

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 20 March 1985

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

ENERGY: PETROL

Price Reduction: Standing Orders Suspension

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [2.16 p.m.]: I move, without notice—

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would enable the Minister for Transport to move the following motion:

That this House notes and endorses the Government's decision to request the Federal Government to examine the possibility of petrol price reduction at the next tax summit as a part of its overall taxation reform.

MR MACKINNON (Murdoch—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.17 p.m.]: The Opposition has received no notice of this motion so we have had no time to prepare for it. I recall about a week ago moving a motion of a similar nature and the member who has just moved this motion had the gall to try to put as his argument for the Government's not accepting the motion the fact that the Government had not been given any notice of that motion. At that time, I argued strongly that it was highly improper for the Government to expect us to do that. However, that was the Government's stand.

That is what the Government expected us to do then and now the Government has shown its double standards. There is one law for the Government and another law for others. It has one law for Mr Dowding and for all of its friends and another law for the operation of this Parliament. We are supposed to be abiding by the Standing Orders and by the rules of this House as set by the Government. However, at the first available opportunity the Government has come in here and moved this motion without giving any notice to the Opposition and expects us after listening to the speech by the Leader of the House only days ago, to support this motion. We will be opposing the motion, as the Leader of the House expects us to do.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Leader of the Opposition) [2.19 p.m.]: When, a couple of weeks ago, the Opposition sought, in private members' business on private members' day, to suspend Standing Orders to allow it to debate a motion relating to a matter which the Government knew

to be controversial and relating to a decision made by the Government, the Government refused to allow us the privilege of moving that motion. The issue raised by the proposed motion is of considerable importance and is one that the Opposition would be happy to prepare for and to present a case on to this House.

Is the Leader of the House suggesting that this decision was made only five minutes ago? Why did not the Leader of the House give the Opposition some notice of it as a courtesy, if for no other reason?

Mr Tonkin: The way you behave, you expect courtesy! You break every agreement. At no time have we said that we would give you notice of this.

Mr HASSELL: The Leader of the House has no answer. He has had all morning to give us some notice of this motion. We are not opposed to debating the issue; we are opposed to debating such an important issue which affects the whole community after being given no notice. It seems that what the Government proposes in this matter is along the right lines. However, why were we not given an opportunity to consider the matter? If a ministerial statement is to be presented, we should be given a copy of that statement in advance.

The situation is entirely different from that which applied when the Opposition sought to suspend Standing Orders a couple of weeks ago, because all the material, facts and knowledge were already in the hands of the Government and it was an issue which the Government already knew was highly contentious. Here we have an issue that may not be at all contentious between the two sides, but the Opposition may wish a proper input to the debate. The sole ground of the Opposition's objection is the lack of a simple, basic courtesy that would have allowed the Opposition a proper input to a debate on a matter which is of considerable importance. Indeed, there may be no disagreement between the two sides as to the need for some action.

It is a smart trick on the part of the Government to come along and do this and it has been clearly done with malice aforethought on the part of the Minister and the Leader of the House. It is indicative of the attitude of the Government and of the Minister.

However, let it be noted clearly that our opposition to suspend Standing Orders at this time is based purely on a lack of opportunity for the Opposition to make an effective contribution to this debate, a debate which ought to take place in this House and one in which the Opposition would be delighted to take part; even a couple of hours' notice would have allowed that opportunity.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [2.25 p.m.]: The National Party supports this motion for the very reason that whenever there has been a motion to suspend Standing Orders it has been very rare that the National Party has been consulted. In respect of every debate in which we have had to take part the National Party members have had no time to prepare their contribution.

Among the members of the Opposition there is enough ability to debate this particular issue. They will be able to make a meaningful contribution to the debate provided the motion to suspend Standing Orders is carried.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [2.26 p.m.]: I think the public have a right to question the sincerity of the Opposition in adopting the position it adopts in respect of this motion and using as a defence to this position the allegation that the Government criticised the Opposition for not consulting with it about its intention to suspend Standing Orders. If that is not the pot calling the kettle black, I do not know what is!

What the Leader of the Opposition said really amounts to his admitting publicly that on a matter of this importance he is not prepared or able to debate the substance of the motion. That is all—it is not a controversial political motion the Government is seeking to move. It is not something that should involve a great deal of political to-ing and fro-ing. It is simply a clear statement about a belief we should all share in this being firstly a matter of importance and secondly a matter that could quite rightly be considered by the tax summit.

The Government is not criticising the Opposition and there is nothing critical in the motion that the Government is moving that seeks to detract from the Opposition.

Apart from the lack of preparedness there is absolutely no reason that this matter cannot be considered by the Parliament on the basis that it is an important matter of great concern to the public that needs to be consigned for consideration by the tax summit as quickly as possible.

Where is the political controversy? What plans does the Opposition have that makes it want to oppose a debate on this matter? The Opposition can raise the matter itself when it wants to and it can ask questions, as it did yesterday evening, about this matter. However, why is it running from a debate that does not criticise the Opposition in any way and which certainly reflects public concern about a pricing mechanism that is causing an increase in the cost of fuel to the people of this State? Why is the Opposition not prepared to debate the motion?

The Government is not preventing the Opposition from taking whatever action it thinks appropriate tomorrow or the next time that the Parliament meets. It is confusing to the Government to have a situation in which the Opposition will refuse to debate a matter on some point of principle that was contradicted by its own actions and attitudes when it moved to suspend Standing Orders about a week ago. The Opposition made its attitude perfectly clear when it moved to suspend Standing Orders and it told the Government that it had no right, and nor should it, to expect any notice from the Opposition. That was said time and time again by the Leader of the Opposition, by his deputy, and by other members of the Opposition.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition can squirm as much as he likes but he is trying to prevent the debate proceeding in this House because he is not prepared for it. If that is what he wants, it is up to him, but what he cannot deny are his own words which were, "The Government has neither the right, nor should it expect the courtesy of being told about the Opposition's plans to suspend Standing Orders". If that is good enough for the Opposition on a highly contentious political matter, the Government can follow the Opposition's lead on a matter about which the Opposition should take no objection.

The Government is putting before the Parliament a perfectly proper motion that simply seeks to have considered by the tax summit, when it is held, the question of the price of petrol and the mechanism by which that price is set. There is absolutely nothing but the public interest reflected in the motion. The motion does not attack or criticise the Opposition and there is every reason that the Parliament should agree to suspend Standing Orders.

MR PETER JONES (Narrogin) [2.30 p.m.]: The Premier has blatantly and severely misrepresented the case. To begin with he was not prepared to acknowledge that on the second occasion on which the Opposition sought the suspension of Standing Orders, he was notified by letter and he misconstrued that situation and turned it around. In this present situation the Premier seeks to entirely misrepresent our concern regarding the subject. The Premier is asking the House to support the Government's decision which in effect will delay consideration of a very important subject for a considerable number of months. The problem relating to the price of fuel is a problem of today, not a matter to be discussed some months hence.

The **SPEAKER**: The member cannot discuss that subject.

Mr PETER JONES: We are discussing whether Standing Orders should be suspended; the Premier seeks our concurrence to the suspension of Standing Orders to allow discussion on a subject that we do not want to support in the terms of the motion put forward by the Leader of the House. If the Government wants bipartisan support for this important issue—as indeed it should—it should have proposed, upon the suspension of Standing Orders, that we seek more positive action a hell of a lot sooner than the tax summit which is several months away. Also at that time this subject will be submerged and snowed under by a range of other issues for discussion. Far more support would have been forthcoming if the Leader of the House and the Minister for Transport, who evidently will have something to say on this matter, were to seek the support of this Parliament for immediate action.

The SPEAKER: The member cannot debate that point. If he wishes to do so he must wait until that motion is before the Chair and then seek to amend it. However, at this stage he must speak to the motion before the Chair.

Mr PETER JONES: I think that the Government should consider rephrasing the motion and in that case the suspension of Standing Orders may be given more careful thought. The House has been asked to suspend Standing Orders so that the Government can say it has taken some action when, in fact, all it has done through the use of its numbers is to make a submission. The motion, which the Speaker will not allow me to discuss in detail, refers to the possibility of something occurring in many months' time. If we had something more substantial and positive in the motion we might think about it. This has been done in a ridiculous way.

Question put.

The SPEAKER: In order that the question may be carried, it is necessary that there be an absolute majority. I shall divide the House.

