

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 7th August, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

1. PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION CENTRES

Number

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many pre-school centres (kindergartens) were operating in 1971?
- (2) How many pre-school centres are operating at present?
- (3) How many new centres other than those that may be operating in schools under the Government's new scheme, are expected to be opened by the beginning of the first term in 1975?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) 124.
- (2) 286.
- (3) 23.

2. TRAFFIC

Fatal Accidents and Control in Country Areas

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) For the months of April, May, June and July, 1974, what were the total number of road deaths in Western Australia in the—
 - (a) metropolitan area; and
 - (b) country shires?
- (2) Of the country deaths, how many occurred in areas controlled by—
 - (a) shires; and
 - (b) police?
- (3) (a) How many country shires retain traffic control; and
 - (b) how many country shires are under police traffic control?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) (a) 52.
- (b) 71.
- (2) (a) 46.
- (b) 25.
- (3) (a) 90.
- (b) 29.

3. RAILWAYS

Concrete Sleepers

The Hon. R. T. LEESON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have tenders been called by the Commonwealth Railways for the

manufacture and supply of concrete sleepers at Kalgoorlie for use on the Trans-Australia Railway?

(2) If so—

- (a) when did tenders close;
- (b) how many tenders were received;
- (c) (i) is it intended to let a contract for the manufacture and supply of the sleepers at Kalgoorlie; and
 - (ii) if so, how many will be produced?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The tender was called by Commonwealth Railways and the detail requested by the Hon. Member is not known locally. It is respectfully suggested that the Hon. Member direct his questions to the appropriate Commonwealth Minister.

4. ROCKINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Works Programme

The Hon. I. G. PRATT, to the Minister for Education:

With regard to the Rockingham High School—

- (1) Are new works scheduled for the current financial year?
- (2) Had any works been scheduled for this school by the previous Government?
- (3) Is there any record in the Education Department files to indicate that an assurance had been given that this work would be undertaken in the current financial year?
- (4) Has there been any change in the priority for new works at this school since the change in Government?
- (5) Has the Commonwealth Government's inflationary policies had any effect on the Education Department's building programme for the current financial year?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Rockingham was included in the Education Department's preliminary building schedule.
- (3) No such assurances were given concerning this work as preliminary listings are always stated as being contingent upon the availability of loan funds.

(4) No.

(5) The rapid rise in building costs has seriously embarrassed the Education Department's school building programme.

5. HOUSING

Modifications: Finance

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) What funds are available to expend on alterations and modifications to State Housing Commission homes to suit—
 - (a) the size of families in occupation; and
 - (b) the mental, physical or social handicaps of members of families?
- (2) What is the source of these funds?
- (3) What amount has been expended for this purpose since the 1st April, 1974?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) Provision has been made for expenditure of \$150 000 during the 1974-1975 financial year towards alterations and modifications of houses to suit the categories of persons referred to.

In the event of this amount being fully utilised, the Commission will extend sympathetic consideration to any further families for such alterations or modifications as deemed necessary on the basis of need.

- (2) Commonwealth Loan Funds advanced to the State under the 1973 Housing Agreement.
- (3) Since 1st April, 1974, work has been authorised at a cost in the order of \$3 000.

6. PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Finance: Sources

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What funds are available from Australian Government sources for pre-school education for the financial year 1973-1974?
- (2) How much is expected to be available from these sources for 1974-1975?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) 1973-74—\$1 106 497.
- (2) Not yet advised.

7. SWAN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

Deferment

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Education:

In view of the Press statement by the Minister for Education that construction of the new high school at Swan View has been deferred due to a considerable increase in costs—

- (a) what is the increase in costs;
- (b) when is it anticipated the construction of the high school will be undertaken.
- (c) if the answer to (b) is not known, will the construction of the Swan View High School receive top priority in future considerations?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (a) The Education Department's estimated cost for stage 1 of Swan View was \$700 000. The lowest tender received was \$1 100 277.
- (b) Not known.
- (c) The secondary education needs of the district will be re-assessed before next year's building programme is determined.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Additional Powers

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

Further to my question 3 on the 1st August, 1974, concerning local government powers—

- (a) who are the members of this committee; and
- (b) when were they appointed?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (a) Local Government Association of W.A. (Inc.)—

Mr G. Strickland, President.
Mr H. Stickland, Vice President.

Mr E. Clark, Immediate Past President.

Country Shire Councils' Association of W.A.—

Cr A. J. Antonio, President.
Cr A. J. Gillam, Deputy President.

Cr W. T. Frost, Immediate Past President.

Country Town Councils' Association—

Cr R. W. Farr, President.

- (b) 18th June, 1974.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FOURTH DAY*Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 31st July, on the following motion by the Hon. J. C. Tozer—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

May it please Your Excellency—We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

THE HON. D. W. COOLEY (North-East Metropolitan) [4.45 p.m.]: I was very honoured yesterday to make my maiden speech in this House in the debate on the Supply Bill. However, I was rather concerned about some observations made by country members when they contributed to the debate. I think on no less than three occasions the words "hate" and "hatred" were used by members during their speeches.

If those words were directed towards me; that is, if it were felt that anything in my speech could have been interpreted as hatred, I would like to very quickly say to this Chamber, it is not in my nature to hate anybody at all. I believe that an ill-conceived feeling exists amongst country people, and particularly amongst the farmers, that there is some sort of dissention and disagreement between their views and those of people who work in the city. It may well be that a man who is "owned" by his employer for sometimes more than 40 hours a week may feel a little envious of a farmer or country resident who, although he makes a very substantial contribution to the State, has a fair amount of freedom in respect of his activities. Perhaps a person working at a factory bench is envious of farmers, but certainly he does not hate them.

Many of the workers believe that employers make large profits and that they, the workers, do not receive a fair share of those profits. Whilst they may resent that situation, in my experience in the trade union movement I have never heard anyone—either a union official or a worker—express hatred of an employer.

A worker may obtain a better share of those profits through union representation. As a last resort, he may take strike action. However, the striking worker does not hate anyone—he is trying to uplift his standard and to make a better life for himself and his family. I do not think it is becoming of any mem-

ber of this Chamber or any other Parliament to read hatred into a member's speech.

I would like to make my personal views known, and I believe most members here, including you, Mr President, know that I have been involved in the hurly-burly of industrial life for the best part of two decades now, and on many occasions I have had violent disagreements with people on industrial matters. You know yourself, Sir, that I have spoken to you on many occasions about industrial matters, but we have not always agreed about the particular questions under discussion. I dislike the policies of some politicians, and the way these policies are applied to the work force, but my feelings have never turned to hatred. In fact, I have never hated anyone with whom I have had dealings. I hope that any statements I make in the House will not be interpreted in that way.

I have a great respect and a very high personal regard for a number of people whom I have opposed industrially and politically over a long period of time, and I feel that, without exception, the respect and regard are returned.

I would like to say, Mr. President, that I feel highly honoured to be the representative of the people of the North-East Metropolitan Province, and also to be a representative of the great Australian Labor Party in this Chamber.

I think a large number of people resident within my electorate will be extremely disappointed that no reference was made in His Excellency's Speech to industrial matters or to the future policies of this Government in the field of industrial relations. It is still my hope that the present Government will adopt a more enlightened approach towards the trade union movement than it did when it was in office between 1959 and 1971. It should be recalled that during that period, among many other things which were detrimental to the interests of the working people of Western Australia, we unfortunately witnessed the destruction of an arbitration system which had brought many advantages to the work force of this State and which had created sound industrial relations.

Prior to 1963, industrial relations in this State were on a high plane. Unfortunately, however, the system of arbitration which we knew then and which provided fair representation of both workers and employers on the principal bench of the Arbitration Court, was taken away from us. During that period, due to the conservative Government's policy of assisting private industry, we witnessed a sell-out of certain semi-Government enterprises, which brought about considerable disturbance to the security and welfare of

a large number of workers employed by those semi-government departments and instrumentalities. We saw trade unionists disqualified from Government and semi-government boards and commissions and we saw a reluctance at all times on the part of the Government to support genuine wage claims and claims for improved working conditions. During all those years of the Brand-Court Government, not once did it go before the Arbitration Court and advocate that there should be an improvement in conditions or an increase in wages for the workers of this State. It is true that sometimes the Government did not oppose wage increases, but it never once went to the Arbitration Commission to advocate an improvement in working conditions.

It would be beyond anybody's comprehension that a Government could maintain that there was no justification for wage increases or improved conditions over the long period of 12 years. However, it is my hope that this Government will not live in the past but will begin to recognise that industrial relations today are vastly different from those which applied 10 years or even five years ago. The Government must face the fact that the workers in this State and throughout Australia no longer recognise arbitration as the sole means of obtaining justice in respect of wages and conditions. We recognise that the Industrial Commission has a part to play, but it has become outdated—I think I touched upon this point yesterday—due to the conservative attitudes of Governments and a reluctance to change laws governing industrial relations to conform with modern standards. The workers of this country no longer are satisfied with minimum standards prescribed in many instances by politically appointed people while, to use the word of the conservatives, unbridled profits and prices are condoned by conservative Governments. We have entered an entirely new field of industrial relations which involves direct negotiations between employers and unionists both at the shop floor level and in the union administration itself. It must be accepted by all sections of the community and particularly by Governments that the cap-in-hand approach to industrial relations is gone and will never return.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Is this direct approach better than going before the Industrial Commission?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: We consider it better than the Industrial Commission. The direct approach is a system whereby the employers and the unions enter into a properly negotiated agreement without any interference from Governments. This approach is accepted throughout the free world. With the possible exception of New Zealand and Australia, industrial relations

