

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 22 September 1987

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 2.15 pm, and read prayers.

VIDEO TAPES CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROL BILL

Amendment: Petitions

MR HOUSE (Katanning-Roe) [2.18 pm]: I have a petition which reads as follows --

To the Honourable the Speaker, and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia assembled

We, the undersigned, request that Parliament amend the VIDEO BILL to grant the people legal standing, and power of appeal, and review, so that we can have a ban placed on those unconscionable videotapes which we find are beyond the pale, and which are severely damaging the social environment.

We request that Parliament carry out its promise to make possession of child pornography a criminal offence, and set severe penalties for the possession of child pornography, bestiality, terrorism, drug promotion, rape and incest tapes.

The petition bears six signatures, and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No 61.)

Similar petitions were presented by Mr Trenorden (849 persons), and Mr MacKinnon (25 persons).

(See petitions Nos 62 and 63.)

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT ACT

Report Tabling: Extension of Time

THE SPEAKER: I have been informed of the following ministerial approval for an extension of time for the presentation of an annual report in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act --

The Minister for Community Services --

1987 Annual Report for the Department of Community Services.

I table the relevant correspondence.

(See paper No 351.)

CRIME

Increase: Matter of Public Importance

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I received today at the appropriate time a letter from the member for Mt Lawley indicating that he wished to move as a matter of public importance, a motion relating to the increase in crime in Western Australia.

[Eight members rose in their places.]

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Sessional Order, half an hour will be allocated to each side of the House for the purpose of this debate.

MR CASH (Mt Lawley) [2.25 pm]: I move --

That this House --

(1) calls on the Government to urgently table the 1986/87 annual report of the Commissioner of Police, in view of recent media reports that the Commissioner of Police has stated that crime has increased by 21.9 per cent in Western Australia in the last year;

(2) condemns the Government's defeatist attitude to this escalating crime rate which it falsely claims is a "worldwide trend"; and

- (3) further calls on the Government to detail specific measures aimed at protecting the law-abiding people of Western Australia by reducing the current level of crime in this State.

In the weekend the public of Western Australia were advised by the Commissioner of Police by way of media reports, which were reporting his internal police magazine *Newsbeat*, that in the past 12 months in Western Australia the crime rate has increased by a staggering 22 per cent. Normally one would get that information from the commissioner's annual report which is tabled in the Parliament; but, regrettably, to date that report has not been tabled. That in itself raises some questions in respect of the handling of his portfolio by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

The statistics are clear. Last year in this State the crime rate rose by 22 per cent, which has some frightening implications for all Western Australians. For instance, it means that one in nine Western Australians -- men, women, and children -- will be a victim of crime this year. Of the 57 members of this Chamber, at least 10 will either be beaten up, have their car stolen, or have their home broken into in the forthcoming year. Urgent action must be taken by the Government to make sure that the commissioner's annual report is tabled in this House so that the media, the Opposition, and, more importantly, the people of Western Australia can study that report and understand the dire straights in which we now find ourselves with respect to the crime crisis in this State.

The people of Western Australia would say that the Government should be ashamed of its appalling record on the issue of law and order. Most members recognise that law and order is the fundamental responsibility of Government; if it cannot protect the citizens of this State, if it cannot protect our youngsters from drug pedlars pushing drugs in the schools and prevent them from becoming drug addicts, what is the good of talking about better schools and the Better Schools report? What is the point of the people in this State working hard to buy houses, motor vehicles, or other assets only to find that those assets will be vandalised or they will be robbed of them. Where is the protection for the people who want to enjoy some leisure in this State? From the figures released in the weekend we can see that every five and a half hours someone in Western Australia will be physically assaulted. Members will recall that towards the end of the last session of this Parliament I raised the disgraceful incident of the assault which took place outside the Red Parrot nightclub in Roe Street, Perth and regrettably led to the death of an 18-year-old youth.

One of the problems in this State at the moment is that the Government says it is in the business of trying to protect the citizens and fight crime, and that it will come up with an initiative. The only initiative the Government has come up with in recent times is to make it compulsory for all motorists to install some steering lock device. What an absolute joke to say to the people of Western Australia, "It is your fault if your car is stolen"! I wonder what we will have next. Will the Government say to the people of Western Australia that they must fit bars on the windows of their houses and fit deadlocks to the doors to make sure that their houses are not broken into?

If one takes the logic of that a step further, we would have a situation where the Government, instead of prosecuting the criminal, would end up prosecuting the law-abiding citizen for allowing his house to be broken into. If we end up in that situation, we will actually be building fortresses out of our homes.

One has only to look at the statistics in the commissioner's *Newsbeat* report to see that in the last five years the crime statistics in Western Australia have become dramatically worse. In 1983, when this Government came to office, the number of assaults was 4 511. Today, five years later, the projected figures for this year show that the number of assaults will be 5 726. Five years ago the number of housebreakings was 24 412. Today it is estimated that it will be 34 806. As far as stolen cars are concerned -- and most members would have been approached by people who have had their car stolen -- five years ago the number of stolen cars in this State was 6 393. Today it is estimated the figure will be 13 008; that is an increase of 103 per cent in that short period of time.

What about drug abuse? How many times have members heard me stand in this place and claim that this Government is not only soft on crime, but worse than that, soft on drugs? The drug offence figure in 1983 was 2 573. Today it is estimated to be 6 076. That is a staggering 136 per cent increase in just under five years. What does the Government say about that? What is it going to do about the drug problem in Western Australia?

Those are the cold, hard statistics of what crime is all about. But worse than that; crime also is about people. It is about the frightened victims who have suffered at the hands of the criminals. It is about mothers who are afraid to let their children go to the movies for fear that those children will become one of the one in five who are assaulted in this State every 24 hours.

What about the pensioners and the elderly people? They are afraid to leave their homes because if they do theirs may be one of the 95 homes which are broken into every 24 hours in this State.

Does the Government not care about the people? Does it not care about law-abiding citizens? Does it not want to do something to protect the law-abiding citizens? Obviously not. It seems more inclined to want to protect the criminals.

Another point which concerns me is the Government's excuse for the rise in crime in Western Australia; and I have already said it rose by a staggering 22 per cent last year. The Government claims this is nothing more than a worldwide trend, and Western Australia is following the trend of overseas. It is important that we put paid to that ridiculous statement. It is not true and it cannot be supported by accurate statistics.

Some months ago I took part in a research exercise which involved a number of people on the Opposition side getting in touch with overseas police departments just to ascertain what the increase in crime was in other areas around the world. These are the facts. In New York last year, crime rose by only 5.4 per cent, while in Western Australia crime rose by a staggering 22 per cent. In London last year, crime increased by five per cent; in Western Australia it increased by 22 per cent. In Singapore last year, crime went up by 7.2 per cent; again, the figure for Western Australia was 22 per cent. Last year in Toronto, Canada, crime increased by 1.45 per cent; back in Western Australia, it was 22 per cent. Interestingly enough, we found that in Tokyo crime dropped by three per cent. So we have a decrease of three per cent in Tokyo -- one of the most populous cities of the world -- yet in Western Australia crime increased by 22 per cent.

Just what worldwide trends is the Minister talking about when he claims that the increase in crime in this State is following an international pattern? Where are his statistics? What research is he relying on to make those statements? Quite clearly the statements are wrong. In fact if one goes a little further into the New York statistics one notices that one in 11 people in New York will become victims of crime this year. If we relate that to Western Australian statistics, one in nine people will end up a victim of crime this year. One in 13 people in London will become a victim of crime, and the figure in Singapore will be one in 50 people. In Tokyo, one of the most populous cities in the world, one in 38 people will become a victim of crime, yet in Western Australia we will have a situation where one in nine will become a victim of crime next year.

Why is it that this Government has such a defeatist attitude when it comes to crime? There is no question that we have had no decent policy from the Government. We know that the Government is bereft of ideas. It is failing badly when it comes to the question of law and order. I ask the Government why it will do nothing positive. Does the Government not have any guts to get on with the job and tackle the problem of increased crime in Western Australia? Does it not have the guts to get on with the job of trying to afford some protection to decent, law-abiding citizens? What is in the Government's philosophy, and perhaps its manifesto, which prevents it from acting on the problem of law and order and the massive increase in crime? Would the Minister please tell me, because the people of Western Australia want to know. They want answers so that they can make up their own minds about whether he is doing his job as Minister for Police and Emergency Services in this State.

The answer, of course, is that this Government is obsessed with attacking the Police Union, with fighting police officers, and generally with attacking the families of police officers who put their hands up and try to present the true picture in respect of the increase in crime in this State. The Government does not want to fight crime; it wants to spend its time fighting the police officers whose job it is to get out there and try to do something about the massive criminal problem that we have.

In fact, if one considers some of the statements that have been made in this House by members of the Government, one sees that they believe that police officers in this State are greedy. They have accused the Police Union of being greedy because it wants to increase the manning levels of the Police Force in this State. Even worse than that, we have a situation

where the Government claims that the Police Union is worse than the Builders Labourers Federation. It is an absolute insult for the Police Union to be compared with the BLF, and I know that the members of the Police Force believe it to be an insult.

I ask the Minister what is his game when it comes to the management of the Police Force in Western Australia; why is it that he wants to politicise the Police Force; and why does he want to interfere with the promotional prospects of senior officers? One recognises that under the Act the Minister has a right to review the recommendations of the Commissioner of Police, but why did the Minister for Police and Emergency Services recently refuse week after week to approve the promotions of five police officers in this State to the rank of inspector? Questions are still being asked about that particular action.

Only last weekend we saw the actions of the Police Union when it carried a unanimous vote of no confidence in the Minister. This Minister does not have the confidence of the Police Force, and he certainly does not have the confidence of law abiding citizens. I do not know where the Minister stands in respect of criminals; I do not know whether they have confidence in him because of his lack of action to do anything about the crimes they commit.

I have great respect for the members of the Police Force in this State. They work extremely hard, and under very difficult circumstances. I also have great respect for the Commissioner of Police, who is trying to do his job under very difficult circumstances. I think it behoves the Minister to tell this House where he stands in respect of the rumours that are circulating throughout the Police Force and the community about the formation of a police board. Why is it that the Minister continues to undermine --

Mr Brian Burke: We have absolutely no plans to form a police board.

Mr CASH: There has been no consideration given to that?

Mr Brian Burke: No consideration during my period as Premier.

Mr CASH: The Premier -- and I want this recorded in *Hansard*, because members will see that he has leapt to the defence of the Minister -- has stated that there will be no police board and that no consideration has been given to the formation of a police board while he has been Premier.

Mr Brian Burke: Let me make it perfectly clear; there is neither the intention nor the policy to establish a police board, and I do not know of any consideration given by the Government to the establishment of a police board during the period in which I have been Premier.

Mr CASH: I think it is important that this statement be recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr Brian Burke: It should be there twice now.

Mr CASH: It will be there twice, and police officers and other people interested in law and order will be able to read the Premier's statement and therefore squash the rumours that are going around this State at the moment.

I hope that fact will give some confidence to our Commissioner of Police, who I believe is being undermined in his job by this Minister and by this Government. The job of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services is to support his commissioner and the Police Force in the lawful execution of their duties. It is not the Minister's job to support the criminal elements in this State, which is the way the public perceives his actions at the moment. The Minister is continually in conflict with the Police Force, and that does nothing to solve the increase in crime that we are seeing.

It is time that the Government woke up to itself with respect to law and order and started putting some positive policies in place. It is no good continuing to penalise the law abiding citizens and letting the criminals go free. We have seen in recent times in respect of parole that hardened criminals have been released on parole, only to offend again, and then when they have gone before a particular board, they have been told, "You have not breached your parole anyway, and you can stay outside." Just what does a parolee have to do to breach his parole?

I believe this motion should be supported by all members of the House who want to support the law-abiding citizens in Western Australia. If some members in this place want to vote for the criminal elements, they can vote against this motion because a vote against this motion will be a vote for increased crime in the next 12 months. I ask members to support the motion.

MR HOUSE (Katanning-Roe) [2.47 pm]: I have pleasure in seconding this motion. The reason why people elect a democratic Parliament is to have law and order in our society. When that law and order starts to break down or when people feel that it is breaking down, we are then faced with a very serious situation. I think that all people who are concerned with the Police Force and the way in which the members carry out their duties would be very worried about the recent trends that are developing in Western Australia. Perhaps we have reached a stage where we have lost sight of exactly what the police are doing in this State. The escalating crime rate is a very clear indication that the Police Force is getting to a stage where it is completely under-manned and out of its depth in trying to arrest that problem.

I am sure every member of Parliament and every person that we represent in this State would agree that we want the State to be a safe place to live in; we want our children to be safe; we want all those people that we represent to have confidence in the Police Force.

In recent days we have seen some very frightening and horrifying things revealed in the Queensland police inquiry, things which are certainly frightening and horrifying to someone like me who feels that the Police Force should be trusted and that the Government should give the Police Force the resources to back up the things that it needs to do. Let us not have any doubts in the minds of the Police Force or the citizens of this State about where the Government stands; let us make sure that we have given the Police Force sufficient resources and that the Police Force has confidence in the Government in order to do the job that it is supposed to be doing.

Last week in this Parliament we passed a new Bill which gives the police the authority to go about and apprehend on the roads lawful citizens to see whether they have been drinking. I spoke against that Bill and I still feel very strongly that it is heading the Police Force in the wrong direction, because it is the direction and emphasis that the Government wants the Police Force to go in that is perhaps causing some of the problems. I have seen that in country areas policemen have a much stronger influence in regard to traffic control, and that has taken their resources and manpower out of the areas of solving crime. The country police do a marvellous job but they simply cannot be expected to work more than a certain number of hours per day, and if the Government of the day directs them to take on such action as random breath-testing of people who may not have committed an offence we cannot expect them to solve the crimes of this country.

In looking at the motion carefully, it is also fair to say that if the media have access to the report referred to in the motion -- and it has been widely publicised that they do -- surely the Parliament should have access to it also. If that is the case, it is not unreasonable to expect the Minister to table the report.

What we must do is make the dollars allocated to the Police Force go further. Perhaps it is time to recall to active duty some members of the Police Force who retired in the last year or two. We could increase police numbers quickly in that way and gain experienced men who have the ability to direct the younger police officers and perhaps solve some of the crimes. There is no question that we need stiffer penalties for criminals, and when the penalties are handed out both the courts and the people need to have confidence that bodies such as the Probation and Parole Board will not let the criminals out of gaol earlier than they should.

In an action in London, *R v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis*, Lord Denning said --

I hold it to be the duty of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, as it is every chief constable, to enforce the law of the land. He must take steps also to post his men that crimes may be detected; and that honest citizens may go about their affairs in peace.

All the people of this State ask is that we may go about our business in a fair and reasonable way and be protected by the law. It is up to this Government to make sure the Police Force has the resources to do just that.

MR GORDON HILL (Helena -- Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [2.52 pm]: I find it rather ironic that members of the Opposition should be calling on the Government to make sure that it provides the resources the Police Department needs to perform its duties in the interests of the community as a whole with relative ease.

I have said on many occasions in this House, and I will say again, that we have a very proud record in terms of the resources we have been able to provide to the Police Department. That record is in stark contrast to that of the Liberal and National Country Parties when they were in Government. The Opposition frequently referred to the question of manpower resources.

If we address just that question, we can see that this Government has provided manpower resources for the Police Force in this State at a far greater rate than any other Government in the history of Western Australia. That is something of which we are especially proud; and I will return to that point in a moment.

In terms of the other resources we have provided to the Police Department, again we have a very proud record of per capita expenditure in this State. I can give members some concrete statistics on that point. The Labor Party came into office in 1983. In 1982, under a Liberal Government, police expenditure per head of population was \$63.34. Just two years later, under our Government, the figure had jumped to \$85.73. Of course, it has increased even more dramatically since then.

It is simplistic for the Opposition, and the Police Union to talk about the manpower resources required when we have provided other resources which make the work of the police in fighting crime in this State so much easier. I can point to two areas in this regard, as examples. I have referred previously in this House to the advances in technology we have provided. The reconstruction of the communications branch facilities is a very important measure which provides the police, at a moment's notice, with information contained on computers in Perth and nationally. That information, which would otherwise take many police man-hours to obtain, can be obtained now in a matter of minutes. That is a very concrete example of how this Government has been able to free up police man-hours in order that police officers can be better deployed in the community to fight crime.

Another very good example of technology we have provided is in the area of fingerprinting. I have referred previously in this place to the fingerprint identification system. Last year this State joined that system, and as a result the police can obtain from the national system in a matter of minutes information which previously would have taken hours or possibly months to obtain. I can give members a very good example of where that system was used recently. This has not been referred to previously in this House because, generally speaking, we do not like to refer to cases in which the system has been used. However, I think the House ought to be aware of the detection and arrest by the police of a person who committed a murder in Victoria Park last year, by their obtaining his fingerprint at the scene of the crime. The Commissioner of Police said to me that he believed the person the police were dealing with may well have been a potential mass murderer -- another Eric Cooke. By obtaining a partial fingerprint of this man -- not a whole one -- the police were able to use the system to gain identification in just 19 minutes. Previously the police would not even have bothered to check the partial fingerprint, simply because there was no value in doing so. They would not have been able to check it manually with any success at all. That is one very good example, and there are others.

These are just some of the areas in which the Government has been able to provide essential resources to the Police Department. I therefore find quite hypocritical the calls of the Opposition for the Government to provide the resources the Police Department needs. I have never heard any comments from the Opposition in relation to the equipment that we have provided the police; I have never heard any calls from the Opposition, nor from the Police Union, for additional technology, for new cars, or for anything of that nature; I only ever hear of the requirement for additional manpower. As I said before, I will return to that point in a moment.

The motion before the House has three sections. The first section calls on the Government to table urgently the 1986 annual report of the Commissioner of Police. Members opposite ought to know that the Financial Administration and Audit Act limits the time in which the Government can table that report, and the implication in the Opposition's motion is simply that we are in some way delaying that report. The members of the Opposition who referred to that and who no doubt support this motion ought to be aware of what the Financial Administration and Audit Act contains because they voted on that legislation when it was introduced to this Parliament last year. The member for Mt Lawley has revealed that he did not understand what he voted on, as has the member for Katanning-Roe, because the simple fact is that the Financial Administration and Audit Act requires the Auditor General to prepare a report on the departmental reports to be tabled. The Auditor General's report is simply not available.

Several members interjected.

Mr GORDON HILL: Again, the Opposition is trying to imply that there is something wrong with the report that the Commissioner of Police has given to me. The Opposition is trying to

cast aspersions on the integrity and ability of the Commissioner of Police and the senior administration of the Police Force in this State. The comments made by way of interjection by Opposition members imply that the Auditor General is not satisfied with the commissioner's report and therefore is taking his time presenting his own comments on the report. In so doing, Opposition members indicate their lack of confidence in the senior administration of the Police Force in this State. The comments to which the member for Mt Lawley referred when he cited the statistics given by the Commissioner of Police in the "Newsbeat" magazine represent some aspects of the annual report. The Commissioner of Police is entitled to present information on the Police Force. It does not mean at the same time that the information contained in the "Newsbeat" magazine necessarily has to be presented to Parliament. It is simply not possible for the Government to present a report to Parliament without at the same time obtaining the Auditor General's report.

The Opposition should have tried to get to the background of that matter and to find out the reasons for the non-tabling of the report before it lent itself to this sort of cheap politicking. From time to time the Opposition embarks on scare tactics and it is trying to instil fear into the community by this technique.

Mr Cash interjected.

Mr GORDON HILL: I admonished the member for Mt Lawley last week in this place when he said in the south west that there had been a 159 per cent increase in certain areas of crime. I had to indicate to the member for Mt Lawley that first the Police Department did not collect statistics in such a way and, secondly, the statistics to which the member referred were grossly inaccurate if they were meant to be State figures. As usual, the member for Mt Lawley simply plucked a figure from out of the air and tried to instil fear into the community by doing so. The member for Mt Lawley is simply not credible and again in this place he indicates that he has a poor understanding of law and order issues. He is superficially plausible but he has no depth.

Mr Brian Burke: He is what I call a "sprinter" not a "stayer". He shows a bit of early pace but tires badly.

Mr GORDON HILL: The comments of the Premier are exactly right. The people who are sprinters raise issues in the way the member for Mt Lawley has when their credibility comes into question. The member for Mt Lawley has no depth or policy and he knows it. On the many occasions I have asked the Opposition, both in this Chamber and publicly, to indicate its policies on law and order, it has not done so. I believe it is appropriate and valid for the Police Department and the Government to have an opportunity to evaluate the Opposition's policies on law and order if it is a bipartisan issue, as the Opposition frequently says it is. However, the only policy I have heard since I became the Minister for Police and Emergency Services was announced by the Leader of the Opposition recently. He promised an increase of 130 police officers, not the 1 000 that the Police Union wants. The Opposition when in Government had a very poor record on the matter of additional police officers. As a result of the additional manpower that this Government has provided to the Police Force, we have seen in this State a cleanup rate which is above the national average; in fact, it is better than the rate in most States. Is it not about time that we heard the Opposition give some credit to the Police Force of this State for its ability to mop-up areas of crime and to lead the nation in its cleanup rate of crime?

I have mentioned the enormous improvement in the cleanup rate made in the Police Department recently, and that is something to be proud of. However, the Police Department's response time is also something to be proud of. The response time for 50 per cent of all tasks in the metropolitan area has been reduced on average from 15 minutes to 12.7 minutes. That is a remarkable achievement. In 95 per cent of all tasks the response time has been reduced from 102 minutes to 78 minutes -- again, a remarkable improvement. At a time when the crime rate has increased the Police Force has been able to respond more quickly because of technological advances and because of the additional police officers this Government has made available.

There has been a considerable change in the way in which crime statistics are collected in this State. In 1982 the police would record the statistics only if they in fact responded to a call, or if it was a matter which required police investigation. However, from the time this Government came into office the method of collection of statistics changed. Every call that comes into the Police Department now is recorded and is reflected in the statistics produced by the department; that change now accurately reflects the increase in the crime rate over the years.

Our Government has a great deal to be proud of, particularly in the area of manpower. The previous Government, in its last three years, recruited an increase in the real strength of the Police Force, above annual wastage, of only 144 additional officers. We have made a commitment to increase the real strength during our two terms of office by 600 additional officers, above natural wastage. This year we have gone even further than that: In the recent Budget, the Treasurer announced that 100 additional police officers would be recruited. The member for Mt Lawley, and the Opposition, can contort and manipulate those figures to indicate that we have not, in fact, increased the real strength of the Police Force, but the fact remains that this Government has given a commitment to increase the real strength of the force, over and above natural wastage, by 600 over the Government's two terms of office. In fact, the Government has gone beyond even that in its Budget by undertaking to recruit 100 additional police officers immediately. The increase in police manpower has been quite dramatic. When we came to office there was one police officer for every 496 people in Western Australia. Today we have the fastest-growing Police Force in Australia. Last year we had one police officer for every 462 people and today it is better than that. Other States have remained static; in Queensland the police/population ratio has declined.

I am pleased to indicate a further measure not previously publicly announced by this Government: Not only has this Government made a commitment in its Budget to increase the real strength of the Police Force by a further 100 officers immediately, but it will undertake to provide 100 additional police officers every year that it remains in office.

Mr Brian Burke: Hear, hear!

Mr GORDON HILL: This means that our commitment over and above the normal allocation of manpower is 133 personnel, in addition to what we committed ourselves to when we took office in 1986. That is a record of which we are particularly proud. We are the fastest-growing Police Force in Australia. We have committed ourselves to further increases in future Budgets. We will be providing the resources needed by the Police Department. We are committed to an increase of a further 100 officers next year and 100 in subsequent years. I make that commitment again to Parliament and the people of Western Australia.

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment --

To delete all words after "House" with a view to substituting the following --

condemns the frequent and baseless attempts by the member for Mt Lawley to undermine public confidence in the administration of the Police Force and in the judiciary as well as for his persistent attempts to project a false perception of inaction by the Government on law and order issues within the community.

The member for Mt Lawley and his colleagues stand condemned for their inaction while they were in office. They stand condemned for trying to instil fear into the community, and for their publicly-stated lack of confidence in the senior administration of the Police Force. This Government is particularly supportive of the Commissioner of Police and is proud of the work that the Police Force in this State is doing.

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [3.05 pm]: I second the amendment. This debate clearly illustrates two things about the Opposition: First, its hypocrisy, particularly on the matter of law and order; and, secondly, its insincerity. I begin with one of the statistics quoted by the member for Mt Lawley in his speech, and compiled from his research into the crime rate in other capital cities in the world. I was particularly interested in the statistic relating to London, which revealed that in that city one in 13 people will be affected by a criminal act. He contrasted that figure with the current statistic -- not trend -- in Western Australia. People in Britain who share the general philosophical outlook of the member for Mt Lawley -- people who said many things in the years 1977-1979 very similar to what the member for Mt Lawley says in this Parliament -- achieved power in Great Britain in 1979 and have been in Government until now. The British Government said it would abolish the crime rate by its simplistic approach to the problem, yet today one in 13 people in London still suffer from the effects of crime.

That clearly illustrates the point made by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services that the crime problem is worldwide. It exists in Great Britain, America and Australia. It is a very complex and difficult problem. To oversimplify the case, as the Opposition does day in and day out in the media and in Parliament, is to do no service whatsoever to the community. What is needed today is increased research into the nature of crime and its causes in this State.

Several members interjected.

Dr GALLOP: The National Party has no right to stand in this Parliament and talk about combating crime. National Party members should talk about their mate, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, and what he has done to combat crime. They are a disgrace.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Victoria Park will resume his seat. I will not start the day by allowing this kind of performance. I am dismayed by both members because they do not usually behave like this. I hope that it will not happen again, and I will endeavour to forget it.

Dr GALLOP: This complex crime situation needs to be analysed. The evidence indicates that it is a multifaceted problem. The Government is adopting a four-pronged approach to the problem. First, it is examining the economic and social factors, and improving employment and the general social situation. Secondly, it will look at policing. This Government has, of course, increased the number of police officers in operation. Thirdly, it will examine the existing justice system in this State. Fourthly, the Government has already initiated developments in community policing, an area which is totally ignored by the Opposition. That is our strategy, and our measures to combat the problem are indicated quite clearly in the Budget papers.

Now let me turn to look at the monumental hypocrisy of the Opposition. Last week we had a debate on the Australia Card, a measure that is proposed in the national Parliament. The member for Mt Lawley had the gall to say here that the Government parties, both Federal and State, were not doing anything about combating drug running. But he is well aware that one of the clauses of the Australia Card legislation is framed in a way that will try to get at those hollow logs used by drug runners -- those safe deposit boxes. Where does the Opposition stand on that matter, when it comes under the umbrella of combating some of the most serious crimes committed in Australia? Members opposite are silent; they oppose the Australia Card, which can do so much to combat crime in this country.

The second element of the hypocrisy of the Opposition is revealed by the Leader of the Opposition's saying that he will increase police numbers when in Government beyond what this Government is doing, but at the same time saying he will get rid of many taxes. He said he would get rid of payroll tax, which makes up nine per cent of State revenue and 40 per cent of all revenues in this country. Members opposite cannot have it both ways; they cannot say that the Government should increase expenditure in these very important areas while at the same time getting rid of all these taxes. They should be honest and tell the Western Australian people precisely where it is that they will cut into public expenditure.

Members opposite are hypocritical on this matter when measures such as the Australia Card have been proposed to combat crime, and they give it no support. Members opposite are hypocritical when they talk about revenue raising and expenditures in this State. This is a totally insincere Opposition. I oppose the motion and support the amendment moved by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch -- Leader of the Opposition) [3.22 pm]: Today the Minister for Police and Emergency Services admitted that the Government is not doing enough by his announcement that not this year, when crime is rampant on our streets, but next year and the year after -- some time down the track -- the Government might employ 100 more policemen every year. The Minister's only answer today is that what the Government has done to date is better than what we did in the past. I am pleased that he said the statistics have changed since 1982, because if one compares 1983 with 1987 one sees a dramatic increase in the rate of crime in this State. In 1983, one person in 13 in this State was a victim of crime. In 1987 it is one person in nine. In the Minister's words, that is comparing apples with apples. No matter how commendable is the Government's employing more policemen and introducing new technology, it is not enough, because crime is escalating in this State and it is beyond the ability of this Government to do anything about that escalation.

The only answer we get from the Government is via the Premier who is reported in this morning's *The West Australian* as saying that the Police Union was irrational and highly political. That is no answer to the problem. It is the Government that is irrational and highly political because it is the Government which tries to equate the Police Union with the BLF; it is the Government which leaks information to the *Sunday Times* claiming that there is corruption in the Police Force when there is absolutely no evidence to back up such a claim;

and it is the Premier who says that the Police Union is wanting to run the State. When has the Police Union or the Police Force said that it wants to run the State? That statement is a sign of an irrational and highly politically-motivated man; it is not the other way around.

It is time the Government did what the Opposition does; that is, periodically sit down and talk with a few police officers and go down to the offices of the Police Union, as we did last night, and talk with its executive to hear what its members have to say for themselves and try to ascertain what they are really worried about.

The Opposition would not employ 100 more policemen next year; we would employ 120 more this year. We would sack the Government's advisers. We would not spend \$500 000 on an advertising campaign trying to tell hardened criminals that they should not commit crimes. We would employ 120 more police officers tomorrow, not next year or the year after, but this year.

(The member's time expired.)

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga -- Premier) [3.25 pm]: As has become the hallmark of this Opposition, the contribution by the Leader of the Opposition amplifying that of his colleague, the member for Mt Lawley, was a last-minute marriage of convenience designed primarily to capitalise on what the Opposition perceives to be community disquiet about the rate of the incidence of crime. The most significant thing to emerge from the debate has been the undertaking by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, given in the name of the Government, that he would ensure that for as long as we are the Government in this State there will be a real increase of 100 police officers each year.