Division taken with the following result—

Ayes 27

Mr Barnett	Mr Hughes
Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Bridge	Mr McIver
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Pearce
Mr Brian Burke	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Burkett	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Carr	Mr Stephens
Mr Cowan	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr Evans	Mr Troy
Mr Grill	Mr Wilson
Mrs Henderson	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Hodge	

(Teller)

Noes 16

Mr Blaikie	Mr Mensaros
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Old
Mr Cash	Mr Rushton
Mr Clarko	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grayden	Mr Thompson
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Bryce	Mr Laurance
Mr Parker	Mr McNee
Mrs Beggs	Mr Crane
Mr Read	Mr Court
Mrs Watkins	Mr Coyne
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Tubby

The SPEAKER: As there is not an absolute majority of members present and voting in favour of the motion, I declare the question negatived.

Question thus negatived.

MINING AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Tonkin (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 19 March.

MR PETER JONES (Narrogin) [2.38 p.m.]: The Supply Bill debate provides members with an opportunity to canvass various subjects, and I would like to canvass one subject in relation to government and more particularly, the role of Governments.

Within the broad community during the last decade, regardless of which political persuasion has been providing government at State and Federal levels, one of the key concerns has been the question of the role and responsibilities of Governments. A whole range of activities is concerned and particularly the role played by Government instrumentalities and departments in the intervention in economic management; and in activities which are more traditionally the role of the private sector.

Indeed, as we have seen during the time of the present Government in this State, there has been an increasing Government influence within the activities of the private sector. But this is not unique. The previous Federal Government, although it did not pursue the equity participation role taken by the present State Government, engaged in this activity with considerable zest and vigour, which caused more difficulty than it gave help.

It would be agreed that the liberty enjoyed by Australian citizens today is a privilege which is increasingly rare in other societies. I wonder whether the same liberty and the same freedom to complain, to protest, and to question exists in many other parts of the world.

The private enterprise system provides 75 per cent of the jobs in the total work force, but it is coming increasingly under challenge, both from the Government and from within its own ranks, and all too often the business sector fails to question or challenge why the Government is doing something. In recent months a far stronger stance has been taken by the Business Council of Australia in challenging the activities and the economic policies of the Federal Government, but prior to that the private sector went along to the economic summit soon after the Hawke Government was elected and it fell over itself to kowtow to that Government in a way it is now questioning. Wiser heads are beginning to say, "This is not on".

Certainly the activity of the private sector, and the degree of determination and resolve with which it challenges what the Government does, need to be far greater than in the past. By "Government" I do not mean only the activities of Cabinet, and the regulatory role of Government; I am referring also to Government instrumentalities which are often said to be beyond our control; bodies such as the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, which I shall come to in a minute.

We have been told that at the turn of the century Australia was one of the two richest nations on earth, the other being the Argentine. On a *per capita* basis that may well have been so, but both countries have now declined to a position where they are little better than economic mendicants. Where the foreign debt of the Argentine is considered to be very great, at some \$43 billion, the Australian foreign debt is twice as great on a *per capita* basis. Our foreign debt is equivalent in value to the Argentine debt, but on a *per capita* basis is twice as great. We are becoming poorer and poorer. I suppose this is a trend in this part of the world, where we are not able to come to grips with the problem in quite the way we should.

In recent years Tasmania has become more and more economically dependent on the mainland. Some years ago the Federal Government was asked jokingly at an economic conference when a report would be made on whether Tasmania was economically viable. The reply from the Treasurer was, "We have had the report, it has been done, and it is not". In other words, no longer was Tasmania economically able to sustain itself.

The same thing has happened with Australia, and we are becoming more and more dependent on interrelationships with Asian nations. What will happen as we keep going further down the track? Some members of our work force will be going to look for jobs in Asia, just as Asians have for some years now been looking to Australia for jobs.

We seem unwilling to do the kind of jobs, take the kind of initiative, or show the enterprise of which many people from Asia who have come into our community are capable. Some sections of the employment force which Asians occupy, or jobs they are prepared to do, involve initiative and enterprise, but we still have unemployed people.

There is a lesson in that which we seem unwilling or unable to grasp. If we do not grasp it we shall go further down the drain.

Let me give an example. In retrospect, it is considered that the years between 1975 and 1980 were economically good years for Australia. Certainly the years since that time have been less prosperous.

Mr Brian Burke: There are better ones coming up; much better ones.

Mr PETER JONES: I am not talking about what is coming up, I am speaking about the years between 1975 and 1980, which was a period of relative economic prosperity in Australia—relative that is to the situation which prevails today. However, in that period the Australian real gross domestic product *per capita* went up by only seven per cent, whereas in the OECD it went up by 14 per cent. Even when everything was going our way, we could still manage only half the level of growth and prosperity which was attained in the OECD.

In the 15 years to the end of 1984, capitalisation in the private sector—that is not counting the rural sector, only the simple private investment in Australia by private companies—declined by some \$29 billion, or 30 per cent. That is despite whatever additional capitalisation effected within the companies, and despite various share issues and financial borrowings.

We also have a situation where Federal Government spending has gone up till it is now one-third of the GDP, and the total in Australia by all Governments and statutory departments this year is expected to reach 44 per cent. In other words, it is estimated that by the end of this financial year, all other Governments and statutory authorities throughout Australia will chew up some 44 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Relating that to this "role of Government", what is the response? There will be those in this House who will remember the discovery and de-

velopment of Kambalda. At that time it was felt by the Government of the day and by the company which made the discovery that that project should be brought into production as quickly as possible.

The first shipment reached the customer overseas within 18 months of the time of the initial discovery. Indeed, the mill was operating within some 13 months. Does anyone in this Chamber think that that could be achieved today? We know it could not be, because, over the years, Governments have become more interventionist and more restrictive; more inclined to impose rules and regulations; more likely to ask for requirements to be met; and more prone to ask that licences be applied for.

The Western Mining Corporation Ltd. project in Kambalda required that company to deal with only two Government departments. However, in respect of Roxby Downs, since the time of the first discovery of the ore body in 1975, it has been necessary to spend over \$150 million; the company concerned is dealing already with some 32 Government departments in South Australia and Canberra; and the first shipment of concentrates will not take place until 1988-89, 14 years after the first discovery was made. Total expenditure by then on the project is estimated to be \$1.5 billion, and hopefully the company concerned will be able to make a profit.

A few months ago I was told that the Homestake mining company in the United States of America had recently brought into production a gold prospect in California. In order to do so, that company had to obtain no fewer than 267 county, State, and Federal licences and approvals over a great number of years. That was required before that company was able to get such a straightforward mining operation off the ground.

I ask members: Is that the way we wish to go in Australia? It certainly seems as if we are moving in that direction. Regardless of which Government has been in power, we have seen an inevitable trend towards that situation. Recently that trend has accelerated in this State where bodies such as the Public Health Department, the Department of Conservation and Environment, and various other statutory agencies and Government departments have sought to establish for themselves a bigger slice of the action. This has occurred since the last major resource development project was negotiated in this State. In 1981 within a comparative period of a few weeks, on agreement covering a major project, the Argyle diamond mine, was put together; but such a situation could no longer prevail.

Thus it is necessary that we review what all this intervention is doing to economic development. We must ask: Is it affecting our economic situation, to which I have made reference, and will we ever swim out of the mire into which we continue to sink?

A total of 90 per cent of Australia's exports are minerals, metals, and primary agricultural products. The industries involved in producing those goods employ only 11 per cent of the work force. Approximately 6.5 per cent of those are engaged in rural industries and service industries relating to rural production; and approximately 4.5 per cent are involved in the mining and metal industry, which includes not only direct mining, but also minerals processing.

In 1983 Western Mining Corporation commissioned a number of project engineering consultants to advise on whether it was advisable to construct mineral processing plants in Australia. That study examined the comparative costs involved in such developments in Australia, North America, EEC countries, the United Kingdom, and South-East Asia. I shall indicate to members the results of that study, which have been published and referred to on several occasions.

We in Australia might tend to look on the United Kingdom as a high cost-low productivity country—a country which has a very sluggish economy. However, in 1983 the results of the comparative study undertaken of the United Kingdom and Australia gave a 55 per cent cost advantage to the United Kingdom in respect of the construction of a mineral processing plant.

The cost in the United Kingdom for the supply of labour and overheads directly related to labour was \$18.2 million, whereas the comparative figure in Australia was \$44.3 million. In respect of the same plant, the equipment and materials cost in the United Kingdom was \$52.9 million, whereas in Australia it was \$65.2 million. Engineering services and other factors had to be taken into account also, and the final cost for that plant in the United Kingdom was \$85.2 million, compared to a cost of \$131.5 million in Australia.

In his report to Western Mining Corporation, one of the other consultants said—

When reviewing the capital cost of a plant in Australia against Europe, the United Kingdom, South-East Asia, and the United States, Australia is not favourable, particularly under the present conditions.