or negotiations are not hampered by Government interference anywhere in the free world.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You just want the Government to interfere so that the workers will get more.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The trade union movement no longer accepts the old-fashioned concept that it should be involved only in the industrial field, because its entire field of operations has political, social, and economic significance, despite the conservative attitudes of some members of the present Government that it should be illegal for trade unions to be involved in commercial enterprises. In fact, this was said recently by a member in another place. Whether conservative Governments like it or not, this is a fact of industrial life at present. Unions now are involved in consumer credit and housing and in the very near future we hope that we will be involved in insurance; in all these areas the trade union movement is becoming increasingly active. Therefore, we hope the Government will recognise these changes and not resist them, because when the Government hurts the trade union movement, it hurts many small people within our community who depend on the activities of the trade union movement for comfort and support. In some instances, their union represents much of the dignity that they have in life and the only means at their disposal of obtaining a better life.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It cannot be of much comfort to them when they are on strike for a fortnight.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is not a terrible thing to strike. If members opposite do not get the right price for the goods they produce, they withdraw them; and if a worker does not get the right price for his labour, he has a perfect right to withdraw that labour. Members opposite do not believe that is right. The attitude of members opposite is that people should be put in gaol for going on strike.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Then it should be possible for employers to institute lockouts.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: They can try that, too. That is within their right.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It is against the law.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Following your argument, the bosses have a right to impose lockouts.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is against the law but it is a bad law. It is a law which employers have been unwilling to take advantage of since 1969, when they knew that the trade union movement was going to face up to them and take them on.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Are you suggesting there should be lockouts?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am not suggesting that.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is the way you are talking. You said that it is a bad law and that we should change the law.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: There are people in high places who utter words such as, "the unions encourage workers to bludge" and, "workers are taking advantage of improved workers' compensation benefits". These statements are so patently malicious and damaging that, really, they should not be answered, because that is not the situation which applies. It is a terrible thing to say that unions encourage workers to bludge. Despite the answers that were given in this place the other day, that statement was made by the Premier of this State and it is not to his credit.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you maintaining that no unions have imposed dargs?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am not speaking about that; I am speaking about the utterances of the Premier.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I say you are not. That is precisely what you are speaking about. Do you maintain that unions do not impose quotas of work beyond which point no further work will be done?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That has never been done to my knowledge.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I belonged to a union which imposed such quotas.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The honourable member must have belonged to that union a long time ago, because it does not occur now.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You said it was not done, but it is done.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Not to my knowledge.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is an entirely different matter; you lack a lot of knowledge.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The workers of Western Australia are looking to the Government to implement its policies, not to slander the union movement.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The Government of Western Australia will give them a chance to work.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Government should be following its predecessor in regard to industrial relations.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You helped industrial relations a great deal!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Government should be looking to involve trade unions in the area of administration and it should recognise that workers are more enlightened today, because they are better educated and they involve themselves in

negotiations with employers. Perhaps sitting in such a lofty place as this, members opposite would not understand that workers on the shop floor these days do involve themselves very strenuously in industrial negotiations. They are the people who are more or less calling the tune in respect of a lot of negotiations in industrial matters. A good Government would be educating those people to enable them to negotiate better, not for the purpose of striking or becoming militant, but so that there can be a reasonable settlement of a dispute when it hits the shop floor level.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You are not going to tell us they are not militant are you?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The trade union movement in this State directly and indirectly represents more than 250 000 people and it is very important in the development and welfare of the State. As I indicated yesterday, it was my privilege to attend the parliament of industrial relations—and I think it is the only one in any part of the world where Governments, employers, and unions get together—in Geneva at the International Labor Organisation conference.

My association with those people confirms that unions have a free and unfettered right to participate in all aspects of social, economic, industrial, and political life of their respective nations. There is no restriction on them at all. Trade unionists, I am sorry to say, have far more standing in those free countries of the western world than have trade unionists in Australia. The movement in Australia has, to a very large extent, been beaten down by Governments over a long period—by a Federal Government for 23 years and by the Government in this State for 12 years.

I think that people who oppose participation of trade unions in commercial enterprises should study the situation in other countries, particularly West Germany where a union has a bank which is the fourth largest in Germany, an insurance company which is the leader in its field in that country, and a housing and construction company which is the fourth largest in Europe. That company is not concerned with building flats or houses only. A 50-storied hotel complex with a very sophisticated conference centre in Hamburg is an example of the type of construction undertaken by the company. These are some of the enterprises the trade union movement can undertake in West Germany, and if any members are able to visit that country they will find it has the best industrial relations in the world, because it has an understanding Government. I do not mean that it has a socialist or Labor Government; I mean it has a Government which understands the problems and is prepared to help solve

them. The Government understands the problems because the trade union movement in Germany was smashed by the Hitler regime, and the employers and the Government in West Germany do not want that to happen again and so they foster and encourage trade unionism.

This State Government would render a great service to many thousands of people in Western Australia if it continued the Tonkin Government's policy of trade union education and if it encouraged union participation in the management of its instrumentalities. It should also encourage its friends in private industry to adopt a similar policy. It should reverse its policies regarding the appointment of workmen to boards and commissions under its control, and assist the movement—not hinder it—in the presentation of its wage cases instead of blindly opposing them on all occasions. In the past because the trade union movement has made submissions, Governments with conservative inclinations feel they must oppose them.

I therefore exhort all members opposite who have any influence with the leaders in Government to constantly remind them that good industrial relations is one of the most important aspects—if not the most important aspect—of our society, and therefore the Government should ensure that a more forward looking and enlightened approach is adopted to it.

I would now like to speak about the laws of tort as they affect trade unionists. I must preface my remarks by saying that in my experience I have not known anyone in the trade union movement—either a trade union leader or a trade unionist—who has ever gained any joy out of being in a strike situation; and I say that with all sincerity because the strike weapon is the last resort. Every responsible trade union leader adopts that policy.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What about Jack Munday? Where would he rate?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: He is a person who has many friends in your camp too. He takes certain action in Sydney because he does not believe that old buildings should be pulled down.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I am talking about strike action.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: He is a great conservationist and a lot of people in wealthy and affluent circumstances support him in that respect.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: In that respect!

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You said, "friends in your camp". What do you mean by "in your camp"?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: He supports people who traditionally support the honourable member's party. There can be no denial; we are in two camps.

Point of Order

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I have a point of order under Standing Order 86.

The PRESIDENT: The Standing Order must be read and adhered to. If the words spoken by an honourable member are objected to by another member he can ask for those words to be withdrawn, but so far as I am concerned I do not find the expressions so far used by the honourable member to be objectionable.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Thank you, Mr President. If I say anything objectionable, or you consider it to be so, I will withdraw it.

The PRESIDENT: It is not a question of whether I consider it to be objectionable. It is a question of whether Mr Withers finds your words objectionable.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I find the words objectionable and I ask for their withdrawal. In reply to my question, "What do you mean by 'in your camp'?" Mr Cooley replied, in reference to Mr Jack Munday, that he supported people "who traditionally support you". I take this as an offence, "you" being "me, W. R. Withers, member for the North Province". I deny that I have ever been—or I ever will be—assisted by a communist.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member state the words he wishes to be withdrawn?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I ask him to withdraw the words "who traditionally support you".

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I was referring to the conservative Government.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mr Withers has asked Mr Cooley to withdraw the words. Will he please do so?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If he considers the words are offensive, I will certainly withdraw them. I was referring not to Mr Withers personally, but to the members of his party.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is still offensive.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Don't start something you can't finish—there is a long way in the session to go.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The words have been withdrawn.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I was replying to an interjection, but I am not too sure whether it is in accordance with Standing Orders to continue in that vein. I believe a large number of wealthy supporters of the Liberal Party do find common ground with Mr Munday on many things.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Only in regard to conservation, and nobody is arguing about that. You were speaking about strike action.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The trouble with the members opposite is that they think that because a trade unionist would support something said or done by a person of a different political philosophy, the trade unionist automatically supports that particular philosophy; that is not true at all.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I did not mention his politics. I mentioned the comments he made the other day about strikes.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I think Mr Clive Griffiths did say something about his being a communist.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I did not.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: In view of a recent industrial experience I believe I should make some reference in this speech to the laws of tort against unionists involved in industrial disputes. Calling again on my international experience, perhaps repeating myself, I would state that most free countries in the world will not accept any position in which the right of workers to withdraw their labour is denied them. The penal provisions of the arbitration laws in Australia are criticised in many countries, not only by unionists, but also by Government officials. Even employers are astounded that such a law should be imposed on workers in a free and democratic society.

The situation in which a Government can appoint a person to arbitrarily impose conditions of work on industry and then levy heavy fines if they are not complied with is not completely understood by many people in other countries concerned with industrial relations. This is because most democratic nations in the western world believe in a system of collective bargaining which was the subject of an interjection some time ago. Labour contracts between two parties—the unions and employers—are negotiated without Government interference. Both parties are then bound by the agreement and freely accept penalties if a part of such agreement stipulates that the laws of tort will apply if the contract is broken.

In 1969 in my travels overseas I had the very great privilege of attending a conference of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Brussels. I emphasise the word "free". I do not believe that a Labor Government was in office at the time, but the Minister for Labour of the Government of the day was called upon to open the conference, and during the course of his address he stated that his Government was proud of the right of the worker in his country to strike. He said he was equally proud of his Government's policy to settle disputes

when they arose; and this typifies the attitude of most leaders in Government in the free western world whatever the political colour of that Government.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What was the system? Was a contract made with the union before the job was commenced?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That is true. They enter into contractual arrangements with the unions, and the unions bind themselves to certain conditions.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is like the American system.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Perhaps it is taken from the American system, or the Americans may have taken it from the Europeans.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We had that system before it ever reached America. We have been bargaining for years, and holding to our contracts.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The penal provisions in the Arbitration Act have been rendered innocuous by the actions of the trade union movement in refusing to pay fines imposed under the Act. The Government in Western Australia should seriously consider introducing legislation to give immunity from the laws of tort so far as they relate to industrial action on the part of unionists and unions.