Mr MacKinnon: That is not even as good as you have achieved in the past few years. You say you have employed 600 more policemen since you were in Government --

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MacKinnon interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MacKinnon interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. One of the major problems with the Leader of the Opposition's method of interjecting is that it is incessant. I have tried to draw that to his attention nicely on a number of occasions, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so nicely. Even though it is not my intention -- or my desire -- to take action against him now, if he refuses to acknowledge my calls for order again, I will take action which will be distasteful not only to him but also to me.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have always thought that those people who do not have the strength of logic on their side are likely to try to prevent other people from speaking.

The most significant thing to emerge from this debate is that undertaking given by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in the name of the Government to increase each year the strength of the Police Force in real terms by 100 officers during the period for which we are the Government.

The Government is not sanguine about the incidence of crime within our community. We are naturally very concerned to ensure that people are secure and safe from the criminal acts of other people. But we are not last in this nation or this world as a Government in acknowledging the difficulty of finding the solutions. We do not have all the answers, and I am sure the Opposition, as wise as it is, does not know all the answers either.

I know this: The Opposition's tactic of trying to politicise the Police Force by trying to score political points from the views expressed about policing in this State does not wash with the public. The attitudes and actions that the Opposition has expressed and taken for so long have been the direct cause of the Opposition's present parlous state. For so long as the Opposition continues to think it will be politically successful by expressing the values and morals that are displayed by the member for Mt Lawley in his effort to politicise the Police Force, then for so long will it remain on the Opposition benches.

It is with a great deal of enthusiasm that I support the amendment moved by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

Amendment (deletion of words) put and a division taken with the following result --

Ayes (25)

Dr Alexander
Mrs Beggs
Mr Bridge
Mr Brian Burke
Mr Burkett
Mr Donovan
Mr Peter Dowding
Dr Gallop
Mr Grill
Mrs Henderson
Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Hodge
Dr Lawrence

Mr Marlborough
Mr Parker
Mr Pearce
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr P.J. Smith
Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Mr Troy
Mrs Watkins
Dr Watson
Mr Wilson
Mrs Buchanan (*Teller*)

Noes (15)

Mr Bradshaw
Mr Cash
Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mr Crane
Mr Grayden
Mr Hassell
Mr House

Mr Lewis
Mr MacKinnon
Mr Mensaros
Mr Stephens
Mr Thompson
Mr Tubby
Mr Watt (*Teller*)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr Bryce
Mr Carr
Mr Tom Jones
Mr Read
Mr Evans

Noes

Mr Rushton
Mr Blaikie
Mr Williams
Mr Clarko
Mr Schell

Amendment thus passed.

Amendment (substitution of words) put and a division taken with the following result --

Ayes (26)

Dr Alexander
Mrs Beggs
Mr Bertram
Mr Bridge
Mr Brian Burke
Mr Burkett
Mr Donovan
Mr Peter Dowding
Dr Gallop
Mr Grill
Mrs Henderson
Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Hodge

Dr Lawrence
Mr Marlborough
Mr Parker
Mr Pearce
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr P.J. Smith
Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Mr Troy
Mrs Watkins
Dr Watson
Mr Wilson
Mrs Buchanan (*Teller*)

Noes (15)

Mr Bradshaw
Mr Cash
Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mr Crane
Mr Grayden
Mr Hassell
Mr House

Mr Lewis
Mr MacKinnon
Mr Mensaros
Mr Stephens
Mr Thompson
Mr Tubby
Mr Watt (*Teller*)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr Bryce
Mr Carr
Mr Tom Jones
Mr Read
Mr Evans

Noes

Mr Rushton
Mr Blaikie
Mr Williams
Mr Clarko
Mr Schell

Amendment thus passed.

Motion, as Amended

Question put and a division taken with the following result --

Ayes (26)

Dr Alexander
Mrs Beggs
Mr Bertram
Mr Bridge
Mr Brian Burke
Mr Burkett
Mr Donovan
Mr Peter Dowding
Dr Gallop
Mr Grill
Mrs Henderson
Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Hodge

Dr Lawrence
Mr Marlborough
Mr Parker
Mr Pearce
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr P.J. Smith
Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Mr Troy
Mrs Watkins
Dr Watson
Mr Wilson
Mrs Buchanan (*Teller*)

Noes (15)

Mr Bradshaw
Mr Cash
Mr Court
Mr Cowan
Mr Crane
Mr Grayden
Mr Hassell
Mr House

Mr Lewis
Mr MacKinnon
Mr Mensaros
Mr Stephens
Mr Thompson
Mr Tubby
Mr Watt (*Teller*)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr Bryce
Mr Carr
Mr Tom Jones
Mr Read
Mr Evans

Noes

Mr Rushton
Mr Blaikie
Mr Williams
Mr Clarko
Mr Schell

Question (motion, as amended) thus passed

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL*Second Reading: Budget Debate*

Debate resumed from 17 September.

MR DONOVAN (Morley-Swan) [3.40 pm]: I last rose to speak in this debate on Thursday afternoon at this same time and it seems to be a most unfortunate time to speak in this House, whatever the subject. In this instance my subject was the general question of this Government's approach to social policy across all its portfolio areas. Those members who remain in the Chamber may recall that I spent some time talking about Aboriginal affairs and pointed out that the Government's approach to social policy embraced some fairly critical areas in that portfolio. Basically I was reminding the House that this approach to social policy is very much based on the notion of equity -- equity in the distribution of resources, access to services, and popular participation in social policy and community service delivery programmes. I reminded the House that a good example of this process of social policy at those three levels is to be found in the Government's approach to Aboriginal affairs throughout the State.

Its 1987 Budget is no exception to that rule. Indeed, it seems to have continued that same progressive approach to social policy and social development. At the end of my comments last week, and in relation to the Aboriginal community development programme, the cost of which is shared by the State and the Commonwealth, I was about to mention a new initiative the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs had discussed with me earlier; that is, the creation of the Aboriginal Management Economic Advisory Unit. The significance of this unit is that although it is necessary -- and this Government has recognised that it is critically important -- for Aboriginal communities to develop across all social policy areas, it is also important that they develop across economic enterprise areas in order to become self-sustaining communities in the foreseeable future.

The exciting part about this unit is that, presumably operating on a very small staff and

directly under the authority of the Minister, it will have the capacity to engage on a consultancy or contract basis expertise from both the private and public sectors. That expertise might include skills and experience in the areas of enterprise development and, for example, communities in the remote north west or east of this State might find it economically viable to engage in tourism activities. In order to develop such projects they would need sound economic entrepreneurial advice, research and development ideas, and financial management. Advice and expertise in those fields would be directly available to Aboriginal communities and groups through the Aboriginal Management Economic Advisory Unit.

Of course, it must also be appreciated that this initiative implicitly carries with it a process of accountability directly to the Minister and through him to the Parliament. At last we have in this State a progressive and creative approach to economic as well as social development in Aboriginal communities which has built into it accessibility to and availability of expertise, and a process of accountability for the expenditure of funds and development of enterprise. That unit and the approach to social policy and social development are progressive. I note that that approach goes across all the Government's social policy and service delivery programmes.

In summary, I describe the present Government's approach, and certainly the 1987 Budget approach, as an exciting and progressive move. It is worth repeating that the programmes foreshadowed and financed in the Budget are based largely on that notion of equity of resource distribution, access to services and skills and, most importantly from the Government's perspective, participation in decision-making and delivery. The 1987 Budget continues a record developed in the lifetime of this Government of sound social policy. It funds viable initiatives in all fields associated with social development and service provision, and builds in structures for management and accountability. The Government is to be congratulated on this last Budget for combining so well the need for creative social policy in Western Australia with the need for responsible Budget management.

MR COWAN (Merredin -- Leader of the National Party) [3.46 pm]: I recall when speaking on the Budget last year that I commented on three factors. The first was public sector employment. In relation to that Budget the Government is to be commended on its aim to reduce by three per cent the level of public sector employment. I congratulate the Treasurer on accepting responsibility for reducing the level of employment in the public sector and on having achieved his target. One rider on those congratulations is that when dealing with the total number of employees in the public sector it would be more appropriate to include the employees of Government agencies and statutory authorities, who are generally regarded as public servants. Perhaps the best example of this category are those who work for the Water Authority and the SEC. I do not know of anybody who does not regard these employees as public servants and yet they are not included in the list of Government employees which the Government has been able to reduce by three per cent. However, the Government deserves to be commended for having accomplished a reduction in the areas listed.

Some of the points I raised last year still hold good; this is definitely a Budget in two parts. For as long as I can remember the Government has made a practice of separating the increases in State taxes and charges from the Budget Bills. That practice has been so well received that I note the Commonwealth is adopting it; it introduces a mini-Budget in May and does precisely what the States have discovered is a relatively easy way of introducing budgetary decisions to the people.

Two points should be brought to the notice of this Parliament. Firstly, the omission in the Budget papers of income to the State in excess of \$240 million. I refer to the State fuel franchise levy and to the carry over of interest the Government has earned on the short-term money market. An amount of \$150 million has been earned on money invested and it is assumed an amount of \$90 million has been received from the State fuel franchise levy. We are talking about substantial funds; in fact, as much as 10 per cent of the State's ability to raise revenue, yet those items are not given specific attention in the Budget papers. One has to go to three or four different places in the Budget to find the revenue from the State fuel franchise levy. The first reference point is the Main Roads Department item to ascertain how much money has been appropriated to that department from the levy. Secondly, in the section for the Minister for Transport within the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure one can extract the appropriation of funds given to the Minister's various departments from the transport trust fund.

In that way, one can estimate the revenue to the State from the State fuel franchise levy. As I

said, that represents in excess of \$90 million. It is time the Government changed its accounting practices and had a specific place within the Budget for the State fuel franchise levy. It is also time the Government had some accounting of the income to be received from the money invested on the short-term money market. It is not good enough to have the Treasurer announcing to the Press that "we have \$150 million available from investments in the short-term money market, and we are going to use that to offset some areas where the Commonwealth may in the future reduce loans or grants to the State of Western Australia." I think it would be fair to say that 10 per cent of the total revenue that is paid to the State by taxpayers must be included in the Budget papers in specific form.

Mr Lewis: Under the heading "pork-barrelling".

Mr COWAN: That is appropriation. I am talking about revenue. One may be able to give it that title in appropriation, but under revenue I think it should be earnings from the short-term money market, and revenue from the State fuel franchise levy. These criticisms are not new; they have been made for quite some time. I am most concerned that there is not greater accounting by the Government in the Budget of these aspects of revenue.

One other area which concerns me relates to the matter of Commonwealth funding. Every year prior to the June Premier's Conference, we are advised that the Commonwealth is going to reduce its funding to the States. We are prepared for the worst; the Treasurer returns and says we must have an increase in State taxes and charges. However, we sometimes find that those increases in State taxes and charges in many ways do not equate with the reductions imposed by the Commonwealth. The best example of this is in the Commonwealth's contribution to the State for road funding. That contribution has been reducing each year by \$3 million or \$4 million, yet while the State has the capacity to contribute significantly to road funding, it very rarely does so because instead of taking the increased revenue raised as a result of the State fuel franchise levy and appropriating that to the Main Roads Department for expenditure on roads, a great amount of that money is taken away from the construction and maintenance of roads and placed into other areas.

Mr Brian Burke: I would argue about that, and even the member could not argue that that was not the case until the trust fund was established.

Mr COWAN: Yes, it was, and that is what I am being critical of. Since the Treasurer has amended the trust fund --

Mr Brian Burke: Since we established the trust fund.

Mr COWAN: I am sorry; there was always a trust fund. However, the funds paid into the trust could be expended only on roadworks and construction. The Government amended the trust fund legislation and allowed the money that was paid into the trust fund to be expended on any transport-related purpose.

Mr Brian Burke: I thought we established a new trust that allowed us to do these things. Perhaps I am wrong.

Mr COWAN: No; the old Act was amended. The Treasurer may have established a new trust, but he amended the old Act.

Mr Brian Burke: Yes; I think we established what we called the transport trust, and that was not what the old trust was called.

Mr COWAN: No, it was not, but the fact of the matter remains that initially all of the money that was going from the State fuel franchise levy had to be expended on road construction and maintenance. The Government can now make a choice as to where it is going to expend that money. Of the \$90 million revenue, \$49.7 million has been appropriated to the Main Roads Department; \$37.5 million to the MTT; and \$3 million to the Department of Transport for the purpose of administering that department. It could be argued that the \$49.7 million appropriated to the Main Roads Department is \$4.7 million greater than was allocated last year for expenditure on roads, but the fact remains that when one looks at the Main Roads Department funding, one sees that \$10.2 million has been allocated for urban transport matters, and one would assume that the bulk of that is going to be expended on the freeway in establishing a contra-flow traffic lane.

Mr Brian Burke: Would it be the member's view that we should reduce the levy by that amount which we do not give to roads -- that is, between \$49 million and \$90 million -- or should we leave the levy as it is and give it all to roads?

Mr COWAN: In view of the Commonwealth's approach, I would very reluctantly say to the Treasurer that we should leave the levy where it is and allocate it all to roads. If we could persuade the Commonwealth to appropriate to roads a greater part of those funds which it receives from the excise on petroleum products, we would be able to reduce the State's tax on fuel products; but while the Commonwealth is not prepared to do that and sees excise on fuel as nothing more than a revenue-earning bonanza and pays very little of that back to the State for the purpose for which it was intended -- road maintenance and construction -- I do not think we in Western Australia, particularly, because of the size of the State, have any opportunity other than to maintain the levy at its current level.

Country people -- and I said this last year, and it bears repeating -- object strongly to the loss of more than half the revenue that is paid into the State's Treasury through the State fuel franchise levy to these transport related areas which they cannot use. I was very critical last year of the Government making a decision to allocate half of the State fuel levy to the MTT for the purpose of purchasing new buses. I am very critical this year of the Government appropriating slightly less than half to the MTT for no specific purpose, so far as I can understand; I imagine it will be for capital expenditure. In addition to that, I assume that \$10.2 million of the \$49.7 million allocated for road construction will be spent on a contra-flow bus lane on the freeway.

Mr Troy: The member is completely wrong in that assumption.

Mr COWAN: I will be extremely pleased, and so too will all the people I represent, if the Minister issues a prepared statement detailing exactly where the money is going to come from, because as I have said before and will say again, while country people represent less than 20 per cent of the State's population, they contribute, on a per capita basis, three times the amount of their metropolitan counterparts. If one wants it in total amounts, country people contribute just under half of the State's fuel franchise levy.

They get a little uptight when they hear that the money they contribute is not coming back to them because they have a greater need for better roads and good transport services. Yet they have been pipped at the post under this new system of placing the revenue from the State fuel franchise levy into a trust fund, which then can be allocated for transport-related purposes that have no bearing on transport matters which service rural Western Australia.

Mr Troy: Do you want me to give you some detail on that?

Mr COWAN: I would be very pleased if the Minister would do so. I would point out that the Minister has never supplied me with any detail, so there is no question of my understanding it, but the people I represent would be delighted if the Minister could prove to them that the State fuel levy they pay is being returned to them, because at the moment they believe that is not the case. All they can see is that we have the Transperth receiving as much as half of the benefit of all this funding. Why should it be singled out? We have Stateships; I would not for one moment advocate expenditure of any money on that particular responsibility of the Minister. We also have Westrail, which is struggling under the current system of competition to get its head above water in competition with road transport, and yet we are not seeing any special attention in the way of expenditure of capital funds being given to Westrail.

Mr Troy: Well, just go through your accounts because you will find for the first time recognition of the principle that you related in terms of railways. Under the ALTP fund special provision has been given to rail expenditure this year.

Mr COWAN: I wonder whether the Minister, who seems very keen to interject, would tell the House how much money from the State transport trust fund is allocated to Westrail?

Mr Troy: None, but there is some there from the ALTP provision. For the first time this State has lent money to a State railway authority in making that allocation. Spread your argument about and be a little fair about it.

Mr COWAN: I am very pleased to hear that, but perhaps the Minister could tell the House how much.

Mr Troy: One million dollars.

Mr COWAN: One million dollars has been allocated to a transport system which, in conjunction with road, is supposed to be the backbone of the State's transport system. The Minister is very proud of the fact that he has given \$1 million to it. I think the Minister's interjections give a very clear indication to this House of the attitude of the Government to

the transport problems which rural Western Australians face. The Government has no compassion or feeling for any of those transport issues at all. One would hope that we are facing a harvest in the near future --

Mr House interjected.

Mr COWAN: As the member for Katanning-Roe pointed out, his constituents may not be facing the same season that my constituents are enjoying. We are facing the need to transport, I would assume, around 4.5 million tonnes of grain to port within the next three to four months. Westrail will be expected to undertake the bulk of that transport task. Here we have a Minister who has proudly stated that he has given Westrail \$1 million out of the funds and that Westrail has not received \$1 million from that fund before.

Mr Troy: Plus the normal provision to Westrail.

Mr COWAN: The normal provision to Westrail is given under an ultimatum. The Government gives it on the proviso that Westrail brings in a deficit of not greater than a certain amount, so those normal considerations --

Mr Troy interjected.

Mr COWAN: I can tell the Minister that would be the position.

Mr Troy: You are way off.

Mr COWAN: I do not think I am. I think I am reasonably accurate and the deficit that Westrail has been required to stay below has been reducing in the main part each year, which is placing a greater burden upon the people who utilise that particular transport facility.

The problem is that most of Westrail's customers are locked into long-term contracts. The people who use Westrail to transport alumina or bauxite are on long-term contracts. Westrail dispensed with the less-than-container-load traffic, so all that is left is the agricultural produce -- grain, wool, and products of that nature. None of those appears to have a contract which has been made to stick and as a consequence, every time Westrail finds itself in trouble, guess who are the bunnies? It happens to be the people who utilise Westrail to transport agricultural produce to port. I refer particularly to the grain industry, which finds itself every October and November fighting with the company that is expected to undertake the major transport task of getting grain from the point of production to the ports where it can then be sent to our international markets. I think that after such a long period of time it would be more appropriate if the Government gave a lot more attention to Westrail, and indeed to our road transport system, and gave us something we do not have to argue about every year for increased expenditure.

It is bad enough that the Commonwealth reneged on its responsibility to both road and rail; whereas road does receive reduced funding from the Commonwealth, rail gets practically nothing; but just because the Commonwealth has abrogated its responsibilities in road transport issues in Western Australia, that does not mean this Government should follow suit. The Parliament established -- certainly with much opposition from the National Party -- a State fuel franchise levy in 1978. Having established that, it was established purely and simply for the purpose of finding funding to be able to guarantee there would be enough money spent on the transport system within Western Australia. Unfortunately, what is happening is that the funds are coming in but the Government, by being selective about where the funds are spent, is not ensuring that those funds are going out and being distributed in the areas that are perhaps in most need of the funding.

There is one issue in the Budget which I must touch on, and that relates to the item of appropriation for agriculture. While it is a fairly important portfolio dealing with many different things, it disappoints me that the level of expenditure on research and development within the Department of Agriculture is never enough. I do not know whether anyone has ever quantified the advantages gained from research and development, but I am sure that somewhere somebody has, and whatever expenditure is placed upon that, I am quite sure that it has been returned to the State fivefold or tenfold.

It disappoints me that in the main there has not been a substantial increase in expenditure on research and development within agriculture. It appears that the Department of Agriculture has given a great deal of attention to many of the new agricultural industries that are beginning to show signs of increasing importance in this State, particularly floriculture and horticulture, as well as the export markets being developed for them. I welcome the increased level of expenditure made available for those industries. Nevertheless it is very important

that we recognise that the more traditional agricultural industries are still very important in historical terms and that there is still a very long way for us to go before we can say that we, as primary producers, are able to gain the optimum yield or production from our traditional agricultural industries, such as wool, grain, and meat. It appears that in an endeavour to give assistance to the newer agricultural pursuits, the Government and the department have forgotten the more traditional agricultural industries.

In this State and throughout Australia the beef industry is confronted with a very serious problem of pesticide residues. I commend the Government for making available something like \$460 000 to deal with the problem. However, it is very clear to me that this level of expenditure will be inadequate in the long term to overcome this problem. Therefore, I hope that the Government and the department are looking now at devising a strategy to ensure that Western Australian farmers produce a product that is acceptable on the world market.

We have to recognise that our buyers, as in any field, are always right. If they set standards, we as producers have to meet those standards. We cannot do anything about influencing the standards that the Americans set; we cannot do anything about the way they want the testing to be done to prove to them that we are meeting their standards. But what is very important in Western Australia is that we establish now, through the Department of Agriculture and the Health Department, a system of testing which guarantees that we will present to our purchasers a product which meets all of the stringent standards they might care to apply, and there are two ways that can be done.

We have to be mindful that limited financial resources are available so we have to make sure that those resources are directed towards the most appropriate balance. It would be timely for the Department of Agriculture to start now to make sure that those properties in the high risk areas were given a certificate of cleanliness, if they could earn one, so that the farmers were able to present their cattle to the marketplace together with a certificate of cleanliness.

This could come about in two ways. Firstly, by using the Department of Agriculture's soil testing facilities to ensure that the properties did not have pesticide residues, or by having the farmer sign a statutory declaration that he had not used the offensive chemicals for a certain time. Once that happened the farmer who had presented his animals and had them slaughtered would have the carcasses submitted to the Health Department for testing to ensure they met appropriate standards. Any farmer identified as having a residual pesticide problem on his property would need to have all the resources available put to best use to assist him. While the resources are not as great as a lot of people would like, they are not insignificant. Once the property was listed as one with a residual pesticide problem, the animals on the property could be live-tested, and it would be the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture to establish that live-testing facility. If the animals found their way to the marketplace, it would be possible for the Health Department, which is responsible for carcase testing, to be able to identify those animals and test their carcasses to ensure we were not producing a product which did not meet the standards that everyone was demanding. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that we should not be looking just at meeting the standards set by the people to whom we export; we should be anxious to demonstrate to our own local consumers that we are offering them a product which is pesticide-free and is in as pure form as we can possibly produce.

Mr Taylor: There are testing difficulties in that area from the point of view of the sale of fresh meat in that there are not enough storage facilities.

Mr COWAN: That is why it is necessary for us to establish a certificate of cleanliness so that the Health Department can concentrate on the problem areas and so that the carcasses which may have a greater chance of showing pesticide residues are tested. The Department of Agriculture must move down the path of soil testing individual properties and being able to live-test animals in order to give the producer an indication that his animals should or should not be sent to market. The Health Department could verify whether a carcase was pesticide free by carcase testing the animals which had been appropriately flagged. I accept that there is difficulty with storage space and the time taken to conduct the tests, as well as with the time for the product to find its way from the kill line to the retail outlet.

I turn now to the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation. It is interesting to note that since there has been a slight upturn in the value of wool, there has been a much greater degree of optimism within agriculture; nevertheless there is still a demand for the services of RAFCOR. This year the Government intends to provide something like \$42.9 million in financial assistance to the rural community through schemes administered by RAFCOR; but

sometimes what the Government promises is not necessarily what the farmers get.

Last year a similar amount was promised to the farmers who were in trouble, but unfortunately the standards of viability and the need for adequate security to protect the loans offered by the corporation proved to be so high that very few farmers could avail themselves of the opportunity to borrow funds from the corporation. I find it very displeasing, as does the farming community, to learn that last year the State Government was required to refund to the Commonwealth certain moneys which the Commonwealth had appropriated to WA for the purpose of offsetting the cheap loans made available to the farming community through RAFCOR.

In other words, the corporation was not able to utilise the total amount of funding made available from the Commonwealth. Clearly there was a need for low interest rate loans to be made to the farming community and the corporation was in a position to provide those loans. It had the funds from the Commonwealth, but it did not use them for the two reasons I have stated. It could not or would not grant money to applicants because it said they were not viable or did not have sufficient equity in the property. We may have recovered from the recession experienced by most grain growers -- to some extent it is still being experienced -- but we have not recovered to the extent where we can be so irresponsible as to return to the Commonwealth funds which have been earmarked for the specific purpose of assisting farmers in financial difficulty.

Mr Court: What was the sum of money?

Mr COWAN: In excess of \$1.7 million. That would have provided \$17 million worth of concessional loans based on the borrowing capacity which this State has. The money was refunded to the Commonwealth and not utilised by the State, and as a result we did not see concessional loans made available to the farming community. It is very irresponsible of any Government or Government agency to not fully utilise funds which are made available to it, particularly in the case of on-lending to the farming community.

I would like to raise one other small item, and I am sure that some of my colleagues will raise similar issues. It relates to the expenditure on water resources. Because of the very lean winter, even the metropolitan area will experience some difficulty in maintaining the level of water supplies without the imposition of restrictions in one form or another. It has been a long time since the metropolitan area experienced water restrictions, but there are many people in rural areas for whom water restrictions in summer become a way of life. I have looked through these Budget papers and I cannot find reference to any significant sum of money being made available to expand or improve water supplies in areas which are not attached to the various schemes.

In fact the only significant allocation of funds for water resources I could find is the initial phase of expenditure on the Harris River Dam. We welcome the commencement of that project because it will enhance the quality of water supplies in those areas which receive water from the Wellington Dam scheme. However, I remind the Government that there are many places which do not have reticulated water or are not attached to the Wellington Dam scheme and rely on an isolated catchment for the town's supply. Those towns will face serious difficulties this summer, as they have faced them for the last eight to 10 years. It is time people recognised what is staring them in the face -- water supplies in most of those areas are inadequate, and we need to allocate more funds to this area. It disappoints me to some extent that the Minister for Water Resources, who is the first such Minister to show a real interest in his portfolio and who has worked very hard to try to secure funds from the Commonwealth, is still unable to secure increased funding for the expansion of water resources in this State. I hope one day the argument he puts forward -- and I have seen some of the information that has been going from his office to the Commonwealth -- will fall upon receptive ears and we get the necessary appropriation of funds.

It is time we started to look at the historical record, and when we see so many of these places suffering water restrictions every summer we must recognise that a problem exists, and that a greater amount of capital must be expended in this area. It has not been done to date, and I look forward to its being done in the future. It is perhaps one of the most disappointing aspects of the Budget when one thinks about specific funds for portfolios.

I know we are going to learn the lesson this summer because the Government will be required to expend an enormous proportion of the \$150 million that has been set aside to replenish those water supplies which it should have extended in previous years to fight this

problem. The Government has not done so and I make a plea to it to ensure that a good proportion of the \$150 million is allocated to the portfolio of the Minister for Water Resources to increase or expand catchment areas in the south west and to meet the short-term needs of those towns in the coming summer because they face an extremely difficult time. If the Minister wants any support in securing those funds he can call upon the National Party, which will give him all the support he needs.

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [4.27 pm]: I take this opportunity to share some of the experiences I had recently as part of a mission to examine productivity and training overseas. The mission went to West Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Great Britain in April this year and returned in May. It was a tripartite mission organised by the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment and included representatives of the trade union movement and employer associations, members from both the Government and Opposition and from both the upper and lower Houses, and many public servants involved in employment, training, and industrial relations.

The objective of the mission was to go overseas and look at the various systems to see whether we could pick up any ideas for improving the situation in this country. I make two general observations on the systems of employment and training and industrial relations that exist overseas, particularly in the Scandinavian countries we visited, which I think are important and from which we can learn lessons. The first is that each of those Scandinavian countries places a very heavy emphasis on skills development in the work force. They believe the people of those countries -- the work force -- are their key resource in terms of competition in the world market. They spend a lot of money, both private and Government, on their education and training systems. Those training programmes are not just designed to educate people to a certain minimum standard; they accept the view that all workers are capable of contributing to innovation and productivity improvement in their firms -- not just those we would normally classify as skilled workers, such as foremen, managers and technologists, but also workers at all levels.

To make that contribution those workers need the proper education in skills development. Even though the types and degree of skill may differ between one worker and another, the key idea is that all workers in the firm can contribute to productivity improvement and innovation if they are educated and capable of doing so. I will give members a good example of that. In the Torslander plant within the Volvo Corporation which we visited in Gothenburg in Sweden, every worker has a two-year development plan on how he can improve his education and training. Courses are provided within the company and the notion is that every worker can improve his performance through the training system.

The second general feature of the Scandinavian system which was very impressive was its emphasis on worker participation and industrial democracy. That idea ranged right through the gambit of meanings we give to those terms, from worker involvement in production decision-making -- in other words, the workers assistance in the process of determining how certain company objectives will be achieved, in the very mechanical production sense of the word "objective", through to the wider involvement of workers and their representatives in plant and company decision-making. In Germany and Scandinavia, they call it codetermination. The idea is that work is a cooperative effort between partners. The notion of social partnership is very strongly held and constantly came up in our discussions. Both sides accept the other and the organisations that represent them. The workers accept the importance and centrality of company viability. The management accepts the unions as the representatives of the workers.

Essentially this mission focused on learning from the industrial relations, education, and training systems of those countries. Our report, which has recently been published, focused on the sorts of systems that exist in those countries.

Mr Court: Do you support the compulsory national service in some of those countries?

Dr GALLOP: I do not think it is a bad system. They link it in with a lot of training of their young people. I certainly am not basically in objection, but in the Australian context I do not think it is necessary in our current circumstances because, for example, of the cost factors outlined by the Federal Minister for Defence.

Essentially, the mission focused on the experiences those countries have in developing their education training systems rather than applying that total experience to the Western Australian context. The hope is that as a result of looking at those systems we can look at our own and improve it.