We are talking about 1983. To continue—

With productivity of approximately 65 per cent, Australia has the same rating as a developing third world country. Our con-

struction inflation rate is approximately four times that of other countries under consideration.

Those are the countries to which I have referred. To continue—

It costs approximately 70 per cent more to build a plant in Australia compared to the US, Europe, and Singapore and approximately 30 per cent more than a plant in Malaysia.

I shall quote from comments made by another engineering consultant who also reported to the same company in connection with that study. This consultant had experience with chemical plant construction. The comparative figures were applied to various types of processing plants and this consultant's comments relate to a specific chemical plant. He said—

Australian productivity is down 40 per cent on European levels, mainly because of the greater number of trades assistants employed in Australia. However for civil work, electrical work, structural steel work our productivity is down by 10 per cent.

In other words, the penalty was only 10 per cent in relation to those areas. To continue—

Across the board, for major chemical plants, a 25 per cent cost penalty for Australian construction is a standard rule of thumb.

I suggest that what Australia is really looking at—indeed, what we are all looking at, because it is not just a matter for the present Government in this State—is that, as a nation, we are fast becoming what I might term a “supplier of last resort”; that is, Australia is the last resort for those who seek to invest in particular companies or to develop a particular project.

That does not apply to everything; but as a broad rule of thumb we appear to have become a supplier of last resort in an area where competition is very real. We have a situation where iron ore companies in this State will invest in mineral downstream processing overseas rather than doing it right here. That is the situation right now. Surely it is time for the Government to consider what has gone wrong and, more particularly, what it needs to do about the problem.

I come back, therefore, to this question of the role of Government. Surely we must accept in the first instance that, in many ways, Governments have interfered where they should not have, and they have not been strong where they should have been.

I mentioned that one of those areas was the arbitration system. What has happened in this country is that elected Governments have completely forsaken any responsibility they had for the industrial arbitration system. Either they have put it in the too hard basket or they have just said that it was far better for someone else to bear the taint of what happens in industrial disputations and the need to arrive at industrial decisions. For whatever reason, the result is that the irresponsibility of industrial tribunals has wreaked havoc on our international economic competitiveness.

We have had a situation where determinations which are unrealistic have been made. They have created an expectation where anybody who applies for something will get something. The more one applies for, the more anarchy one threatens if one does not get something, then the more one will get. In other words, what has happened too often, particularly in the Federal arbitration system, is this: That particular tribunal has in fact sought to make determinations which have an immediate effect upon the cost and wage structure in this country, rather than determining whether it should make a decision at all, or whether it should ignore the claim.

We have a situation at the present time where the Government in this State has chosen to support a redundancy case before the State Industrial Commission, regardless of the cost that will mean to industry as a whole, to employers and employees. No-one will gain. There will be a further erosion of employment, but more particularly, there will be a further increase in costs. Those costs have been estimated and I do not wish to waste time going over them again. There will be an increase in costs, all of which will further erode the international competitiveness of those industries which comprise 90 per cent of our exports. That will be felt particularly in this State, where the export economy is the wave on which we ride, because there is no manufacturing economy, thank God, like that which prevails in New South Wales or, more particularly, in Victoria, where we are in fact paying to support that manufacturing economy with tariffs and various other protections.

In 1909 the first President of the Federal Arbitration Court, Mr Justice Higgins, said—

It would be better for an employer to go out of business rather than pay his employees less than the fixed rate.

If one really thinks about it, that lunacy has been perpetrated ever since, because in the 76 years since the first President of the Federal Arbitration

Court made that comment, that same situation has prevailed.

Regardless of the cost to industry, regardless of the effect that a determination may have on the employment of those whom it was seeking to protect, decisions have gone on being made beyond the reach of the elected Government. Governments have retained Statutes which have allowed this situation. In other words, no-one has been prepared to bite the bullet at State or Federal level in order to bring to heel and make more accountable and responsible a system which has a great deal to answer for, and which has brought Australia to a situation where it is, as I indicated at the commencement of my remarks, becoming far and away a supplier of last resort, and a country which is very close to being the economic mendicant of its Asian neighbours.

How about this for what I have suggested is complete lunacy? In 1983 the Federal court made a major decision—an approach had been put to it in a national wage case supported by the Federal Government of the day—which, it admitted in the judgment when it was handed down, was a determination which would increase unemployment, and increase costs and inflationary pressures! Yet it still went ahead and made the determination, no doubt based on the theory that one has to give something, one has to do something.

That was at a time when the Australian nation was seeking a continuation of the wage pause which had been introduced by the previous Federal Government. It was seeking a little more sanity when it came to the measurement of productivity because our competitiveness had been so seriously eroded. Those people who comprise the Federal industrial bench actually made a determination knowing, because they acknowledged it, that it would increase unemployment, increase costs, and increase inflationary pressures. Indeed, by any assessment whatsoever that was totally irresponsible, and it was little better than financial vandalism to make a determination in the way that they did.

One can only ask why! Further, in their determination they gave a reason; having announced their determination and having acknowledged the defects in it, they said—

To do otherwise was not sustainable industrially.

In other words, unless they did something, there would be industrial disruption. That places the Federal industrial bench in no better a position than that in which this Government finds itself, where this Government has chosen to quash a court case against a union official. One of the reasons given by the Attorney General was that he

was aware of industrial disruption which would occur if the proceedings continued.

What happened in this State was scandalous, and here again we have a Government appointed body operating under a Statute saying that not to do something would, on its own admission, increase unemployment, costs and inflation, and it even said that to do otherwise was not sustainable industrially.

Is that the role of government? Is it its role to stand aside and allow such a body to make a determination which further eroded employment levels and further increased costs and inflation? That decision was made without any economic accountability whatever.

Now we have the tax summit, and I feel sure the Federal Government already wishes it had never heard of it. It has been seen as a nice gimmick but already it is becoming a tiger caught by the tail because leaks are being tested to ascertain what the public will bear, and all sorts of comments are being made about what this or that faction of the Labor Party will accept. This faction might want more welfare handouts, and another faction might not want any indirect taxes. Members can check this out in the newspaper every day, and see what this or that faction of the Labor Party does or does not want. I am quite happy to comment on this matter. The whole thing is a farce. It is ridiculous because the exercise is simply creating another little circus in order to try to soften up the community in regard to new ways of raising revenue, because we need to have a huge financial cake to service the Government's borrowings of the last two years which have now risen to a point where borrowings exceed money spent on defence. All the other matters which were being discussed earlier pale into insignificance compared to the cost of government, which means the cost of borrowings and all those things which are now having to be paid for. That is why the cost of government has now increased to 44 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product this year.

This is simply an exercise in trying to use the Government's revenue in a way whereby the Government will only have to say, "We did it because the tax summit said we could, we should or we must". Nowhere have we heard any suggestion by the Federal Government about holding a summit—if that is the fashionable thing to hold—into lowering the cost of government. I certainly have not heard the Government ask, "Can we review the role of government? Do we need to have particular departments?"

Members have heard comments made about Senator Walsh's efforts to cut back individual

Minister's demands for their respective departments, but nowhere have members heard, for example, that the Federal department of education will be abolished—of course, it should be, because it has nothing to do—and that is a case in point.

For some years there was agitation between certain States that the Federal department of education should be abolished because it had no statutory responsibility to run an education system except in the Australian Capital Territory. It has no function to perform in regard to education in schools except for various functions it has been given to justify its existence. One thing it does do is to assist eligible applicants for the TEAS allowance, but that function does not require a department of this size. It does not provide the Commonwealth funding for schools. That is handled by the Schools Commission, by separate bodies, or statutory authorities. There is no justification for the continued operation of the Federal department of education. This situation has existed for years because of the way the department is currently constituted. One thing that any summit could do is to look at reducing the cost and role of government because 90 per cent of that department's functions are duplicated.

Similarly, what are the functions of the Department of Trade and Resources, as it used to be called?

It operates a trade commissioner service, which is laughable, and various other devices for duplicating the work done by the States. It has no positive role at all.

This morning I had breakfast with some executives from the iron ore industry, and I asked them whether they could tell me any positive contribution that the Department of Trade and Resources, as it used to be called, had made to the iron ore industry in the last decade. The answer was that it had made "no contribution". They could give me plenty of examples against that department, and the Burke Government in the current iron ore price negotiations in Japan is wanting to "dip its oar" in.