This suggestion is not made in an attempt to promote anarchy within the community but simply in the hope that a sensible approach will be made to industrial relations. My suggestion is a means of preventing what could be a head-on confrontation with the trade union movement should any industry or employer attempt to take court action. The Australian Council of Trade Unions has formulated a policy in this regard, and I will quote from the decision of the executive which was made at its meeting from the 20th to the 24th May. Among other things, it says—

The ACTU Executive declares that the tort action which was ordered to the overseas owned restaurant in Sydney, The Old Spaghetti Factory, against the Federated Liquor & Allied Industries Employees Union, its officers and Committee of Management members is an attack on the fundamental rights of unions to organise, and will be ultimately defeated by the full mobilisation of the trade unions. The ACTU affirms its previous decision that the use of proceedings in tort against union's right to organise must be resisted by the whole trade union movement.

In order to avoid a situation which could involve all workers throughout Australia, the ACTU demands that the employers should withdraw the writs immediately and call upon the

employees to become members of the Federated Liquor & Allied Employees Union.

Falling this, that the ACTU convene a meeting of unions and State branches to decide the most effective method of mobilising trade union movement to implement trade union policy in this regard.

That in itself gives food for thought in respect of what I am proposing. For many years an attempt was made to invoke the penal provisions of the Arbitration Act against workers and unions, but the workers do not want to be told they will go to gaol if they do not abide by a policy which will not give them a right to express their views by withdrawing their labour and engaging in industrial action. The sooner Governments realise this, the better it will be for all concerned. We will then be able to get down to decent industrial relations.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Or else what? If the Government does not realise it, what will you do?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am not making threats. I am making a suggestion which will possibly avoid a situation where there is a head-on confrontation between the trade union movement and the Government; but if a head-on confrontation with the whole trade union movement is wanted, members should cast their minds back to the events which took place earlier this year in England when the trade union movement was "taken on" by a Conservative Government, and they should remember what happened to that Government.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It has certainly brought England to its knees.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It has not. The Labor Government, with its understanding of the problems of workers and trade unions, got England out of the mess which was the product of the work of Conservative Governments.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Are contractual arrangements the ultimate aim?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That is the policy of the ACTU. The honourable member spoke yesterday about people being ignorant in respect of rural matters. If he wants to interject during my speech, perhaps he should read up on industrial relations.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I very politely asked a straightout question of you. Is that the ultimate aim?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am not being impolite. It might appear that way but I am not.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What guarantees have we that the unions will stick to the contracts?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The point I am trying to make is that when a union makes a contract, the agreement contains a stipulation that the law of tort will apply to any party which breaks the contract.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The present laws do not apply.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The present arbitration laws were made in 1912, in the horse and buggy days, when those who made the laws did not have the slightest conception of what would be going on in the world today. Because there has been a predominance of conservative Governments since that time, those laws have not been brought up to date. We have had a long period of conservative rule since federation, which has brought about a terrible situation in industrial relations in this country today.

The Hon. N. McNeill: The people must have kept those Governments in office.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I wish some members would realise that, in respect of the present Australian Government.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Are you not saying court action should be removed from union affairs? What will happen if the unions break agreements?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: We do not want laws to be imposed upon us by Government-appointed people saying what will happen if we break awards containing conditions which they have put in them. In this type of industrial relations a third party is imposing the conditions.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Who should appoint the conciliation and industrial commissioners?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is the very basis of industrial relations that the major parties involved be consulted. However, since the present Government took office it has appointed a person to the Industrial Commission without consulting either the trade union movement or the Employers Federation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have not answered my question.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Surely he is an unbiased individual.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I have a great deal of respect for the person who was appointed and I think he will do a good job.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Then what are you worried about?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am not worried. The basis of industrial relations, which the Government should understand, is that there are two parties—the employer and the union—and they should be consulted in any matters which relate to them.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Should they make the appointments?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I did not say that.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: That is what I want to know: who is to make the appointments?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Government must make the appointments under the present laws.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The Government should be praised for making an appointment with which one Mr Cooley can say he is delighted.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I like the individual but I do not like the things he represents. I feel the same way about the honourable member.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is understandable because you have already admitted he will do a good job.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: He will do a good job for the people who appointed him.

A recent dispute in this State involving the Metal Workers Union and Bell Bros. highlights the need for some reform in this regard, and I will relate some of the circumstances associated with that dispute. The workers at Bell Bros.—only 33 in all—withdrawed their labour because their employer attempted to absorb overaward payments into an increase in an award prescription. We had the situation where Bell Bros. was paying something between \$5 and \$10 in respect of what I think was called merit money. The Industrial Commission awarded these workers a legitimate increase as a flow-on from the Metal Trades Award, and Bell Bros. decided it would absorb the overaward payments into that prescription. The workers withdrew their labour because they regarded the action of the company as being unfair, and in my view the workers acted correctly.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: They had a contract.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How many contracts are broken in Australia? Do not interject when you know nothing about the matter.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There was an implied contract made to pour the concrete which was the subject of disputation the other day.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I find it difficult to understand how you can reach the conclusion that it was an unfair tactic on the part of Bell Bros.—and I have no love for Bell Bros., I might tell you. I used to employ people and pay them overaward rates, and sometimes I had to absorb the overaward payments.

The PRESIDENT: Order, please! The Hon. D. W. Cooley has the floor. If the honourable member wishes to make a speech he should get to his feet.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The workers were immediately dismissed from their employment when they withdrew their

labour, and they were stripped of all rights and privileges by their employer. Furthermore, the union was advised that upon settlement of the strike only 50 per cent of the workers involved in it would be re-instated. This involved the Trades and Labor Council in a matter of principle on the question of the preservation of workers' rights. When the employer refused the Trades and Labor Council's proposal to restore to workers their rights and privileges, sanctions were imposed against the company by all unions connected with it.

If that action had not been taken with respect to the withdrawal of all rights and privileges the Trades and Labor Council would not have been involved and it would have been a simple dispute between the union and the employer; but when the Trades and Labor Council stepped in, the secretary, most of the unions which imposed the sanctions, and ultimately all the workers involved in the dispute were issued with Supreme Court writs, primarily seeking an injunction of restraint, no doubt with the ultimate object of obtaining damages at law.

In accordance with its policy, which I have just read, the trade union movement in Western Australia geared itself for a confrontation with Bell Bros., and in these circumstances there is no doubt in my mind that had the writs been proceeded with and anybody had been gaoled or fined, the whole trade union movement in this State would have been involved. There could even have been a nationwide stoppage because the ACTU would have been brought into the matter.

My submission is that this kind of situation should be avoided wherever possible. In the case under discussion, the writs went to the Supreme Court, and when Mr Justice Wallace was hearing the action against Mr Coleman, the Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council, he said he granted the injunction against Mr Coleman with some misgivings; it could be ineffective and it seemed the day was not far off when damages in civil courts would no longer be available for parties involved in industrial disputes. No doubt the learned judge believes, as we do, that the civil court is not the place to resolve industrial disputation.

This observation by Mr Justice Wallace appeared to break the back of the dispute because the employer then decided to adopt a more realistic attitude. Bell Bros. abandoned the idea of absorbing overaward payments into the award increase, restored to its employees their former rights and privileges, and gave an undertaking to the Trades and Labor Council that all writs before the Supreme Court would be withdrawn.

It is therefore high time some provision was made to prevent employers adopting the same tactics as Bell Bros. did, because if this type of action is not curtailed an

explosive situation could develop which would damage the interests of all sections of our State.

I would like to quote from the *Journal of Industrial Relations*, volume 15, No. 3, of September, 1973, relating to civil law and the settlement of disputes. The author is Mr J. H. Portus, a Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commissioner, and the quotation is from a paper given to an Industrial Relations Society conference at Lyndoch, South Australia, in April, 1973.

Commissioner Portus referred to all the aspects of strikes related to the furtherance of wages and conditions of employment, and sanctions against employers who were involved in disputes. He also went into the question of whether unions had the right to have a closed shop wherein if a worker was employed in that shop and he would not join the union his employers could force him to join it. All these subjects were referred to in the paper Commissioner Portus submitted to the conference. In his conclusion he said—

I return now to the question should the civil law be available in the case of industrial disputes. On the basis of the limitations of the civil law already mentioned I would suggest that it should not be available in the case where the issue is demands for better wages and conditions. In any event, it has been pointed out that this type of case hardly ever arises.

In his summary he said—

In summary my object in the last part of this article is to open up some aspects which appear to me to merit discussion, but on the general theme it appears best that the law of torts should not apply to strike action. These torts should be confined to relationships between people which it is accepted by the community should be covered by the ordinary law. Industrial relations are not in this category. They are in a shadow land only partly within the law. Their most significant aspect deals with the co-operation between employer and union groups and this co-operation will at times break down and strikes will occur. In our present stage of society, this co-operation cannot be rigidly enforced by law.

That should be sufficient testimony to those who may have required any further proof that something should be done to remove the law of torts from the area of industrial disputes.

I would like now to turn my remarks to the very vexed question of inflation. I am not by any stretch of the imagination an economist, and I do not wish members to think I am an expert in this field because I certainly am not.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: That gives you as much authority as members opposite.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know as much as your leader does, so go ahead.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is obvious that neither the State nor the Federal Government has any ready-made overall cure for inflation either in the long term or the short term. It is a world-wide problem and a disease of modern times that cannot be completely cured. Our efforts should therefore be directed towards controlling that part of it which we have power to control. This can be achieved by some forms of restraint acceptable to all sections of the community.

I believe that most people who support the Labor Party—and after all that is the largest single section of our nation—would consider that the first move should be a form of price control of essential goods and services which contribute towards a reasonable standard of living for the average, middle, and low-income workers. We should also have control of rents on residential quarters up to a certain standard, and control of all forms of interest rates, together with control over profits.