I would like to make a few reflections on our own system. In 1985 the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development reported on youth policies in Australia. It described the Australian system as a system founded on the dangerously obsolete notion of an economy requiring a small majority of professional and skilled trade workers and a large majority of semiskilled and unskilled workers. The OECD felt that the Australian economy and labour market was developing in a way that was creating too strong a division between the skilled and unskilled sections of the work force.

Indeed, the economists who studied the labour market in the late 1970s and the mid-1980s have said that there are four basic tendencies in the labour market. Firstly, there has been a sharp decline in the demand for middle level managers and technicians, especially in the manufacturing industry. Secondly, there has been rapid growth at the top of the occupational hierarchy in the demand for highly qualified professionals. Thirdly, there has been a reduction in jobs for skilled trades people in both manufacturing and construction. Fourthly, there has been the creation of a large new under-class of unskilled workers holding down part-time and casual jobs in the services sector interspersed with periodic bouts of unemployment. That is a description of the labour market as it was developing in the early 1980s.

In a sense, that type of labour market was a reflection of the recession which hit Australia and the problems which emerged in the manufacturing industry as the antiquated protection structures were not capable of protecting industry from the forces operating internationally.

Inasmuch as they described longer term tendencies in our economy -- and to some degree I think they did -- they indicated a labour market and an economy which was unsuited to grow and prosper in an increasingly competitive world. The fact of the matter is that we need to strengthen our traditional industries of agriculture and the resources sector. We also need to move into new areas in manufacturing and the services sector. If we are to have a more competitive manufacturing industry and a more commercialised services industry in the world market, winning a share for Australia, those labour market tendencies will have to be reversed. One of the key factors that will be necessary in determining Australia's economic future will be the availability in Australia of a properly skilled work force to utilise the technologies which are transforming the offices, workshops, stores, ports, and factories throughout the world. Australia will need a skilled work force to utilise these technologies.

I think that the tendencies which existed were a reflection of an economy which was not being strengthened; rather they were a reflection of an economy which was being weakened. It is necessary for the Government, industry associations and interested people in the education and training systems to try to reverse the tendencies which developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

[Quorum formed.]

Dr GALLOP: There is an increasing recognition in our society on the part of unions, business, and Government of what I would call the "skills imperative", as is indicated by the plethora of published work on the topic, the number of seminars that have been held and, indeed, the number of overseas missions of recent times. Missions have been organised by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, and business associations are taking an increasing interest in the topic. We also had our own mission to which I am now referring. All these organisations have been concerned about how to improve productivity in Australia's economy. They all recognised the centrality of skills development in that process.

We still have a lot of work to do in this area. The first problem we have recognised and which we are trying to address is that there is simply not enough training in our system. Not enough young people are entering the labour market with sufficient skills; and there is not sufficient attention paid to the upgrading of the skills of those who are already in the work force -- all levels of the work force.

We are starting to turn the corner in relation to these matters, but we need to do a lot more. In the first place, the Government will need to place greater emphasis on raising the proportion of children who stay on at school in years 11 and 12. The Labor Governments, both State and Federal, have been pleased to report to their respective Parliaments that the retention rates have been increased.

The Federal figures relating to retention rates indicate an increase from 36.3 per cent to 48.7 per cent during the period 1982-86. The Western Australian figures for the period 1981-86 indicate an increase from 35.1 per cent to 50.3 per cent. The Federal Government has set itself an objective to raise that retention rate to 65 per cent. That is a objective we all share

in this Parliament. There needs to be a greater private effort on the part of individual companies and industry associations to expand training; we have spent too little in this area. In the past, individual companies and industries have been able to rely on what we call the external labour market to bring in skilled labourers by immigration. The time is now coming when we need to train our own work force to ensure it is capable of dealing with new technologies which are coming onto the market. We cannot simply bring new workers into the system. We must develop workers' skills in relation to that technology as it comes into operation. We need to increase the proportion of business expenditure in the general area of training.

That is not easy to do, particularly in an economy such as Western Australia's, where the structure is such that there is an overwhelming predominance of small business. One of the obvious differences between the Swedish and West German economies and the Western Australian economy is the number of firms which we would classify as big businesses competing in the international market.

The Western Australian economy has a number of important big businesses in the public as well as in the private sector, but the overwhelming proportion of our economy is dominated by small businesses. A report of the Small Business Development Corporation in 1985 clearly showed how small business dominates most industrial areas in Western Australia. If we look at the proportion taken up by small businesses -- which is defined as a business with 20 or fewer workers -- of the total number of enterprises, the figure is 99.8 per cent in agriculture, 86.7 per cent in mining, 89.5 per cent in manufacturing, zero in electricity, gas and water -- obviously that area is dominated by the big, public sector institutions -- 98.9 per cent in construction, 95.6 per cent in the wholesale trade, 98.4 per cent in the retail trade, 97.8 per cent in transport and storage, and 100 per cent in communications. In finance and business services, 96.6 per cent of the total enterprises are defined as small business; public administration and defence, 50.2 per cent; community services, 92.7 per cent; and, recreation, personal and other services, 94.4 per cent.

So, 97 per cent of our firms would be classified as small businesses. Of course, they differ in their employment proportions. Even though those firms may comprise a very large percentage of the total enterprises in this State, the percentage of employment in small businesses is not so high; in fact, in manufacturing it goes down to 32.3 per cent.

The point I am making is that, given the nature of our economy and small business's importance in it, and considering the cost structure and competitive nature of small business, it is difficult for business to spend a lot of money on training at the individual company level. If our economy is to expand via export development -- and I am sure most of us will agree that that is the basic strategy to pursue -- many of those small businesses will need to be more outward looking, more international in their perspective; they will need to ensure quality backup, services and goods supply. They will have to be able to compete on non-price as well as price terms.

A very high proportion of those small businesses will have to grow and become bigger firms if they are to win an increasing share of the world market. Many new firms will come into the small business area and capture a proportion of the market, but some of those which are currently there will have to become bigger firms. As they become bigger and employ more workers, one of the key constraints on future developments will be the quality of their work forces, including management and production, and the white collar and blue collar sectors.

A key to our future expansion will be the ability of our firms to expand and develop by capturing markets. In Germany and Scandinavia we saw ideas of multi-skilling, teamwork, and product quality, which will have to become major aspects of company development in Western Australia.

Our problem is that many of our firms are small ones. Our economy is dominated by them. We need to spend an increasing proportion of our budgets on education and training. We must find mechanisms by which these firms can share the costs of training in the interests of all. Industry associations will have to expand the range of their activities.

One of the interesting features of the German economy is the central role played by their chambers of crafts, chambers of commerce and chambers of manufacturing. These chambers have developed through centuries of German history. They are not merely industry associations in the way that we understand that term. They put a lot of emphasis on research and development, and on training. They play a key role in the vocational training system of Germany. These chambers are not simply interest groups; they are educational and research

institutions which take an interest in the overall future of the German economy. I would like to see many of our business and industry associations expanding the range of their activities. They should do more than simply lobbying on behalf of their specific interests. They should do more than simply promoting their industries overseas, even though they should still engage in those activities. They should find mechanisms to share the costs of promoting education and training within their industries. The Government has a role to play in helping those industries and associations, broadening their perspectives and starting to invest in the future of our work force.

The Government has begun the process by looking into the whole area of vocational training in the secondary education system. An interesting feature of the Swedish educational system is that in its upper secondary system student apprenticeships are available through a very sophisticated system of vocational education streamered as part of their curriculum. They are not courses which teach people narrow skills which would become redundant; they focus on overall production systems -- the production of both goods and services. They teach many of the youngsters, before they go into the work force, to live in a society in which production plays an important role.

Our Government has begun to look at the possibility of establishing a vocational year in our upper secondary system, thereby developing vocational streams in our year 11 and year 12 programmes. That is a development which we should encourage and see expand in the future.

I have had a chance today to focus only on the question of the overall amount of money which we spend on training and the degree to which Government and business associations need to put an increased emphasis in that area. On another occasion I would like to look at the whole nature of the training systems we offer, the types of courses we need to develop, and the different types of training programmes which are possible with the aim of creating workers who can fit into the modern economy which is developing. We also need to look at the administrative structures which we have developed at both Commonwealth and State level in order to administer labour market policies.

Labour market policies are concerned not only with the provision of training but with the unemployment benefits system and the Commonwealth Employment Service. State and Federal Departments of Employment and Training are involved. All these bodies and programmes exist and we need to look at the way in which they relate to one another and see whether, through administrative changes, we can improve the system of delivery in our labour market policies.

I will conclude by saying that the overseas mission was, from the point of view of the individuals concerned, a very important educational experience. A group of very hard-working members of Parliament, public servants, and representatives of trade union and business organisations was given the chance to study in some detail the systems that exist overseas. We were assisted by very good public servants who came on the trip with us. We came back and wrote a report which summarised some of the things we saw, and we emphasised in that report that we believe that all who went on that mission have a duty to explore continually those ideas in the specific context of the Western Australian education, training, and industrial relations systems.

MR COURT (Nedlands -- Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.51 pm]: Before making some specific comments about my direct areas of responsibility I will make a general comment about the Budgets brought down recently, by this State Government and by the Federal Government.

The major issues facing Governments throughout Australia have to do with how to control growth in Government spending and lower the levels of taxation, which in many cases are causing major disincentives for individuals and businesses to grow. We have seen government around this country growing larger and larger, and the Budgets presented in this State Parliament and federally have not addressed that issue. These days, Budgets are presented in an orchestrated manner. The major nasties of the year tend to occur earlier in the year so that at Budget time the Budget comes across as though everything is okay.

In his recent comments Senator Walsh has spoken the truth and has caught the Federal Government out, because he has cast serious doubts on this Government's economic strategy. Everything was going fine for the week after the Budget. The Government had good media coverage and everyone said the Budget was good. The Federal Opposition expressed

concerns about the continuing high levels of taxation and about Australia's debt, yet Senator Walsh, the person jointly responsible for bringing down the Budget, started talking about our being on the Argentine road. The Treasurer, the other person responsible for the Budget, had spoken previously about a banana republic; now his partner in preparing the Budget was talking about the Argentine road. The fact that our gross overseas debt now stands at some \$110 billion is of great concern, yet that issue was not addressed; Senator Walsh now says that he can think of 200 programmes that are not justified on social or equity grounds, but will not be abandoned because the Government does not have the political courage to do so. By his comments Senator Walsh has shown us that a cover-up was going on; that the Federal Government did have the opportunity to start cutting back on levels of Government expenditure without causing social problems but did not take that opportunity. Therefore we are going to remain saddled with those very high debt levels. That is an important scenario to consider when talking about the State Budget and the responsibilities we in the States must accept in order to do our bit to control that situation.

I refer now to some items of more direct responsibility to me, the first being the subject of defence liaison. Last Sunday I attended a function at HMAS *Stirling* for the official arrival of the first Australian submarine to be based in Western Australia. It was a great occasion, attended by huge crowds -- about 15 000 people were there, as was Australia's senior Admiral. It was wonderful to see the public come out in such large numbers to witness this special occasion. However, I was somewhat annoyed and concerned that the State Government was not represented by a Minister at that function -- and I am glad the Premier is in this Chamber when I say that. From our point of view, politically it does not do us any harm for the Government not to have a representative at such functions, but the Federal Minister for Defence was there, and it was a big occasion.

Dr Gallop: The member for Cockburn was there.

Mr COURT: There was not a Minister at that function.

Another point I wish to make is that not very long ago the first patrol boat was handed over to one of the Pacific islands. Again, that was a significant function, and the Navy saw fit to have its senior brass over from Canberra. The Prime Minister was at that function and it was a very proud moment for the country. However, the State Government was not represented by a Minister at that function.

I believe the Government should lift its game, and should have in charge of defence liaison a Minister who has a genuine interest in the matter, and who sets an example to the officers in the department concerned. The officers of the department do attend those functions, but that is not the point. Their leader -- their boss -- should be the person demonstrating that interest.

Also on the question of defence, I was very pleased to hear the announcement that we would no longer have a floating dry dock in Cockburn Sound but instead would have a proper shiplift facility. We need the best facilities possible at Cockburn Sound -- facilities that can efficiently cater for the future needs of a growing defence and commercial shipping presence in this State. If the Australian Government intends to have half of the Australian Navy based in Western Australia it would be ludicrous for us not to have the proper service facilities available. I congratulate the private sector for putting forward a very good argument in this area to convince the Federal and State Governments to make the decision to shift from a rather antiquated, old-fashioned floating dock concept and instead to help fund the very modern shiplift facility which, as was explained to me in the weekend, can be expanded as the need arises for it to take bigger and bigger ships. That is a good initiative and the multiplier effect in years to come -- the business awarded -- will make a worthwhile contribution to this State.

While talking about defence, the third matter I wish to raise concerns the question of the Coastwatch facility. In recent months we have witnessed a debacle in the transfer of the contract from the then existing contractors to Amann Aviation which was awarded the contract. That decision was made by bureaucrats and the Government. I shudder to think how they came to that decision on such an important concept. I believe the surveillance of the north was put at risk by the bungling of the Federal Labor Government. This State Government was very quiet on that point. When we started expressing concern we were told to wait and see. We all waited and saw, and the end result was not at all what it should have been.

The Opposition would like to see not just the allocation of the aerial surveillance part of the

Coastwatch programme, but also a complete review of how surveillance is carried out in the north. The Coastwatch concept should not just be a contract for planes to fly around once a day looking for ships. The goal of the Federal Government -- and the Opposition would like the State Government to support this initiative -- is a major upgrading of the Coastwatch concept. The current arrangements are not adequate.

Whenever defence and the current surveillance techniques are mentioned they are treated as a bit of a joke. The Opposition would like a review of the whole concept, covering the current aerial surveillance contracts and the possible use of new technology. For example, airships might be suitable for that region. Airships are being developed in the United States using Western Australian-owned technology. They might be ideal for carrying out more effective surveillance both visually and using an electronic system. There is no doubt that the most effective form of future surveillance will be sophisticated radar systems working day and night. I am told there is a lot of activity around the north of the State at night time. Anyone in the smuggling business would certainly tend to operate at that time.

Another area which should be included is the role of our defence forces. We already have a very good defence force in the north in the Army and its north force concept based at Darwin. That is expanding, and it is doing a very good job. Our defence forces, the Army, the Air Force with its new bases, and the Navy -- both the regular and naval reserves -- should all be a part of this Coastwatch concept. Many civilian groups, whether on-land or the fishing fleets operating around the north, should also be locked into this concept of a more effective Coastwatch.

The Federal Government gives the distinct impression that the north of this State is out of sight and out of mind. There are not many voters there and the Government is not taking the Coastwatch concept seriously. It thinks that by awarding a contract it has solved the problem. It fails to appreciate the very real problems of drug-running; the control of disease in stock and plants; and the need to protect the large export-based resource industries, now either developed or being developed in the North West Shelf and other oil fields. The Opposition calls for a review which incorporates a coordinated effort from all these areas; we should not simply award another aerial contract.

I move on to the Teachers Credit Society saga. This will go down in history as a classic case of a Government, with the help of political advisers, not properly administering legislation and, as a result, taxpayers having to pay the price for that Government's mistakes. The Teachers Credit Society was a very large credit union. Teachers in this State were attracted to it to save and use its wide range of financial services. Many teachers bought their houses and organised their travel through those financial services. They were very proud of their credit union. All this turned sour and to this day most teachers do not properly understand the full story of what took place. They have known of the major problems because they read the reports in the newspapers, but they were shocked to read the Treasurer's announcement in the newspapers that their credit union was in trouble.

There are two major reasons why the Teachers Credit Society got into trouble. The first is that the Government failed to properly administer the Acts under which it operated. There was no effective monitoring. There were no early warning systems of problems which could arise. It allowed crazy gearing ratios when it came to how much money was being lent on the assets the credit union had. After the functions of building societies and credit unions were deregulated there was a changeover in ministerial responsibility, with the Minister for Housing handing over to the Treasurer. There seems to be a grey area as to who was actually responsible, although the Treasurer has now given us a definite date as to when he accepted responsibility for credit unions. The Registrar did not have the proper resources at his disposal to ensure that the 20-odd financial institutions he was administering were being properly monitored.

The situation concerning the gearing ratios meant that the Teachers Credit Society, and some other credit unions and building societies, were lending up to 50 or 60 times their capital base. Banks are allowed to lend to only 17 times their capital base, so it is easy to see how problems occurred. In round figures, the unions and societies were lending \$450 million when they had about \$440 million in deposits, and they had a capital base of approximately \$10 000.

The first problem was that the Act was not being properly administered. The Teachers Credit Society was going off the rails and there was no-one to say, "Hang on, enough is enough." After the event information was released about the small number of large loans. A

large part of the society's loan portfolio was out to a few people. Unfortunately, in recent weeks we have heard about some of the problems connected with that.

The second major problem was that senior management ran into difficulties. Things were allowed to get out of hand. As one of the chiefs at the R & I Bank said, they ended up having a tiger by the tail. We saw in one or two cases that members of the senior management were actually involved in some of the companies to which loans were being made.

The Government acted foolishly in a panic move many months after the problem was first drawn to its attention. It is academic whether the Treasurer knew of the situation in December and did not take action. If the proper systems had existed he would have known on a continuing basis, as would the Minister before him -- I have to acknowledge that the Minister before the Treasurer was responsible while a lot of this was going on -- but that was obviously not the case. Faced with this situation the Government quickly undertook some form of damage control. R & I bankers were called in to administer the credit society and estimate the seriousness of the situation, while decisions were being made as to the future of the credit society.

There are questions concerning this situation which need to be answered. It is all very well for the Treasurer to say that the R & I Bank will manage the credit society, but what will happen then? Will the Teachers Credit Society become a subsidiary of the R & I Bank? Will it be taken over by some other body? As I read the Credit Unions Act the bank cannot just take over. That is not what a credit union is about. A credit union is not about a major company becoming the major shareholder. By its very nature it is a cooperative made up, in this case, of some 30 000 members, all of whom have a vote in its operations. For the R & I Bank to take over, special legislation would be required. My concern is that there are approximately 30 000 shareholders, most of them teachers, out there in the community who seem to have become irrelevant in this exercise. They have read about their society's problems in the newspapers and they want to know their rights in this situation. They want to know what they should do. Are they simply going to bank with a subsidiary of the R & I Bank? These questions should be answered by the Government. If the R & I Bank has intentions of buying the Teachers Credit Society, how much will it pay for it?

Mr Brian Burke: You have the answer to that already. You asked that question today and I answered it.

Mr COURT: I am asking the Treasurer now whether the Teachers Credit Society will become a subsidiary of the R & I Bank.

Mr Brian Burke: Not to my knowledge. I thought you asked that question today.

Mr COURT: Could the Treasurer tell me what will happen with the Teachers Credit Society?

Mr Brian Burke: It will be managed and administered by the R & I Bank. We are awaiting the R & I's advice to change any legislation that may be desirable and/or necessary if it is the R & I's view that it should take over rather than administer Teachers Credit.

Mr COURT: Will it remain a credit union?

Mr Brian Burke: That is the R & I's intention.

Mr COURT: So the Teachers Credit Society will remain a credit union and the shareholders of it -- that is, the teachers -- will be able to be elected to the board of directors.

Mr Brian Burke: I have had no proposition put to me that that should be varied. However, part of the R & I's brief will be making recommendations. I have indicated by public statements that we would be prepared to amend the Act if it is necessary and desirable for the R & I to take over the Teachers Credit Society.

Mr COURT: So, the Treasurer is suggesting that if the R & I wants to take it over --

Mr Brian Burke: I did not say that. I said, "If it was thought to be desirable and/or necessary". We have formed no view as to whether it is desirable.

Mr COURT: So if the R & I Bank --

Mr Brian Burke: No, I did not say, "the R & I Bank".

Mr COURT: If the Government thought it was desirable and necessary to take over the credit society, legislation would be introduced for that to occur.

Mr Brian Burke: If it was necessary.

Mr COURT: I am putting the alternative position. I have said that the problems have arisen for two reasons: First, the Government did not properly administer the Act or have proper controls in place and, secondly, there were problems with the management. I would like to see the Teachers Credit Society remain a credit union so that the teachers could continue to have their own credit union. The Government should do its bit to administer the Act and to abide by the rules. Proper management should be put into place. If the R & I Bank provides that management, well and good. However, I have a lot of time for the credit union movement and I would like to see the teachers being able to continue with their credit union. After the debacle that has occurred, the teachers will be taking a different approach to the responsibilities and the board of the society.

I believe that the Government's handling of building societies and credit unions has been appalling. It has shattered the confidence of many of those institutions. In attempting to defend its position, the Government has stooped to despicable tactics of attempting to destroy traditional banker-client relationships by releasing confidential information about the president of the WA Liberal Party and his banking activities with the society. The Government will still not give assurances that that will not happen again. It will not tell us how it gained that information about the Teachers Credit Society. Nor will it tell us about the banking details and the fact that Mr Simpson had invested funds in the SEC. That was an appalling state of affairs.

The Government stooped so low to divert attention from the bad smell that was hanging around deals done by the society. In the weekend, the Government made an attempt to draw a red herring across another trail by making claims about corruption in the WA Police Force. No-one had heard about it until the Government decided to make an issue of it this weekend, just because the issue is running hot in Queensland and in New South Wales. I think that was a stupid thing for it to do. The Police Force in this State has a first-class record. I believe that it is not the Police Force that needs investigating, but the Government.

At this stage, the teachers do not know what will become of their credit union. The Treasurer has told us that the Government will wait until recommendations are made by the R & I Bank before it makes any decisions. Months are likely to pass while we wait for those decisions. We have been told the society may become a subsidiary of the R & I Bank, depending on the advice the Government receives. Perhaps the teachers should start a new credit union. There is nothing to stop them, provided they abide by the rules.

I want this matter cleared up quickly. When problems occur in financial institutions, we should get to the nub of the problem immediately, and put them back on a sound footing. The Government should not procrastinate. The Treasurer should assure us that a proper monitoring system is put in place to oversee the dealings of credit unions and building societies. If the R & I Bank takes over this credit society, I want an assurance that a proper price is paid for it, because one does not pick up 30 000 customers overnight without having to pay for them.

I cannot understand why the Corporate Affairs Department was not called in to investigate the affairs of the Teachers Credit Society, as it was called in to investigate the affairs of the Swan Building Society which had similar problems. It had also not been properly monitored and had been lending large amounts of money to large borrowers. The Corporate Affairs Department was quickly called in to investigate it. I think it is strange that, despite the fact that the problems of the Teachers Credit Society were five or six times greater than the problems of the Swan Building Society, the Corporate Affairs Department was not called in to investigate Teachers Credit. I would be interested to know why. Were a few people too close to the operation?

Mr Brian Burke: Support that allegation?

Mr COURT: The Government could not move quickly enough to put the Corporate Affairs Department into Swan Building Society.

Mr Brian Burke: Because the registrar recommended that action be taken on the advice he had received.

Mr COURT: The problems are similar.

Mr Brian Burke: No, they are not.

Mr COURT: They are of a far greater magnitude.

Mr Brian Burke: No, they are not.

Mr COURT: The problems at the Teachers Credit Society were certainly greater and it is amazing that the Corporate Affairs Department was not called in to clear the air, particularly when one considers that the people connected with some of the loans were involved in the Anchorage development. I would have thought that the Treasurer would be keen to see an investigation carried out.

Earlier today, the House dealt with a motion relating to the appointment of the head of the Corporate Affairs Department. That person would have access to some very confidential information relating to the corporate life of this State. That life would be seriously damaged if the information were misused. If the Government made a political appointment to that position in order for it to have access to confidential information, it could be chaotic. Individuals and corporations could be ruined if their private information were bandied around.

I am concerned about the Government's track record on releasing certain confidential items of information. I am concerned about what could take place with the Government thinking it is clever to have a key political person in that very sensitive position. The Treasurer thinks it is clever to refer in this House to companies or businesses with which my family is related. The other day he said that he had heard this or that about Perpetual Trustees. That sort of behaviour is not acceptable from the Treasurer of this State. If he thinks it is clever to carry on like that, who knows what he will do when, by getting information from Corporate Affairs, he is able to cast a slur on or make innuendo about people in the business community. The Government has a responsibility to make sure that everything is completely above-board and people around this town at present are concerned that when it is convenient or politically opportune to do so, the Government will release certain information. A business community cannot operate with that sort of cloud hanging over it.

Referring briefly to the Swan Building Society, this is a similar saga to that which occurred with Teachers Credit Society. People had deposited their money in that building society, it was controlled by the registrar and was initially the responsibility of the Minister for Housing until it was transferred to the Treasurer in October last year. It was a relatively small building society which lent a large amount of funds to a small number of people and some of those loans ran into considerable problems. It reached the stage where action had to be taken to keep the building society afloat. The Government is treading quietly with this one and again, it is refusing to properly answer the questions put forward, whether in this House or publicly through the media. Commercial interests were quite prepared to rescue the Swan Building Society but for one reason or another -- the Government did not give its reasons -- it decided not to accept the commercial solution but sought another building society to take it over with the Government's promise to accept some of the losses associated with its previous activities. At the beginning it was suggested that the SGIO would get involved but the Treasurer replied to a question that the Government had decided SGIO was not a suitable body to become involved. Already big losses are being written off at Swan Building Society and the Opposition wants to know how much the Government will be up for in funding that rescue. It is not a matter of the Treasurer saying that these losses will crystallise over the next year or two. I am told that some quite major losses are happening right now. It is proper for the Government to tell us from where those funds will come. Earlier we listened to the debate about funding the police to help control the increasing crime rate. In these cases we are talking about the Government forking out large sums, \$7 million in the case of the Swan Building Society. Who knows what amount is involved with the Teachers Credit Society? I know the Government wants to sweep the whole problem under the carpet but the public have a right to know where the funds will come from.

Why did the Government not conduct an independent audit into the Swan Building Society for 18 months? I asked about the condition of the Swan Building Society when the Minister handed over responsibility to the Treasurer and was told that the situation was as per the audit that the building society had published in a newspaper report. The whole idea of having a registrar is for him to independently check on the building society, checking the quality of its loans and getting regular reports. In answer to a question in Parliament, the Minister replied that the situation was as published in the newspaper by the company. Obviously, there were major problems at that time, yet the Government and the registrar were not able to pinpoint that problem and we were told that the registrar had not been to the society for 18 months. That is of great concern because the public are depositing their

savings into these organisations and the Government is not fulfilling its role.

I asked what regular reports was the Minister given of the financial health of each building society in Western Australia. The Minister said he was getting regular reports but did not know much about their financial health. I would have thought that was the main issue -- their financial health. I asked what additional monitoring and control procedures were introduced when their activities were deregulated by the 1984 amendments. We are not given that information but we are told by the people involved in the industry that they simply did not have the resources or the personnel to do their job. Why were the Government officers, Mr Edwards and Mr Lloyd, advocating --

Mr Brian Burke: I asked Mr Edwards about that and he said he did not advocate that. Who said that he did? I have not asked Mr Lloyd.

Mr COURT: Mr Edwards has mentioned it to a number of people in the credit union and the building society -- I have also checked that information. I accept that the Treasurer wants to see a rationalisation of building societies but not so much of credit unions. The Treasurer gave that explanation in Parliament, but his officers seem to be calling the tune. They have been engineering what has happened at Swan Building Society.

Mr Brian Burke: I asked the officer you named and he said he did not say that.

Mr COURT: I am glad that the Treasurer took up this matter.

Mr Parker: You are wrong, it is one of your famous rumours.

Mr COURT: No, it is not a rumour, it is a fact.

Mr Brian Burke: You said I said it and I never said it.

Mr COURT: I have accepted the Treasurer's explanation and I have explained who has been involved. Those are the types of questions in connection with the Swan Building Society and the Teachers Credit Society that must be answered to the satisfaction of the taxpayers of this State who are being called on to provide considerable sums of money to cover up this Government's mistakes.

[Leave granted for the member to continue his speech at a later stage of the sitting.]

Debate thus adjourned.

[Questions taken.]

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 pm

RESERVES AND LAND REVESTMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Peter Dowding (Minister for Works and Services), read a first time.

Second Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the second reading.

MR PETER DOWDING (Maylands -- Minister for Works and Services) [7.17 pm]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Associations Incorporation Act 1895 enables clubs, churches, schools and other non-trading associations to obtain corporate status. The Act worked well for many years, but is now generally regarded as inadequate.

In March 1972 the Western Australian Law Reform Commission reported on the Act. That was the first review of the Act's operation since its enactment in 1895.

That 15 years has passed without action on the Law Commission report is regrettable. On the face of it, the delay is also surprising in view of the repeated public commitments to a new Act by successive Governments.

The fact is, however, that the questions involved in the incorporation of associations are much more complex than might at first be apparent. In the first place, there are thousands of such associations and their circumstances and those of their members and executives vary enormously. They range from very small groups handling insignificant funds to very large organisations dealing with hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of dollars.

Some are serviced by large staffs and professional assistance. By far the majority are likely to be constituted by modest numbers of members and serviced by volunteers.

Major deficiencies of the present Act include the inadequate accountability of association executives to their own membership, and the absence of suitable provision for withdrawal of incorporation or the voluntary or involuntary winding-up of associations. There is, for practical purposes, no external supervisory role by the Department of Corporate Affairs or any other authority.

The problem is to fill those gaps without imposing unduly onerous obligations on association executives, most of whom are working in a voluntary capacity. It is important that such work be encouraged, and excessive or inflexible regulation could easily be counterproductive in this respect. Questions of enforcement and penalties require particularly careful consideration and the Bill has been prepared with such factors well in mind.

Since the report of the Law Reform Commission in 1972, new legislation relating to incorporation of associations has been enacted in Victoria and Queensland, both in 1981, New South Wales in 1984, and South Australia in 1985.