Why is it a justified role for government in the private enterprise economy to go and tell Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. and Mt. Newman Mining Co. Pty. Ltd. how much they should get for their iron ore? The market-place dictates the price. We know of the absurdity some years ago when the price of alumina on the world market was somewhat depressed, probably nearly to the extent that it currently is. Because many of Alcoa's contract customers were taking smaller quantities than would otherwise be the case be-

cause of the lower price of aluminium, Alcoa was seeking to keep its plant and its refineries in WA operating intensively as possible; it was seeking to sell alumina on the spot market—in other words, at whatever price it could get and was prepared to accept. However, the Federal Government of the day intervened through its bureaucratic mechanism in the Department of Trade and Resources at that time by saying, "We need to approve the price or we will not provide an export licence". The situation was that Alcoa would have an order. An overseas company would express an interest in buying alumina at the spot price—not under a contractual arrangement, only so many thousand tonnes—and Alcoa was then required to go to the Federal Government to see whether it would be allowed to accept the price. Some weeks elapsed while that was going on and inevitably, because of the depressed situation around the world, many other suppliers were willing to provide the product and the customer went somewhere else in order to finalise the deal. That situation was absolutely scandalous. I was Minister at the time and when I approached the then Federal Minister I was told that we had a "national responsibility" and we had to act "in the national interest" in anything we did. That is a load of rubbish because in this case it meant the products could not be sold even at a price Alcoa was prepared to accept. The plants shut down just as the alumina plants that Alcoa had in this State have now shut down to some degree and are producing less than they were some months ago.

Consequently, jobs, export income, royalties to this State, and income tax and company tax to the Federal Government were lost. Surely it would have been in the national interest, if one must use such a ridiculous phrase in this context, to have kept that tonnage going, to have kept the company operating, to have kept those jobs in place, and to have kept people working, particularly when the company was prepared to bite the bullet and accept lower returns for a short period in order that in the long term there was some chance the new customers it was attracting and the orders it was getting at the lower price would persist and the resultant jobs and so on could be maintained.

That is a disgraceful situation. Yet, this so-called expression, "the national interest" is used not as a reason, but as an excuse for a considerable amount of Government intervention or as an excuse for the Government becoming involved in something it need not meddle in at all.

We have seen in this State the spread of government increase dramatically. Why should the Government in this State want to compete with the private sector? Why should it want to be tell-

ing the private sector what it can and cannot do? Why should the Government wish to become involved in what returns a company can accept or not accept? It is not even constitutional for it to do so! However, leaving that aside for a moment, there is no justification for any intervention whatsoever.

This amounts to one thing: The Government is simply finding jobs for people to do. This action is an attempt to justify and finance a role for government which is far greater than it need be. It would be far better if the Government were to say, "We don't need to be doing this; we don't need to duplicate what has been done".

The ambition of Senator Walsh, when he held his previous ministerial portfolio—presumably he still retains the same interest and philosophical endeavour—was to remove from Western Australia the control of the offshore exploration industry, the administration and responsibility for which was won for WA with some difficulty. Notwithstanding the constitutional position that might prevail, the management of exploration and fishing activities off Western Australia is carried out by the Western Australian Government in accordance with an agreed policy. Where the petroleum and submerged lands' legislation is concerned, the Federal Government and the State Government statutorily agreed on a policy which was applied.

It is administered under this policy, but the State does the work. However, what is now happening, since the advent of the Hawke Government, is that a number of public servants in Canberra, interfere with this. It is an unnecessary duplication, as well as a much heavier influence in the role of government.

I come back to the same point: Surely the time has come, not just to find ways of financing the role which governments over the years have taken unto themselves, but also, and far more realistically, to start a review of Governments and some of the things they are doing.

The Government should abandon or get out of a whole range of activities, as well as scraping a whole range of departments it has embarked on, and for which there is no need whatsoever.

MR TRETHOWAN (East Melville) [3.24 p.m.]: I wish to speak on a matter which I believe is of considerable concern and of extreme importance to this State. I make it quite clear that the reason the Opposition did not agree to the Government's request for the suspension of Standing Orders this afternoon was not that we were not prepared to debate the topic, but that we were playing by the Government's rules. On 6 March, when the Opposition moved to suspend Standing Orders,

the Premier said that insufficient notice had been given. The Premier opposed the suspension of Standing Orders on that occasion because of the lack of courtesy involved in not allowing the Government time to consider the question that was to be raised. That is the reason the Opposition opposed the suspension of Standing Orders this afternoon. If the Government cannot count its members, that is not the fault of the Opposition.

Mr Brian Burke: Why do you keep apologising? If you do not want to debate the matter you need not.

Mr TRETHOWAN: I am about to debate the matter now. At the commencement of my speech I explained why the Opposition was not prepared to debate the matter on the basis put forward by the Government.

I asked a question without notice last night of the Premier. I do not know whether he miscalculated, but he said he could answer that question by referring to the Press release of the Minister for Transport. He did so, and read most of that Press release to the Parliament. During the course of his answer the Premier said that he would ensure that the member for East Melville received a copy of the Press release. I have not yet received a copy; the only copy I have is of the transcript of the question without notice which contained the part of the Press release which was read to the House. Why? I suggest the Government knew at that time that that matter would be brought forward in the House today and that the Government would move to suspend Standing Orders to debate it. It was clear the Premier jumped the gun by using the Press release which was designed for this afternoon. When considering the motion the Government proposed to move one realises it is a typical example of the Government's response to the serious questions about the oil industry.

The last time we had this sort of response from Government members was when they were in Opposition. The then Opposition carried out a stunt in relation to fuel prices. It allowed people to believe that it would keep fuel prices down in this State, if it were elected to Government, and that attitude was stated quite clearly.

I will quote from a letter the Premier—who was then the Leader of the Opposition—wrote to the *Road Patrol*, the journal of the RAC in this State. He said—

Retail petrol prices can be brought down by two to three cents a litre if the State Government is prepared to take on the multinational oil companies who manipulate the wholesale prices to the retailer to suit them—

selves, without any consideration for equity or fairness.

A State Labor Government will set maximum prices for fuel to bring under control unfair price discrimination which drives up fuel prices.

Immediately after the election, in order to fulfil that promise, the Premier attacked multinationals because they were making excessive profits at the expense of the people of Western Australia. He introduced the unfair prices legislation which was simply a big political stunt. Nothing really happened.

Let us consider the logic of the arguments of this Government. During the time in which the Government said it would attack the multinationals because it believed they were ripping off the people of Western Australia, the largest multinational operating in this State was operating a refinery which provided jobs for hundreds of Western Australians, but made a \$90 million loss. That is an example of how tough the market has been at all levels in the oil industry and how tough it has been for the oil companies.

That was a political stunt by the then Opposition to get itself into Government. It enticed people by saying it would do something about the price of fuel. The then Opposition knew the price of fuel rested primarily with the Federal Government decision in that regard.

Mr Brian Burke: Not entirely.

Mr TRETOWAN: The Premier said, "Not entirely". That is the point I will come back to, because that is the point where the Government has made itself vulnerable.

That stunt was seen to be a stunt by most people only a month or so after the legislation was introduced because it did not produce the required effect. Competition in the marketplace kept prices down—competition, the thing which we on this side of the House have always advocated and which we said to the Premier when he introduced the legislation was the essence of providing the lowest cost product to the consumers.

The Premier sought at that time to produce a political stunt, and now because the people of Western Australia are beginning to see the real problems they will face with the current dramatic rise in fuel prices, the Premier is again endeavouring to produce a political stunt. He is doing so by shifting the onus of responsibility and attention from what the State and Federal Governments can do to the Federal Government's biggest stunt—the tax summit—which people in business are already seeing as a stunt. It is a typical ALP Government stunt to draw attention

away from the real issues and endeavour to not have to face the difficulty of making decisions as a Government to help people in need.

That is what the suspension of Standing Orders this afternoon was supposed to be about—the Government being able to pull off a political stunt. The motion it proposed to move was very limited; it only talked about the price of petrol. It did not mention the price of distillate, and I will illustrate later that that is the more important price because it affects fundamentally the way the economy of this State operates. The price of petrol is important because we all feel it every time we go to a service station to fill our cars.

But we feel it more when jobs are lost because our primary industries are under threat. Jobs are lost because people cannot afford costs outside the metropolitan area which are caused by the cost of transport being so high. These matters are directly affected by the cost of distillate, but that was not included in the motion. It was clearly a stunt.

Why have we seen the dramatic rise in petrol prices over the last two months, which we suspect we will continue to see until at least the middle of the year? The prime reason is the effect of the import parity pricing policy which Federal Governments have had, I think, for well over 10 years. That policy was introduced during the time in which an international cartel took over the selling of crude on world markets. The OPEC nations got together and decided they were going to fix the price artificially because they controlled most of the supply of crude oil on world markets.