The goods I refer to would include, of course, all those things which go towards making life comfortable, quite apart from the standard requirements. I am referring to things which have become accepted as normal comforts in the modern way of life, and they would include a television receiver, a refrigerator, and a motorcar of average size, etc. I think the prices of defined luxury items could continue without any form of control if that is so desired.

A move on the part of manufacturers, retailers, employers and, most importantly, the Conservative Governments of our country, towards support for this form of price and profit control would, I believe, be responded to in a favourable manner by the trade unions which believe that the time is now to adopt some form of restraint.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Who wrote that?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Nobody wrote it; it is an observation that I make.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I'm sorry.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Most responsible trade unionists believe that the time is right to adopt a policy of restraint if it means the curbing of inflation. There is no way in the world, however, to obtain an acceptance of restraint on the part of any union while prices and profits are rampant. I think the Australian Government has already taken action to bring about this situation. Information came into my possession only today that conferences will be held in accordance with the wishes expressed by the President of the Industrial Commission when he brought down the national wage decision in May. He expressed the wish that conferences

and meaningful discussions would be held in respect of this question. It will be proposed to unions that they confine their wage claims to a form of indexation, and this can only be achieved by consultation on a tripartite basis with Government, unions, and employers represented on an equal footing.

The problem cannot be solved by private industry and Governments on the one hand saying that they do not support any form of price control and unions on the other hand opposing wage control. I strenuously oppose total wage control, but I support restraint in wage claims if the nation is to benefit, provided that the necessary controls are imposed to prevent exploitation of that restraint. I think efforts are being made in other places to bring this about, and so I would leave my comments on this aspect of industrial relations until those determinations are made.

I believe a better way of life lies ahead for all of us if tolerance and understanding can be achieved. It is very disturbing to witness the almost carping attitude by the leaders of the present Government against the policies of the Australian Government. I realise that I touched on this matter yesterday, and I apologise for being repetitive. Certainly it can be recognised that differences must arise where there are opposite political views between State and Federal Governments. The attitude of our State Government towards the Federal Government reminds me very much of the attitude towards the trade union movement when a Liberal-Country Party Government was last in office.

Perhaps the interests of the State would be better served if the Government would face up to its responsibility and make its decisions in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time—even if it means an abrogation of electoral promises—and reserve its ideological differences with the Labor Party until a more appropriate time when the people of the State are called upon to judge its performance. I support the motion.

THE HON. T. KNIGHT (South) [5.39 p.m.]: Firstly, Mr President, I would like to extend to you my congratulations on your appointment to the deserved and esteemed position of President. I extend my congratulations also to our leader (the Hon. N. McNeill), the Leader of the Opposition (the Hon. R. Thompson), and to all members who have been appointed to positions of responsibility within this House.

I would like to pass on my thanks to all members and to the staff for the way in which they have received and welcomed me to the House. Many thanks also go to all the electors of the South Province who have honoured me with the position of representing them. I shall honestly and diligently work to show their

trust was not misplaced. Last, but by no means least, I thank my wife who helped me in so many ways to bring about my victory. Her understanding, loyalty, encouragement, and love were of tremendous assistance at all times and I am proud to have her support in this venture of helping in the governing of our great State.

I welcome the opportunity afforded me at this stage briefly to outline problems within my electorate and I hope that in the future I can be instrumental in alleviating some if not all of them. I believe the Legislative Council to be of the utmost importance to rural people, as this is where their voice is as great as that of city dwellers on a show of numbers. This is a House of Review and I intend at all times to support motions, resolutions, and Bills according to my conscience and the hopes of my electorate.

I wish to speak not only on my own province, but on all areas of the State outside the metropolitan area. Representing a country province makes me aware of the anomalies that exist for the people in country areas. Firstly, I believe that the small country town must be maintained at all costs to allow country dwellers the chance of having any service similar to that which exists in the city. We must see that the country hotel, store, garage and machinery dealer remain to give a service to the housewife, farmer, and worker. Without these necessities the country family must travel to the city for all requirements, yet we are killing the existence of these facilities by high freight rates and surcharges on goods to the country.

The State Government must look at ways and means of overcoming these anomalies either by subsidising freight or by insisting that the big firms charge that little bit extra in the city to alleviate the higher charges in the country. With 70 per cent of the State's population in the city, it would mean an increase of only a few cents for city people, but it would allow country dwellers to purchase commodities such as a packet of cigarettes a packet of weeties, a bottle of beer, etc.—the type of goods that are essential to normal living everywhere. How can we decentralise and ask wage earners to pay more by moving from the metropolitan area to the country unless we can offer them some incentives?

For instance, some months ago a bottle of beer cost 40c in Perth, and at that time it cost 55c in Albany. To enable that commodity to be purchased in Albany at the same price as it may be purchased in Perth, working on a 70 per cent-30 per cent population differential, would mean that Perth people would pay 5c more in order to allow country people to save 10c a bottle. In the case of a 10c per article differential, this would increase the cost

in Perth by only 3c in order that the price in Albany could be the same as that in Perth.

At the moment these small centres are struggling to exist because the country family decides to go to Perth for the weekend to buy its groceries, clothing, cool drinks, and a couple of cartons of beer. It will also purchase the petrol for the trip in Perth. Yet we expect the small country storekeeper, hotelier, and garage proprietor to give credit during the next bad season, because the big stores in the city will not give that credit to country people. I believe it is our duty as parliamentarians representing this great State of Western Australia and its people—not only in our own little electorates—to see that a reasonable standard of living exists for those country people on a footing equal to their city cousins.

Some small country towns are still waiting for electricity and water. Hopetoun, on the south coast, has no SEC power and no water. The people at the hotel, caravan park, and shops, and the local residents must cart water from a Government bore four miles from the town. I have now been told by the water supply authorities that this water cannot be reticulated because it is nonpotable. In effect this means that Hopetoun will lose its tourist trade because tourists will not suffer the inconveniences that we, the Government, expect the residents of Hopetoun to suffer. Many other small centres are suffering in similar circumstances. I refer to Nyabing, Pingrup, Munglinup, etc. Hopetoun in particular, as it is a coastal town offering beaches, has the necessary ingredients to make it a tourist and recreation centre for the area; but this must be forgone because the necessary services to make the tourist trade possible in the main are power and water, and Hopetoun has not those services.

How would the residents of Scarborough, City Beach, Cottesloe, and other metropolitan beach areas take this sort of treatment? I believe the Government has to show a more responsible attitude towards areas such as Hopetoun and make every endeavour to supply the necessities of life.

It is commonly said: Attract industries to a country centre and population will follow. I believe that by increasing the population of a country centre industry would follow the work force. I am told that the Indonesian Government is moving the population of complete villages from one area to another, and industry is following the new population in these built-up areas. It is my belief that if 10 000 people were lifted in bulk from the metropolitan area and landed in a town such as Albany, the extra homes, shops, services, and roads that would be required would employ the worker supporting a family for 12 to 18 months. By this time industry could be made aware of the situation of a regional

port with all facilities and a population of some 25 000. At present the population of Albany is 15 000. I am sure the existing industries would expand and new ones would be encouraged to move in.

In the case of Hopetoun the provision of power and water would attract population. More land needs to be opened up in Lake Grace, Newdegate, Ravensthorpe, and Jerramungup to increase population and to make their shires more viable to allow major works, such as road construction, etc. to be carried out.

It is up to the Government to sponsor and encourage decentralisation, and I believe the establishment of Government regional offices, as suggested by our Government, will help tremendously to increase population and services in country areas.

I should hope that Albany and Esperance would be designated as regional ports and afforded the trade of imports and exports through these ports to support the region that they serve. As Albany has become a major wool-selling centre over the past few years, I believe we should recommend that all wool sold at sales conducted in Albany should be shipped through the Port of Albany.

Another suggestion I support, due to the fact that wool is railed to Fremantle for shipment overseas, is that if all wool for Europe were shipped from Fremantle, after being railed from Albany, then all wool exported to, say, Japan, should be railed to and shipped from Albany. This would make the shipment of such wool more viable for shipping companies and the railways, as trucks carting wool to Fremantle for shipment to Europe could backload to Albany wool that had been sold in Fremantle for shipment to Japan.

Another industry based in Albany—the only shore-based whaling station in the Southern Hemisphere—has from time to time been threatened with closure by pressure from groups claiming that in the name of conservation whaling should cease. This is a viable industry employing 100 employees on an annual wage pay-out of approximately \$750 000. Of these 100 workers approximately 30 are family men, and to close down this industry would result in great financial hardship not only to families but also to the town's industries which are supported by some \$380 000 a year as payment for work done for the whaling company. The International Whaling Commission has carried out full-scale research into the question of whaling and has adopted a whaling quota which it maintains will not deplete the world stock of whales. We must therefore be very careful that a viable industry such as whaling is not closed by a group of emotional misguided people from other parts of the world.

The Albany Woollen Mills must be supported, as our Government has done in the past, to ensure that this important industry remains in Albany, as it has now become, under new, decisive, competitive, and progressive management, a viable industry.

I intend to support the concept of the Esperance meat exporters' proposed new abattoir at Esperance which will become a major industry in that area, serving farmers and residents alike. Esperance also has a great future as a regional port serving the goldfields, the nickel mines, the pastoralists, the graziers, and points north. The Government, through the Minister for Works and Water Supplies, has offered to supply sufficient water on the site for the works' operation at a cost of some \$250 000.

We must make sure that the great southern comprehensive water scheme goes ahead, firstly to help in the establishment of industry in the Albany port area, and secondly—but equally important—the provision of a water supply to Denmark, Mt. Barker, Cranbrook, Tambellup, Frankland, and Rocky Gully. These areas, particularly Cranbrook and Tambellup, during the drought of a few years back, suffered drastically due to water shortage, and many people were subjected to undue and impossible hardship. This must not be allowed to happen again and therefore we must press on with this most important project which is estimated to cost some \$17 million.

