to other members they must give the letter or circular to the attendants, who will then decide how it should be delivered. It has been a long-standing rule of the House that where unstamped mail or circulars are delivered to the establishment for distribution to members, bulk lots are given to the secretaries of the parties, who then distribute the material to their respective members.

I ask members to desist from undertaking the distribution of material in the fashion in which the letter concerned was distributed today.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN AND PUBLIC SERVANTS

Air Travel

10. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

My question refers to answers the Premier gave yesterday to a series of questions asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition regarding the cost of travel by all Ministers. The questions concerned interstate and intrastate air travel, and the Premier stated that he was not prepared to divert staff to obtain the information required. My question is—

- (1) Can the Premier explain why staff from his department still wish to obtain travel service requests from my office? I am quite happy to make them available, but if he does not wish it to be done, and he is not prepared to divert staff to do it, I cannot see why one of his staff should still be seeking the information?

- (2) Is the Premier doing this for his own information; and if so, why is he able to divert staff for his own information, and yet not provide the information to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) If I recall aright the questions asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition they went much further than apparently is the understanding of the Leader of the Opposition. It would be as well for the Leader of the Opposition to have a look at the questions, because he will appreciate they went into great depth and required a great deal of information which I believe is not particularly relevant so far as this House is concerned. Ascertaining the information would have imposed a commitment on the staff that I was

not prepared to impose. This extends a long way beyond anything of a superficial nature.

So far as the inquiry received by the office of the Leader of the Opposition is concerned, it would have nothing to do with this question.

Mr Davies: The same fellow who asked yesterday, rang today and asked again.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It may have something to do with the insurance return that must be submitted each month. A declaration must be made in respect of those who are covered under the policy we hold. I understand the Leader of the Opposition shares in the benefits that are applicable to Ministers.

Mr Davies: I do not wish to share in them!

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am only guessing, but I feel the requests relate to the provision of that monthly declaration.