The Bill draws from all these sources and has four major aims --

- to clarify and simplify the existing law with respect to incorporation, including eligibility for incorporation, and the advertising of and procedures for objection to applications;

- to improve the accountability of associations to their members;

- to empower the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs to require an association to transfer its incorporation to another Act, or to cancel incorporation in appropriate cases; and

- to provide procedures for the voluntary and compulsory winding-up of incorporated associations.

Generally, the Bill reduces the number of and frequency with which documents must be lodged or registered.

I will outline in more detail the various provisions of the Bill. Part I of the Bill deals with definitions and preliminary matters. Part II deals with applications for incorporation. Clause 4 extends the range of purposes permitted for incorporation as of right. The present prohibition on incorporation of associations which trade or distribute profits to members is retained and a trade union as defined in the Trade Union Act 1902 will not be eligible to be incorporated under this Bill.

The Bill, however, preserves bona fide activities of associations which are consistent with incorporated status, such as a sporting club which raises funds to assist travel expenses to attend a competition, or a war widows' association which provides accommodation for those of its members in need. Other associations not permitted in corporation as of right must receive the commissioner's approval, with provision for review of his decision by the Minister. This replaces the current requirement for ministerial approval.

Clause 5 sets out the detail of documentation required for incorporation. Affidavits verifying the documents will no longer be required. The applicant's own certificate will be adequate, subject to a penalty in clause 43 for false or misleading statements. Only one advertisement is required by clause 6 instead of the present two. Clause 7 sets out procedures whereby a person may object to an application for incorporation. Objection is made initially to the commissioner with the opportunity for review of his decision by the Minister.

Clause 8 specifies the criteria for approval by the commissioner of an association's name. These criteria are similar to those applicable to business and company names. The Minister may review the commissioner's decision.

Incorporation is effected under clause 9. The commissioner is required not to incorporate an association if its activities are such as to make it more appropriate for it to incorporate under

another Act, or if incorporation is against the public interest. There is again a right to review the commissioner's decision by the Minister. Part III sets out the consequences of incorporation.

Clause 10 invests the association with the usual characteristics of a corporate body. Clause 11 effects a statutory vesting of property. Clause 12 protects members from personal liability for the debts of the association after incorporation. This protection is directed essentially to debts of a contractual nature. There appears to be a misconception that incorporation as an association protects members from liability for negligence. In fact, members of associations are not, by virtue of incorporation, protected from liability for their own negligence or other torts committed by them.

Clauses 13 and 14 specify the powers and privileges of an incorporated association. Subclause 13(2) makes it clear that an association may, unless restricted by its rules, act as a trustee. The doctrine of ultra vires is abolished by clause 15 except where members seek to restrain their association from acting beyond its powers.

Part IV deals with the requirements and procedures for alteration of rules. Clause 16, by reference to the second schedule, sets out the basic framework of matters which an association's rules must deal with to comply with the Act. This requirement will not, under paragraph 4 of the second schedule, apply retrospectively to existing incorporated associations. Model rules are not included in the Bill. However, it is intended that the commissioner will make model rules available to the public as a service.

Under clause 17, rules may be altered by special resolution, with a copy of the alteration being lodged with the commissioner. Under clauses 18 and 19, names and objects may be changed in a similar manner, but the commissioner's approval is also required, subject to a right of review of the commissioner's decision by the Minister.

Part V details the procedures and requirements for management of the affairs of incorporated associations. Clause 20 invests responsibility for management with the association's committee. Clauses 21 and 22 seek to ensure that conflicts of interest are disclosed and that committee members having a conflict of interest do not vote. Clause 23 specifies the times within which annual general meetings must be held. Special resolutions must be made or lodged with the commissioner in the manner required by clause 24.

Clauses 25 and 26 set out the requirements for keeping accounts and tabling of annual accounts. In line with current practice, there is no requirement for accounts to be lodged with the commissioner for public inspection. That is regarded as unduly onerous having regard to the nature and purposes of associations.

Under clauses 27, 28, and 29, associations are required to keep a register of members, copies of rules, and record of office holders and of persons who are authorised to use the common seal of the association, which are all to be available for inspection by members and can be copied by members.

Part VI deals with the winding up and cancellation of incorporation. The present Act is silent as to winding up and dissolution. This has resulted in a number of associations being no longer active but with no procedure to remove them from the register. Compulsory winding up by the court under the companies code is available, but is a cumbersome and expensive procedure. The Bill seeks to overcome these defects. Clause 30 of the Bill provides for voluntary winding up of solvent incorporated associations initiated by special resolution of members. Thereafter, relevant provisions of the companies code will be adopted by reference to regulate the process.

Clause 31 provides 11 grounds for compulsory winding up by the Supreme Court, on application by the association, a member, the commissioner, the Minister, or in the case of insolvency, a creditor. Again, relevant provisions of the companies code will be adopted to regulate the process.

The present Act is also silent as to distribution of surplus property. Members are free to make their own decisions although it has been the practice for many years not to incorporate an association unless its rules prohibit distribution of surplus assets to members and require distribution to another association with similar purposes or as determined by the court.

Clause 33 provides for members to determine a distribution plan for surplus assets. However, subclause (2) prohibits any distribution to members, and requires that the distribution must be to another incorporated association or for charitable purposes. In the absence of a

distribution plan, or if a plan is unworkable, the commissioner can take steps to have the surplus paid to the Treasury. Provision is also made for an application to the Supreme Court to review the commissioner's decision.

The Bill recognises that an association's activities may expand beyond the normal close-knit and localised group or become more commercially oriented. Accordingly, clause 34 empowers the commissioner to require an incorporated association to transfer its corporate status to more appropriate legislation. It may, for example, be desirable that an association be subject to the fiduciary and prudential requirements of the companies code. If the association so requests, its property and undertakings will vest in a nominated body, incorporated under the appropriate legislation and the association will be dissolved. If the association does not request to transfer, the commissioner can take steps to have its incorporation cancelled under clause 35.

If an association is defunct for other reasons, this will also provide grounds for cancellation of incorporation. An appeal against a proposed cancellation lies to the Supreme Court. On cancellation, assets are sold by the commissioner under clause 36, and any surplus after payment of expenses is paid to the Treasury. No provision is made for amalgamation of associations. Apart from being complex, such provisions are considered unnecessary, as it is open to use the voluntary winding-up procedures to achieve the same end.

Part VII deals with administrative matters, including requirements for lodging and searching documents under clause 37, and admissibility of evidence under clause 38.

Detailed provisions for investigation and audit of records are made in clause 39 as a result of associations not being generally required to have their accounts audited or to lodge annual accounts. These powers can be exercised by the commissioner only to investigate contravention of the Act or offences involving fraud or dishonesty or other specified matters. In these circumstances, persons holding records related to the association can be required to produce those records and an association can be required to produce audited accounts. Failure to comply with a requirement under this clause will be an offence.

Part VIII deals with miscellaneous matters, including service of documents under clauses 40 and 41. Committee members are responsible under clause 42 to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their association complies with its statutory obligations. Failure to do so constitutes an offence. Clause 43 provides penalties for false or misleading statements. Clause 44 prohibits unincorporated bodies using the word "incorporated" or its abbreviation, unless incorporated under this Bill or any other law.

Clause 45 provides for fees to be paid on lodging documents. Clause 46 provides a general regulation-making power, clause 47 repeals the 1895 Act, clause 48 gives effect to transitional provisions in schedule 2, and clause 49 makes consequential amendments.

Schedule 1 sets out a minimum prescription of matters which rules must deal with to comply with the Bill as required by clause 16. Schedule 2 comprises transitional provisions to ensure continuity of corporate status for existing incorporated associations. Paragraph 4 of this schedule makes it clear that the requirements of clause 16 and schedule 1 as to the contents of rules are not to be imposed on existing associations.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR COURT (Nedlands -- Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.32 pm]: I refer now to technology and education which will now be handled on behalf of the Opposition by the member for Cottesloe. The Government's performance over the last five years in the introduction of computers into schools has been appalling. I have been in this House for five State Labor Budgets and in each Budget the Government has made a big noise about technology. It has created and funded technology bureaucracies and the Deputy Premier has tried to make a name for himself in the field of technology. However, our schools have been literally starved of adequate computer resources. Technology, at the most basic level, is being taught in the schools and a lot of promises have been made by this Government. Each

year it promises a certain amount of equipment to the schools and each year it has delayed the delivery of this equipment for various reasons, including funding. A great deal of money has been spent by this Government on unnecessary items, yet in a basic and important area the Government has not been delivering. It is offering too little, too late.

It appalled me to read in the Press recently a letter to the editor complaining about the fact that the Government had promised an allowance for the provision of computers in a school, but that that school had not received the equipment. The letter reads --

The State Government has long heralded that they will fulfil their election promise of providing one free computer for every 40 students in State secondary schools.

This week our long-awaited computer allowance arrived - a measly \$1795, enough to buy one computer!

With a student population in excess of 900, we would expect to be granted sufficient funds to purchase at least 20 more computers.

The letter goes on to illustrate how students queue up before and after school to gain access to computers. The situation is that the students are keen to become involved, yet they do not have the proper facilities available to them. All the talk by the Government about what it is doing in the field of technology is hollow because it cannot provide, at the very basic level, adequate facilities for students who are very interested in furthering their computer studies. While the Government has talked, year after year, about doing something in the technology field, in fact it has fallen further behind in that area. The Government's priorities are all wrong. I would like to think that the Minister for Education, in conjunction with the Minister for Industry and Technology would realise that they have made a mistake and that they have not been providing the resources in the correct area. They should start providing those facilities for the schools.

I know that in most cases, the schools in my area have had to buy most of their computer facilities. However, the rooms housing these facilities are not up to standard. Recently I read in the local Press where the member for Subiaco commented on the problems faced by the Hollywood Senior High School. The member expressed concern about overcrowding and the like. Members need only go into the computer rooms at that school to see how the Government expects the schools to operate. Yet it is a new school facility and has been in operation for only a year.

The final matter I wish to discuss is the gold tax. With my new responsibility in the field of minerals and energy I will be taking a far greater interest in these areas from now on. After the Budget address by the Commonwealth Treasurer, Mr Keating, I was appalled to read the comment in the newspaper that the Federal Government was to carry out a review of company taxation. The article said that there will be no sacred cows and that the Government will look at all areas of company taxation. Of course, there was an immediate outcry from the gold mining industry. Just prior to the last election the gold mining industry went to great lengths to obtain assurances from both the Liberal and Labor Parties that if they won Government they would not introduce a gold tax. In the case of the Liberal Party such a commitment was given in writing because there was a great deal of concern about this matter.

Only weeks after the Federal election the Government has come out and said that it will now review all company taxation. In the Press today the Prime Minister said that his promise about the gold tax will stand and that his Government will not introduce a gold tax. I ask you, Mr Speaker, why the Federal Government budgeted funds to conduct this sort of investigation into a gold tax if it is not going to introduce the tax. I am sure that members opposite would support me in saying to the Prime Minister that he is creating uncertainty by having his Government investigate all company taxation, including the possibility of a gold tax. The Prime Minister should exclude all reference to the gold industry in order to get rid of this uncertainty. The Opposition has written a letter to the Prime Minister today asking him to exclude the gold industry from his Government's proposed review of company taxation. I am one of those people who believe that the gold industry is a fantastic example of what taxation incentives can do to encourage an industry.

Instead of the Government talking about trying to find new industries to tax, we can proudly hold up the gold industry as a classic example of what happens when people are given incentives. At the end of the day the Government picks up taxation in different forms as a result of the increased economic activity created by the gold industry. The classic example of how not to use taxation as an incentive is the fringe benefits tax and how it affects the

automobile industry. There has been a terrible slump in motor vehicle sales.

I urge members opposite to support the Opposition in telling the Prime Minister to get rid of the uncertainty when it comes to a gold tax; exclude the gold industry from the proposed inquiry into the different forms of company taxation and allow the industry to continue in its present buoyant manner.

DR LAWRENCE (Subiaco) [7.41 pm]: I wish to speak today about a matter with which I have been involved as chairman of the task force on child sexual abuse over the last 12 months. I have been involved regrettably, because it is not an area which is very pleasant to contemplate. Our task force has completed its deliberations and we will report to the Government in the next couple of weeks. Prior to that report being considered by the Government, however, I would like to raise a few issues that we as a task force were required to investigate, without at this stage disclosing the specific recommendations. In particular I want to ask a few questions about what we as a community should do in relation to child sexual abuse, and in particular, to pose a question to the Press about the role it plays in both sensationalising this issue and in some ways actually fostering the social climate in which it can occur.

I want to outline first a few of the working principles which the task force came to adopt over the course of its 12 months' deliberations. As with most social policy developments, the theory tells us that the working principles should come first, but frequently they emerge only after we discover what we think. The working principles of the task force became very clear. Consensus among the 12 members was substantial. In fact on only one issue was there any dissent, and on the working principles none at all.

We want to state very clearly to the community that sexual activities between children and adults are always unacceptable. It may seem unnecessary to make this statement, but submissions were put before us, including some oral ones, which suggested that sexual relationships between children and adults were not particularly harmful in all cases, and indeed should be encouraged. I was approached by members of the paedophile organisation who suggested to me that eight-year-olds were acceptable sexual partners and they indeed provoked and invited sexual contact. That was a view that I was not willing to accept, and neither was any member of the task force.

As part of that working principle we wanted to state very clearly that sexual abuse of children, by its very definition, has harmful psychological and social consequences, many of which appear only in the long term. We also felt that while it shared some similarities with other forms of child abuse, it deserved separate analysis and treatment.

The second major principle that we adopted was that children had the right to the care and protection of the entire community. All adult citizens had a duty and responsibility to extend that care and protection to all children. That may seem like an obvious thing to say, but it is not a view which is necessarily shared. People tend to see the community as split up into family units, and are sometimes reluctant to act as advocates for children who may be part of other families. We want to say that it is a community responsibility. Any child deserves any adult's care and protection.

We also wish to state very clearly that the community as a whole has a responsibility to recognise and act upon disclosed or suspected child abuse. People should not say, "It is not my business, it does not impinge upon my world." We want to say quite clearly that the community has a responsibility.

Fundamental to the nature of child abuse is the misuse of adult power over dependent children. It is the fault of adults failing to respect the rights of children to autonomy, safety, and personal privacy. In our view it also indicates the pervasive imbalance of power between men and women, and I shall elaborate on that point in a moment.

A fifth principle that we adopted was that the responsibility for sexual abuse lies with the offender. There is no circumstance in which the child's behaviour can be seen as an invitation, a provocation or an excuse for sexual abuse. There were occasions when adults attempted to say to us that their falling from grace, as it were, was the fault of a child. The most extreme form of that was an example which came to us not in our own State but through material provided to us from the United States. In a judgment in Wisconsin as recently as 1982 a very lenient sentence was passed on a man who had sexually assaulted his de facto wife's five-year-old daughter. The judge explained his decision to give a lenient sentence in the following terms -- so it was not even an excuse of the perpetrator. The judge said of the five-year-old --

I am satisfied we have an unusually sexually promiscuous young lady and he (the defendant) did not know enough to refuse. In no way do I believe he initiated the sexual contact.

That is a view we utterly repudiate.

A sixth principle which guided our deliberations was that children rarely -- not never -- make false allegations of sexual abuse and that in any case, children's disclosures of abuse should be taken seriously and acted upon to ensure protection. If the allegations subsequently emerge as false, so be it, but we believe that that will occur in very few circumstances, and that children should be taken seriously in the first instance.

In our deliberations we tried to define what we were looking at. It is obviously extremely difficult to draw a boundary around sexual abuse. What constitutes abuse? What is the difference between loving, affectionate contact and sexual abuse? At what age does a child cease to be a child? When should adults be concerned? What emphasis should be placed on the nature of the act? Is it assault, abuse, or victimisation? We wanted to recognise that definitions we might make would inevitably be time and culture-bound, and would vary between professional and other groups in the community.

It is well known that the sexual abuse of children has been practised throughout history and in various cultures, but we decided as a group that there was now no general or indeed specific acceptance of that by any group within our community.

We adopted a working definition which reads as follows --

Sexual abuse in our view is the involvement of the dependent and developmentally immature child or adolescent in the sexual activities of an older person where the younger person is used for the gratification of sexual desires or adult needs of the older person or where social taboos or family roles are violated.

We referred specifically to children under 18. Although we recognise that that definition does not coincide with the legal one, we thought it would give a fair range to our deliberations. We were not concerned with consenting sexual activity between peers. The emphasis in our definition is on the imbalance of power between adults and children. It is this imbalance which renders children vulnerable to being led, seduced or coerced into sexual activities to which they cannot give true consent.

The term "child sexual abuse" obviously refers to a wide range of behaviour, from exhibitionism to the involvement of a child in pornography, to explicit sexual acts with children such as fondling, genital manipulation, intercourse and child prostitution. The examples which came before us included all of those instances. Obviously the type of abuse will vary, depending on the relationship of the offender and the abused child, the frequency of operation of the abuse, the ages and maturity of the participants and the degree of coercion and threat. Examples of various combinations of those variables came before us.

We wanted to make it clear in our deliberations that we were aware of the fact -- and I shall point to the statistics in a moment -- that most abuse occurs between a child and a person known to that child, so any campaign of public education or awareness which relies entirely on a stranger-danger type of approach would be entirely inadequate. The fear of a child being abused in the street, which is the sort of fear sometimes thrown up by the Opposition, is a real one, but only 15 per cent of cases of sexual abuse were of that kind. In the remainder of the cases the perpetrators were known to the victim, and in over 50 per cent of the cases the perpetrators were members of the biological or social family of that child.

As I indicated earlier, we felt it important to distinguish child sexual abuse from other forms of abuse, although we recognise it often had components of emotional and physical abuse as well, and the major difference between other forms of abuse and sexual abuse was the gender factor, as we called it.

Whereas women are more likely to be the perpetrators of physical abuse, men are more likely to be the perpetrators of sexual abuse. There is less connection with economic and social disadvantage. Physical abuse of children is more likely in circumstances where people are under a great deal of pressure, financially and socially. The same is not true of sexual abuse. It occurs across the range and regardless of status or geographical location, despite some unkind things that are occasionally said about people in the country.

Sexual abuse is premeditated, secret, occurs over many years and frequently becomes progressively more serious, unlike physical abuse which is often impulsive and one-off. The

only evidence is frequently the child's disclosure. We took the view that child sexual abuse needed to be considered separately for all of those reasons, although many of our recommendations would embrace all forms of child sexual abuse.

I turn now to the extent of the problem in Western Australia and to look at the reasons we should be concerned about the problem, but why we should be cautious not to develop a hysterical response in the community and propel the inevitable backlash that has occurred, for example, in the United Kingdom recently and to some extent in the United States.

Mr House: Did you investigate the mental abuse of children by adults?

Dr LAWRENCE: No, our brief was to look only at sexual abuse. But we recognised that often a component of sexual abuse was threats, coercion, and intimidation, which would constitute mental or emotional abuse.

The difficulty with determining the incidence of the number of new cases in a given year, or the prevalence or number of people who have ever suffered child sexual abuse, is obvious. In other words, we are going to rely on those cases that do come to the attention of some authority which then reports the fact that such an event has taken place. There have been recent, very large increases in reported incidents of child sexual abuse in Western Australia, as in other States in Australia. This parallels the experience in the United States. Whether there is a real increase in abuse, however, is open to debate and we should keep at the back of our minds the very real possibility that growing community awareness, greater cooperation from the media, and more sophistication amongst professionals have all contributed to an apparent increase in the rate of reporting this offence. It is one case where an increase in reports does not necessarily represent an increase in the number of incidents.

During my time as chairperson of the task force many people rang me informally to tell me about their experiences. Many people whom I knew well disclosed to me for the first time that they had been sexually abused, sometimes for periods as long as 12 or 15 years. Often they had disclosed this to other family members or professionals and received no response to their disclosure. One woman in her seventies told me -- I was the first person she ever told -- of an experience that lasted for most of her childhood; an experience that she relayed to her mother, who ignored her and in fact punished her for her disclosure.

So part of the apparent increase in reports of child sexual abuse must be attributed to changes in community values and community tolerance for disclosure of this matter. Whereas in the past it was likely that people who reported sexual abuse in a public forum would insist on anonymity -- their faces would be blanked out on television or newspaper reports -- fairly soon on one of the commercial networks a television programme will be presented in which the victims of abuse quite openly identify themselves. That shows a considerable advance on the previous shame and guilt associated with this problem.

We need to caution against uncritical and sensationalist use of statistical information on abuse. Nothing could be worse than syphoning a huge amount of resources into the detection and confirmation of cases that prove to be unfounded. The emphasis needs to be on substantiated cases rather than on notification levels.

That brings us to the question of the sorts of reports that can go to agencies responsible. In the United States, where a wide group of people are mandated by their reporting laws to report and are allowed to do so anonymously, something like 80 per cent of those cases reported turn out to be unfounded. The more clear the guidelines, the more limited the number of people who respond to a report of child sexual abuse, and the more careful we are in educating the community about precisely what it is, the more likely we are to have a reasoned and reasonable response to what is a very serious problem without exaggeration and distortion.

As I have suggested, the increasing notification levels probably reflect greater awareness and concern about the problem and more accurate and comprehensive statistical information itself. Many agencies are now reporting that previously did not. However, it is fair to say that there is still significant under-reporting in our community. I would not go along with some people who say it is the tip of the iceberg -- I do not think we are that far removed from the truth of the matter.

But a number of people are still reluctant to report, for a number of reasons. First, they fear being disbelieved. That is a very real fear because often that is the consequence of their disclosure. In other cases they fear retribution or the consequences of disclosure. Part of the abuse may be specific threats about what will happen to them if they tell somebody else

about what has occurred. In addition, they may fear that the family will break down; again, that is another very real outcome. Another difficulty in getting an accurate estimate of abuse is the fact that something like 50 per cent of children who are abused are under 13 years of age in this State as in others, and an unhappy proportion of those are under six. So those children are not in a position to provide corroborating evidence and they are unlikely to be able to tell a very coherent story. Frequently they rely on advocates who interview them and involve them in play with accurate dolls, as they are called, to determine what has occurred. The professionals then may be reluctant to report to public bodies for fear of being ridiculed and, in some cases, out of ignorance, for fear they may be the subject of writs. Another fear that leads to under-reporting is uncertainty about what constitutes abuse. People are unwilling to act because they do not know exactly what it is they are looking for. That is part of the general lack of community awareness and a reluctance in some cases to acknowledge sexual abuse as occurring at all.

There is a lack of knowledge, too, about the harmful nature of child abuse. A number of people came to me and suggested that although it was an immorally outrageous practice, in the long term there was little need for concern because after all the consequences on the adult were minimal. They wanted to argue that there was no evidence of an epidemic of mental health, suicide, and drug-related problems. But, as I will show in a minute, some of the cases we now regard as having an unknown cause in those areas of distress are indeed related to early sexual abuse.

Another reason for under-reporting is the lack of knowledge about how and where to report and what help is available. These are all areas where the community needs to respond and improve information. In some cases there is ignorance that sexual abuse is an offence. Again, this is something which needs to be remedied. In some cases there is a perception that if they do report, nothing will happen. People who have had experiences with our system will sometimes say, "It is all very well, but what will happen if I do report it; there are no treatment services and I cannot anticipate a reliable response." Again, that is an area that deserves close examination and is one we looked at carefully in our task force report.

Finally, there is a belief that family privacy is sacrosanct. Some people see that as an overriding principle and one they would put before the others I have mentioned. We have taken the view that the care and protection of children is paramount, and while family privacy needs to be respected it is not an inviolable right.

The number of cases of child sexual abuse that occur in Western Australia is difficult to estimate because of under-reporting, the fact that some professionals do not or will not report, and the fact that trends and patterns have emerged only after satisfactory record-keeping began, which it did in this State in 1981 under the auspices of ACCCA -- the Advisory and Coordinating Committee on Child Abuse. One of the reasons the Government established the task force was the apparent escalation of notifications of child sexual abuse. To go backwards, in 1985-86 the contributing agency to ACCCA reported 995 notifications of child abuse and neglect in the broadest sense, 500 of which were sexual abuse cases. This compared with 427 cases of sexual abuse in the previous year and 373 in the year before that. So members can see that there was a steady and apparently alarming rise. In all of those years sexual abuse has constituted roughly 50 per cent of the cases that have come to the attention of the reporting agencies. Of those, most were regarded as substantiated or believed possible.

As I suggested, in the case of young children it is often quite difficult to marshal the necessary evidence to reach a conclusion. As I indicated earlier, too, the majority of cases here, as elsewhere, are female. In 1985-86, 85 per cent of those people who were sexually abused were female; 15 per cent of the reported cases involved male victims. My belief, and it is not based on much more than the expert evidence of several witnesses who came before us, is that the major area where sexual abuse is under-reported is male children, because there is a double-jeopardy of both sexual abuse, often by close family members, and homosexual abuse at that, because as far as we can determine the perpetrators there, too, are largely male.

In 54 per cent of the notifications for the year 1985-86 the offender believed responsible was a family member, including de facto stepfathers and brothers; 32 per cent involved offenders who were known to the child; and only nine per cent were perpetrated by strangers. As I indicated earlier, although the largest percentage of abuse occurred in the 13 to 18 years age group, nearly 54 per cent of all sexual abuse involved children under 13, and over the last few years there has been a steady increase in the number of children under six years reported

as being abused. It has gone from 13 per cent in 1981-82 to 20 per cent in 1985-86.

Again, I would caution against necessarily interpreting those increases as real increases in fact, but rather as indicating trends in reporting and sensitivity on the part of professionals involved. Based on those figures, the reported incidence of child sexual abuse in Western Australia is 1.25 cases per thousand of children under 18 years of age, and 0.93 cases per thousand of those under 13 years of age. That is a substantial community, social and health problem.

I want to raise the issue of what causes child sexual abuse, since I believe it is in that area as a community that we can respond in a sensitive and supporting way. There has been a tendency in the past to regard the people who perpetrate sexual abuse on children as peculiar, perverted, weird, exceptional and pathological in some way. Unfortunately, most of the studies that have examined those people find them to be largely unexceptional. They certainly do suffer from certain social disadvantages and psychological deprivation, but there are many others in the community who have suffered similarly but who do not perpetrate sexual abuse on children. Certainly the individual pathology, if you like, is a contributing factor but it is not the sole factor.

Another view is that children contribute to their own abuse by being provocative and sensuous and leading adults on. Again, that is not a view that can be sustained. In any case, it is not one that can be supported by any caring community. It is not an excuse for child sexual abuse. Other studies have looked at so-called pathological families, in particular, the role of the mother. Again, however absent or neglectful a mother might be, that is no reason for a father to entice the girl into a sexual role much earlier than she would otherwise do with her peers.

Finally, we need to look at the community's contribution, particularly that of the media. I have said on a number of occasions during the currency of this task force that I am not in favour of any form of censorship of the Press and magazines beyond an acceptable community level, which is what we have already. The message that children and adults get is basically one which says that a child is not a child. It is acceptable to regard a 10 or 11-year-old girl -- a pre-pubescent -- as an appropriate sexual target. One has only to pick up magazines in any bookshop in the State to see that very young women are often depicted in a way that suggests that they are sexually available. The first problem for the media that has a conscience -- if there is such a thing as a collective conscience for such a body -- or the individuals who make up the media, is to examine the role they play in blurring the distinction between adults and children.

A girl or boy of 10 years does not have the same emotional or intellectual development as older children. We protect that child in law for very good reasons. The media should examine the practices that it adopts in relation to the depiction, particularly of young women, but occasionally of young men. They are not adults in any sense that relates to their sexual behaviour.

The major area in which the media, in particular, can possibly contribute to an issue about children being sexually available and appropriate sexual partners is in the depiction of women. I have been horrified by the steady deterioration of the standards of this newspaper, the *Daily News*, particularly in respect of page 3. I find it very difficult now to read this newspaper at all because of the attitude that it quite clearly portrays towards women. Women are sexually available, they are to be viewed entirely as sexual partners, and they are there simply for their anatomy. When one combines that view with the view that children are, if one likes, women -- 10 or 12-year-olds are women -- and women are there principally for the sexual gratification of males, the community can hardly be surprised if some people's values and standards are influenced by that message.

It is not only the *Daily News* that adopts that standard -- there are many other magazines -- but perhaps because this is a daily newspaper it has caught the attention of people like myself. I understand that its circulation continues to decline and, although I have a great deal of respect for the journalists who work on that newspaper, I believe that as long as they continue to work in this way, the community will reject that newspaper. I pray that its circulation will continue to decline even further until they change their attitude towards women. It is not to be found just on page 3 but on every other page of that paper. Incidentally, it is not just towards women. One finds that males are sometimes depicted in a similar way.

I would say to the representatives of the media who are here and might be listening, that it is time that they took a role. It is not for Governments to censor in every case. It is impossible to anticipate in any case what will appear. I do not think, as a community, we would tolerate that degree of intervention. I do ask those journalists to examine the extent to which, by depicting children, and women in particular, as sexually available at all times, they contribute to this very real problem of sexual abuse. I hope that in time it will be possible for newspapers, television, and so on, to become involved in this problem in a way which means that they are at least as well informed as those who are delivering the services, and at least as concerned as professionals and families who have had previously to cope with this difficulty.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [8.08 pm]: From my observations of the Budget papers, they become more and more glossy every year. At the same time, unfortunately, they become less revealing and telling. My nine years' experience in the Ministry has taught me the requirements of a good Budget, and what actions the Government should take when framing a Budget in order to serve the best interests of the State. It should be realised that the temptation when framing a Budget is always to give preference to the political party to which the Government belongs rather than the whole of the State and its citizens. I am not expecting a Government to ignore this political aim, because that would be unrealistic and even hypocritical. I do believe, however, that these two divergent aims can be reconciled. The question is, of course, have they been reconciled in this Budget?