We have at the moment the nucleus of a wine-growing industry in the Mt. Barker-Frankland area and the first batches of wine produced in the area have been highly commended by experts. This industry must be fostered.

There are many problems to be solved throughout the vast area of the South Province which I represent, and it is my intention to endeavour to assist in the solution of all of them within my capacity.

I thank you, Sir, and members, for affording me the time to say my piece and I hope that in the future I will be able to bring forth issues that will benefit the electors of my province and the State of Western Australia in which it lies. I support the motion.

THE HON. T. O. PERRY (Lower Central) [5.52 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion moved by Mr Tozer and I compliment him on his maiden speech. It is fitting that he is aware of the problems of the North Province and, judging by the figures he quoted, it is evident that the pay packets of the workers in the North Province will not purchase as much as the pay packets of the workers in the south.

Mr Tozer evidently has ideas on decentralisation and I sincerely hope that he remains in this Chamber long enough to see some of those ideas come to fruition.

Through you, Sir, I would now like to speak to the Hon. D. W. Cooley. My father was about my age when I was born and he had a very sound understanding of the extremely unjust conditions that obtained in England in regard to young people who worked in the coalmining industry. By the time they were 18 or 20 years of age many lads who were engaged on coalmining were crippled or deformed and unable to do an honest day's work. Those people who, at that time, sought better conditions for coalminers were very brave people indeed. There were no social services and no trade union movement. The average family of a married man in those days comprised possibly eight to 10 children and the people who fought for better working conditions were often blackballed and unable to get a job in any mine. I repeat that those who realised the injustices obtaining in those days and who fought to bring about better working conditions were indeed very brave people.

Today I think the pendulum has swung completely in the other direction and we should realise that productivity will eventually decide the standard of living of every person in this State. My mind takes me back to the days when I earned my first pay packet by shearing sheep, not with the modern shearing equipment of today, but with the old hand shears. I do not know if there are many members in this Chamber who have sheared sheep with the blades. At that time the payment for shearing sheep was 19s per 100.

During the last session of Parliament I represented the electorate of Narrogin but as a result of the redistribution of seats this centre was removed from my province. I regret this because one builds up a close association with many people in a centre, and over a term I became familiar with the problems that faced the residents of that area. Therefore I am saddened at losing that district which used to be part of my province.

I have gained the electorate of Warren; a very picturesque part of the State noted for its production of timber, apples, lamb, and beef, and I believe that the hops farm at Pemberton is the only hops farm in Western Australia. It is very interesting to visit that farm to see how the hops are grown and the harvesting methods that are employed.

When I spoke on the Bill relating to the wood chipping industry I mentioned that the karri forests were in flower and it seemed that a good honey harvest was assured. Actually, in the early part of the flowering season very little nectar was produced, but later a large honey flow was experienced and a rich honey harvest was extracted from the hives. In my hand I have a sample of honey which I would like to present to you, Sir in a few minutes.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Are you trying to get sweet with him?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I can assure you, Sir, that in that jar of honey there are no wasps and no stings. I also have here an apple which is not of the export variety. It is an apple grown in the southern part of the State and of a type which is not exported overseas. Therefore I would like you to eat it and I hope it leaves a healthy taste in your mouth. I also have here a grapefruit. It is unfortunate that the Hon. N. E. Baxter is not present in the Chamber, because he could vouch for the fact that this grapefruit is very sour and bitter. If you would care to have it, Sir, you may, but if not I will give it to someone else.

The apple industry is facing the most difficult period of its existence. The loss of markets in England as a result of Britain joining the EEC is of great concern to those engaged in the apple industry. South Africa has a freight advantage of about \$1 a case over Australia. Of course this has meant that that country has taken from us many of our traditional markets. The market in Asian countries for red apples is quite good, but we do not export many red apples.

The apple cannery at Manjimup has offered a solution for the many oversized and undersized apples that are produced. The cannery ran into many teething troubles following its establishment and the former Minister for Agriculture (the Hon. H. D. Evans), who comes from Manjimup, had a good understanding of the apple industry, and the previous Government did give a great deal of financial support to the cannery. The cannery has now reached the point where it almost breaks even, and I believe that in the coming season we will see it making a profit.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The previous Government was criticised by some members in this Chamber for rendering that support.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I do not think I did.

The Hon. R. Thompson: No, not you.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I believe it was a good move and I consider that the cannery at Manjimup will prove of great benefit to the area.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I do not think there was much objection to the cannery itself; it was the way in which it was commenced that brought forth the criticism.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: During the peak of the cannery's operation it employs about 146 workers on wages and about 11 people on the salaried staff. A short time ago, because of the slackening of production, the number on the wages staff was reduced to 63 and, more recently, it was reduced to 40. This was as a result of a shortage of cans. Only one company in Australia produces the type of can—a tin-

plated can—that is suitable for the canning of fruit and which is used by the Manjimup cannery.

I sincerely hope the Minister for Industrial Development is aware of this and will do all he can to ensure that an adequate supply of cans is made available to the cannery. When the cannery is in full operation the wages bill is about \$8 000 a week.

When it goes on to what is termed a mini-shift in the evening the wages bill drops to about \$5,000 a week; but this is money that is being injected into the economy of Manjimup and as a result, not only do the fruit growers and those employed in the industry benefit but every person in Manjimup benefits.

Unfortunately the cannery only operates for about seven months of the year. It is essential that the farmers in the Manjimup area grow either a vegetable crop or a berry crop or some other crop that can be canned in order that the cannery might be kept operating for about 10 months. The cannery requires about two months as a shut-down period for maintenance and repairs, but to enable the best financial return to be obtained it should operate for at least 10 months.

The wool industry in Western Australia—indeed throughout the whole of Australia—has at the present time run into very serious financial difficulties. I am concerned that the Federal Government is not doing more to back the Wool Commission, and I am also concerned about the statements made by some of the Federal Ministers criticising the operations of the Wool Industry Commission.

I recall having listened to Dr Rex Patterson when he addressed two meetings—one at the Melville Civic Centre and the other in my home town of Dardan—when the present Labor Government was in opposition. He made rather sweeping promises and said that if the Labor Party were elected to office the Labor Government would bring about an orderly marketing scheme for wool.

I feel the present Federal Government has had plenty of time to implement these promises which, to me, have turned out to be empty promises. They were made, of course, by the shadow Minister for Primary Industries, but they were pretty worthless promises. Incidentally, the shadow Minister for Primary Industries did not become the Minister for Primary Industries or the Minister for Agriculture when Labor was eventually elected to office. I often feel the Labor Party also has a shadow Prime Minister. Dr Jim Cairns certainly seems to be the real force behind the Australian Government today.

The Hon. R. Thompson: He is a very good officer.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: What the wool industry needs is a method of selling which will iron out the large fluctuations between

the high and the low prices, and this can only be achieved by having one seller. If the entire Australian wool clip were acquired a supply management scheme could be brought into operation and wool could be fed onto the market in an orderly manner.

This could be achieved either through the auction system, by direct negotiation, or by a combination of the two systems. Feeding large quantities of wool onto the market at a time when there is practically no demand for wool, or when the market is depressed, can only react to the detriment of the producer and the industry.

When Japan bought large quantities of wool last season at high prices raw wool was denied to European countries such as France, Italy and Britain; countries which set the fashion for dress in the world.

It is essential that an authority be given power to direct wool supplies to areas where this is in the best interests of the industry.

Sitting suspended from 6.05 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: The Country Party has been accused of being racist, but I deny that. I deny it as a person who has played football with coloured people and as a person who has travelled many miles on the backs of trucks to football matches with them.

I have never been a very successful employer of Aboriginal people. I have tried it but perhaps because of a complete lack of understanding on my part I was not successful. I will recount my first experience of employing coloured labour. These people would not start until I had "subbed" them because, as they pointed out, they could not work without food. I think I "subbed" them £30 in the currency of that day, but after getting about £20 worth of work out of them they "subbed" again. This battle went on for some time until I reached the stage where I nearly broke even.

However, one Sunday morning a young Aborigine rushed in to my house and said that his wife was going to have a baby and asked if I would give him £20 so that he could take her to the hospital. I panicked, to a certain extent, wrote out a cheque and then gave him £20. I felt rather relieved and told my wife what I had done. My wife laughed her head off. She said she had seen the woman a couple of days previously and she was convinced the woman was not about to have a baby. I do not know how long a pregnancy takes for a coloured woman but at least two years elapsed before she had her baby, and I still have not got back my £20.

Notwithstanding that experience, as one who has sat on the Bench as a Justice of the Peace I think I have a fair amount of tolerance and understanding towards these people. I left this Chamber one night at about 11.30 p.m. and arrived home at

2 o'clock in the morning. I was immediately called out on an ambulance call to attend the native reserve at Darkan where a woman with a broken arm had been thrown into a fire. It was a real brawl after a pension day. I rounded up as many of the injured people as I could and transported them to the hospital at Collie which was a 40-mile trip each way.

It was daylight when I arrived home and I did not even go to bed. I submit that social service payments cause a lot of the trouble today, not only amongst the coloured people, but also amongst the white people. I believe the Commonwealth relief paid to unemployed people should be taken a step further, and that the people who receive benefits should work for that money unless they can produce a doctor's certificate to prove that they are medically unfit. I think that in those circumstances everyone would be much better off. Of course, this would apply just as much to white people as to coloured people.

In my own district, within the last 12 months, I know of one man who boasted that his wool cheque was in the vicinity of several hundred thousand dollars and his child was drawing social service payments. I do not think social service payments were ever meant for that kind of situation and I think it could be corrected. Work should be found for everybody and they should receive payment for the work they do.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is rather a contradiction of some of the speeches we heard last night when we were told that all the farmers were poor.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I quoted the case of one farmer; I did not say all farmers.