It was essential at the time that we in Australia protect the reserves we had and encourage exploration for new reserves. It was essential that we did not squander the fuel we had by its being below the price which most other countries would have to pay for crude. We had to learn to be fuel-efficient and value the cost of energy. That is why the policy was introduced and the basic principle of import parity pricing is still valid. Very few people have suggested it should be challenged.

What is at stake is not whether locally produced crude coming into our refineries should be at a price which approximates the world price, but how we determine the world price. Is the world price to be fixed to that of Saudi Arabian light crude as it has been until now, a price determined by the cartel which operated until the demand for fuel reduced, the supply increased, and the cartel found it could not control the supply to the degree it had in the early and late 1970s, or is that price to be fixed to a more realistic world market price? That is the essence of the argument that the world market price would be more representative if we

took the spot price, for instance, of the London and New York commodities markets as a realistic assessment of the current world market price. If we took an average over a period of time we would end up with a world market price on which we could base our internal fuel costs. That would be a far lower cost at present than that based on Saudi Arabian light crude.

That is a technical argument which many people find difficult to understand. They know the import parity price has been affected by the drop in the Australian dollar, but they are not always sure why that should be so.

The reason is that international oil prices are quoted in US dollars and the US dollar has been extremely strong, partly because the US economy has been seen as strong. When the Federal Government took the option of floating our dollar, it found a level at which it was valued on the international market. That value has come down dramatically in the last two or three months. When we buy with our dollars, particularly in US dollar equivalents, we have to pay more of our dollars to get the same quantity. The cost of a barrel of imported oil has gone up in terms of Australian dollars. That is why we are facing fundamentally such a major rise in the cost of our fuel.

It is wrong for the State Government to say, "Look, we can wait a couple of months; it is not that serious. Let us put it back until we go to the tax summit. That is a nice thing we can do; we can take it as a submission to the summit". In that time the cost will go up again. It is envisaged that by the middle of the year we will be looking at 60c a litre for petrol out of the bowser in service stations. That is as a result of inaction by the State and Federal Governments.

It is important that something be done now. It is important that this State Government take action on the factors under its control and make representations now to the Federal Government to do something immediately about the oil pricing policy, and not put it off for some stunt which many in the business community say should not be about taxation but about Government costs.

It is wrong that a Government should put off addressing itself to the revenue it raises from fuel taxes until it reaches the summit, because a real question exists as to whether it needs to raise that amount of money and whether it is putting at risk many industries dependent on fuel as the prime energy for their operations.

The economy of this State depends largely on our primary industries. Those industries are agricultural, including pastoral operations, fishing,

and mining. The mining industry is affected by fuel price rises because of the cost of transport and in many cases the cost of running power stations to produce electricity to operate the mines. There is also the cost of fuel for the mining companies' vehicles. In the case of the mining industry the increasing fuel cost has been significantly outweighed by a better market price in Australian dollars for its products. The mining industry's fuel costs are not as high in relation to its product as is the case with agriculture. Although the mining industry has been affected the effect has been outweighed by the increase in market prices.

It is also true that the agricultural industry can sell its products more competitively on the international market because the Australian dollar is at such a low level. However, its internal cost structure is such and it is so dependent on fuel that its costs are outstripping the returns it gets from the world market. That is particularly true for those operating in the grain industry. It has been said that, in the middle to marginal wheatlands, the farmer requires at least four bags of grain an acre to equal the cost of putting in the crop.

Mr Burkett: What did your Government do about this since 1976—since the rot started?

Mr TRETOWAN: Much action has been taken. The point I am trying to make is that it costs four bags of grain to plant a crop. A farmer is lucky if he reaps a five-bag crop in a reasonable season. If he does not get a five-bag crop he is lucky to break even and, in the past few years, many farmers have found themselves unable to cover the cost of planting a crop.

Farmers must cope with fuel costs, the cost of imported chemicals, which are a primary part of agriculture, the cost of transporting products to and from the railhead or port, and the cost of interest on servicing capital debt. Of those costs, fuel is the major factor. An average wheat and sheep farmer will use up to 30 000 litres of distillate a year in his on-farm operations. A wheat farmer will use up to 60 000 litres or more a year. That is a significant fuel usage and represents a high cost to producers.

The Federal Government has introduced indexation of the fuel excise. That indexation occurred at a time when fuel tax was around 7c a litre. At that time also, a rebate of 7c a litre was given to primary producers for fuel used in on-farm operations. That rebate was pegged at 7c a litre but the excise was indexed. Even though the 7c rebate was pegged from the last Federal Budget, there is now a significant difference between the amount of excise charged and the amount of the rebate being allowed to the

agricultural community. That is an example of the attitude of this Federal Government to the needs of the primary producers. The difference is 2.3c a litre. One cent of that is 50 per cent of the bi-centennial road tax and 1.3c is a part of the excise duty that is not rebated.

This State Government should be asking the Federal Government to increase the rebate because that cost will be faced by every person putting in a large grain crop this year. If we have another good season, a large grain crop will be the only way that some farmers will get themselves out of their current economic plight and out of the hardship they are experiencing.

My other major concern relates to the fuel tax which is being used for the building of roads. The Federal Government may not grant enough money this year to this State to meet the needs of maintaining and building our roads. There have been strong indications that our road grants this year will be curtailed greatly in spite of the fact that we use more fuel per head of population than the other States of Australia because we have more roads per head of population. We depend on road transport to shift goods over long distances. However, the proposal seems to be that Western Australia is to have a reduced portion of the cake. Our major industries, mining and agriculture, will be hit again because we will not receive as much money from the fuel tax as we should receive to maintain our road system.

That is an example of the actions of this Federal Government and it is an example also of the State Government not being prepared to take those matters to the Federal Government. Those actions will affect our agricultural industry by May of this year when the farmers start putting in their crops.

Mr Grill: Don't be ridiculous. If there is a campaign, it has been initiated by this Government; you are part of that campaign—probably unwittingly, but you are a part nonetheless. If you do not think that campaign has been waged outside this State you are ignorant of the facts.

Mr TRETHOWAN: I am not saying that this State Government is not making representations to the Federal Government on road funding. I am saying that the Government now wishes to forestall the matters involved in the motion until the tax summit. That is another example of the Government not being prepared to tackle the other side of the question which is not related just to the funds we get back, but also to the funds that we lose.

Mr Brian Burke: I told you last night, in answer to your question, that I made representations to the Prime Minister. Didn't you listen?

Mr TRETHOWAN: I heard the Premier say that last night, but today he said he was putting these matters off until the tax summit. Why did the Premier not say that this House should take immediate action on this issue? The Premier did not say that. He is content to have these matters lost in a tax summit. That is a big Labor Party stunt. The Labor Party does not consider the tax summit is a serious issue.

I accept the point made by the Minister for Transport because we agree on the amount of road funding which should be provided for this State. We agreed about that in a debate last year. I know the Minister has made representations on behalf of the State. However, I am saying that the same Federal Government that will not take action in regard to fuel taxes and restructuring the import parity pricing levels is turning against this State and cutting back the funds we are likely to receive for our roads. That is a classic example of the way in which the needs of Western Australia are not being considered. The needs of primary producers are being ignored by the Federal Government. We will have to put pressure on the Federal Government continuously if attention is to be brought to the kind of issues I have raised today. We will not get anywhere by taking the kind of initiative this Government sought to take earlier this afternoon.

The tax summit is a stunt at which the Labor Party will be able to lose many of the difficult issues confronting it. The community now understands that more and more. It is a stunt to take responsibility off the Federal Government in the name of consensus. That will not happen. There will not be consensus this time. We should be continually attacking the Federal Government on the cost of fuel and on the road grants we receive so that we can achieve maximum benefit for this State.

Transport is of prime importance to the operation of this State. We have the largest geographical area in Australia and we have the greatest length of roads. In fact, it is estimated that up to 30 per cent of the cost of all goods in this State relates to transport.

The increase in the price of distillate was something which was ignored in the Government's proposed motion. That increase will have a significant effect on the cost of consumer goods in this State because of the long haul from the Eastern States to Perth. It will cost even more when those goods have to be transhipped to other regional centres in this State. The cost of transport will be borne primarily by those people who live outside the metropolitan area. It will be an additional cost paid by many people who already suffer a cost burden in excess of that experienced by people in

the metropolitan area. It will also be an additional cost borne by the people in Perth as against the cost borne by people purchasing the same goods in Melbourne and Sydney.

It is something about which this Government should be fighting with the Federal Government because it affects every person in this State and it means that the people in the Perth metropolitan area and the country areas are being disadvantaged because of distance.