To some extent, looking at it objectively, they have been. This, of course, is to the credit of the Government; but because enough praise is being given to the Government by the large sector of corporate entities which it has created and nurtured for this purpose, the Opposition's duty is to point out the shortcomings and to criticise where the so-called experts and media generally have remained silent.

With lack of evidence to the contrary, without the required explanation when asking searching questions, without more revealing figures, and without evidence that key positions in the Treasury are filled, and key personnel maintained, on the basis of expertise and experience alone, not because of political allegiance, one cannot be satisfied that in many fields party-political considerations did not prevail over the general interest of the community when framing this Budget.

Yet the Treasury and the Department of Budget Management, not being my shadow portfolio responsibilities, I do not want to go into very fine details and will make only some fairly general observations.

During the Brand, even the Tonkin, and particularly the Court and O'Connor Governments, we developed a very good system within the legal and Loan Council policy framework to reap maximum benefit for the State when preparing financial planning which of course was ultimately expressed in the yearly Budgets. We never went to the extreme and never made blatantly obtrusive arrangements as some of the Eastern States did at the time with, for instance, leveraged leasing of various assets, such as rolling stock, which sooner or later were rebuffed by the Commonwealth and had to be vacated with disgrace.

We had a system of State agreements almost unique in the world which offered incentives to development companies and saved the Commonwealth's tax for them in a proper way which the Commonwealth could not and did not undo. It could not criticise such arrangements, at least not very loudly. Our policy of having the companies' building all infrastructure, and securing tax deductions for them through depreciation and, in most cases at the time, through investment allowances, acted as an acknowledged incentive and saved money for the State.

We were, at least during my time as Minister for Energy, planning private power stations so that their owners could build those stations much cheaper by way of legitimate tax benefits. This was long before the word "privatisation", once condemned and now praised by the Treasurer, was even invented. Now, studying this Budget and what is in it, but mainly what is not in it, I can see dangerous practices which could rebound on the Government, and hence the State of Western Australia.

To build up and maintain, unaccounted for and for unspecified periods of time, comparatively large reserves in the hundreds of millions of dollars range in order to play with them according to political need will, I predict, not be sustainable for long, at least not unpunished by the Commonwealth. To keep the proceeds from short-term money market interest by Treasury without destination for use and without stating the time of use and to have large capital replacement accounts and other reserves kept by State utilities and agencies without

exact destination as to when and how those moneys will be used -- just to keep them for a political rainy day, such as an election year, or even by-elections -- will sooner or later be picked up by the Treasury in Canberra and will result in a denial of Commonwealth grants or other payments to Western Australia. Apart from that, this method so widely and unashamedly used by the Treasurer does not represent proper accountability required by law and tradition from any Government.

I am not against building up reserves per se. Indeed, I advocated this when I was in charge of the two largest utilities, the State Energy Commission and the then Metropolitan Water Authority, because it stood to reason, particularly in times of very high interest rates, which existed in those years, that the utility and consequently its consumers -- largely the taxpayers -- would have been much better off had the utilities been able at least partially to self-finance the capital expenditure they needed than to go on and on with constant very high interest rate borrowings and service those borrowings, which resulted in more than one-third of the yearly expenditure of those utilities going to servicing loans. That was a tremendously unhealthy situation.

My proposition was to bite the bullet, so to speak, and to have the Government display some courage instead of always pleading with the electorate that, "I can do it better and at cheaper rates", and gradually charge more. That would have led to ultimate reserves through depreciation and to a legitimate self-financing system. It is very easy to explain how this works. If one takes the simple example, a little exaggerated, of having to pay 20 per cent interest with procuring costs and one needs 100 units of capital expenditure a year, one pays 20 units interest. The next year, however, one again needs 100 units but one already has to pay 40 units to service that debt. By the sixth year one is paying more than one is getting; one has to pay 120 units to receive 100 units and to service past borrowings. Consequently, from the sixth year onwards, theoretically at least, self-financing would be increasingly cheaper, and be reflected in cheaper rates/charges.

Of course I could not achieve that because, frankly, political considerations prevailed, and the charges had to be brought back. I am still being criticised because perhaps they could have been lower if one ignored not only the theory, but also the necessity of self-financing. I am not against it building up reserves in principle, but I am against keeping reserves floating and not designated within a year with a precise purpose, preferably for capital works.

There is another important aspect of this operation which is not widely understood. The reserves invariably are kept not in cash but in paper investments in the private sector. When cash is needed and the paper is converted to money and withdrawn from the private sector it has the same effect as issuing State bonds. In other words, it is borrowing from the private sector.

Yet another sad aspect of this practice is the decreasing accountability of Government. The reserve moneys I am talking about are not a large proportion of the whole economy, yet they are not insignificant. Signs are that they will grow, and with that grows the lack of accountability to Parliament. The reserves being built up are originally from moneys appropriated by Parliament. According to the Westminster system the appropriation expires at the end of the financial year and the funds not so used ought to be re-appropriated in the next Budget.

However, by using the cleverly designed and misleadingly titled Financial Administration and Audit Act, the appropriations left over do not expire; they are accrued in reserve funds and lose the purpose originally tagged to them. Hence, parliamentary accountability is lost.

Looking at the system on broader lines, as I have mentioned in this place and warned about previously, every year this Government creates more and more "independent" Government instrumentalities, authorities and agencies. All, or at least most of these, are conversions of what used to be Government departments and the result is that their financial activities are entirely removed from the Budget. If this Government lasts for too long and follows this same practice, in due course we will reach the stage at which no departments are left -- they will all be agencies. There would then be no need for a Budget except perhaps for one item, a subsidy account for all the non-earning agencies.

One has just to think about it: The architectural division of the Public Works Department became the Building Management Authority; the engineering division of the Public Works Department became the Water Authority of Western Australia; the Department of Tourism became the Tourism Commission; part of the Treasury, the Lands Department, and the Public Works Department became the Western Australia Development Corporation which

deals in land; and the Department of Industrial Development became a hybrid authority again -- an agency -- and also found its way into the obscure EXIM and Western Australian Development Corporation Government agencies. Parliament does not even know about some of these, let alone there being parliamentary scrutiny about what are after all public moneys.

This process is deliberate and the worst erosion of democracy, watched idly by all bystanders because it is cleverly done, well concealed, and generally not understood. Those who would understand it are sucked into the corporate structure -- the new characteristic of our State -- the big corporations, big unions, and big Government agencies which are endeared to the present Government as the Government's policy deliberately endears them. Through this process, unfortunately, the Government becomes less and less accountable, less and less responsible, and less and less responsive. This lack of responsiveness by the Government not only leaves its mark on our parliamentary institution but also flows right through it.

Even during the years I have been a member of Parliament we have lost a lot of decorum and dignity in this place. I do not think that the upkeep of formal traditions, even if some people consider them ostentatious, is without merit. It is not a coincidence that as these forms are slowly disowned -- as the Speaker's wig, the clerks' wigs, and the attendants' formal attire is discarded and members sit and go around in shirtsleeves -- so is the dignity of behaviour and the standard of communication among members diminishing to a level at which scarcely a trace of the previous level can be detected.

This adverse process is also evident in the behaviour of at least some of the executive members. Ministers, of course, have additional administrative, executive duties for which they are paid in cash and, more importantly, in kind. But, they are still members of Parliament, neither more nor less than any other of their colleagues, even if they happen to sit on the other side of the House. Yet, it is pathetic and sad to observe how some of the Ministers -- particularly younger Ministers -- behave towards and communicate with Opposition members. It is a patronising attitude at best but is mainly arrogant and belittling at worst. It often extends towards the constituents of Opposition members.

I will give an example of what I am saying and I know that I am not the only member to have experienced such treatment. In reply to a question I asked, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services prefaced his answer by saying, "The answer to the member's hardly comprehensible question". As English is not my mother tongue I thought there might be something to what he said. I looked at the question once again and could detect nothing wrong with it. That evening I dined with a couple of academics, one is a reader in English and the other in literature. I showed them the question and asked them what was wrong with it. They could detect nothing wrong with my question. This childish attitude rebounded on the Minister who had the satisfaction of saying, "I told him."

The very same Minister even extends this attitude to his correspondence. I wrote him a letter asking some questions on behalf of one of my constituents. In due course he replied and having to some extent given the information required, he concluded by stating words to the effect that this showed me how much better his Government was than the one I served as Minister for nine years. Obviously the Minister thought I would not show that letter to my constituent but I did so. I did not suffer as a result of that; in the view of my constituent the Minister's reputation suffered. I do not think the Minister does himself, his party, or his Government any good.

Mr Taylor interjected.

Mr MENSAROS: During the nine years I was in Government I considered every member of Parliament to be my equal. I have never once sent a letter, nor has one left my office, which I have not signed -- even an acknowledging letter. If the Minister can show me one --

Mr Taylor interjected.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not think the Minister can deny what I am saying because I am presenting facts. This is an example of how the communication and the dignity in this place have deteriorated.

This neglect of the parliamentary institution is expressed also in the Government's and the Treasurer's general attitude towards Parliament and its physical facilities. With regard to procedures, I am referring to the latest policy -- if one wants to be kind -- or technique, whereby if the Treasurer considers that questions are directed to the wrong Minister, those questions are not automatically transferred to the other Minister, but an answer is given that

the member has directed his question to the wrong Minister and it will be transferred to Minister X,Y or Z who will respond in writing. That has undesirable results, because the Government extricates itself from the purpose of parliamentary question time; it does not give a public response. According to Standing Orders, one cannot put the same question on the Notice Paper, and therefore the Government has extricated itself from replying publicly to a member of Parliament on a matter of public interest. Further, it is tremendously unjust. The Premier has claimed that members should learn what subject belongs to which Minister, and then those Ministers will reply. The Premier took the trouble of sending to every member a little booklet which describes the ministerial responsibilities. Yesterday I directed a question to the Premier -- to the head of the Government -- and I asked him --

Has he caused calculations to be made regarding the cost of the Commonwealth's Australia Card legislation to departments and instrumentalities?

If the Treasurer or anyone can explain to me that it is in this booklet that the question about a matter for which the Premier is responsible is considered at that point of time to be the responsibility of his second in charge, the Minister assisting the Minister responsible for Public Administration, then I would like to know, because it is not clear. As I mentioned before, it is not a black and white situation that one simply looks up the book, because it is not in the book. The Premier could have answered the question, but he conveniently did not answer the question in order to extricate himself from giving a public answer to a question of public importance. Of course, it is inconvenient to have to state an answer -- because this party's caucus is in Canberra -- that it is for the Australia Card. It is inconvenient and unpopular, and I predict that Government members will all eat their words, and instead of being wise and eating them first, they are waiting, which is their business.

Apart from this, this method is very impolite, to say the least, to the clerks, because the clerks are proper servants of this Parliament. They know their jobs, and no-one can accuse them of being ignorant. Every time I ask the clerks --

Mr Brian Burke: Who did I say was ignorant?

Mr MENSAROS: You said to members that they do not know the book; therefore, they are ignorant.

Mr Brian Burke: I did not say they are ignorant.

Mr MENSAROS: You may not have used those words, but that was the implication, and that also implies that the clerks do not know either, because every time I ask the clerks to whom I should direct a question, they say, for example, "That question should obviously go to the Premier", because why should the Premier not be in charge of the departments and instrumentalities of this State? Where does it say that it is the Premier's second in charge who is in charge? That is just a convenient side-stepping in order not to give the answer. That is the way Parliament has been treated.

The neglect of the parliamentary institution is also expressed in the treatment of the physical facilities of this Parliament. Because we could not maintain its dignity; because the media at every opportunity seizes on the low status of the institution and its members; and because members -- or politicians, as they are usually called -- become fair game for everyone within a perennially open season. The Premier grandstanded, in my opinion, as the public saviour, rejecting with big fanfares a very sensible plan for the development of this Parliament House. This plan, supported by his own then Minister for Works and Services, used the available land to its best advantage, with most aesthetic results, it featured good architecture, was practical, and took the long-term future demands into consideration.

Allowing for its staggered development, the plan was not expensive. Indeed, I thought it was quite economic from a proper long-term cost-benefit point of view. However, it was easy to make out that the plan was not popular. One only had to mention the \$100 million and one obviously was a clear winner with the public. However, the question is whether this was all important or whether the importance of the institution was more important. Instead of that plan, which was very well thought out and presented, the Premier later contented himself with a cheap, makeshift, unsightly and ugly solution, the cost benefit of which I am quite sure in the long run is much worse than the original plan was. In most States in other federations, like the USA and Canada, they consider their State Parliament to be a symbol, and express this in the quality and predominance of the building housing the legislature.

However, the most important and concerning tendency is in the weakening of Parliament's role, which is the main and virtually the only check on the administrative arm of the Gov-

ernment in our system. Some members might still remember when the then member for Pilbara, Arthur Bickerton, fought to establish a public accounts committee, and he fought against a Government of our persuasion. After a long time, a public accounts committee was achieved. However, the purposes for which it was established deteriorated very much. Only the other day there was a proposition put from the Opposition for the now Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee to examine a certain question. The Government, of course, rejected that proposition -- the very same Government which fought to have this public accounts committee.

Finally, I would like to deal with a couple of individual items. We all support curtailment of Government spending, but this curtailment should be sensible and should follow proper priorities. There are a couple of cases which I would like to bring up on this occasion. The first is the case of the Association for the Blind. They have written a letter to me, saying that they have to inform me with great sadness that not only has their appeal for a Government subsidy for their plans for their library been rejected, but the previous funding of \$50 000 has also been withdrawn.

They received a letter from the Minister for Budget Management, saying that --

I therefore regret that the special State funding assistance provided in 1986-87 through the Library Board will not be available in 1987-88.

We there have a voluntary association, a non-profit making association, which helps blind people and those who are visually impaired and print handicapped. The association has 1 150 clients -- or had the last month -- and it provides a tremendous service. It has about 60 000 titles made up of 400 000 cassettes, and they are handled through various officers and volunteers. It has a magazine service, with a wide range of Australian and international magazines, in audio format.

It has a library of 200 braille titles serving 75 readers which is staffed by 16 paid staff; there is also a volunteer work force of 80. I ask: If there is anything worthwhile in the proper order of priorities to be subsidised, would it not be the Association for the Blind's library? It is a lousy \$50 000, the lack of which denies hundreds of intellectually needy, deserving and handicapped people. How does this compare with the amounts spent on all the ministerial suites to improve their appearance over a one-year period? How does it compare with the millions of dollars which four and a half years ago were spent on the Premier's suite?

Mr Brian Burke: I don't want to interrupt you but \$4.5 million on the Premier's suite?

Mr MENSAROS: Several million.

Mr Brian Burke: That was for the Capita Building.

Mr MENSAROS: Has the Government bought the building?

Mr Brian Burke: No we didn't. That was for Treasury, for the Department of Resources Development -- there are 20 floors there.

Mr MENSAROS: All right, but I am simply saying that one should compare that with the denial of \$50 000 for the blind when people such as Sir David Brand, John Tonkin and Sir Charles Court were quite content to be in premises which were unsuitable for the present Premier, yet conducted the affairs of State reasonably well.

Mr Brian Burke: That is not right. Sir Charles Court's offices compared with mine were luxurious.

Mr MENSAROS: Then why did the Premier not stay there?

Mr Brian Burke: Because they were not big enough.

Mr MENSAROS: Maybe the Premier is right.

Mr Brian Burke: He was the Minister for Industrial Development and Resources Development at the same time. He had a department; I did not.

Mr MENSAROS: He did not hold those portfolios, but maybe the Premier is right and perhaps it is right to deny this amount to the Association for the Blind and do other things with the money. However, whoever reads this speech may decide for themselves.

The second matter to which I refer is in my electorate and I do not hesitate to mention it because it concerns the City Beach Primary School. I know that this district is usually considered to have a "silver spoon" reputation but in my judgment the only difference is that

the people who live there have higher mortgages and have to work harder to pay them off. For several years this school and its P & C Association have asked for an upgrading of the toilets, for drainage facilities and a roof cover for the approach between the school and the toilets, which are a little bit further away. The approaches have been rejected year after year. I want to know what the priorities really are and the reason for the rejection of the funding. I have asked questions about the schools and the amount available for this region for minor works. I wanted to know which schools were allocated those amounts and so on. Of course I did not receive an answer because the Government does not answer such questions publicly. I received a response to the effect that it would be a cumbersome and long examination to obtain the answer and the Government would let me know in due course in writing.

Mr Pearce: I am sure you could produce the letter. We don't ask for it to be copyright.

Mr MENSAROS: No, but the Government is not willing to give a public answer to a question of public interest.

Mr Pearce: It is not a question of the public interest at all.

Mr MENSAROS: It is to me.

Mr Pearce: Then you can publish the letter in the newspaper.

Mr MENSAROS: It might not be important to the Minister but I represent the schools in my area properly and to me it is a question of the public interest.

These are only two small cases of \$50 000 and perhaps \$5 000, but how do they compare in priority with the growth of other departments? I give the House one example; I give it out of experience; I did not have to look it up in any book. The Department of Industrial Development, as it was then -- it is now an authority -- when I was in charge between 1974 and 1980 had about 100 employees. That number did not increase. The department also did the job of what is now a separate Department of Resource Development. Today that authority, which became the agency in lieu of the Department of Industrial Development, has about 130 to 150 employees. On top of this there is the Department of Resource Development, which has either an equal number or a greater number of employees. The increase therefore has been fourfold or fivefold.

If one were to observe: The population increased by 10 or 15 per cent; the projects which were successfully handled by this department probably decreased, they did not increase; we had the North West Shelf and a lot of development in the bauxite and gold mining area -- I cannot see anything comparable to this -- and this gives one the comparison. The examples I mentioned were not entirely unjustified.

One small matter which appears to contradict tradition and which I would like to mention before I resume my seat is the timing of the Budget. It has always been the tradition that the Budget was neither publicised nor parts of it released before it was presented by the Treasurer. This State and almost all the other States this year presented their Budgets before the Federal Budget was presented. Logically that means that by necessity the Federal Treasurer had to communicate his Budget with the various States because if one wanted to bring down a Budget, one could not do so if one did not know what was in the Federal Budget because, for instance, the Federal Government might have increased some taxes which might have affected the States. Had the Federal Government had some other provisions again affecting the States, one would have thought that one would have to allow for them, so that is simply the proof that even the old tradition of keeping the Budget under wraps before it is presented to Parliament, which decides about it -- that is, the elected representatives of the people decide -- has gone out the window just for convenience's sake. The States were told in advance of the Federal Budget in order that they could bring down their respective Budgets earlier.

When considering everything I have said, I warn that if we wish to maintain and continue our democratic system we should not allow the unbridled power of the Executive to grow vis-a-vis the progressively reduced powers of Parliament.

DR WATSON (Canning) [8.49 pm]: I want once again to bring to the attention of the House a problem that was debated here in 1982 and 1983, and occasionally since. I refer to the problems associated with the greatest single preventable cause of death, disease and misery in Australia -- cigarette smoking. Every year 23 000 Australians die prematurely because they smoked tobacco. We lose about 65 people a day; just in the eight months to 31 August this year alcohol accounted for just over 2 000 deaths; road deaths accounted for nearly 2 000.

Drug-dependent deaths amounted to 113, and tobacco related deaths, 15 471. One in four of all men and one in six of all women die because of some attribution to tobacco. I am concerned not only about death but also the misery that precedes it and the incapacity of chest and leg pain, chronic bronchitis and chronic coughing --

Mr Brian Burke: I have all those symptoms but I do not smoke.

Dr WATSON: Well, the next on my list is impotence --

Mr Brian Burke: Well, I'm awfully bloody tired.

Dr WATSON: I turn now to surgery related to smoking. This list has been given before but I think this is an appropriate forum for this problem to be raised. Every year seven Western Australians lose their tongue, nine their gullet, seven their stomach, three their pancreas, 15 their larynx and 46 their lungs; we have 66 people losing their legs or part of their legs, and a range of other body organs being removed because of cancer.

Since 1962 when the Royal College of Physicians first published its report on the link between smoking and cancer, 500 000 Australians have died; and by the year 2001 another half a million will have died. The million deaths between 1962 and 2001 amount to what some people would identify as a holocaust. Approximately one-third of all adults in Australia smoke and approximately one-third of all 15-year-olds smoke; the proportion is the same but, of course, adults do smoke more. In Western Australia, however, because of the success of our educational campaigns, one in three men who smoked and one in five women who smoked have given it up, but this is replaced by young people in ever-increasing numbers.

As people die or as people quit smoking, the industry is desperate to replace its market and recruits young people to smoke. Tobacco is lethal; nicotine is addictive, and the industry is virtually unregulated in the way it can still promote carcinogens among children. The younger they start the more vulnerable they are to cancer. It is predictable and inevitable that we will be seeing people in 20 to 30 years' time, people aged 30 and 40 with cancers and with a need for amputations.

Mr Brian Burke: I found it much easier to give up drinking than to give up smoking.

Dr WATSON: Yes. Indeed, the United States Institute on Drugs Studies has identified nicotine addiction as being more difficult to deal with than narcotics addiction.

We have become increasingly aware of the dangers of passive smoking: the effect on the foetus of the mother who smokes, or even the father who smokes, can result in low birth weight and increased vulnerability around the first month of the baby's life. A recent Canadian study revealed that 500 Canadian nonsmokers die each year from lung cancer due to the effects of passive smoking. Carcinogens in sidestream smoke and from cigarettes burning in ashtrays are as much as 30 times higher than in the mainstream smoke.

Recently, Professor Armstrong has done calculations that show what a public health risk passive smoking is in Australia, with 136 deaths per year attributable to lung cancer due to passive smoking -- which is entirely preventable; 281 deaths from mesothelioma, and lung cancer due to asbestos exposure; and 56 deaths from opiates, put that in some kind of context.

We have to be increasingly aware that we have the right to eat, travel and work in a smoke-free environment. It is our responsibility to encourage nonsmokers, especially children, to remain nonsmokers. It is our responsibility to avoid passive smoking by nonsmokers, and it is our responsibility on behalf of our constituents to avoid these things, and I see a special responsibility to be an advocate for this on behalf of the thousands of women and especially children in my constituency.

Women have struggled for years to get suffrage, maternity leave, equal pay, and equal employment opportunities. Our loss in these gains is the increase in cigarette smoking, with alarming increases in rates since World War II leading to increases in diseases of the cardiovascular system and the reproductive and respiratory systems. Lung cancer is a greater threat to women than breast cancer.

Mr Taylor: On Thursday the member for Subiaco and I will release a special publication on smoking.

Dr WATSON: Women are so vulnerable, but despite this -- I am a reformed smoker -- women are smoking at an earlier age; smoking more, and quitting more slowly. By the age of 15 more girls than boys smoke regularly; 43 per cent of young women aged between 16

and 19 years smoke, while 31 per cent of boys between the ages of 16 and 19 years smoke regularly. So the women's market is important for the tobacco industry, and it cashes in on an addiction, and the fact that women for many reasons are slower to quit. It is an international phenomenon, and while the proportion of men who smoke is falling in 19 out of 22 countries recently surveyed, the proportion of women in 11 of those countries is rising or stable.

I emphasise the point that smoking is now a much bigger problem for women than it is for men. It threatens not only women but also their children and partners, increasing their cancer risk through passive smoking. Women have specific health problems related to cigarette smoking in terms of reduced fertility, as women are three times more likely to take over a year to conceive if smoking; twice as likely to miscarry, and -- if women are smokers who take the contraceptive pill -- 39 times more likely to have heart attacks. Amongst other things, the children of smoking women will be about 200 grams lighter at birth and suffer increased respiratory infections and asthma through their infancy and childhood. One of the most important things too is that those children often learn to smoke.

By the end of primary school, 37 per cent of girls have experimented with smoking and by the age of 15 more girls than boys have tried smoking. We know that in 1984, in Western Australia, 34 per cent of girls and 29 per cent of boys of 15 years of age were regular smokers. For women, cigarettes are promoted as the route to sexual success, slimness, and emancipation. Cigarettes have become the mark of women's emancipation.

Mr Taylor: Cancer slims you right down.

Dr WATSON: It does, yes. It is really important that campaigns are aimed at women because smoking-induced diseases are increasing much faster among women than men, hence cardiovascular diseases and reproductive problems are much higher than in nonsmoking women.

There are striking differences in the rate of smoking prevalence between men and women, and women are a key target of the tobacco industry. The other market which the tobacco industry is keyed into is children, and there was a report in this morning's newspaper that in America for every older person who quits smoking a younger person is lighting up. So the tobacco industry is replacing people who quit or who die with children of 10, 12, or 15 years of age. Children smoke the most heavily advertised brands of cigarettes. Children who approve of cigarette smoking are more likely to smoke, and sports sponsorship by cigarette companies teaches an association between different brands and different sports.

If the industry advertised to adults only, as it claims, we would see adults between 30 and 60 years of age in advertisements as we do for advertisements for soap powder, motor cars, or anything else. Cigarette advertising, however, is designed to attract young people from 12 years of age who look for models. I cannot see that an advertisement like this has any appeal to a middle-aged man, but it would have plenty of appeal to a 12-year-old child. This is the advertisement for Marlboro Milds, "The spirit of Marlboro in a mild cigarette". There is a cowboy riding a horse and a foal in the foreground.

Mr Taylor: It is interesting that Marlboro uses the theme from *The Magnificent Seven*, and most of the actors in that film who were smokers have died of cancer.

Dr WATSON: Australian children are spending \$30 million per annum on cigarettes, and in Western Australia it has been calculated that our children are spending \$2.4 million, so children are paying about three-fifths of the industry's advertising costs.

Tobacco is addictive. One starts off in control, but it becomes a prop and a sign of adulthood. It gives people some confidence, but it is a dupe. The cigarettes then control them, and they might take between 100 and 400 puffs a day. The aim of the industry is to establish a habit, and that it does. The tobacco industry has consistently sought to deny the evidence of smoking and disease and to oppose any action which will significantly reduce it. No other industry is responsible for so much death and disease. No other industry promotes so pervasively or so effectively a product which is lethal when used as intended. It is an industry responsible for 81 per cent of deaths caused by all drugs in Australia. The tobacco industry promotes known carcinogens, and its one overriding problem is that as smokers die or quit it has to find another market. They look for adolescents and women, and the international tobacco companies shift into the less developed countries and try to promote tobacco with the values that are important there.

To advertise successfully one has to associate one's product with something desirable, no

matter whether it is relevant or not. One has to suggest that it fills a genuine need or is an essential accoutrement of modern trendsetting. One has to make it sound like an agent of progress and it is promoted as a route to sophistication. It tries to say, "You are what you smoke." In fact, one smokes it and one dies.

A very interesting study has been done of the German cigarette market; an econometric study which looks at the economics of the industry over time using quite complex mathematical models. It found absolutely unequivocally that advertising has a highly significant influence on the primary demand and has a statistically significant impact on industry sales. It looks at the type of advertising that can be promoted at three different levels. One looks at the transactions -- the relationship between the seller and the service, at the buyer and the product. Another looks at the relationship between the organisation and the client and the group of products in a much broader way so it looks, say, at tobacco and women. The third level applies to the organisation's attempt to relate its product to its potential sales -- to its potential as well as to its consuming public -- so the brands of tobacco are advertised at this level where people try to establish loyalty or attract a change. In this context, marketing is concerned with how transactions are created, stimulated, facilitated, and valued. It is a very important study done by and for the tobacco industry, for all major brands of German cigarettes between 1960 and 1975.

Other studies on advertising have shown that advertising and promotion are directly or indirectly undertaken to increase sales of the product and to enhance its profits. It is a product which is unsafe when used in the way it is prescribed.

The Australian Journalists Association is pressing for national bans on cigarette and alcohol advertising. It has argued that newspapers which accept such advertisements are less likely to print the full debate on the harm it can do. It is impossible to sustain the industry's case that advertising has no effect at all.

Mr Taylor: Dick Smith had that experience in relation to the Press.

Dr WATSON: Dick Smith has been tremendous in the disgust he has shown. He is incensed at the way cigarettes are pushed on young children through advertising.

Smoking is presented as a rite de passage -- a rite of passage -- a habit to be envied. It is a habit which leads to destruction. Advertisements show beautiful, slim, adventurous women surrounded by beautiful, fun-loving men amidst luxurious settings. It is dishonest and exploitative. It promises fun and glamour and gives death and destruction. There is growing evidence that children as young as six years are vulnerable to cigarette advertising. Visual images are crucial at that age.

I have here a bag of toys which have an obvious target. There is a racing car with the Marlboro sign on it, and another which has lost its wheels which also has a Marlboro sign on it, and another with John Player on it.

Mr MacKinnon: Do you think a six-year-old plays with the car and thinks about a cigarette?

Dr WATSON: They do. We know that image is related to the way --

Mr MacKinnon: My six year old doesn't.

Dr WATSON: The Leader of the Opposition would be surprised; the effect is so subtle. They use very sophisticated advertising techniques. They are causing six-year-old children to make an association with a brand of cigarettes.

Well controlled studies with appropriate methodologies have been replicated in London, Scotland, New South Wales, and Western Australia -- I presume that it applies also to the United States of America -- and they show that children of six years are vulnerable to associating this type of advertising with cigarette smoking. By the age of 12 years, nine out of 10 children can recognise Benson and Hedges advertisements and can name the brands. By the age of 14 years, children can readily discern which brands are for boys and which brands are for girls.