The Hon. J. Heitman: This was before the Federal Government came in. All farmers have been poor since.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The honourable member said that happened only this year.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I would like to move on to the question of coal. With the oil crisis which is facing the world today we are conscious of the need to find an alternative fuel. As one who has always supported the use of coal I am glad to say that many of the power stations in Western Australia are turning to the use of coal today.

Last night, in answer to a question I asked, we were told that the Muja power station was using 42 560 tonnes of coal per fortnight; the Bunbury power station was using 17 441 tonnes per fortnight; and I understand that the South Fremantle and East Perth power stations will be using coal before the end of the month. Cockburn Cement is using 300 000 tonnes of coal per annum, and at Capel they are using about 20 000 tonnes per annum.

It would appear to me that the consumption of coal in this State will rise to between 7 million and 8 million tonnes in the next few years. I believe we will reach the situation where in Western Australia about 25 per cent of our power will be derived from oil and gas, and 75 per cent will be derived from coal.

In answer to a question asked in another place, the known reserves of coal were quoted to be 282 million tonnes. However, that is a totally wrong estimate and I believe our reserves are nearly double that quantity. The State Electricity Commission has allowed itself to be carried away in the past and has been using oil for power generation. I do not believe that was a sensible course to follow. There should be a balance between the use of coal and oil. I understand that fuel oil at Collie would cost 3½ to four times as much as coal for power generation, and that coal would be cheaper than oil at Kwinana.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The Collie miners have been saying that for years.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I realise that, and I have said it myself.

I do not wish to keep on reiterating what has already been said in this Chamber, but a number of members have mentioned the meeting and the demonstration which took place at Forrest Place. I would like to examine what led up to that situation in its true perspective. It is all very well to shoot off one's mouth on the back of a truck when one is surrounded by 120 policemen.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: I did not say that.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I am not referring to what Mrs Vaughan said. However, that is a different situation from sitting in the back of a passenger bus in the north of the State. The people who attended the meeting at Forrest Place were deliberately incited by the speakers who were on the back of the truck.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Nonsense; they could not hear what was said.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: The honourable member could not hear, but other people present could hear what was being said. Would the honourable member agree that the Press reports were correct? On the 27th March, 1974, an article appeared in the Press under the heading, "Don't blame the farmers-union". The article, in part, read—

Mr T. E. Sullivan, said that the media coverage of the meeting placed the blame for the disturbance almost entirely on farmers.

This was totally unjust and misleading.

He said: "It seems that because farmers identified themselves by carrying placards, it was presumed

that they were the cause of all the trouble."

The union did not condone or take any responsibility for the demonstration, he said. It was coincidence that Mr Whitlam's address was on the same day as the union meeting at Subiaco.

Mr Sullivan said that people who attended the Forrest Place meeting told the union that though some farmers became noisy, they did not cause the jostling and other unseemly behaviour.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Of course, they were not unbiased, were they?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I do not think Mr Sullivan is biased. The honourable member knows him and could possibly discuss this matter with him. I have heard that the Minister for Community Welfare might be biased! To continue this article—

Though it was impossible to tell who was responsible for throwing the objects, one bystander, who was not a farmer, had said he knew that the can that hit Mr Whitlam was thrown by a non-member.

Mr Sullivan said: "There were apparently a number of other groups present in Forrest Place who did not identify themselves but who, we are told, were more to blame than the farmers for the trouble.

"They escaped mention by the media.

Witnesses had said that Mr Whitlam and the Federal Minister for Property and Services, Mr Daly, used such term as "yahoos, outsiders, blow-ins, bludgers, scabs and scum," Mr Sullivan claimed.

Is it denied that those terms were used at Forrest Place?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: I could not hear what anyone was saying.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Fair enough, the honourable member could not hear. In another article published in the Press the Hon. R. Thompson had the following to say—

Many of the objects thrown at Mr Whitlam had been thrown from waist-high. The police in the crowd could not see who was responsible.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Perhaps they had pie in their eyes.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: If the honourable member did not see what was going on she would have had only one eye. Another article which appeared in the Press was headed, "Wriedt backs WA farmers". This article appeared in the *Weekend News* of the 6th July of this year, and was as follows—

The Minister for Agriculture, Senator Wriedt, has lashed the Minister

for Services, Mr Daly, for antagonising WA farmers.

The following is the sort of thing he took exception to—

Mr Daly told the Forrest place crowd that a farmer had asked him for 10 cents for a parking meter because all the farmers had were \$10 notes.

The honourable member who has been interjecting can deny this statement if it is not correct.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Mr Daly did not say that. I am quite sure he did not say it.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What did he say; they had only \$5 bills instead of \$10 bills?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: On another occasion Mr Daly spoke as follows—

... he said that he apologised for being late at a function because he couldn't find a place to park his car because of all the farmers' Mercedes that were parked around the place.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Mr Daly did not say that.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Well, Mr Daly has not denied it. It is surprising that Senator Wriedt should come out and castigate Mr Daly for his deliberate antagonism towards farmers. Senator Wriedt has dissociated himself from the sarcastic remarks about the farmers' actions.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Does the honourable member believe that if Mr Daly said that there was justification for physical violence?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: No, I am not saying that. I have seen riots as a matter of fact. On the 27th March I left Perth on the way to Colle. I had some materials to pick up at Armadale, and so I travelled along the South West Highway. I picked up a young lad at Pinjarra. He told me he was a welder but as he had some eye trouble he had been advised to give up welding. He was off to Bunbury to seek employment. He claimed that he was at Forrest Place and he was so disgusted at the comments made there that he had thrown missiles. He was not a farmer. I cautioned this lad that having seen riots in other places, I knew how quickly demonstrations of this description could become riots.

Of these 10 000 people at Forrest Place, the percentage of farmers was very small.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: That is quite incorrect.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Of the 10 000 people at Forrest Place that day, the percentage of farmers was very small.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Why were 2 000 of them at a farmers' meeting an hour and a half later?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Dirty, scurrilous, lying statements do nothing to bring about good relations.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: If you were jostled, pushed around, and had things thrown at you, would you feel like promoting good relations with these people?

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I certainly would not incite them.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Mr Thompson, the leader of the Opposition in this House, said—

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I was actually pushed around by a person who admitted he was a farmer—physically pushed around.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The 129 policemen could not observe what was going on amongst 10 000 people.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: If these 129 policemen could not observe what was going on, how can individuals say that they knew what was going on?

The Hon. R. Thompson: Possibly people standing on the trucks could see where the missiles were coming from.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Do you reckon there were 10 000 there?

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Yes.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Why was it there were only 6 000 at Subiaco? Where did the other 4 000 come from?

The Hon. R. Thompson: They were held up by the traffic—they could not get there.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: I am glad to say some of the farmers are honest and they have admitted they were there and that they threw things.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mr Perry, will you continue with your remarks?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: To put the record straight, I did not say that the farmers admitted they were there and had thrown objects. I said some farmers were there, but the Leader of the Opposition in this House has said that the 129 policemen could not identify any of the throwers.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He seemed to be quite satisfied with the police action. At the time he said he was very satisfied with the action taken by the police.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I still am.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Why are you suggesting they were not capable of seeing what went on?

The Hon. R. Thompson: You must realise that 129 police could not control 10 000 people. I think the police acted very responsibly.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: They did indeed. I would have thought the Minister would have sent more police down.

The PRESIDENT: Mr Perry, will you continue your remarks, please, and ignore the interjections?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Thank you, Mr President. I must say, however, in reply to one of the interjections made by Mr Clive Griffiths, that the Press report at the time bears out Mr Thompson's statement. It is headed, "Satisfied", and it says—

Mr Thompson said that he and the Premier, Mr Tonkin, were satisfied with the way the police had handled the situation.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Yes, I know.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Tedious repetition!

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I come from a farming family, and I have mixed all my life with country folk. I remember back as far as the depression years when the lot of the farmers was a very hard one. As we move around this building we see evidence of men who have come from the land and who have contributed tremendously to the prosperity of Western Australia. I can think of Lord Forrest, Sir James Mitchell, and past-Presidents of the Legislative Council. When the history of the day and age in which we are living is written, and it will be recorded accurately, Sir David Brand will go down as the greatest Premier Western Australia has ever had.

Government members: Hear, hear!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What has that to do with it?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I am speaking about men who come from the land. We have heard such a lot of rubbish about farmers and the farming community.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: From whom? Who said anything nasty about the farmers?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Read next week's copy of *Hansard*, or even last week's will do.

I made the statement in this Chamber that it is the Labor Party's policy to abolish State Governments. This is the avowed declaration made by Mr Whitlam. I would like to read to members from *Labor and the Constitution*, and I am sorry that Mr Cooley is not here at present. This book was written by E. G. Whitlam, QC, MP, and under the heading "The Role of State Members" he said—

Much can be achieved by Labor members of the State Parliaments in effectuating Labor's aims of more effective powers for the national parliament and for local government. Their role is to bring about their own dissolution.

I was challenged on this point last night, but that statement appears in the book, *Labor and the Constitution*.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Anyhow, his actions leave no doubt about what he is doing.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Members know what is going on in Canberra.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You do not have to read the book.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: His plans are not all working out satisfactorily. Last Saturday we saw an article headed, "PM says faith in Government Shaken" in *The West Australian*. It commences—

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, admitted yesterday that public confidence in the Government had been undermined by disagreements by ministers and the Labor caucus.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That was the understatement of the year!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: No, that would be in *The West Australian*!

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: The words quoted were the words of the Prime Minister. I have no doubt that not only is the faith in the Government shaken as far as members of the Labor Party are concerned, but also as far as the whole of Australia is concerned.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I would love to quote some of the Press statements made by Mr McMahon when he was Prime Minister.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Mr Mc—who?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: We have the worst Federal Government since federation.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What a joke! The people have just re-elected it.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: The people of this day and age will live long enough to see the truth in my words. I support the motion.