Mr Gordon Hill: We wanted to fight it and put a unanimous point of view from this Government to the Federal Government, but you rejected that proposal.

Mr TRETHOWAN: The member for Helena has missed the point. The Opposition rejected the motion for the suspension of Standing Orders because it was playing to the Premier's rules of 6 March. The Government lost the vote because the member for Helena could not count.

Mr Gordon Hill: That is not true.

Mr TRETHOWAN: It is true that the Government lost the vote. It needed a constitutional majority and the Government did not have sufficient members for a constitutional majority even though the National Party voted with it. One suspects that the Government was lulled into a false sense of security, perhaps knowing in advance that the National Party would vote with it. The Opposition did not want to debate that motion at that time because it wanted to work by the Premier's rules. However, I have shown that I was prepared to debate the substance of the motion as I am doing now.

The Government's proposed motion was a poor excuse for what should be done. It is a poor excuse for putting something off until tomorrow which should be done today and it was a poor excuse for attempting a political stunt. It is typical of the attitude of the Government—when in Opposition and now in Government—in relation to fuel prices.

It is very important that we pursue this matter; and, believe me, the Opposition will pursue the matter on behalf of the people of this State who operate private motor vehicles because they will bear a significant increase in the cost of fuel. It has been forecast that the cost of fuel will rise by 10c per litre by the middle of this year which will be before the tax summit is held, yet this Government is prepared to let that happen without taking any action. Is that the action of a responsible Government which should be fighting for the interests of the people in this State?

The Opposition is prepared to continue pressing the point in respect of distillate. The transport and

primary industries depend on distillate and if the price of distillate increases dramatically our transport costs and the cost to the agricultural sector will also increase dramatically.

We all know the difficult time that is being experienced by the agricultural industry at present. Members of the Government know that many farmers are facing very difficult times and that many of our grain-growing areas, even though they have had a good season, will be facing a difficult situation. They need assistance now and they need the cost burden of fuel removed before they have to use thousands of litres of fuel with which to sow their crops by the middle of this year. However, the State Government is prepared to wait until after the crops have been sown before it takes this matter to the Federal Government. The Government does not care about grain growers and it is prepared to wait until the tax summit irrespective of the effect of the cost of fuel on the grain growers who will have to buy millions of litres of distillate. This Government should make representations to the Federal Government to reduce the price of distillate now.

The State Government and the Federal Government do not care about the rural industry.

I have demonstrated that it was not that the Opposition was not prepared to debate this matter today—it has a lot to say about it and it will continue to say it—but that it wanted to ensure that the rules of this House were observed and that the rules made by the Premier were observed. If the Government cannot count numbers on its side to ensure a constitutional majority when it wants to debate a particular matter, the fault lies with the Government and not with the Opposition. The Opposition plays by the rules.

The Opposition condemns this Government and the Federal Government for their lack of action in respect of this matter. It also condemns this Government for seeking to postpone this matter and for seeking to take no action until after the tax summit. It is merely a stunt to get off this Government's plate a difficult situation which it will have to face because it will have to stand up to its masters in Canberra; and that will not be easy.

For once, the Government should stand up for the people of this State. The agricultural, mining and fishing industries will be affected and if they cannot meet the export costs for the goods which they are producing they will not be able to make a profit when they sell on world markets. It will be the people of Western Australia and our children who will miss out because the economy will take a downturn if the mining and agricultural industries are ignored.

This Government is not prepared to do anything about this matter. It does not care about the interests of this State or about jobs for young people in this State. It is not prepared to fight for the primary industry.

MRS BUCHANAN (Pilbara) [3.58 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to place on record the exceptionally bright prospects we face in the Pilbara.

The iron ore industry is now emerging from the downturn which it experienced over recent years and the prospects of a Chinese involvement with the new Hamersley mine at Channar are becoming closer to reality every day. The announcement by the Minister for Minerals and Energy recently that the second stage of the North-West Shelf gas project should be sealed by 30 June is certainly welcome news, as is the Federal Government's decision to forego royalties on the domestic phase to ensure the future of the project is secure. It is exceptionally good news for the people in my electorate. In fact, community leaders immediately welcomed the positive action of both Governments. They are extremely pleased that at long last the date has been set for the finalisation of the contracts.

I also place on record my appreciation of the exceptionally diligent attention that the Minister for Minerals and Energy has paid to matters which, of course, are of importance not only to my electorate, but also to people in other parts of the State and, in fact, all Australians.

As well as his efforts in negotiations involved with the Channar iron ore development and the second phase of the North-West Shelf gas project, the Minister for Minerals and Energy has found time to make regular visits to the Pilbara to personally chair the newly formed Iron Ore Industry Consultative Council. The council has met within the last couple of weeks. I was fortunate in being able to attend part of the meeting, and I must say that at this stage the council is proceeding extremely well. The council has begun to consolidate and it provides an excellent forum for the sharing of opinions between the company, unions and Government representatives who sit on the council.

The latest information from the most recent council meeting is certainly music to my ears as it is to the ears of community leaders in the Pilbara. Last year's total shipment of iron ore was 91 million tonnes compared with the previous highest level of 86 million tonnes in 1974. Things have certainly gone ahead in this area. In addition, the number of working days lost because of industrial disputes dropped from 109 000 in 1983 to 40 000 in 1984.

Mr Williams: Which is still criminal.

Mrs BUCHANAN: I do not know how the member can say that—it has not affected the shipments from the ports during the last year and the record tonnages of 91 million which was shipped from the area last year is proof of that. Because of the reduction in the number of strikes the companies have been able to operate at greater capacity. Also an upsurge in the world steel market has led to larger amounts being taken.

The existing iron ore markets in Korea, Taiwan, China and Europe, although somewhat small, are all being expanded. New markets are being developed in Malaysia, Pakistan and Turkey. There is considerable hope in the Pilbara that we shall shortly increase our interest in those areas. These markets are comparatively small at this stage but they have tremendous development potential. This augurs particularly well for the people in my electorate. We have already begun to diversify in the marketplace and for the first time Australian exports to Japan have passed the 50 per cent proportion of that country's imports which puts us strides ahead of the new Brazilian mine yet to come on stream. It is a welcome change to have these good reports to replace some of the gloom and doom we have been hearing over the last couple of years.

I wish to deal with a comment made by the Leader of the Opposition during this debate on 28 February. I am sorry that he is not in the House to hear what I have to say. I interjected at the time but at this stage I feel it is necessary to elaborate on the comments he made. On that day the Leader of the Opposition said—

At the Harding River Dam, the Aborigines did not know the sacred sites were there.

That statement is totally untrue; it is a despicable thing to say and it reflects not only on the Leader of the Opposition's lack of understanding of the Aboriginal people in Roebourne but also shows a complete lack of respect for these people and their customs. It is easy to see why the Opposition does not support land rights. In fact, it does not support Aboriginal people at all as was evident from the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition on 28 February. I could not allow those remarks to go unchallenged without making some attempt to put the record straight.

I have lived in the Roebourne-Wickham area for many years and I have always been aware that there were significant sites in the dam area. In the past I may not have been able to pinpoint their precise location. Many places are sacred to the Aboriginal people in the area and it is customary for them not to talk about these things or to spread

them around. Nevertheless, I have always known about the burial site close to, but not actually in, the dam site and also of the ceremonial grounds, places of significance, various rocks and other objects which the Aborigines in the area find sacred.

I know that two tribal groups for many years have taken their young people to the dam site area for educational purposes. There is a similar place on Woodbrook Station which has always been used by the people of the area. The dam site has always been of considerable significance and there is no question that the construction of the dam caused some disturbance to significant sites.

The disturbance has created a great deal of distress to the Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma people. The Opposition's claims are probably based on the fact that when in Government it met with a group of Aboriginal people who may have given some indication that they were prepared to let the dam construction go ahead. The problem is—and this may be of interest to the member for Floreat—that the then Government did not consult with the right group of people. It consulted those who had an association with the area of the Fortescue River. Therefore, they were not concerned that a dam was about to be built on the Harding River. However, it created considerable disturbance to the traditional grounds of the Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma tribes.

According to the information I have, the original group of people with whom the then Government consulted were not concerned about the construction of the dam because it did not involve their area. If the Government of the day had bothered to take the matter further it would have found that it was dealing with the wrong group of people. By the time the Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma elders had written to the then Minister—the member for Floreat—it was too far down the line because work on the dam had commenced. Nevertheless, they made representations to the museum and to the member for Floreat, and it was acknowledged that they did have a strong association with the area and it had significance for them. However, it was too late by then because the dam was already under construction.