I have another advertisement in my hand advertising the Peter Jackson company. This company has been responsible for a 27 per cent increase in tobacco sales to children. It started three years ago with one per cent of the child market, and three years later, with its sophisticated marketing techniques and promotions, it has increased its sales to 27 per cent of the child market.

Mr Watt: Why do you think that more action is not taken to prevent minors from buying cigarettes?

Dr WATSON: I will make some recommendations at the conclusion of my speech. On the one hand, how can we have promotion that is costing the tobacco industry a minimum of \$80 million a year, and on the other hand a corner deli which is vulnerable to children asking for cigarettes?

Mr Watt: It is a joke to say you cannot sell to minors. Have you ever known a minor to be knocked back?

Dr WATSON: The biggest joke of all is that the legislation was not passed in 1983. Members on the opposite side of the House must take a lot of the responsibility for that.

English research shows that brand switching is an essential part of the process of becoming an established smoker. Some people change brands five times in the first year they are learning to smoke before they establish their brand loyalty. Eighty per cent of adults are loyal to one brand, but a teenager experiments with each brand as it is launched. This is an integral part of learning to smoke. While children experiment with cigarettes, almost 80 per cent of those who try will become regular smokers. It is worth it for the tobacco industry. First they hook children on tobacco and then they concentrate on brand allegiance. Carefree and pretty teenage girls, who can take or leave cigarettes, become hooked on them and become women who cannot do without them; and they find it very difficult to quit.

The data in a study of United States high school children supported the studies which suggested that cigarette advertising encourages children to smoke. The tobacco industry says it is not interested in the child and adolescent market. It is very strange because 70 per cent of smokers start smoking by the age of 14 years and 35 per cent of 14-year-olds smoke.

I have referred before to the incredible success of the Peter Jackson campaign and the way in which advertising appeals to children by the use of primary colours and young people -- role models -- having fun. The tobacco industry says that its advertising makes little difference, but the money spent on advertising can be described as profligate in some cases. If it is not effective, perhaps the shareholders should consider that their directors are negligent and request the companies to account for their waste.

I am trying to make the point that the tobacco industry is keen to recruit children as smokers. Another thing we have learnt through research we have done and which has been replicated in many countries is that few people start to smoke after the age of 20 years. By then, tobacco advertising has set the tone for associating it with behaviour that is glamorous, successful, sexual and, in some cases, can even be associated with fitness.

The same industry which deceives the public about whether its products kills people is now asking the public to believe that it is being honest on its reports on tobacco advertising bans and shifting from advertising to promotion.

A British survey of nearly 1 000 secondary school children demonstrated that television sport sponsorship by tobacco manufacturers acts as cigarette advertising to children and circumvents the bans on cigarette advertising on television. The promotional messages we receive on television are not merely accidental or incidental, but they are intentional. In February 1987, at the one-day cricket finals sponsored by Benson and Hedges, the advertisements were visible for 103 out of the 320 minutes it was televised. Thirty-two per cent of the total televised playing time showed Benson and Hedges advertisements. There is no doubt that it acts as advertising for children. I have already said that children are vulnerable to the most heavily advertised brands of cigarettes.

Many people would say that the voluntary advertising code, with which tobacco manufacturers must comply, exists to protect the industry against other advertising, rather than to protect the public against unethical advertising.

When the Commonwealth Government put a ban on television tobacco advertising in 1976 there was an initial fall in consumption, but this led to a dramatic increase in the volume of advertisements in the print media; and this is regulated by State Governments. It has also led to an increase in sponsored sport which has been televised with arena advertising for cigarettes.

It is interesting to note that only half the amount of sponsorship funds is actually paid out by the tobacco companies. In Australia money spent on advertising sponsorship is deductible from income in assessing company taxation. Therefore, of \$16 million spent in sponsorship last year, only about \$9 million was actually outlaid by the companies. The balance of \$7 million represents tax which would otherwise have been paid on that income.

The industry will continue to deny and distort evidence about the relationship between tobacco and tobacco addiction, death, and disease. It will continue to lobby politicians; it will continue to spend an increasing amount of money on advertising and promotion; it will continue to develop new and more sophisticated promotional forms; it is and it will remain a formidable adversary -- it sells carcinogens.

I will summarise my comments by describing the recent history. From 1962 when the Royal College of Physicians' report on the effect of smoking and health was published -- it was followed two years later by the Surgeon General's report -- there has been a growing public and political support and opinion led by health professionals.

It has resulted in two attempts in this House to legislate against advertising. The Smoking and Tobacco Products Advertisements Bill of 1982 was introduced by the then member for Subiaco. There was public support and support from the medical profession, but unfortunately a vital health issue was seen merely as a political issue.

The Tobacco (Promotion and Sale) Bill of 1983 was defeated in the other place, where 15 members representing 53 per cent of the electors voted for the Bill and 17 members representing 41 per cent of the electors voted against it. Members may remember that the tobacco industry's opposition succeeded, using the supposed erosion of human rights, unemployment in the tobacco and advertising industries, the collapse of major sports through loss of sponsorship, and creeping socialism. The 1 600 deaths that year were said to be only statistical deaths. The industry expended about \$3 million on its campaign, and we about \$300 000 on ours. The onus for the continuing carnage due to tobacco consumption rests very heavily on the Opposition.

From then in November 1983 to September this year, there have been more than 7 000 deaths from tobacco smoking in Western Australia. More than 200 000 people have started smoking, and 50 000 of them will die prematurely. Children who start smoking light a cancer fuse. Public support has grown tremendously since then. By 1986, 93 per cent of smokers were in favour of education programmes aimed at children, 66 per cent of smokers supported the Quit campaign, and 93 per cent of smokers and non-smokers supported a smoke-free work environment. Almost 60 per cent of smokers and non-smokers believe that cigarette advertising should be banned from newspapers and magazines, and 74 per cent of smokers and non-smokers believe that sporting events which can be seen by children should not promote cigarettes.

This problem will not be resolved by doctors or by the tobacco manufacturers; it is our problem. It is a political problem and it has political solutions. I wonder whether members of the Opposition would now support a ban on advertising. Silence is the stern reply! What about the new Deputy Leader of the Opposition? Would he support a ban on tobacco advertising?

Mr Court: I am sorry, I was not listening to your speech.

Dr WATSON: Would the Deputy Leader of the Opposition support a ban on cigarette advertising?

Mr Court: No. I do not mind people being able to advertise their products. People can make their own decisions whether to use them. I do not believe in that sort of thing.

Dr WATSON: Is that the view of the Liberal Party?

Mr Court: I cannot speak for the party. You asked for my opinion and I gave it.

Dr WATSON: An awful lot of statistics have been drawn from studies tonight, because the evidence is overwhelming. I have had a long interest in preventive health programmes and in the promotion of health. As a member of the health committees, both of our party and Caucus, I have thought long and hard for some of the solutions which might be appropriate so that our platform and policies can be implemented.

Tobacco company sponsorship in Western Australia is worth a maximum of \$1.6 million, and perhaps much less. Since 1983, some notable sports in WA now no longer accept tobacco money; for instance the speedway and baseball.

State licence fees currently take 35 per cent of the wholesale value of all tobacco goods sold, and bring in about \$57 million annually. If this were raised one per cent to 36 per cent the Government would easily raise an additional \$1.6 million annually. That rise would add 1.5 cents to a pack of Peter Jackson 20s. We could increase the tobacco tax by one per cent, or

2c a pack, to pay for that sponsorship. These are my thoughts on this.

We need a coordinated and comprehensive campaign to stop people from taking up smoking and to encourage people to stop. We need well-funded education programmes. We need non-smoking to be promoted as normal social behaviour. We need clear and explicit health warnings on the product. We need a progressive reduction in the tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide yield. We need to provide full and clear product information to consumers. We need regular and substantial increases in tobacco taxes. We need a ban on all forms of promotion and advertising. We do not need some, or one or the other; we need all those measures combined to reduce smoking. We really do not have time to lose. All members should be concerned about the way in which the industry is persuading children to take up smoking; about the way in which smoking becomes an addiction. That addiction is for many reasons much more difficult for women to withdraw from than for men. When people start to puff, they light a cancer fuse.

Mr Taylor: May I say, as Minister for Health, if I could be assured that sufficient Liberal Party and National Party members in the upper House would vote for the reintroduced Bill in relation to the banning of tobacco advertising, I would be prepared to reintroduce the Bill tomorrow.

Mr Court: Would you do the same for alcohol?

Mr Taylor: No, I would not do that for alcohol.

Several members interjected.

Mr Court: Has the cigarette consumption in Western Australia gone up or down over the last two or three years?

Dr WATSON: Different categories of people are smoking.

Mr Court: You measure it per person, do you?

Dr WATSON: As men and women have quit, children are being persuaded to take it up. Our health education campaign is funded at about \$1.54 per head, and that is the highest per capita health-promotion campaign in any western country.

Mr Court: What is happening, according to the statistics? Are more people or less smoking?

Dr WATSON: Fewer adults are smoking but more children are.

Mr Taylor: That is why we are trying to do what we can to restrict the advertising campaign, particularly in the sporting areas.

Dr WATSON: These studies are replicated internationally. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition might not have been here in the beginning when I cited the fact that in the eight months to 31 August this year, while just over 2 000 deaths occurred as a result of alcohol, 15 470 occurred due to tobacco. We cannot escape the urgency of that problem. The younger people start smoking, the more vulnerable their body systems are to carcinogens. Babies exposed to asbestos at Wittenoom have developed mesotheliomas in a much shorter time frame than adult workers who were exposed up there.

This is a very important issue and I would like members of the Opposition to look at the growing public support there has been both for banning advertising and for the Quit campaign itself, to look at ways in which we can approach the greatest single preventable health problem we have in our country, and to think of their constituents and especially of the women and children they represent here.

Mr Taylor: Well spoken!

Mr House: Well done!

MR HOUSE (Katanning-Roe) [9.31 pm]: I congratulate the member for Canning on her remarks and her obviously very well-researched speech. As somebody who used to smoke 40 or 50 cigarettes a day, I understand full well what she was saying. It is interesting to note that it was my children who stopped me from smoking. At the age of five or six years they very quickly convinced me that I would not be around much longer if I continued smoking 40 or 50 cigarettes a day. I decided I would far rather spend my time with them, so I gave up smoking. I do understand the member for Canning's message and I congratulate her on a very good speech.

I also congratulate the member for Subiaco who I thought made an excellent speech, also

well-researched, that touched on an area many of us would rather forget about but which needs to be brought home to us. Both those speeches indicate the value of having women in this Parliament and what they can contribute to it. The National Party has a bit of work to do in that area. Maybe after the next election we will be represented by a number of women.

As I stand here tonight I am sorry to say that a great deal of the electorate I represent is suffering from perhaps the worst seasonal conditions that have ever been experienced in the great southern part of Western Australia. According to those older, wiser, and more experienced farmers than I, never before have we seen a year with such little rainfall accompanied by such hot and strong winds in September. It appears that we are now faced with a very long, unpleasant summer, and a great shortage of water and feed. Some of the towns in the great southern area will be very much affected because they are used to getting perhaps 16 inches of rain and this year they have had something like 6 inches. Although some rain right now would help to some extent, it will not turn those conditions around.

The reason I mention this is not only to bring to the Parliament's attention the fact that part of this State -- and an unusual part of the State -- is suffering such unusual seasonal conditions, but also to put to the Parliament a suggestion I first made to a drought consultative committee with which I was involved in 1983; that is, that we in this State must put in place some long-term measures for unseasonable conditions, for drought conditions, and for water shortage conditions.

The problem with making a decision about what to do in those areas now is that those decisions are made in a very emotional frame of mind. The farmers are emotional; they can see their stock suffering. The mental pressure of their having to go through this kind of season obviously has an effect on the way in which they make decisions. That also flows through to the people in the Department of Agriculture, the Minister's department, and all of the other people, particularly those on the drought consultative committee, who have to make decisions about what sort of emergency assistance measures we will have to put in place.

I have a feeling that if those decisions were made when we were not under that sort of pressure -- when areas of this State were not experiencing drought conditions -- we would come up with a far more rational plan about how to handle the situation when it did happen. Not only that, but also the farmers would be aware of what assistance was available to them. It is a sad fact that at the moment people are trying to make decisions about whether to agist sheep or cart water for 20 or 30 miles for the next six months. They cannot come to terms with that because they are not sure of what assistance will be offered to them.

I therefore implore the Government to make some decisions, certainly about this year, very quickly; and to get on and put in place some measures that will help the people in those areas. But, more particularly, I implore the Government to look at a long-term plan that would be ready to be activated at a moment's notice to assist the townspeople and farmers in those areas. As we all know, the drought area seems to shift quite dramatically over the years. The north eastern part of my electorate, which has in the past experienced some harsh conditions, is this year experiencing a very good season and I am very pleased for those people.

Mr Evans interjected.

Mr HOUSE: Yes, it is. The member for Warren has rightly pointed out that it is very difficult to ascertain exactly where a drought stops and starts. In 1983 I was involved in having to draw a line between the great southern region and the northern wheat-belt to delineate where the drought area would be, and it was very difficult to say to the farmers, "That is the line. If you are on one side of it you will get nothing; if you are on the other side you will get assistance."

Mr Evans interjected.

Mr HOUSE: Yes, there is; perhaps the member does not remember. I proposed in my maiden speech to this House that there be a national insurance scheme for such events as this that would allow farmers to take out insurance that would pay a return to them if their crops fell below a certain yield. In Canada they have such a scheme and it is done on a 10-mile bridge system. It was tried in Western Australia about 10 years ago but through lack of support it fell down. I still believe it is worth another try and if we work at it hard enough I am sure we could come up with some guidelines. I agree that it will never be easy merely to draw a line. Rain does not fall as neatly as that.

Mr Bridge: What do you think about the present programme we have, where officers from

the Department of Agriculture and the Water Authority of Western Australia are carrying out assessments with a view to making some early decisions? Is that what you are seeking to achieve by your proposal?

Mr HOUSE: Yes, it is, very definitely, and as quickly as possible.

Mr Bridge: That is happening now.

Mr HOUSE: I am very pleased, and I congratulate both the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Water Resources for acting so quickly last week when I asked them to set that in motion. However, I am now looking at a broader concept whereby we have those measures in place prior to a drought, ready to be activated very quickly, rather than having to undertake a week of assessment and probably another week when the officers return to the city to go through the evidence they have collected. I would like to see it happen more quickly, because farmers must make decisions about agisting their sheep, and so on.

Some of the problems are caused by ourselves, because economic conditions have forced farmers to push their agricultural land further than they should in order to earn a living from smaller properties. If they try to carry too much stock without sufficient resources in the way of water, feed, and fertiliser, that is purely an economic matter which has larger implications -- the area of erosion, for example. I think we will pay that price in later years. While on that point, I believe we must do more than we are doing now to encourage people on farms to combat soil erosion.

They are some of the things the Government could look at in future Budgets and I hope that, particularly in terms of soil conservation, we will see some increased taxation incentives, especially from the Federal Government.

Also I am pleased to see that money has been set aside in the Budget to buy back some of the chemicals that were shown to be affecting our beef delivered to the United States of America. I refer of course to DDT and hexachloride in particular. I think the Government has acted very quickly to try to alleviate this problem. However, there is no question that right at this moment there is a real need to get more people on the ground in terms of getting more samples done in this next month and analysing those samples as quickly as possible. My information is that the department in Bunbury is currently dealing with about 30 samples per week. That is simply not enough to get through the number of farms it needs to get through and convince the people who buy our beef overseas that the particular properties, and the beef they are selling, are free of any chemical residue.

We all acknowledge that it is slow work, but the way to fix it is to get more people on the ground very quickly. Most cattle farmers would be aware that the market fell by about \$60 across-the-board yesterday; that is a very dramatic drop, and stems from the fact that at the moment farmers cannot guarantee that their animals are free of chemical residues. It is very interesting to note that those farmers who were honest enough to say they never used chemicals on their properties have been told by the department that they are to go to the bottom of the list. They will have to wait while the properties which are definitely affected -- or where it is definitely known chemicals have been used -- are dealt with. That seems to me to be very unfair because although those particular people are going to the buyers and saying, "We've never used chemicals", they do not have a certificate to prove it. Perhaps one way around that would be to issue a statutory declaration to the buyers that the properties were free from chemicals and the onus could rest with them. I think there is no doubt that some onus rests with the Government in terms of putting more feet on the ground very quickly. By that, I mean within the next week.

As an aside to the supposed export problem, it is interesting to note that there has been what I think is rather an overreaction by the Americans in this matter. Not many people would realise that one would need to eat about three tonnes of beef in one sitting in order to take in enough chemical to do any damage. I am not sure whether too many people could do that. I feel that perhaps the American beef farmers have been pressuring their Government to put on what may be unreasonable limitations in order to enable them to sell their own beef. I suppose that is reasonable from their point of view but from our point of view it creates rather a massive problem.

I turn my attention now to something that was not in the Budget and I think should have been. I take up a cause on behalf of the Association for the Blind of Western Australia. I am sure that members of Parliament who have seen people with disabilities would agree that blind people are one of the most disadvantaged groups. Of all the disabilities I can think of I

am sure that to be blind would be the worst of them and yet this Government has seen fit not only not to review the \$50 000 it gave last year to the Association for the Blind as a special grant to help it run the braille and talking book library section but has also cut out another \$50 000, making a total of \$100 000 in reduction to the braille and talking book library service in Western Australia. I consider myself to be fair and reasonable when I judge these things, but I can only say that I feel that this is an absolutely disgraceful action.

The Government in no uncertain terms stands condemned for forcing these people into the situation where they are more reliant than ever on the goodwill of people who subscribe towards keeping the braille and talking book library going. The people in the country who use the braille and talking book library -- which, I might add, includes tapes of books and educational learning programmes -- are very grateful for it. However, it appears that this service may be one of the things which is cut out because of the extra work involved in the packaging and posting of those tapes to the people who live in the country. As a representative of country people in this Parliament I have more than an average axe to grind. I cannot believe that this Government would allow this to happen, but let it happen the Government has. Last year the extra funding needed was something like \$271 000. The Government came good with \$100 000 and the Association for the Blind was very grateful. Peoples' generosity helped the Association for the Blind to raise the extra amount of money needed to keep the service going. Last year it made about \$25 000 from sales of these things and the Commonwealth Government saw fit to give it another \$70 000.

I urge the Government to reconsider this decision and to have another look at these very disadvantaged people to see whether somewhere in this Budget it can find that \$100 000 and give it to the braille and talking book section of the Association for the Blind of Western Australia. There are 4 500 people in this State who suffer some major sight disability and there are 1 157 clients who use the talking book library service. That is a lot of people and when one considers that this Government provides library books and facilities in just about every suburb in this city and many country towns and that local government involves itself in the provision of libraries for sighted people, it seems incongruous to me that we can take from these people who are blind and partially blind a service they desperately need. If the Government listens to nothing else I have said tonight, I urge it to take note of this particular request and to do something about helping those disadvantaged people.

I wish to touch on another subject which I have spoken about before -- probably ad nauseam to some of those who have listened to me -- in this House at some length at various times; that is, rural small business. We still have no assistance to rural small business apart from the fact that the Government will put into the town of Merredin an adviser for small business. The fact of the matter is that there are still people in small rural businesses going broke and a lot of towns have lost people who were employed in those businesses. Those people have come to the cities and joined the dole queues. There is no work for them in the country because those businesses have gone broke. The young people leaving the schools who used to be employed as apprentice mechanics, for example, are now coming to the city to find work. I urge the Government to look at its programme again because it must encourage those people to stay on and work in the country; to work for themselves and to build into their businesses some long-term future.

Mr Lewis: What programmes should they look at?

Mr HOUSE: One of the things they should be looking at is extending to rural small business exactly the same privileges extended to farmers; that is, access to the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation and to be able to borrow money to alleviate their floor plan loans at a lower interest rate, which would enable them to get over the hill. That would be a very positive step. I think all members of this House are well aware that the Government still has the money in the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation and it could be used for that, provided the Government and the Federal Government were prepared to change the legislation under which that corporation now acts.

Mr Troy: You are aware that matter was pursued.

Mr HOUSE: I am not worried about whether it was pursued, I am worried about whether it succeeded, and it certainly did not succeed.

It is also interesting to note that they had time to put out a fairly glossy brochure about small business in Western Australia. I have read that brochure very carefully and I quote from page 8 concerning the Western Australian economy --

The slow-down in the Western Australian economy, noted in the previous issue, has continued into 1987. In spite of the State continuing to be the fastest-growing in population, the number of economic indicators summarised in the accompanying table show that Western Australia's economy is only just keeping pace.

I have searched this brochure and found items about forestry, agriculture and mining, but nowhere can I find anything about the machinery dealers in Western Australia. Nowhere can I find anything about mechanics and apprentices. They are the subjects this Government should address in a way that rectifies them; it should not just wait until a lot more go to the wall. Although we have seen a very real turnaround in some agricultural production, particularly in the wool industry, we have not seen that same turnaround in the wheat industry. I do not think we will for a year or two. This means that people who rely on machinery and motor vehicles will not have money in their pockets for some time yet.

In June this year the Minister for Local Government -- and I am very sorry he is not here tonight -- announced the new Federal Government grants to the shire councils of Western Australia. Most people will know that under the old system a certain amount of income tax revenue was set aside for payment direct to local government authorities, and each grant was arrived at by a formula used up until this financial year, when the Federal Government indicated to the States that it would change that system. Under the new legislation the States had to devise a formula for distributing that money to the shires on an equitable basis. That involves a number of criteria, the population in each local authority being the main one, making up 30 per cent of the actual base formula.

The Minister for Local Government in this State set up a committee to visit some of the shires and come up with a formula which would be fair and reasonable for the people in the shires of Western Australia. When those grants were announced we found that there were some very serious anomalies. I quote from the "Balance Budget Approach Figures". Over a five-year period the Shire of Broomehill would not lose very much -- just \$1 000 or so. The Shire of Cranbrook would, in fact, increase by \$100 000. That is a shire separated from the Shire of Broomehill by about 30 miles. The Shire of Gnowangerup, which has a common boundary with the Shire of Broomehill, lost \$104 000. The Shire of Jerramungup, which has a common boundary with the Shire of Gnowangerup -- indeed, up until six years ago they were one shire -- had an increase of \$53 000. The Shire of Katanning had an increase of approximately \$12 000. The Shire of Kent had a decrease of \$120 000, and the Shire of Lake Grace a decrease of \$150 000. Those shires are interesting because they all have common boundaries; they all have a large difference in allocation under this formula; and one has to wonder why that is.

I took the trouble to colour-in on a map, which I show to this House, all the shires that actually suffer a decrease under the local authority grants system. It is interesting to note that, with a couple of exceptions, all the shires that had a decrease are on the eastern fringes of this State. It is also interesting to note that, once again with a few exceptions, if one follows these figures a little more closely, the middle belt of shires in Western Australia receive little or no increase or decrease, and western shires and some of the fringe city shires all have increases. One has to return to the formula for the explanation as to why that has happened, because it indicates quite clearly that there is an anomaly in that grant formula. I seek leave to have this map incorporated in *Hansard*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There would be technical problems for *Hansard* to reproduce that map. It would be preferable to lay the map on the table and every interested member can observe that document.

MR HOUSE: I seek leave of the House to table this map at the conclusion of my speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

MR HOUSE: It is apparent, when one examines the individual shires and the total allocations, that part of the formula has gone wrong due to the fact that the Local Government Grants Commissions committee based its formula not on net incomes, but on the gross incomes of farmers in those areas. I am sure I do not need to tell this House that people in the eastern areas, because they are largely grain-growing areas, would have a larger gross income than the smaller sheep farmers in an area such as Busselton. The fact of the matter is that this committee went about its work, but did not come to that conclusion. Every time one takes an individual or collective example, the mistake in that formula was that it used gross incomes instead of net incomes when assessing farmers' ability to pay.

There are some other anomalies in the way that the committee arrived at its decision which I will come to in a moment, but that is the one that most upsets the balance within the grants to local government in this year. That committee should go back to the drawing board and use farmers' net incomes to determine their ability to pay. Nobody in those shires would argue that we must come up with a formula that works, and is equitable to those who live in all local government areas in this State. However, it has to be fair and equitable to the people on the west coast as well as those on the eastern fringes.

In terms of agricultural rates what the committee did was to use a regressive model, and where it did so it made the same mistake over and over again. It should have used the net value of rural production which is the most accurate method of assessing a landowner's ability to pay. It is really the only method because gross income does not mean a thing. The amount of income that a landowner retains in his pocket is what matters most. The considerable difference between the net and gross value of production is demonstrated in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics report relating to an Australian agricultural and grazing industry survey of 1985-86. In region 5212 in that report, covering the Shires of Broomehill, Katanning, Ravensthorpe, Esperance, Kent, Tambellup, Gnowangerup, Kojonup and Woodanilling the gross value of production for farmers amounted to \$149 928, or \$84.90 per hectare. The net production, however, was \$32 872, or \$18.60 per hectare -- a tremendous difference. Those shires I have cited are the ones I used at the beginning of this example when I was outlining the argument I wished to put to the House.

I am sorry the Minister for Local Government is not here to take notice of what I am saying, but I hope he will look at that particular problem. In assessing the ability of shires to pay the committee commissioned by the Minister also used a couple of other determining factors which I thought were particularly misleading. It used a cross-formula of miles of road, but did not determine how much was main highway and how much was maintained by the shire. It did not say how many miles were a 12-foot or 16-foot seal, and did not take into account how much of the area had road transport. I refer to the Shire of Gnowangerup which is largely a road transport area, but to get to the Port of Albany people go through the shire and use the roads which are maintained by local ratepayers. They come from the shires of Kent, Lake Grace, Kukerin, Kulin, and Dumbleyung and even as far north as Narembeen. In that situation where large trucks and road trains are using the roads the roads are getting a far greater usage than in the shires further north and east.

It seemed to me from reading the report that no disability factor was allowed for that. It also seemed to me that in some cases shires were actually penalised for the provisions in place now.

Mr Troy interjected.

Mr HOUSE: I am glad the Minister mentioned that because I had forgotten another point. Another aspect the committee forgot to take into account -- it did not appear in the report -- was that there was no mention of secondary roads to which the Main Roads Department makes a contribution. I thought that was a particularly important and telling point. It makes a tremendous difference if one has 30 or 40 miles of sealed secondary road in the shire and it is a heavy workload road.

Mr Troy: There is a level of compensation for that aspect through the main roads funds for those authorities. That has to be taken into account by the Grants Commission.

Mr HOUSE: Has the Minister read the report?

Mr Troy: Yes, I have.

Mr HOUSE: He would be aware that that factor is mentioned in here so it was taken into account. What is his point?

Mr Troy: It is taken into account, but bear in mind that that is the source of funding to offset the disadvantage.

Mr HOUSE: Yes, I accept that argument.

There also seemed to me to be some anomalies in the fact that the Grants Commission committee was almost saying to shires, and I use the word "almost" advisedly, that they had to do certain things in order to qualify for an increased grant, and if they did not it might affect their disability grant in the future. A number of shires which contacted me were very worried that they might be forced into providing welfare-type services because if that was part of the formula they might have to provide those services to put up a case to the Grants

Commission. I think probably not enough emphasis was given by the committee to low population density areas. There is a tremendous difference between having an 11 000 square kilometre shire like the Shire of Lake Grace and having the same population in a shire the size of, say, Donnybrook because it is a lot more expensive to service that population. There is a multiplicity of ovals and halls and all sorts of things which people demand and rightly deserve when they live in those particular areas. I think the commission's disregard for population in its new method is questionable because distribution of population is very important.

I am very concerned that this particular issue does not seem to have been taken heed of by the Minister for Local Government. Indeed in a letter he wrote recently to the Shire of Lake Grace he said --

Hearings held to date with councils in similar circumstances as your own indicate general acceptance of the method and appreciation for the chance to make a submission to modify the model where necessary.

I do not know who fed that line of rubbish to the Minister, but if it is one of his advisers he should get another one because that particular adviser has not been outside his airconditioned office in the Terrace. That adviser, or whoever wrote the letter to Councillor Elliott, the President of the Lake Grace Shire, should go out into the bush and talk to the people in local government whom I have been talking to. I am sure every other member in this Chamber who represents a country electorate would have had some complaints.

To balance the argument about the method of arriving at the grants, I point out that many shires have benefited and are not making much noise at all. Some shires have had some advantage out of this new method of assessing and determining grants, but one has to determine how they arrived at that benefit. If one looks closely he will see that most of them did so to the detriment of their neighbours, because the cake is not any bigger; only the way it has been cut is different. One cannot correct an injustice by overcorrecting it in a regional area. Some shires which have benefited could be classified as regional centres. I think that trend is rather frightening, and I hope this Government does not encourage the regionalisation of local government into larger authorities because they will be too cumbersome and unwieldy and will not provide the necessary services which are provided now by the smaller shires. It will also be to the detriment of many country areas and country people if some of the smaller shires disappear and are replaced with a system of regionalisation.

I think it is very important that the Minister ask the Local Government Grants Commission to put in place something he asked it to put in place when he originally set it its tasks. One of the things he asked it to do, and which it has not done, is stated in the report --

In formulating principles the States shall have regard to the objectives of ensuring that the allocation of funds for local government purposes is made as far as practicable on a full horizontal equalisation basis, being a basis that ensures that each local government body in the State is able to function by reasonable effort at a standard not lower than the average standard of local government bodies in this State.

There is no question that that part of its brief -- I consider it to be a most important part -- has not been adhered to for assessing the grants under this new formula. It will have to come up with a new system. In my opinion, that system will have to be based on the net income of farmers in agricultural areas.