THE HON. M. McALEER (Upper West) [7.53 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to join with other members in congratulating you, Mr President, on your appointment to your high office in this House. I congratulate the Leader of the House, his fellow Ministers, and also the Leader of the Opposition. I take special pleasure in congratulating the Hon. Jack Heitman on his election as Chairman of Committees. He is my colleague in the Upper West Province, and because I owe so much to his help and advice, I would like to thank the officers of the House and the staff for their help to me and to other new members.

Mr President, these are very uneasy times for us all. Inflation is such that even those who are able to ride the wave

and take advantage of it to get ahead are concerned about their destination. It is an alarming time for those who are left behind, whether they are people on low incomes, retired people on fixed incomes, pensioners, or people living in disadvantaged areas.

In varying degrees it is an anxious time for farmers and for all people in the country, whether they work on the land or in the towns. By extension it is an anxious time for those people who live in the metropolitan area but who work in businesses which service the rural community.

The Upper West Province which I represent is a very large one, but it has only one town of any size—Geraldton. Apart from the important fishing industry and the mineral sands development at Eneabba and Jurien, the people of the province are dependent almost entirely, directly and indirectly, on the farming and grazing industries. Their problems and their hopes can be duplicated in many parts of the State.

Twelve months ago, with some months of extraordinary wool prices behind them, an enormous wheat quota to fill, cattle at premium prices, and high prices predicted for barley and for the new crop of white lupins, growers in my electorate, like growers throughout the wheatbelt and pastoral areas, saw daylight for the first time after four years of depressed prices, a heavy and increasing debt burden, and some very real hardship. Because the Federal Government chose this moment to foreshadow the termination of the superphosphate subsidy and to remove or reduce taxation concessions on plant, clearing, farm housing, water and soil conservation, these measures had at least an air of plausibility and in some respect lessened their impact. There were, of course, vociferous protests but they went unheeded.

Of almost equal importance at that time was the fact that shortages had developed in supplies of new machinery, parts, fencing materials, and in practically all the things that were needed to make up the backlog of maintenance which had accumulated over the four depressed years.

Fortunately the season was, in general, a good one. Prices were generally good although wool declined and lupins were disappointing. However, so much of the money which should have been put back into the land was not put back, partly because of the shortages, partly because provision had to be made to meet the increased taxation, and partly because much money had to go towards repaying the debt.

Now many of the bright prospects have vanished with the virtual collapse of the wool market and its uncertain future, with increased costs, particularly as a result of the new shearing award. Lupins now have

a big question mark against them and they are the hope of the light lands, because they are the only practical alternative commercial crop to cereals. They have this question mark because they are heavily dependent on superphosphate and the market for them is uncertain. Beef and mutton prices are depressed; grain markets certainly remain, but with the prospect of reduced profitability, because all charges have risen, particularly fuel. Added to this will be the almost tripling of superphosphate prices which will occur when the bounty is removed.

A great deal of publicity has been given to the high world prices for wheat. However, it must be remembered that the only benefit the growers obtained from last season's crop was the extra 10c on the first advance, bringing the payment to \$1.20. The proposed second advance in August has been deferred largely because of the slow turn-around of shipping in the Eastern States. This will erode the ultimate price.

The immediate effect has been a contraction of bank credit, and farmers who took the proposed payment into account for budgeting purposes have found themselves in an embarrassing position.

It is no wonder that, given the conclusion of an unsatisfactory wheat stabilisation agreement, interest still remains in a State wheat marketing plan. While it is possible to show advantages for a national as well as a State scheme, I hope the Government will press on seriously with its study of a wheat marketing scheme for Western Australia so that we may in times to come have a feasible alternative.

I welcome the Government's intention to support the retention of the superphosphate bounty. I welcome its intention to examine and review the organisation and techniques of marketing rural products. The land in Western Australia is one of our few permanent or renewable great natural resources. Apart from minerals, it is our only great natural resource that we have been able to develop extensively although our soils are poor by world standards. We believe that its preservation and development are in the interests of the nation as well as those of the State; but we are certainly dependent on world markets for all our products.

It is important that we do not price ourselves out of those markets which exist and that we should not rest in seeking to improve our position in such a competitive situation. I hope that with other matters the Government, beset though it is with budgetary difficulties, will bear in mind that country people—not simply farmers—are very vulnerable to rises in all sorts of charges, but more especially to increases in freight rates.

It may be that our small rural population could hardly ever justify the large investment needed to provide it with facilities

and amenities enjoyed by people in the city. But, looked at as an investment for the development of the country for the benefit of all, it can be justified. When I say "development", in this sense I mean not simply the development of primary industries, rural, mining, or fishing as they may occur; I refer to the establishment wherever possible of light industry and concentrations of industry where circumstances favour it. It is not possible of course to establish even the lightest of light industry if we do not have the basic facilities of transport, water, power, and good communications; and given our geographic circumstances I believe that a far greater incentive may be necessary in Western Australia than that which the Government already offers. I have in mind something substantial such as concessions in pay-roll tax.

However, industrial development apart, I think we all face the fact—heaven knows, it is said often enough—that people will not remain in the country if they are not given these basic things and other amenities such as housing and medical care, because the expectations of people everywhere have risen. They are no longer content to spend endless years of deprivation in the bush when they could be comfortable in Perth.

In the northern end of my province, the Government has honoured its promise to deepen the existing harbour at Geraldton and I believe very little more can be done to improve the harbour as it exists today. But the people of the area look forward to significant mining developments in the Murchison which would justify the provision of a deep-water port, and to the associated processing industries, accompanied by tertiary and service industries. This would benefit the whole area. Even without this development, the very size of Geraldton and the number of people it serves as a town and in the vast hinterland behind it must justify a strong claim on the Government's attention.

All the same, in the Greenough and Moore electorates—that is, in the northern, central, and southern parts of the province which stretches, as members would know, from Kalbarri to Gingin and from Goomalling to Pindar—the day-to-day needs of the people are served by the small agricultural and fishing towns. There is a school of thought which contends that we should abandon the struggle to maintain small towns and concentrate our resources on the development of large centres, but in this province the distance between such possible centres would be so great as to defeat the whole objective of the exercise—at least, while we are confined to our present modes of transport.

In the small coastal towns in the Shires of Gingin, Dandaragan, Coorow, Carnamah and Northampton, development is being delayed by the lack of many essential

services. Money is an object and it is a question of priorities. Many of these towns are fishing villages with a population that comes and goes with the season. Still, once we discipline people into townsites rather than let them squat at will, with all the problems that that brings, we incur a responsibility for them and this creates pressure points. The coastal towns, from north to south, essentially have the same problems. In fact, they are part of the one coastal region. Some of them have distinct tourist possibilities.

Jurien and Eneabba—which is not exactly coastal but is related to the coastal area—have a future as centres of mineral sands development. In every case, the problems are beyond the resources of the local authority and the local shires, where they are located and whose rate revenue is based almost entirely on farming land. The only satisfactory solution is to have close co-operation between all the Government departments involved, the shires and the local people. It might be said that this is already so in principle and partly in fact. I know of cases where very strenuous efforts have been made by individual departments. Nevertheless conditions change and plans have to be changed, and personnel in departments change. There is a lack of easy communication between all the parties involved and this causes delays and breeds dissatisfaction.

It often seems that people who pioneer the area, take the early risks, and suffer the hardships are those who lose out, and that starting in almost virgin circumstances, opportunities for the best possible development are lost. I support the suggestion of Sir David Brand—I hope it is the Government's intention to do this—that a small co-ordinating committee should be established to oversee and help plan the development of Eneabba and Jurien Bay and, further, I believe that a close look should be given to the entire coastal area as one entity.

Now is a particularly good time to do so because we seem to be at a turning point in the fishing industry. Perhaps members will have read the article written by Mr Kallis and published in last Monday's *The West Australian*, and are aware of the disabilities now being faced by the rock lobster industry through revaluation, inflation, and a declining market. While it is true that there is quite a lot to be learnt about the rock lobster industry and a vast area of research to be covered, at this time we cannot expect any expansion of that industry. This development has led to an expansion in the search for other avenues in the fishing industry, such as, for instance, prawning as far south as the Abrolhos and purse seining. However, this area of fishing requires large capital investment and special efforts must be made if the industry is not simply to become the preserve of a few large companies.

Throughout the many districts in the country people have a strong desire to preserve their local identity and local institutions, and a degree of local autonomy. Sometimes, they defeat their own purpose by bypassing their own small towns, but it is not merely a pious sentiment. They work hard and freely on shire councils. They work for their kindergartens, their schools, and, if they are lucky enough to have one, their hospital, their churches, sporting bodies, and clubs. Some districts are developing as cultural centres for the arts and crafts and nearly all are seized with enthusiasm for historical remnants and records. All these things are good; they stabilise people in the country and add to the attractiveness of country life and they need to be encouraged.

However, if there is one thing that destabilises people in the country more than the lack of work opportunities it is limited education opportunities. These days, people in the country are not willing to allow their children to lose education opportunities, knowing that when they leave school they will have to compete with city children. As in the days of the Brand Government, when the great expansion of junior high schools took place, there is now hardly a town of any size in the country which does not aspire to having a senior secondary high school with all the attendant cost of building with the need to supply staff, for a suitable range of courses and a high quality of teaching. This great upsurge of interest in secondary education has come at a time when the problems in the primary schools and the old established junior high schools are not yet solved. There is a continuing need to renovate, repair, and extend old buildings. There is a lack of classrooms, resource centres, adequate storage space, adequate space for staff and—this is always a problem—a lack of teacher housing. Finally, there is the problem of hostels, which seem to be required because of the distances children travel, yet which suffer from fluctuating numbers, and which must be run by somebody but still not be too great a drain on the community.