That is the truth of the matter for the record. The Leader of the Opposition should be quite ashamed of himself for trying to misrepresent the truth and for accusing the people of Roebourne of not knowing where their sacred sites were.

MR TUBBY (Greenough) [4.09 p.m.]: Along with other members, I take the opportunity in this Supply Bill debate to raise some matters affecting my electorate. There is no doubt whatsoever that

the matter of greatest impact in my electorate is the critical financial situation in the rural industry and the flow-on effect it has on people in country towns and on the community in general.

I would like to compliment the member for East Melville on the very forceful way in which he put forward many of these matters, particularly from the point of view of the impact of fuel costs on the farming industry. At this stage the farmers are carrying out and formulating their budgets for the forthcoming year, and they are deeply distressed and shocked to realise that after an above-average year they are no better off than at this time last year. Farmers find themselves in a disastrous situation.

Farmers are basing their budgets on the increased costs last year and the anticipated rises for the coming year. Rises in fuel and farm chemicals are already coming to light, and they are in excess of the increases which took place last year.

This Government does not seem to realise that most of the costs it imposes are eventually passed on to the end user, the farmer. When it comes to businesses, they raise their prices and pass them on to the users. So it goes on down the line till it comes to the farmer, who has to bear the brunt of those rises.

The situation is such that it cannot be tolerated any longer. The Government is hell-bent on continuing with its extravagant expenditure in other areas with complete disregard for the plight of the rural industry.

The inquiry into rural industry hardship identified problems. The interim report was tabled in Parliament in July, and the final report in October. We have seen nothing as a result. This is a disastrous situation, because this very valuable document is fast becoming irrelevant as far as the present position is concerned.

The extreme concern and the morale of the farming industry is of great significance in this State. At the recent annual conference of the Primary Industry Association the State President appealed to farmers to have confidence in their industry. However, they need more than confidence to get this industry out of its present mess. They are fast losing confidence in both the State and the Federal Governments. One cannot blame them when their appeals for assistance go unheard with no commitment from either Government. Each time their hopes are built up and they think their message is getting through, they find the Government appointing yet another committee of inquiry. The Government, instead of making a decision and acting on the problem, appoints a committee. This is becoming a very stale joke as far as the

rural industries are concerned. The rural industries have had a gutful of lack of action.

On a number of occasions costs are brought to light which we believe are unfairly imposed on the rural industries. An article in *The Western Farmer* on 7 March 1985, under the heading "Government costs \$16,000 per farmer," states as follows—

Government meddling, unfair taxes and massive protection of other industries are hobbling agriculture by average annual costs of \$16 000 a farm, the National Farmers Federation has told the Federal Government.

In its submission to a meeting with Prime Minister Bob Hawke and senior ministers in Canberra on Tuesday the NFF said the Australian farm cost problem mainly was a function of five government activities.

These were; excessive tariffs on imported goods; excessive spending and borrowing at federal, state and local government levels; a rigid labour market; over-regulated service industries (such as transport) and government taxes and charges on inputs.

In the submission, a farm balance sheet was prepared. It showed that agriculture funded a substantial part of the industry assistance elsewhere in the economy—with the cost penalty only partially offset by assistance to the farm sector.

The highest costs to farmers on the balance sheet were general tariffs and import quotas which NFF estimated at \$19 694 annually per Australian farm, or \$3 398 million to primary industry as a whole.

The NFF estimated that actual interest rates were 5 per cent higher than it would expect with sound economic management. This cost each farmer \$1 709 a year—or the whole industry \$290m.

Taxes on fuel and associated areas cost \$577 a farm or \$98m overall.

Other items on the debit side of the balance sheet were transport regulation (\$1 050 a farm) and machinery and plant taxes (\$240).

The annual total debit was estimated at \$23 267 for each farm.

With a hike about to take place on the cost of all fuels, that will escalate considerably. As urged by the member for East Melville, the Government should be taking immediate action and not once again stalling, this time until after the tax summit. Today is the day when action should be taken. As the member for East Melville said, by the time of the tax summit these costs will be firmly in place,

and it is very unlikely the Federal Government will reverse that situation.

The article continues—

Farmers will have to wait until a review of farm costings has been made before they know if they will get a new deal from the federal government.

Once again there is another stalling tactic where the Federal Government will adjourn the hearing for another five weeks to consider the proposals which have been put forward and the costs submitted to them by the National Farmers Federation.

To continue—

At the long awaited farm costs summit in Canberra on Tuesday the National Farmers Federation and the federal government produced substantially different figures on the impact of tariffs and quotas on farm costs—and spent some time arguing them.

The NFF says the cost, per farm, is at least \$19 000—

... But he would not commit the government to following the NFF's recommended course of action should its costs case be proven.

Mr McLachlan warned that if no action were taken "other steps" would have to be considered.

This included increased militancy from farmers—but he would not indicate in what way.

That is a very serious situation, and considering the type of people they are, when farmers take such action it really emphasises the very serious situation which affects families in the rural industries.

The only time the State Government has taken action was when it was not wanted—in regard to the O'Connor case, the Secretary of the Transport Workers Union. The farming industry was watching this as a test case for the Government to demonstrate its interest in supporting law-breakers or small businessmen and farmers. In this case it has clearly demonstrated its affections are with the lawbreakers and not with the law abiders. The Government is prepared to see farmers subjected to gangster and standover tactics which it has no wish to stamp out.

When the member for Nedlands was speaking the other night about the O'Connor case, he mentioned that the member for Geraldton was very quiet and did not take any part in the debate. I indicated that the member for Geraldton was concerned about the reaction within his electorate. The member for Geraldton denied any adverse reaction in his electorate. He said that the people

were getting the story and were quite satisfied with the action the Government took.

I have a letter from the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce—a body which clearly is within the member for Geraldton's electorate—which reads as follows —

The Geraldton Chamber of Commerce wishes to support The West Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and register its grave concern at the recent decision by the Attorney General to drop a criminal charge against the Transport Workers Union Secretary, Mr O'Connor.

The Chamber is firmly of the opinion that the Government through the Attorney General has interfered with the ordinary course of justice and, in this case, justice has not been seen to be done. We are concerned at the implications of this decision for small business.

The letter is signed by Mr E. R. A. Wilson, the President of the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce.

In making that comment, the member for Geraldton was out of touch with the position in his electorate. That is borne out by the letter I have just read from the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce. I assure the member for Geraldton that business people who are not members of the chamber and those involved in rural industries in the area share the same views.

The O'Connor case was a real test case in the eyes of the farmer. In this instance a farmer had the guts to co-operate and provide information which brought this case to court. Most people are reluctant to report standover tactics for fear of retaliation. Once again the unions got away with this and a law-abiding citizen was penalised, with the support of this Government. These people see themselves being kicked from pillar to post—

Several members interjected.

Mr TUBBY: That transport driver entered into a private contract with that trucking operator. He had the opportunity to earn well in excess of award wages if he wished, and because he was unable to do so—I am not saying he was reluctant to do so—

Several members interjected.

Mr TUBBY: That man could have earned well above award wages. He made his choice and he was quite happy with the position until he found his job was no longer available.

Mr Pearce: You will come in here representing any crook, won't you, as long as he is disguising

himself as a small businessman? Anybody who steals \$8 000 of a working man's wages is a crook.

Mr TUBBY: Why did not the court decide he was a crook and penalise him?

Mr Pearce: He stole the money and that is beyond dispute.

Mr TUBBY: If the Minister for Education says that outside this place, he will be in big trouble. Mr Leishman is a very honourable farmer and businessman who is held in high regard in that area.

Mr Pearce: He does not pay award wages.

Mr TUBBY: He does pay award wages.

Mr Pearce: He does not.

Mr TUBBY: He did not do so in this case, because he wanted to give this man, who was prepared to work, the opportunity to make well in excess of award wages.

Mr Pearce: One of the reasons that they could not recover the \$5 000 was that the man was acting illegally in terms of the Transport Act by driving beyond the hours he was supposed to drive, but Mr Leishman got the benefit of those trips.

Mr TUBBY: If the Government was so sure it was right, why did it not allow the matter to go to court and let the court decide?

Mr Pearce: It is an industrial matter; that's why.

Mr TUBBY: An industrial matter my eye!

Mr Pearce: If you were prepared to use the industrial award, he could have been charged.

Mr TUBBY: The union executive and the union stole that farmer's livelihood by extortion. It said, "We will give it back to you if you hand over the money". If that is not extortion, I do not know what is.

Mr Davies: What about the driver's livelihood?

Several members interjected.