I think that with the introduction of adult franchise two years ago, we have reached the stage where rates in agricultural areas are fast becoming a land or wealth tax. Although it has always been a land tax it is now becoming a wealth tax. A tremendous burden is being placed on landowners in smaller towns because of the agricultural recession. We are placing a greater burden on those people by raising the land tax known as local government rates. While property values have always been the accepted method of determining the capacity of people to pay in local government, and while local government has used that method for many years, I think we are fast running into a new era of adult franchise forced on us by the Government. We did not want it then and we still do not want it, but we have to live with it. The reality is that a greater burden is being placed on fewer people. I urge the Minister for Local Government to examine other ways of distributing revenue equally so that there is a balanced account and so that the people in the towns who do not own property also pay.

Time does not permit me to enlarge on all of the details of how exactly the Local Government Grants Commission arrives at its funding method. However, I think it is evident from

what I have said to the House tonight that in no way is what it is doing fair and equitable. It must begin again and redistribute funds more equitably.

(The member's time expired.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I direct that the documents referred to by the member for Katanning-Roe be brought to the Table of the House and lie on the Table for the remainder of this day's session.

MRS BUCHANAN (Pilbara) [10.15 pm]: I welcome the opportunity to make a few brief comments on the Budget and to raise a couple of matters of concern to me. It was refreshing to note the Premier's general comments in his Budget presentation when he referred to the encouraging signs of the future recovery of the national economy. The State Budget was followed by a very good Federal Budget which almost completely rid us of the burden of a huge deficit that was left to this Government by the previous Liberal Administration. That has established the Australian Labor Party as a leader in the economic management field.

It is a pity that the Opposition has not adopted a more positive attitude towards this Budget. With a little more honesty, it could welcome the financial disciplines which have been exercised by both the State and Federal Governments along with the brighter prospects which have been forecast for our nation. At times, though, there is no pleasing the Opposition. One minute it is demanding more Government funds and the next it wants to see less Government spending. It is fast developing the habit of opposing issues for the sake of opposing them. I suppose this, in itself, might be looked on as a consistent approach by the Opposition, but it is certainly not one which is likely to inspire confidence in its overall performance. What is more, this negative unproductive attitude seems to be filtering through to the grassroots level of the Liberal Party.

I wish to refer to some of the inflammatory statements which were made by some of the leading Liberal lights in Karratha in the course of the Burrup dispute which is still going on but which is on the brink of being resolved, I am pleased to say. Some members of the Liberal Party in Karratha, under the cloak of respectability provided by the Karratha Chamber of Commerce, and, in particular, one person, Mr Graham Thompson, along with some of his cohorts, have indulged in out-and-out union bashing during the dispute. They made misleading and inflammatory statements through the local press, and through a local radio station 6KA. That was done at a most critical stage of the negotiations when the unions were ready to report back to the work force. They could not have picked a worse time. As far as I am concerned it is no coincidence that, at that very same time, the Opposition was indulging in a similar exercise in this Parliament. In my view, the Liberal Party deliberately set out to inflame the Burrup dispute in an attempt to detract from the Government's good reputation of achieving a far greater level of industrial peace than was ever experienced by its Liberal predecessors.

What did it achieve? In the first instance, it undermined the credibility of the Karratha Chamber of Commerce which I always thought was a fairly reputable organisation. The chamber's executives went on radio and made statements in the newspapers claiming that, because of the dispute, businesses were closing down. They made these claims only about two or two-and-a-half weeks into the dispute. Local people were saying that if the

businesses suffered that badly after only two-and-a-half weeks, they must have been on fairly shaky ground in the first place.

What else was achieved? Was the dispute resolved?

Mr Lewis: You must have a real problem if all you can do is talk about the Opposition. The Opposition must be worrying you if all you can be is negative.

Mrs BUCHANAN: It must be having some effect on the member for East Melville if he has to respond otherwise he would not be interjecting.

Mr Lewis: Why not be positive? Do you have such a preoccupation with the Opposition?

Mrs BUCHANAN: I do not have a preoccupation. I have the right to speak in this place about whatever I choose. If the member does not like it, he can also speak about anything he chooses. Those people at Karratha did not resolve the dispute. They had no positive recommendations to offer. The Chamber of Commerce and the Liberal supporters who represented that body and made the statements followed the Opposition's line in this House and called on the Government to intervene with the same sort of action that we could have expected had the Opposition been in Government.

Mr Lewis: What did the Government do?

Mrs BUCHANAN: If the member for East Melville had been in the Chamber the other night he would have heard the Minister explain the sorts of actions that were taken and they were totally unlike the actions the Liberal Party took when it was in power. The previous Administration had an appalling record. I wonder when the Opposition will concede that a confrontationist approach is the wrong way to go about industrial relations.

Mr Court: If we did it wrong, how would you go about handling it?

Mrs BUCHANAN: The Opposition could learn a lot of lessons by simply listening instead of jumping up and down making great public statements and not helping to resolve the issues at all.

I will continue with my remarks and perhaps the Opposition may become more enlightened. Industrial relations, as it has been said in this place often enough, is really about human relations. If people are bashed about the head with authoritarianism they will give a negative response every time. During its sorry record in office the Opposition never learnt the simple basic lessons that have been around since the days of the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

There is no doubt in my mind that the activities of certain members of the chamber of commerce were politically motivated. There is no question that their public utterances and their generally negative action has contributed towards the protraction of the strike. By making the statements it did, the chamber of commerce got the work force's back up and that was due mainly to the one-eyed nature of its criticism. Such a confrontationist approach is neither in the best interests of the local business community, nor in the best interests of the national economy.

The Liberal executive of the Karratha Chamber of Commerce has done its members a great disservice by bringing its organisation into disrepute in this way. Furthermore, the chamber's political activities have the potential to undermine the confidence of would-be investors into the area. The exaggerated view of the effects of the dispute which have been put forward by these people could very well have an off-putting effect on interested people. In fact, the area desperately needs investment in private rental accommodation, if anything is to be done about the high rentals paid by the people in Karratha.

If the chamber is trying to convince everyone that businesses will close down and that the project is in trouble because of the strike, the task of attracting people into the area is so much more difficult. It is a destructive approach to what is a difficult industrial situation. As I have said the chamber's action has inflamed the dispute, rather than assisting achieving a resolution.

In stark contrast, union representatives have behaved sensibly and have entered into the negotiations through the proper channels and in good faith. The strike is obviously having a detrimental effect on the community -- there is no question about that and no-one would deny it. The people feeling the effects of the strike the most are the workers and their families. I remind members that they are the people who made the decision to go on strike. They are prepared to make that sort of decision and that sacrifice to achieve better working conditions for themselves and their workmates.

I do not believe that the hourly rate increase being negotiated is extreme or radical. It is not a departure from the wage fixing arrangements. What the Burrup work force has asked for is a comparable rate to other major projects around Australia. They seek what they believe their labour to be worth on such a highly technical project and in considering this labour value, it is necessary to take into account some of the following facts: First, the temporary nature of construction work must be taken into account when setting rates of pay. In this case, the North West Shelf gas project, as Opposition members have already said, is a unique operation which must be given special consideration. The isolation of the project has to be considered in setting the rates of pay. In many cases, the separation from families by workers on this project must be endured for up to three months at a time. Others who live in Karratha have to battle along, in some cases, in temporary accommodation such as caravans or else pay very high rentals, which is a considerable burden. The high rentals are caused by the shortage of accommodation as a result of the influx of people who have come into the town with an interest in working on the project.

They are building Australia's largest project and, of course, it attracts nationwide publicity. There is a tendency for large numbers of people to seek work on the project. Not only is it Australia's largest project, but also it is a most difficult project technologically. Quality

control on the project is very stringent. In fact, it is such a high-tech project that it has actually been likened to building a space station on the moon. That comment was not made in jest. It is a difficult construction project and it is being undertaken in very harsh and difficult conditions.

Mr Court: Is it true that some of the welders working on the site have gone back to the Eastern States?

Mrs BUCHANAN: I would not know the exact number or which categories of work they might be in, but a number of people have left the site and returned to their homes. Some of those homes may have been in the Eastern States and some are in the metropolitan area. Other people are based in Karratha and they have remained there throughout the dispute.

Mr Court: I received a telephone call from a shopkeeper who said that some people have gone back to Melbourne and will stay there until after the VFL grand final.

Mrs BUCHANAN: Of more concern to me is that those people are so fed up with the conditions on the project that they may not return at all. There could be a problem in recruiting new people to take their place.

Mr Lewis: Which conditions are bad?

Mrs BUCHANAN: If the member for East Melville does not know, it is time he took a trip to the north west and looked at how these people are working in high temperatures and dusty conditions. He would become aware of the isolation of the place and, as I have already said, in many cases the workers leave their families in their hometown to work on the project.

Mr Lewis: Karratha has a population of 14 000. Where is the isolation?

Mrs BUCHANAN: That is where the Opposition is extremely ill-informed. The people of Karratha are still isolated from the main centre of things.

Mr Lewis: Where is the main centre?

Mrs BUCHANAN: In the metropolitan area.

Mr Lewis: Is that right?

Mrs BUCHANAN: Yes. If the member travelled to Karratha and spoke to the local people he would realise.

Mr Brian Burke: I would not answer his questions. They do not make sense.

Mrs BUCHANAN: The Premier is probably right. His comments are always silly, but I always try to be polite.

Mr Brian Burke: That is your trouble -- you are too polite, especially to him.

Mrs BUCHANAN: I will not do it any more.

The reason I have raised the problem of the difficult living and working conditions is that all these factors have to be taken into consideration when considering or arguing the pros and cons of the factors contributing to the dispute.

For their part, as far as I understand, the unions have now agreed to a number of concessions in the package. In return for an increase in their wages, the members have given a commitment to work 54 hours a week which the company is anxious to have them do. That has not been easy to achieve, given the high technology and the heavy physical nature of the work they carry out. They have also agreed to the company's proposals for restructuring and efficiency measures and procedures will be agreed to for resolving future disputes. Those sorts of things are fairly encouraging. These matters have been progressed through the proper channels, and the Industrial Relations Commission's orders to date have been followed.

It is laughable, therefore, that the Karratha Chamber of Commerce should describe the dispute as being worse than the Robe River dispute; there is no comparison between the two. The Robe River dispute involved shock tactics used against the company's work force and an out-and-out attack was launched on the State's industrial system; Government members rightly expressed outrage at the ruthless way in which the company acted. On the other hand, the Burrup dispute has been a totally different situation; there has been no challenge to the industrial system -- in fact, the two parties are working through the system towards a resolution of the matters. This dispute is about a work force being dissatisfied with working conditions on a very tough job and they have taken their case to the industrial commission.

The company has entered the negotiations, obviously with a different point of view, and some compromises will be made by both sides. But the important difference between this dispute and the Robe River dispute is that both sides are observing customary procedures for dealing with industrial problems. In my view the Karratha Chamber of Commerce is as ill-informed as it is ineffectual. Its members have done nothing to support the community during this strike. It has simply strutted the public stage calling on the Government to do something about the strike. The Karratha Chamber of Commerce by its political activities has definitely exacerbated this strike. It previously had a very good reputation and it was a sorry day when the new rightist, Mr Andrew Hay, came on the scene, because he is behind all this. Since his appointment as President of the Melbourne chamber and also with his position with the Australian Federation of Employers, political activities have been placed on the top of the agenda of business organisations. The Karratha Chamber of Commerce is a prime example of this.

Mr Lewis: I cannot believe this.

Mrs BUCHANAN: The member for East Melville does not have to, he can sit back in his seat cackling. If he does not believe it he should take into account that shortly before the Federal election Mr Andrew Hay wrote to the Karratha Chamber of Commerce, urging it to circulate a letter to all local members. It was in the form of a questionnaire asking them where they stood on certain issues. The Karratha Chamber of Commerce carried out those instructions to the letter. I do not know what the Karratha Chamber of Commerce thought it would gain for its members but it followed the directions of Mr Andrew Hay and thereby established a link with him and the New Right. I express my greatest concern about this turn of events. After all, the membership of the chambers is mainly drawn from the small business field and small businesses collectively provide the greatest number of jobs for Australians and make a major contribution to the nation's economy. Interference by the most destructive force, the New Right, has the potential to do enormous damage to employer-employee relations and the action of the Karratha Chamber of Commerce has demonstrated the sort of damage of which it is capable.

I call on that chamber and, in fact, all the chambers throughout the State, to have nothing to do with the political directions they are receiving from Mr Andrew Hay. If the Karratha Chamber of Commerce wishes to regain its credibility and retrieve the situation whereby its members were previously able to work with the Government and local members of Parliament, I suggest it needs to brighten up its ideas. It may consider some ways in which it can encourage good employer-employee relations generally as a strike preventive measure. It might for instance commend the people who set up and supported the trust fund for the daughter of the worker killed on the North West Shelf gas project recently. Instead of trying to undermine the Government's effort to reduce industrial disputation it should recognise that it is in its own best interests and in the interests of its members to make a more positive contribution than the one it has made in recent days.

The high level of growth taking place in connection with the North West Shelf gas project will greatly benefit Karratha business people. There will be ups and downs to be weathered, as there have been in the past, and hiccups such as the dispute will occur but must not be allowed to lower confidence in the future of the area. I am extremely pleased to note that this Budget reflects the Government's confidence in the area, with substantial allocations for construction of educational facilities, more housing and work on the water and sewerage systems. In particular, I welcome the approval of funding for the new school in Karratha which will ensure that the existing Millers Well school, which has been feeling the effects of the big influx of students, will not become overcrowded.

I turn now to another matter, a letter I and other members received from a newly-formed group identifying itself as People Against the Australia Card. Although I do not want to get into another debate on the Australia Card -- I understand this matter will be raised in a motion tomorrow which will give an opportunity for that debate -- I would like to comment on the make-up of the group. The letterhead lists the main people who support the group and includes: Senator Fred Chaney, Senator Jean Jenkins, Senator Jo Vallentine, Professor Martyn Webb, Professor Richard Harding, Bill Hassell MLA, Bishop Challen, and Hendy Cowan MLA. That is a fairly unique and unusual mix of people who would certainly make strange bedfellows. I do not deny this group the right to enter the debate and demonstrate on the question of the Australia Card if it wishes.

However, I question the motives of one of the participants, namely Senator Vallentine.

Senator Vallentine will be remembered in this place for her wilful disruption of the House. She is obviously an advocate of civil disobedience and in this respect I believe she does more damage than good for the one or two causes she supports. Furthermore, Senator Vallentine's record as a Federal member of Parliament has certainly not been very good. It is about time this poor performance was exposed. I therefore place on record some facts about the Senator which have been provided by my Federal colleague, Senator Jim McKiernan. In the two years prior to the July election, Senator Vallentine was absent on many occasions. She did not serve on any of the parliamentary Senate committees which are a major part of senators' parliamentary duties, and she has a history of non-participation in votes and divisions. In 1985 Senator Vallentine voted in seven out of 59 divisions; in 1986 she voted in one out of 189 divisions; there was a slight change in 1987 mainly after the announcement that Parliament was being dissolved. Her total parliamentary record reads: 37 votes out of a possible 335. I am also informed that Senator Vallentine has been in the Chamber as little as possible, only ensuring she was there at question time. This apparently was important because the travelling allowances are paid on the basis of attendance. Senator Vallentine sought to explain her behaviour by virtue of the fact that she was a single-issue parliamentary representative. Although Senator Vallentine purported to represent the peace and disarmament issue, she was absent during the debate and vote on the Government's South Pacific nuclear-free zone legislation in December last year. A conference of Quakers in New Zealand was more important than the issue which she claims to represent in the Parliament.

Some of my constituents have told me that letters to Senator Vallentine requesting support for various matters have met with the response that she was interested in that one issue only and therefore could not help them.

Mr Hodge: I have had the same complaints.

Mrs BUCHANAN: Many people have told me the same thing. No doubt she accepted the same salary, allowances, and staffing arrangements as other senators from all political persuasions who obviously work on a whole range of matters for their constituencies. Senator Vallentine's involvement in the Australia Card is quite obviously designed to suit her own purposes, because it has been beefed up as an emotive issue and therefore it is likely to attract some attention from the media.

In my view Senator Vallentine has simply hopped on the band wagon to shore up her dwindling electoral popularity. I would like to say straight out that I believe Senator Vallentine is a fraud, and the people who form this group, the People Against the Australia Card, run the risk of being tarred with the same brush.

Having drawn those matters to the attention of the House, I conclude my remarks and support the Budget.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mrs Henderson.

House adjourned at 10.42 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH: NURSES

Accommodation: Country Areas

1526. Mr SCHELL, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the current policy on the provision of accommodation for nurses in country areas?
- (2) Is the policy under review?
- (3) If yes to (2), when will the review be complete?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Accommodation is provided having regard to priorities and available funds, on the basis of the need for accommodation in order to recruit and retain staff to provide and maintain essential services.
- (2) Overall policy in relation to the provision of accommodation for all staff is under review.
- (3) Responses on a policy proposal are now being collected, following which discussions will be held with appropriate unions. This process is expected to take several months.

FREECORNS-METRO-BICTON TRANSACTIONS CASE

Companies Code Amendments

1612. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Is he familiar with the Freecorns-Metro-Bicton Transactions case as described by the liquidator in his letter to the Premier dated 1 July 1987?
- (2) If so, does he agree that as the case is described, the provisions of the Companies Code appear to be in need of amendment to remedy the inequitable situation?
- (3) Accordingly, is he prepared to either --
 - (a) submit the case to the Law Reform Commission asking for its report and recommendation as to whether the Code ought to be amended;
 - (b) with or without such recommendation, place the question of suitably amending the Code on the agenda of the Ministerial Council?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The case has already been referred to the Commonwealth Law Reform Commission, which has a current project on insolvency.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT

Repeal

1613. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Has the Barristers Board been consulted about the proposed repealing of section 37 of the Legal Practitioners Act?
- (2) If so, what was the Barristers Board comment and recommendation?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The board recommended the proposal.

PORTS AND HARBOURS: FREMANTLE

Barge Harbour: Plans

1622. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What are the present plans for a new barge harbour at Fremantle?
- (2) What is the estimated cost?

- (3) Who is liable to meet that cost?
- (4) When is the present plan expected to proceed?
- (5) What is the size of the proposed facility, and what is its intended capacity in terms of servicing, number of barges, maximum tonnage?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) A site for housing replacement facilities for the North Fremantle waterfront industries has been selected on the ocean shore adjoining the North Mole. Several specific forms of development are being investigated, with the aim of optimising the use of the site.
- (2) The cost of the basic replacement harbour is of the order of \$7 million.
- (3) The project will be funded on a full cost recovery basis.
- (4) A time schedule has not yet been determined.
- (5) Not yet finalised.

MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT

Databanks: Access

1654. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Does he, as Minister, have the right of access to all databanks maintained by departments and authorities within his jurisdiction?
- (2) If no, what limitations are there on such access?
- (3) Is he, as Minister, subject to the legislative sanctions for breaches of confidentiality referred to by him in his answer to question 1545 of 1987?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This and a series of related questions on the Notice Paper seek comprehensive information on matters affecting the entire public sector, and which are within the portfolio responsibilities of individual and different Ministers.

Some of these matters are administrative arrangements in which Ministers have no direct involvement. They do not come within the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Public Sector Management.

The information sought by the member and other members will require detailed research. Accordingly, the member and other members who have asked questions on this matter will be advised in writing in due course.

TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

Databanks: Information Leakage

1655. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Has there been any inquiry, either external or internal, into suspected leakage of confidential information from any of the public sector databanks?
- (2) If yes, when and which Government department or agency was involved?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Government Employees: Compulsory

1658. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Further to question 1546 of 1987, is it Government policy to make the possession of an Australia Card a condition of employment in the public sector?
- (2) Does that policy apply to persons already employed in the public sector?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Cooperation: Policy

1659. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it Government policy to cooperate with the Commonwealth Government in the establishment of the Australia Card proposal?
- (2) If yes, which State Government department and agencies will be providing to the Commonwealth information about Western Australian citizens?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Support: Policy

1661. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

Is his Government's policy to support the Commonwealth Government in its endeavour to introduce a computerised surveillance system with the Australia Card Bill 1986?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

Databanks: Information Purchase

1717. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government purchased or otherwise acquired information about individual Western Australian citizens from any private sector databanks?
- (2) If yes, which ones?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

Databanks: Employee Security

1718. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Are all employees who, in the course of their employment, have access to public sector databanks, screened for security purposes?
- (2) If yes, how, by whom, and how often?
- (3) How many persons in each of the last four years have been assessed as unsuitable security risks?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

Databanks: Information Sale

1719. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Do any of the public sector databanks sell or otherwise dispose of information about individual Western Australian citizens to the private sector?
- (2) If yes, which ones?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

CITIZENS

Information: Confidentiality

1720. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

Is it Government policy to make publicly available confidential information about individual Western Australian citizens if it believes it is in the public interest to do so?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The Government has no rigid policy on this matter, but there are clearly circumstances when the release of such information is in the public interest. There are numerous instances where information of this type is made available through the courts or in reports prepared for Parliament.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Production: Compulsory

1721. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

(1) Further to question 1543 of 1987, has he sought from the Commonwealth an amendment to the Australia Card Bill in order that it may, legitimately, demand the Australia Card as proof of identity?

(2) If no, is it Government policy to seek such an amendment?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Support: Policy

1722. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

(1) Does the Government still support the Commonwealth Australia Card Bill in its entirety?

(2) If no, which clauses or parts of the Bill does it not support?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

See answer to question 1654.

MOTOR VEHICLES: POLICE USE

Compensation

1729. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) In circumstances where police assume control of --

(a) motor vehicles;

(b) boats;

(c) aircraft,

to assist them in police work such as search and rescue or crime detection, what arrangements are made for insurance cover in the event of damage in each category?

(2) Does the insurance cover differ in any of the above categories if the vehicle, boat, or aircraft is driven or flown for the police by its owner?

(3) If insurance cover is not available in any category, what recourse is available to the owner in the event of damage?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) Insurance cover is provided for the Police Department in the circumstances outlined as follows --

(a) Motor vehicles - \$600 000 limit for damage or destruction of the vehicle;

(b) (i) boats - \$600 000 for damage or destruction of the boat;

(ii) \$1 000 000 for liability to others;

- (c) aircraft - \$600 000 for damage or destruction of the aircraft.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.

DEFENCE: AIRCRAFT

Low-flying: Reports

1733. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Defence Liaison:

- (1) Is he aware of reports of low-flying military aircraft in the Corrigin, Kondinin, and Lake Grace areas?
- (2) If yes, are the reports accurate?
- (3) Has there been any report of damage to crops or loss of stock arising from the incident?
- (4) If yes to (3), will he advise the appropriate course of action for the recovery of a financial loss arising from that damage?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) I am advised that in the past week military aircraft belonging to the United States Marine Corps and to the Royal Australian Air Force have been flying over Western Australia in association with the joint exercise code named "Valiant Usher". Some of these aircraft could have overflowed the areas specified in the member's question.
- (2) Inquiries are still proceeding with the Royal Australian Air Force. The member will be advised in writing as soon as possible.
- (3) No reports of damaged to crops or loss of livestock have been received by the Royal Australian Air Force.
- (4) Answered by (3).

POLICE STATIONS

Country: Cash Float

1735. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Will he take the necessary action to ensure that all country police stations have enough cash on hand to be able to give change to people paying for the services the police provide?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

There has been no demonstrated need for country police stations to provide such a service to the public.

TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Directors: Appointments

1737. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Industry and Technology:

- (1) Has he selected the five new directors for the Technology and Industry Development Authority?
- (2) If so, who will fill these appointments?

Mr BRYCE replied:

(1) and (2) The Public Service Board has made the following appointments --

- 1. Mr Richard Muirhead, Director Marketing Division;
- 2. Mr Bernard Stapleton, Director Technology and Investment Division;
- 3. Mr Graeme Watt, Director Corporate Services Division.

The two remaining appointments will be made as soon as practicable.

CHEMICAL: CYANIDE

Transportation

1738. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will cyanide be transported through the towns of Northam and York?
- (2) If so, have the appropriate councils been notified?
- (3) If yes, on which roads will the cyanide be transported?

Mr TROY replied:

Cyanide is classified as a dangerous good. Under that classification, aspects of its transport are administered by the Mines Department; therefore I have referred the question to the Minister for Minerals and Energy, and he will respond in writing.

CHEMICAL: CYANIDE

Transportation

1739. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does he think that the Pingelly-Wandering road is safe for the transporting of cyanide?
- (2) If not, have funds been allocated for its upgrading?

Mr TROY replied:

See answer to question 1738.

CRIME

Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicles

1741. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) How many complaints were recorded for unauthorised use of motor vehicles for the following period, and how many vehicles were involved --
 - (a) 1 July 1984-30 June 1985;
 - (b) 1 July 1985-30 June 1986;
 - (c) 1 July 1986-30 June 1987,
 - (d) 1 July 1983-30 June 1984?
- (2) How many charges were laid with respect to the above offences, and how many convictions were obtained?
- (3) Can he provide statistics on the age group and sex of the convicted persons?
- (4) Can he advise the ratio of Aboriginal offenders involved in the unauthorised use of motor vehicles as compared to non-Aboriginal persons?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) (a) 8 016 complaints received and vehicles involved;
- (b) 9 941 complaints received and vehicles involved;
- (c) 13 012 complaints received and vehicles involved;
- (d) 7 064 complaints received and vehicles involved.
- (2) 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1984 -- 2 170 charges laid;
1 July 1984 to 30 June 1985 -- 2 661 charges laid;
1 July 1985 to 30 June 1986 -- 2 387 charges laid;
1 July 1986 to 30 June 1987 -- 2 380 charges laid.
- (3) and (4) The statistics sought are not recorded.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Child Care Centre: Leeming

1744. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Has a decision been made on where the Leeming Child Care Centre is to be located?
- (2) If not, when will a decision on its location be made?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1) As a result of a Commonwealth Government decision to reduce from eight to six the number of child care centres to be built in Western Australia through the Commonwealth-State agreement in 1987-88, a centre will not be built in the Leeming area. However, it is proposed to increase the number of Commonwealth-subsidised family day care places available to families in Leeming and surrounding areas.

(2) Not applicable.

MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVERS' LICENCES

Credit Card-type

1746. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Referring to question 1133 of 1987, is the Government now considering implementing a scheme similar to that in New South Wales in relation to the use of photographic drivers' licences as credit cards?
- (2) (a) If yes, when will such a scheme be implemented in Western Australia?
(b) If not, why not?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) and (2) Senior officers of the Police Department have examined the proposed photographic driver's licence system for New South Wales as well as the photographic driver's licence system currently in use in Victoria.

The Commissioner of Police has advised that results are now being assessed by the department, and a full report with recommendations is being prepared for consideration.

ANIMALS: VETERINARY SURGEONS

Blood Samples

1747. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) In relation to question 943 of 1987, who authorises private veterinary surgeons to take blood samples, as referred to in part (3) of the answer to that question?
- (2) How many such veterinary surgeons are so authorised?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) and (2) Any registered practising veterinary surgeon may be authorised by the owner of a flock to collect blood samples from that flock.

HEALTH: DISABLED PERSONS

Booklet: Compilation

1750. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Who was responsible for compiling the booklet "A Fair Go for People with Disabilities"?
- (2) Has the full report been publicly released?
- (3) What recommendations in that report have been acted upon?
- (4) When is it expected that the balance of the recommendations contained in the report will be acted upon, if at all?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) The working party on equal opportunity legislation for people with disabilities.
- (2) The full discussion paper, "A Fair Go for People with Disabilities", was released to the public on 18 August 1986. A public conference was held in September 1986 to discuss the working party's recommendations.
- (3) A residential review task force established by the Minister for Planning is dealing with the issues raised in recommendation 61. A consultant has been appointed to progress the drafting of amendments to the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.
- (4) See (3).

AUSTRALIA CARD

Government Instrumentalities: Costs

1761. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

Has he caused calculations to be made regarding the cost of the Commonwealth Australia Card legislation to departments and instrumentalities in --

- (a) cooperating with the central surveillance agency to feed in available information from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, etc;
- (b) feeding in other relevant information;
- (c) demanding the production of the card and registering the card subject's, and occasionally the prescribed person's, number?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This question has been directed to the Minister assisting the Minister for Public Sector Management, and he will answer the question in writing.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Computer Matching: Cost

1773. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Industry and Technology:

- (1) With reference to the Australia Card proposal, what is the estimated cost of establishing land line computer matching in Western Australia, as outlined by Senator Ryan?
- (2) Does the Western Australian information technology industry have the expertise and the capacity to carry out the installation of land lines?
- (3) If yes, what steps has the Government taken or will it take to assist the local information technology industry in tendering for or otherwise securing a contract for the installation of land lines in Western Australia?

Mr BRYCE replied:

See reply to question 1654.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Building Societies: Compliance

1776. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Treasurer:

What is the expected --

- (a) initial cost;
- (b) recurring cost,

to Western Australian building societies complying with the Australia Card legislation?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This is a matter for determination by the building societies.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Small Business: Compliance

1778. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Minister for Small Business:

What is the expected --

- (a) initial cost;
- (b) recurring cost,

to Western Australian small businesses complying with the Australia Card legislation?

Mr TROY replied:

I refer the member to the answer to question 1654.