Of course, the Government is aware of all these problems and is pressing on with the provision of new classrooms and resource centres. But the list is very long and resources are limited. It is hard to eliminate waste and in the past at any rate there has been some reason to believe that metropolitan schools have skimmed the available money. I believe that the increasing availability of technological aids such as cassettes and videotapes will go some way towards solving the problems of the small and remote schools. I welcome the Government's initiative in planning to lower the school entrance age to the year in which the child turns five because I believe that in time this will be of as

great an advantage to country children as it will be to metropolitan children, especially to those in disadvantaged areas.

There are many problems in the technical and tertiary areas which trouble the country, and I will not labour them now except to say that I hope the experiments in open education which the universities and the Western Australian Institute of Technology are undertaking will be of great benefit to the country and will not overlap each other wastefully.

In conclusion I should like to turn briefly to the problems of another generation and to those members of it who are pensioners. Pensioners in country areas do have disadvantages not experienced by those in the city, particularly in the field of transport, because in country areas there is very little public transport. In a town like Geraldton which is widespread and straggling but which has only one main business and professional centre it is simply not possible to walk to it from many parts of the town, and it is equally impossible just to stay in one's own small neighbourhood. There is no bus service because it cannot be made to pay, and the only choice is between taking taxis, keeping a car, or relying on friends. Further out in the country, of course, the choice is narrower. I hope the Government will give consideration to this problem because I think it is a sad state of affairs when people are forced to leave their environment and move to the city in their old age for want of suitable transport. I think the people of the country are poorer for it.

If it is not possible to provide subsidies for buses, perhaps it may be possible to provide a fortnightly taxi subsidy. In any case I am sure that some immediate relief could be given by allowing reasonable concessions on car licenses, and I was glad to hear that the Government was considering such a course. I have touched on a few aspects of the life and problems of the people living in my electorate. Some I have not mentioned. Most of the problems to which I have referred are well known to members. But unless we consider these things, we will miss the opportunity to solve them when it occurs.

I thank the people of the Upper West Province for electing me as their representative. They may not be as many in number as electors in the metropolitan provinces but they are scattered over a very wide area; and many of the handicaps and disadvantages outlined by the Hon. Grace Vaughan are suffered by people in my electorate. These are compounded by the distances they must travel and their remoteness from institutions and agencies which could help them. For those and other reasons I believe that they place more reliance on their members of Parliament than do city people. In any case, I cannot think they are over-represented. I support the motion.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) (8.14 p.m.): I take this opportunity during the debate on the Address-in-Reply to offer my congratulations to you, Mr President, on your attainment of that high office. I also extend my congratulations to Mr McNeill, his fellow Ministers, Mr Thompson as Leader of the Opposition, and other office bearers on their election to their respective offices.

I also extend my personal welcome to the members who have recently been elected for the first time and I congratulate those who have been re-elected for a further term.

I believe this Chamber will be the richer for the presence of the new members and their expressions of opinion. I am quite sure that the address to which we all listened attentively a moment ago from the Hon. Margaret McAleer amply demonstrates her clarity of thinking, depth of understanding, and dedication of purpose which she displayed without political dramatics.

The honourable member must indeed be congratulated on her very sincere understanding of the many facets of life in a large rural electorate. I believe the Hon. Grace Vaughan concurs with her thoughts because on page 107 of *Hansard*, she said—

As legislators we should be sounding out the people and listening to their views. We should be getting out into our electorates to meet the people whose opinion is indicative of the grass roots of the electorate.

We had an elegant demonstration from the Hon. Margaret McAleer when she expressed her innermost thoughts in a most capable and considerate manner; and I look forward to her further contributions in this Chamber over many years to come. I believe we will be the richer for her assistance in the work in this House.

I would like to raise one item in particular during the privilege extended to us on this debate; that is, the problem of beach front erosion which is nothing new. It has been with us since time immemorial, but I suggest that man-made developments have accentuated the problem in a number of locations around the Australian coastline. Possibly the worst example of this would be at Surfers Paradise in Queensland.

More recently in Western Australia the coastlines at Busselton and Mandurah have suffered adversely. Some lesser damage has been experienced at other points, but I suggest that in more recent times the Busselton and Mandurah areas have been the ones which have been affected the most.

The erosion along the beach front is in my view caused mainly by man-made obstructions such as groynes, jetties, boat ramps, and the like which alter the currents and the movement of sand along the shore. It is well known that on the south-west coastline of this State the water drift

is from the south to the north. Many subdivisions have been established too close to the coastline. Indeed in some cases the buildings are erected on nothing but sand dunes. When this occurs and roads and parking areas are also constructed on unstable sand, it is only to be expected that problems will arise. I am concerned that this type of development has been allowed in places where it was obvious that problems would occur in the future. It has been pointed out to me by engineers who I believe are competent to judge that even if a parking area is constructed near a beach front the water pattern from rainfall can be altered even if the area is covered only with gravel. As a result serious erosion problems can occur in the area. I am explaining this to show how some of the problems are caused.

The Government is not unmindful of the difficulties on our Western Australian coastline and I am very pleased that it has in fact established an advisory group under the chairmanship of the Director of Engineering from the Public Works Department to look at this very problem. The group will include representatives from the Departments of Town Planning, Agriculture, and Lands, and from the EPA. I am particularly pleased to note that the Government will be inviting local authority organisations to nominate two representatives to serve with the group. This is important because local authority people have a very keen interest in problems of this nature and they have had experience at the local level. One could refer again to the grass roots level, I suppose. It is only right that these people should be invited to participate.

A coastal management organisation will also be established in the Public Works Department to investigate existing and potential erosion problems. In the meantime, through its engineering section, the department is continuing its research in an endeavour to find remedial methods to combat the erosion.

In some cases not only must the beach front be restored, but some roads must be re-established because they have been destroyed by the sea action. The cost of such repairs is considerable and those local authorities which have within their boundaries coastlines of this nature have a further burden placed upon them which other shires do not have. One may argue, of course, that shires in inland areas have other disabilities, and I do not disagree with this. However, some shires have coastline within their boundaries and they experience special problems. I am therefore pleased that this Government has recently announced a policy under which beach restoration work will be carried out with the Public Works Department providing \$3 for every \$1 contributed by a local authority. This is a real breakthrough. I do not believe that there has been any firm policy in the past, but the present

Government has recognised this special need and I appreciate the fact that it has tackled the problem in a practical way.

It is not accepting full responsibility for the work because it recognises that the local authorities involved must accept responsibility for the total area within the boundaries and all the problems associated with it. I agree with this and believe that the local authority should contribute in some way. Under the new formula the local authority will contribute 25 per cent of the cost and the Government, through the Public Works Department, will contribute 75 per cent up to a certain amount. It will not be an open-ended agreement, but at least it is a breakthrough about which I am very pleased, particularly because it will help the difficulties facing the Busselton Shire. I refer specifically to that shire because it happens to be in the province I represent. It is a responsible shire and over the years it has tackled the problem willingly and has carried out a tremendous amount of repair work at its own expense.

Real damage was caused by a storm during the first weekend in June of this year. A tremendously strong storm swept in from the ocean and the barometric pressure was very low. I am informed by marine experts that because of the low barometric pressure the sea level would have been raised by approximately 2 feet. Because of that and the high tide and strong wind which coincided with the storm, an excessive amount of damage occurred. Storms of lesser violence have been experienced since then and have compounded the problem along the foreshore.

It can be said that eroded beach fronts can be restored easily by a number of methods one of which is to pour in sand to replace that which has been washed away. Instead of sand, either gravel or rock boulders can be used. Of course these methods are only temporary and they are certainly costly. The mere fact that the beach is being eroded by the movement of drift up the coast taking the sand away means that we have, in fact, a shortage of sand. It might sound peculiar to say that we have a shortage of sand along the beach, but this is an actual fact, particularly in the lower part of the south-western coastline. For instance, if at Mandurah or at Busselton, one were to build a rock wall, the wall would have to be of such magnitude that the sea water could not get around behind the wall to wash out the sides and undermine the bottom of it. Given time, those rocks would, in fact, be sucked back into the ocean and one would be back to first base.

So, for a wall to be effective it must be built on the same principle as the erection of a rock-filled wall for a dam; that is, the fines in the middle, and the larger rocks on the outside, to ensure the water does not get through or behind the wall.

That type of construction is all very well for a dam wall, but members can appreciate the effect such a wall would have on a scenic drive along the waterfront in a tourist resort. No longer would the visitors be able to look out over the ocean because the wall would be, in some cases, several feet higher than the surrounding ground. Tourists and residents would see nothing but a wall when driving along the scenic roadway. Furthermore, the beach on the ocean side of the wall would be lost because of the action of the sea coming in and smashing itself on the wall. The energy of the water goes sideways and underneath, scouring out the sand, and dragging it back into the ocean.

In a tourist town, of course, this situation presents serious difficulties.

I am aware of the problem and I believe other members should be made aware of it also. Beach erosion is no good for the district concerned and is certainly detrimental to tourism. I am therefore delighted that the Government has taken a practical step in an effort to alleviate the financial burden on local authorities. It is adopting a formula of \$3 to \$1 to meet the costs involved in beach restoration. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. S. J. Dellar.

House adjourned at 8.30 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 7th August, 1974

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

QUESTIONS (59): ON NOTICE

1. ALBANY HIGHWAY

Improvements

Mr P. V. JONES, to the Minister for Traffic Safety:

Having regard to the number of traffic accidents on the Albany Highway, especially between the 99 and 130 kilometre pegs,

- (a) what work will be carried out during the current year to improve the highway;
- (b) will most expenditure on the highway during the current year be concentrated on the above section;
- (c) will he arrange for additional warning road signs to be erected along the above section pending improvements to the highway?