CHEMICALS: AGRICULTURAL

Residue Testing

1779. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Are the manufacturers and/or importers of agricultural chemicals making any financial contribution to the cost of testing beef for contamination by chemical residue?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) Can a producer who can prove that he or she has never used DDT or any of the other chemicals that are the subject of meat testing procedures be exempted from the meat inspection levy?
- (4) Will the producers whose cattle are tested and found to be entirely free from contamination by chemical residue be exempted from the levy?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Presumably because the agricultural chemical industry has not accepted responsibility for the residue problem.
- (3) No. As cattle move from property to property and residues take so long to break down, there is no guarantee that cattle from "safe" properties will have no residues.
- (4) No. The cattle industry has decided that all producers will pay the levy.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK

Liabilities: Teachers Credit Society Ltd

1780. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What financial commitment has the Government given to the Rural and Industries Bank over any liabilities incurred by its takeover of the Teachers Credit Society?
- (2) Is the Government requesting a firm figure from the Rural and Industries Bank as to the extent of the financial liability the Government is expected to carry?
- (3) When will full details of this financial commitment be made available to taxpayers?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) The Government has given an assurance that it will stand by the bank, and that the bank's financial results should not be affected by the profits or losses of the Teachers Credit Society during the period that the bank has a management contract with the society and during any subsequent period of administration under the Credit Unions Act.

It will not be known for some time whether or not an overall loss will be incurred by the society.

(2) No formal request has been made as yet, but obviously the bank is closely monitoring the situation and will advise the Government in due course.

(3) If any overall loss is incurred, as soon as the information becomes available.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK

Teachers Credit Society Ltd: Purchase

1781. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Will the Rural and Industries Bank be buying the Teachers Credit Society business?
- (2) If yes --
 - (a) who will determine the price;
 - (b) what notification will be given to Teachers Credit Society members and shareholders;
 - (c) is approval required by Teachers Credit Society members and shareholders;
 - (d) in what form will the Teachers Credit Society be operating in the future if it is purchased?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

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

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK

Teachers Credit Society Ltd: Administrator

1782. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:

Under what authority has the Rural and Industries Bank become the administrator of the Teachers Credit Society?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The Credit Unions Act and the Rural and Industries Bank Act.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK

Teachers Credit Society Ltd: Takeover

1783. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What legislation is required to facilitate the Rural and Industries Bank takeover of the Teachers Credit Society?
- (2) When will this legislation be introduced?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) The Rural and Industries Bank Act and the Credit Unions Act have relevant provisions. Further amendments as may be necessary will be introduced this session.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK

Teachers Credit Society Ltd: Management

1784. Mr COURT, to the Treasurer:

When was the Rural and Industries Bank first informed it would manage the rescue of the Teachers Credit Society, and how was it informed?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

On 17 August 1987 the Rural and Industries Bank accepted the invitation from the Directors of the Teachers Credit Society to take over the management of their society.

HEALTH: TOBACCO SMOKING

Deaths

1785. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Health:

Further to his estimate that 37 000 Western Australians will die as a direct result of their having smoked cigarettes, will he state the number of Australians who are condemned to die from the same cause in the same period?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

If the present death rate from smoking continues, the Health Department projects that around 475 000 Australians will be killed by tobacco in the period 1985-2001. This will take to approximately one million the total number of Australian lives claimed by the epidemic of smoking diseases since its emergence in the 1920s.

It may also be worth noting that smoking kills each year significantly more people in Australia than the total number killed by drink, drugs, murder, suicide, road accidents, rail accidents, air accidents, poisoning, drowning, fires, falls, lightning, electrocution, snakes, spiders, sharks, and crocodiles.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Pinjarra: Land Allocation

1787. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Works and Services:

(1) Has land been set aside for a new High School at Pinjarra?

(2) If so, where?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by (1).

HEALTH: PATIENTS

Travel Assistance Scheme: Escorts

1789. Mr SCHELL, to the Minister for Health:

Why has his department determined that patients, transported to Perth or other treatment centres as inter-hospital transfers, are only entitled to an escort under the patients' assistance travel scheme if the Director General of Medical Services has given his specific approval?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

Inpatients transferred between public hospitals are usually transported by surface or air ambulance, and, because there are professional attendants, normally do not need a member of the family as an escort. If the patient is seriously ill, the Health Department's Director General, Medical Services or the medical superintendent of the hospital has authority to approve travel and accommodation assistance for a relative to accompany and stay with the patient during the critical period.

SWAN BUILDING SOCIETY

Police Investigation

1790. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) Have the police completed their investigations of the Swan Building Society?

(2) Are the police also investigating any activities associated with the Teachers Credit Society?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) No.

(2) Yes.

POLICE: FIREARMS

Licences

1791. Mr P.J. SMITH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) According to the latest available statistics, what is the number of firearms licences in each State of Australia?
- (2) What is the number of firearms licensed per thousand of population --
 - (a) on a State by State basis;
 - (b) for the whole of Australia?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

Due to the varying firearm licensing procedures and recording systems in each State, the requested information is not suitably classified to make this information available. The following statistics are therefore applicable only to Western Australia --

- (1) 113 480.
- (2)(a) 199;
- (b) unavailable.

HOSPITAL

Gnowangerup: Report Publication

1792. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Adverting to question 1620 of 15 September 1987, will he please answer part (3) and state whether the report will be made public?
- (2) If he will not make the report public, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) and (2) The findings of the report have been made public and a copy follows for the member's information --

Conclusion

On the evidence presented to me I have come to the conclusion that there are no reasons relating to her fitness to perform the functions of Matron to dismiss or demote Mrs. Griffiths from her position as Matron of Gnowangerup District Hospital. In my view her conduct has not been of such a nature as to warrant any disciplinary action. In the light of the fact that I am not bound to confine my enquiries to matters the subject of complaints by the Board, I have given consideration to whether there is any further investigation I ought to make. However, the number of allegations made, the vigour with which they were pursued and the great interest taken in the controversy by the community of Gnowangerup generally, leads me to conclude that if any other matters had been worth investigating they would have been brought to my attention.

The members of the Board have been placed in a very difficult position. My conclusions should not be taken as an adverse reflection upon them. In pursuing the allegations against Matron Griffiths they have had to rely heavily upon the evidence of others. No fault should be inferred from the fact that the evidence has not established that the Matron should be dismissed or demoted. In the light of the gravity of the matters complained of they were right to ensure a thorough airing of all issues. Given the nature of this dispute there must be some doubt that Dr. Cummins and Matron Griffiths will ever establish a satisfactory working relationship. Nevertheless I am quite certain that for the benefit of the community of Gnowangerup, they should endeavour to do so.

TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Senior Director

1793. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Industry and Technology:

Has Mr Bernie Stapleton been appointed the Senior Director of the Technology and Industry Development Authority?

Mr BRYCE replied:

Refer to parliamentary question 1737.

POLICE STATION

Pinjarra: Manpower Reduction

1794. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Is there a proposal to reduce the manpower at the Pinjarra Police Station?
- (2) Is there a proposal to remove the vehicle inspection service at the Pinjarra Police Station?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) and (2) No.

ARCHITECTS ACT

Amendment: Discussions

1801. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Works and Services:

- (1) Has he or his department had discussions with the Architects Board of Western Australia with a view to amending the Architects Act to impose a financial limit on the maximum value of architectural work or architectural drafting work performed by persons other than registered architects or persons holding the architectural qualifications as set out in the Act?
- (2) If yes --
 - (a) will he provide details;
 - (b) have discussions been held on this subject with representatives from the Association of the Consulting Draftsmen Australia;
 - (c) if so, what was the result of such discussions?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) I understand that the matter had been discussed with my predecessor, Hon D.K. Dans. I am informed that Hon D.K. Dans was of the opinion that there should be no change to the existing legislation.

- (2)
 - (a) As above;
 - (b) no, but I am informed that there has been some correspondence on the matter advising the Institute of Draftsmen that they would be afforded an opportunity to comment on any formal proposal submitted by the Architects Board;
 - (c) as above.

ENVIRONMENT: HERITAGE

Legislation: Responsibility

1802. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

Which of his Ministers is going to be responsible for introducing the foreshadowed Heritage legislation?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The Minister for Planning.

COMMISSIONERS FOR DECLARATIONS

Appointments: Conditions

1803. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

As he has spelt out those negative conditions which will not be considered as serious enough ones for appointing a Commissioner for Declarations in his letter to members of Parliament, will he please expand on the positive conditions which, when they apply, will be considered sufficient reason for approving an appointment?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

Future applications will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that there is

a special need -- for example, in an area where no qualified witnesses are available to service the community.

HEALTH

Mandurah Community Health Centre: Value

1807. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the replacement value of the Mandurah Community Health Centre in Ormsby Terrace, Mandurah?
- (2) What is the estimated repair cost of the centre following tornado damage on 12 August 1987?
- (3) Was the building and/or contents insured?
- (4) If so, for how much?
- (5) Was there an excess applicable to the insurance?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) In the region of \$2.3 million inclusive of furniture and equipment.
- (2) \$53 000.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Up to \$4 million.
- (5) Yes.

PACIEXPO

Government Contribution

1808. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What financial contribution did the State Government make to the Paciexpo conducted at the Fremantle Passenger Terminal in 1985-86?
- (2) Under what item in the 1987 Budget papers was this contribution listed?

Mr TROY replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Minister for Transport. It has been referred to the Minister for Tourism, and she will respond in writing.

SUPERANNUATION BOARD

Audited Accounts: Tabling

1809. Mr MacKINNON, to the Treasurer:

When would he expect to be able to table in the Parliament the completed audited accounts of the State Superannuation Board?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The 1986-87 annual report of the State Superannuation Board, which will include the audited financial statements, will be tabled during the current sitting of the Parliament.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Members: Country Representation

1810. Mr SCHELL, to the Minister for Planning:

Is it his intention to honour his undertaking to the National Party about country representation on the State Planning Commission in the current session of State Parliament?

Mr PEARCE replied:

Yes.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: AMBULANCE OFFICERS

Paramedic Tools

1813. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the concern within the community regarding the restricted access of ambulance officers to basic paramedic tools?
- (2) In this regard, have steps been taken to implement recommendation 5.3, Section 18, of the Public Accounts Committee Report No 25 into ambulance services in Western Australia?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No. Staffing and equipment levels are constantly monitored by St John Ambulance.
- (2) The recommendation was accepted in principle. Existing legislation is being examined to ascertain its suitability for this recommendation.
- (3) See (2).

SUPERANNUATION

Government Employees Superannuation Fund: Pamphlet

1815. Mr COWAN, to the Treasurer:

- (1) How much money was spent on the production of the pamphlet entitled "Government Employees' Superannuation Fund"?
- (2) How many copies were produced?
- (3) Approximately how many of the pamphlets were distributed before the Government Employees' Superannuation Bill 1987 was passed?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) The cost of producing the Government Employees Superannuation Fund explanatory booklet was \$57 663.
- (2) The number of copies printed was 129 370.
- (3) The Government Employees Superannuation Fund commenced operation on 1 July 1987. The Government Employees Superannuation Bill did not complete its passage through the Parliament until 18 June 1987. Distribution of the booklet before the legislation was enacted was necessary to give employees the opportunity of joining the new scheme prior to the date of its commencement.

The number distributed was approximately 110 000.

GAMBLING: INSTANT LOTTERY

Distributions

1816. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Will he provide a list detailing the distribution of funds allocated from the instant lottery fund in 1986-87?

Mr WILSON replied:

As the information required will take time to collate, I shall advise the member in writing in due course.

MINES DEPARTMENT

Geophysics Section: Private Property

1817. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

- (1) Further to question 1736 of 1987, is it not a fact that the geophysics section has been operating on private property on behalf of farmers?
- (2) If yes, is it not also a fact that it charges for the service?
- (3) What is the cost per farm?

- (4) How many farms have used the service in each of the last two years?
- (5) Is it his intention to continue the service for the remainder of the current financial year?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes, for bore logging only.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The cost per bore over the past two years has ranged from \$364 to \$794, depending on depth and location.
- (4) Thirteen.
- (5) Yes.

GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES

Advertising: Expenditure

1818. Mr COWAN, to the Treasurer:

Will he give consideration to altering the way in which the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure are presented so that the amount spent on advertising by each department and authority is an identifiable item?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The proposal will be considered in preparation of the 1988 Budget papers.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

STATESHIPS

South East Asian Operations: Losses

296. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the estimated loss in the first year of extending the State Ship's operations to Asia?
- (2) Is that loss included in this year's Budget papers?
- (3) If so, where?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) to (4) I will come back to the member with a fully detailed answer on this, but there is an expectation of some loss in the first year of operation. From what I recall, the loss is in the order of \$600 000, but it is certain that in the second year there will be a better than break-even point established with it, and a substantial return by the third year of operation. There is some difficulty associated with the first year of operation in terms of its establishment, as the member would appreciate, but certainly it turns over in quite a reasonable time.

I might point out to the member that in the case of the Papua New Guinea and east coast studies, we are now in the eleventh month of operation, and the market surveys that were undertaken at that time have been surpassed. The same technique is being used in examining this new route, so I have every confidence that it will be successful. However, I will give those figures to the member in due course.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Opposition: March

297. Mr THOMAS, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware that opponents of the Australia Card intend to march on Parliament House tomorrow?
- (2) If yes, has he been asked to speak to the marchers?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I am aware of the planned march on Parliament House in opposition to

the Australia Card. I received a letter from the organisers, which was posted to me in the last few days, asking me to do three reasonable things; they also asked me to lead the march, but I said no. The first request was to be present; the second request was to receive a petition or petitions; and the third request was to speak.

I indicated to the organisers, through my office, that I am due to host a decision-makers' lunch at which Lord Alistair McAlpine will be speaking, and that the lunch is scheduled to begin at 12.30 and to end at about 2.00 pm. The lunch will be at the Sheraton Hotel. I indicated to the organisers of the march that I will deputise the Minister for Minerals and Energy to represent me in the various functions ascribed to me, to ensure the march was a success, and that the Minister for Minerals and Energy would reflect the Government's policy in this matter.

The organisers at last contact were evincing some disquiet at the prospect of the Minister for Minerals and Energy being my representative, but I have nevertheless asked him if he will attend and attempt to fulfil what is asked of the Government.

The only other thing that can be done is for me to cancel out of attending the decision-makers' lunch for Lord McAlpine, which is something that I am considering, but I am reluctant to do that because the lunch is a longstanding engagement, to which many people have been invited, and I do not want to cause any discourtesy to Lord McAlpine. Nevertheless, I will continue to think about my obligations in that respect, and if I am not there, then the Minister for Minerals and Energy, a man of undoubted talents and a great future, will be there to speak on behalf of the Government.

PERTH CITY COUNCIL

Corruption Allegations

298. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

(1) Is the Premier aware of the allegations of corruption levelled last week at the councillors of the Perth City Council by his colleague, the member for Perth?

(2) Does he agree with those statements?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) I am aware of the statements made by the member for Perth, who in a very short period of time in this Parliament has stamped himself as a member with a good future and as a member who is prepared to intelligently and assiduously discharge his duties. I do not know of the detailed background to the contribution made by the member for Perth, but it is sufficient to say that the Government regards the allegations as of sufficient gravity to refer them to the Secretary of the Department of Local Government for his investigation as a matter of urgency and advice to the Government as to the appropriate course of action that should be adopted by the Government in respect of the matters raised by the member for Perth.

Having said that, I also say it is most likely that unless the advice is absurd or unrealistic, the Government will adopt the course that is recommended by the Secretary of the Department of Local Government. That is not to say we are excluding the motion -- notice of which has been given -- that will be moved by the Leader of the Opposition, but obviously we will not exclude the significance of the advice from the Secretary of the Department of Local Government by agreeing to any course of action that precedes the advice being received by Government.

That is the situation, and I hope that by informing the Leader of the Opposition -- in his genuine quest for knowledge on this matter -- of the seriousness with which we regard the matters raised, he will accept that we should attach sufficient weight to the advice of the secretary of the department before precipitously rushing to make any final decision.

ENVIRONMENT

Guildford: Fluoride Damage

299. Mr DONOVAN, to the Minister for Environment:

Is the Minister aware of a recent deputation led by members of the Guildford Society, which produced samples of alleged fluoride damaged foliage for his consideration, and can he inform the House of his reaction to this deputation?

Mr HODGE replied:

At the time the deputation came to my office, unfortunately I was not there; I was on my way to Sydney for a meeting with the Federal Minister for Environment. However, I have made some inquiries, and I am reliably informed that the damaged vegetation, which was provided in a symbolic protest and delivered to my office by a group of residents from the area, was in fact generously provided by Midland Brick. I am further advised that it was actually cut by an employee of the Midland Brick Co Pty Ltd, from trees within the grounds of Midland Brick.

Mr Lewis: Have you checked that?

Mr HODGE: I have made inquiries, as I said -- the member was not listening -- and my inquiries revealed that the trees were provided by Midland Brick and they were cut from property owned and operated by Midland Brick. I thought that was quite interesting.

Mr Parker: The Minister should take some action about their effluent emissions.

Mr HODGE: Yes, I am going to do that, and I was going to explain to the House that I have decided there should be an overall study done of fluoride levels right throughout the general Swan region. I have written to the proprietor of Midland Brick, Mr New, along with the proprietors of other brick companies in the region, and suggested that they might like to make a contribution towards the cost of funding such a study. I am sure Mr New can be relied upon to react in his usual generous way. I am going to gear the cost of funding the study in relation to the production of the various brickworks, so if Mr New accepts my offer, he will have the pleasure of contributing in a tangible way to a study of the fluoride levels in the general area.

PERTH CITY COUNCIL

Corruption Allegations

300. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Planning:

Has the Minister taken any action as a result of the allegations of corruption that were made specifically against those councillors who are members of the town planning committee of the City of Perth by the member for Perth?

Mr PEARCE replied:

As I understand it, the member for Karrinyup is also the Opposition spokesman on Local Government, and he might alert me if that is not right. In fact, the normal disposition of his shadow Ministry is not well known, and I guess that is appropriate given that shadow Ministers are not exactly famous people themselves. My understanding is that the member is the shadow Minister for Local Government, and if that is the case, he ought to know that any complaints made against the councillors and the way in which they operate in a council come under the purview of the Minister for Local Government -- that is, the Minister for Planning has no capacity to initiate any action at all against any councillors --

Mr Clarko: I asked the Minister whether he had taken any action. He could write to the Minister for Local Government.

Mr PEARCE: -- whatever they might be involved in with regard to planning.

The acting Minister for Local Government, my good friend and colleague the Minister for Health, has initiated that action by instructing the Department for Local Government to initiate an investigation into the claims which were made in Parliament last week by the member for Perth.

Mr Taylor: A day after the claim was made.

Mr PEARCE: Yes, and was well publicised at that time.

With regard to the general question, I have been much on the public record of late -- and certainly before the member raised those allegations -- as saying that one could hardly be surprised that these kinds of allegations surface, given the immense power which is wielded by the Perth City Council, and the fact that the council is elected purely of voluntary members, who have to pay in order to be elected to those positions. Those people are deciding entirely by themselves developmental projects which have price tags which run into hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr Lewis: What's wrong with that?

Mr PEARCE: Well, every other capital city in this country has had to come to grips with the fact that these sorts of allegations emerge under those circumstances, whether they be justified or no. The central business district of a State is a different proposition in planning terms from any other part of a State.

Mr Clarko: Its sheer money scale.

Mr PEARCE: It is the sheer scale of the buildings, it is the cost involved and the potential profit in developmental projects --

Mr Clarko: Do you realise that Observation City in Scarborough cost \$85 million?

Mr PEARCE: Of course I understand that; but the member ought to understand that in the central business district of Perth every block is potentially an observation city or more, and that they are cheek-by-jowl. It is a different situation from the occasional big project which might come in other areas. I have initiated a study of central city planning, and in due course the results of that study will be known.

POLICE FORCE

Corruption: Investigation

301. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

In view of the report in the weekend Press concerning plans to check or combat possible corruption in the Western Australia Police Force, will the Minister give details of his proposal?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

There is no such proposal.

POLICE

Internal Investigations Branch: Confidence

302. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services :

Does he have confidence in the integrity of the members of the police internal investigations branch and of its impartial investigation of complaints referred to it, which investigations are the subject of review, if required, by the Ombudsman?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

Yes.

LORD MAYOR OF PERTH

Premier's Meeting

303. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

(1) Did the Premier meet with the Lord Mayor of Perth, Mr Mick Michael, today?

(2) If yes, did he discuss the statement which was reported in the *Sunday Times* of 22 September in which the Lord Mayor is quoted as saying, in an article headed "It's a Labor Plot, says Lord Mayor" --

I believe I'm being used as a scapegoat for the Government's grand plan to achieve planning power for the total State.

(3) Is the Government in fact planning to achieve planning power for the total State through its amendments to the State Planning Commission Act, copies of which have been circulated to local government?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) to (3) I did meet today at 8.30 am with the Lord Mayor, Crs Rod Evans, Evan Kakulas, and Mick Lee, and with Mr Reg Dawson, who is the City Clerk. We did not discuss the *Sunday Times* article; that was not referred to or raised, but it is a bit strange that the Lord Mayor, Mr Michael, should say that the Labor Party is plotting to remove him when I understood that it was the Liberal Party at the last election that he thought was manoeuvring prior to the election to encourage a candidate to stand against him.

Mr Watt: Did another senior Liberal Party official leak that to you?

Mr Pearce: The Lord Mayor leaked it to us; he was paranoid that the member for Nedlands' father was going to run against him.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Anyway, that was my understanding of the previous situation, but I do not know of any Labor Party discussions about running a candidate for lord mayor. I have not heard anyone raise that except the Lord Mayor himself. I do not know why he would raise that unless he thought it was a defence that was legitimate against some charge that was levelled against him. I suppose whether or not it is the member for Perth making the charges is one thing, but I understand -- and in fact while I do not get to see too much television and the standard of reporting has diminished since those times when I was a reporter, it is true -- I did on the "7.30 Report" one evening see some councillor named Gallagher making the same sort of claims.

I do not know whether Cr Gallagher is a member of the Labor Party, but I do know that one of the members of the delegation said to me today that he thought Gallagher would eventually stand for Parliament. That member of the delegation said to me, "It would not be for your party, Mr Premier."

Mr Lewis: Another senior Liberal source.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: No, it was one of the members of the delegation this morning.

Mr Lewis: You're getting weaker; your credibility is zero.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Well, I might be getting weaker, but I am getting older. I have only ever been a battler of poor stock. But all I can say is that Cr Gallagher was saying these things as well, and I do not know whether his statement is to be discounted because he is not a member of the Labor Party and Dr Alexander is a member of the Labor Party, but I would not discount it for that reason.

Mr Taylor: Wasn't a writ issued against Gallagher?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not sure whether a writ was issued against him or not, and I do not find it of passing interest.

Mr Court: Was your brother Terry at the meeting this morning?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: No, why? My brother Frankie was not at the meeting either; but I tell the member for Nedlands that my brother Frank would make a better Deputy Leader of the Opposition than he would. Mr Conway from the East Cowan division of the Liberal Party was not there either. Does the member for Nedlands know Mr Conway?

In summary, I did have the meeting; the article was not discussed and I have no doubt it was not discussed because, as I have pointed out, it lacked conviction and credibility. As far as the Government is concerned, in the question of planning powers we do not intend to take planning powers for the whole State. I do not know whether we are planning to take planning powers from the whole State; we do not really want them. It is not proposed and it has not been discussed when I have been there.

It is true that we run a fairly democratic operation on this side of the Parliament and the Ministers, unlike in previous times, follow their own leads about different things; but in due course the new planning legislation will come to Cabinet and I will be able to perhaps illuminate the area a bit more for members opposite. However at the moment we are not intending to take planning powers; it is as much as we can do to plan to the next day.

BUILDING SOCIETIES

Life Insurance Policies

304. Mr MARLBOROUGH, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Is it correct that the Department for Consumer Affairs approved a scheme which enabled several building societies to tempt people into life insurance policies by offering cheap building society loans, as reported in *The West Australian* of 15 September and 22 September?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

The comment that the Department of Consumer Affairs approved the scheme is

simply not correct. The only matter referred to the department was the promotional brochure used by the British Building Society in its sales campaign. That was examined by the then legal officer of the department for an opinion as to whether or not it breached section 8 of the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act -- that is, that section dealing with misleading advertising provisions.

At the legal officer's suggestion, the brochure was amended in respect of some of the representations; and the British Building Society was advised that the brochure was "considered to be in order". That was contained in the first story in *The West Australian*. In fact the department offered no comment on the scheme itself, and the society was advised by letter by the department that it could not say in any way that the department gave approval to the scheme and that it is also in breach of the Consumer Affairs Act to suggest that that sort of approval had been given by the department. If anyone publishes or causes to be published that sort of comment saying that the department has approved a particular scheme, they can be liable for an offence under the Act.

PERTH CITY COUNCIL

Corruption Allegations

305. Mr CLARKO, to the Premier:

The Premier a few moments ago stated that certain matters raised by the member for Perth have been referred to the Secretary of the Department of Local Government for an inquiry. What specific allegations were made by the member for Perth that demonstrated that the actions of councillors of the City of Perth necessitated an inquiry?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This matter was referred to the secretary of the department by the Minister who is acting as the Minister for Local Government at present, in the absence of the Minister. I am sorry, but my understanding from the acting Minister is that the substance of the speech made by the --

Mr Taylor: I have in fact asked the department to examine the transcript of what was said.

Mr Clarko: I don't think there are any specific allegations that could possibly measure up to the allegations as reported. I would like to know why you specifically decided to do it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I did not. The acting Minister says that the transcript was referred to the acting Minister. What the member for Karrinyup is saying is that he cannot see the substance that would support the newspaper report.

Mr Clarko: I want the specific reason you had the inquiry. I think you made a general smear.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I suppose it is the same reason that the Leader of the Opposition wants a Royal Commission. I have only asked the secretary of the department. The Leader of the Opposition wants a Royal Commission, so he must have some knowledge.

Mr Clarko: I am asking you to give your specific reasons.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I know.

Mr Clarko: I don't think you have any. I would like the master of tricks to indicate --

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member should not be so dismissive as to call me the master of tricks.

Mr Clarko: I meant rhetorical tricks, not the pea and thimble sort.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The whole transcript has gone over.

Mr Clarko: So you can't give me a specific reason why it has been referred?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The transcript has gone over because of the matters raised.

EDUCATION: SCHOOLS

Remote Areas: Satellite Dishes

306. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Has the Government decided to install satellite dishes in remote schools to afford country school children access to education programmes?

(2) If so, when will the programme be implemented?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) and (2) The Government does hope to have television receiver dishes installed at schools in remote areas. Obviously the programme is not cheap, and the timing of it will be dependent on Budget considerations in the future.

PLANNING: OLD SWAN BREWERY

Development

307. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

The Lord Mayor is reported in the *Sunday Times* of 20 September 1987 as stating that he believed that at his meeting with the Premier today the PCC could resolve the question of the town planning scheme and the old Swan brewery. As a consequence of the Premier's having met with the Lord Mayor this morning were any decisions made relating to the future development of the old Swan Brewery and to the Perth City Council's right to have a say in that planning procedure?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The strict and absolutely accurate and brief answer is no, no decisions were taken. However, I do not believe that the Lord Mayor and the other members of the delegation who called upon me expected me to make decisions. They put a general proposition to me that, firstly, they were not all that enamoured of the Minister for Planning, in a quiet and self-effacing way.

Mr MacKinnon: They are no orphans.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: When I look at the crew opposite it occurs to me that not one of them likes anyone, and it shows in their faces. They do not even like each other.

Mr Crane: I like one of your Ministers.

Mr Pearce: For heaven's sake don't name him!

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If question time is ever televised, "Perfect Match" had better watch it.

The general proposition was that the Government had acted unfairly in the matter of the old Swan brewery and the planning functions involved in the brewery proposal; and that the Government should negotiate with the Perth City Council. The Lord Mayor indicated that the PCC accepted that there should be a boutique brewery at the site with the facilities to make the beer that would be sold at that boutique brewery, but that it should not make -- in his words -- two million gallons of beer, which would be sold by the Brewtech company. They also said that the council accepted that there should be a vintage car museum and a tavern on the site. The Lord Mayor also said, as did Cr Evans, that there was a powerhouse proposal in New South Wales which had involved the investment of a great deal of money in the creation of a very good tourist resort which could be duplicated or at least paralleled at this site.

Mr Parker: A powerhouse museum.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Lord Mayor said that at an informal meeting the members of the town planning committee had reconsidered the offer made to the council to participate with the State Planning Commission in the investigation into the brewery development, and was now of a mind to participate.

I listened to all those things. Marcelle Anderson from the policy secretariat division was there also; she is the daughter of Tom Metaxas, and she will be able to verify all these things. There were no decisions made and that is where we left it, apart from some other general discussion about some other things. But I have never shopped anyone on this side of the House.

TOURISM

Inbound Passengers: Landing Charge

308. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Tourism:

(1) Does the State Government support the Federal Government's intention to introduce a \$5 landing charge for all inbound international passengers?

(2) If so, what does the Government see as its virtues?

(3) If not, what action is the Government taking to persuade the Federal Government not to proceed with its proposal?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1) to (3) I am aware that the Federal Government intends to impose a landing fee on all entries into Australia. I have today written to the Federal Minister for Tourism requesting an explanation of the reason for the introduction of the fee. However, it is important that I point out that during the time of this Federal Government, tourism into Australia has improved considerably. The amount of money the Federal Government has spent on marketing Australia overseas is very significant, and it has been very successful. Regardless of the fee to be imposed, I imagine that no-one on either side of the Chamber would be able to point to any area where the Federal Government has been remiss in encouraging international tourists to visit Australia at an increasing rate every year.

However, I understand that any fee imposed in this way could be a deterrent, and so I have asked the Federal Minister to explain how the money raised would be spent. I would encourage the Federal Government to use it to further market Australia overseas and to encourage more people to come here.