Mr TUBBY: A very serious situation is developing and because of these sorts of actions, it will not be long before peaceful citizens become militant. They have been fair, reasonable, and tolerant, but to no avail. The O'Connor case has shown them what they must do to get the ear of the Government. The Government has made a rod for its own back.

In my electorate approximately 130 farmers are desperately trying to get out of their problems caused by rising debts and reduced equity in their land-holdings. They are virtually locked into that sad situation now, because potential buyers are not prepared to borrow money in view of the high

interest rates and the insecure future of the industry.

In the Geraldton area, which comprises almost my entire electorate, 130 farms are up for sale. Farmers do not lightly make the decision to put their properties on the market. When they reach that stage they have lost interest completely. The exception is in normal times when a farmer must sell for family reasons or the like. However, in most cases, these farmers are being forced off their properties and they are reaching the stage where, if they cannot dispose of their properties, they will have to endeavour to make arrangements to carry on for another year knowing full well with the experience of the past year, which was an above average season, that they have no hope at the end of the coming year of getting out, and that probably they will have no equity whatever in their properties.

For many years, a number of these farmers have experienced a very serious drought situation. They hoped that, when seasons returned to normal, they would be able, as in the past, to work their way out of their problems. They are not afraid of work. However, not only have they had to face a climatic drought, but also they face now a financial drought. It is a hopeless situation.

I know of some farmers who have been rather fortunate in that, when they have advertised their properties for sale, they have attracted interested buyers. They have reached the stage where it was almost certain that their properties would be sold. In order to obtain finance to buy a business or at least to purchase a home for their families, they have arranged a clearing sale.

Last week I heard of two cases where farmers had conducted clearing sales and disposed of their plant, machinery, and stock. They then found that their potential buyers had withdrawn, because of the difficulty in arranging finance and their reluctance to commit themselves to high interest rates which they would need to pay on the money borrowed to purchase the properties.

Leave to Continue Speech

I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of the sitting.

Leave granted.

Debate thus adjourned.

PORTS AND HARBOURS: JURIE

Contract: Grievance

MR THOMPSON (Kalamunda) [4.30 p.m.]: If the first 10 tonnes of fish delivered to the wharf within the proposed new breakwater at Jurien Bay were to be left to rot on the wharf for a couple of

months, the stench that that rotting fish would produce would not equate with the smell that surrounds the awarding of the contract for the construction of that harbour.

I have had the opportunity of discussing this matter with a number of people including one of the unsuccessful bidders for the project, Simto Pty. Ltd. The main personnel of Simto Pty. Ltd. are members of the Caruso family who have been involved in heavy earthworks contracts in this State for many years. I am convinced that something untoward has occurred with respect to that contract.

The value of the contract is in the order of \$1 million, but it is not a firm fixed price because of the way in which the tenders were called. It is based on what is known as a schedule of rates and it is not unreasonable to expect that the total value of the contract will exceed \$1 million, and that the difference between the successful bidder and Simto Pty. Ltd., on the face of it and as it currently stands—that is, \$80 000—will escalate undoubtedly to \$100 000 or higher. We have a situation where the expenditure of an additional \$100 000 of public money is needed to get the job done, because the Government has favoured a higher tenderer.

I speak from some experience in handling Public Works Department tenders. I know the tender procedure because for many years before I entered Parliament, I was involved in the supervision of the construction projects and in the analysis of tenders for Public Works Department contracts. Having had that experience, and having been acquainted with the circumstances that apply in this case, I have no doubt that there has been some undue interference in the awarding of the contract.

The Minister for Works has said in response to questions that have been asked in this House that he is satisfied with WA Limestone Co. and Italia Limestone Co. which have been awarded the job. That may well be the case, but he has no right to spend \$100 000 of public money simply because he has confidence in a particular company.

The whole tendering procedure is called into question when, without a worthy reason, a lower bidder is not given the job. Very soon after tenders for this project closed, the Carusos were asked to attend a meeting with officers of the Public Works Department to clarify certain points made in the tender documents.

Mr McIver: So were all the other tenderers, of course.

Mr THOMPSON: I know; they were. The successful tenderer was asked to come once. The

Carusos went back—I do not know how many times—with answers to the queries that were raised.

Mr McIver: I will explain that.

Mr THOMPSON: They were asked to clear up certain questions. On a particular day they were asked seven questions. Within three days they were granted an appointment to return to answer those particular points. They satisfied the departmental officers on all except one point, and that was a matter relating to the size of dump trucks that they were to use. There was a necessity for further discussion on that point, so the Carusos went away, considered the matter, and ultimately got in touch with the department which still insisted that it was not happy with the type of trucks that Simto Pty. Ltd. proposed to use. So the contractors returned to the Public Works Department and said that they would use conventional trucks instead of the 50-tonne dump trucks which they had originally tendered on. The officer with whom they discussed that matter appeared to be satisfied with the proposition that they would use the dump trucks.

It was then that the officers asked other questions. They asked questions about the competence of the person in charge of the quarry. The person who was to be employed by Simto Pty. Ltd. is in fact now producing limestone for Readymix, the supplier to the successful tenderers, WA Limestone Co. and Italia Limestone Co., for work on the Fremantle project, so the same quarry man will be doing the same job for WA Limestone Co. on this project that he would have been doing for Simto Pty. Ltd. One of those critical phases was to be performed by the same person.

The way in which contract procedures have operated in this State in the last 20 years or so is that a contractor does not employ directly all the personnel that are involved in the project. Most of them are subcontractors and it is conceivable that the same people who would be driving the trucks to haul the limestone for W.A. Limestone Co. are the people who would have driven the trucks for Simto Pty. Ltd., and it is also conceivable that the same machinery would have been used to place the limestone on the groyne. Indeed the clear indication is that that would be the case.

To clear up this whole matter the Minister should lay the file on the Table of the House to demonstrate that there has not been undue influence in this matter because a knowledge of the procedures that normally apply in a tendering arrangement indicates to me that there has been some underhand work involved in this matter.

The Government also is required to lay down the rules under which these tenders are to be handled in the future because in this case the Minister said that he was satisfied with the person who ultimately was given the job. If that were the case, why did the department put the Simto Pty. Ltd. representatives to all this trouble by calling them back repeatedly, asking questions, and obtaining answers to the Government's satisfaction, and officers of the department indicating to Simto Pty. Ltd. that they were satisfied with their explanations and propositions?

Mr McIver: That is not unusual in a matter of this magnitude.

Mr THOMPSON: It is unusual. If the contract was awarded for the reason the Minister says it was awarded, there was no necessity to put Simto Pty. Ltd. through all of this nonsense.

Mr McIver: It is a new company. It is untried.

Mr THOMPSON: Yes, it is a new company; it is untried. It is made up of people who have been in the business for 45 years! The company the Minister awarded the contract to was in liquidation only a few months ago. The Carusos have a sound record and they did a job similar to this at the Bunbury Harbour.

Mr McIver: That was 10 years ago.

Mr THOMPSON: Some sort of smell is involved in this matter. I hope the Minister will clear up the situation. If he is prepared to put the file on the Table of the House we can all look at it and satisfy ourselves that all has gone according to the rules.

Talking about rules, the Government needs to spell them out to these people because it costs companies a lot of money to go through these tendering procedures, and it is unfair to keep calling them back when the Government has already established the firm to which it will award the contract.

MR McIVER (Avon—Minister for Works) [4.39 p.m.]: I can understand the concern of the member for Kalamunda. No doubt, the manager of Simto Pty. Ltd. has approached the Opposition.

Mr Thompson: He is one of my constituents.

Mr McIVER: Naturally he has approached the member for Kalamunda. I hold no malice against the member for that situation.

Unfortunately there are a number of points which the member got a little out of perspective. I want to put the record straight as to why this tender was allocated when there was a variation of \$100 000 in tenders. Naturally, when one sees a variation like that one could expect concern to be expressed about why a lower tenderer did not re-

ceive the contract. My departmental officers brought the variation of the amount to my attention. I summed up the pros and cons and made a decision on the basis of the performance of the successful tenderer.

I want to refer to the tenders that have been awarded to the WA Limestone Company and the Italia Limestone Company, and I quote—

Point of Order

Mr THOMPSON: I ask that the Minister lay the document from which he is quoting on the Table of the House at the conclusion of his remarks, in accordance with Standing Orders.

Mr McIVER: This is a Government file, it has not been the procedure for Ministers to table departmental files.

Mr Old interjected.

Mr McIVER: The member cannot get the abatours situation correct, so I suggest he leave me to deal with the quarrying.

Mr Old: We are talking about tabling files.

Mr McIVER: The member is at liberty to come to my office and peruse this file any time he likes. It is a departmental file and I am prepared for him to peruse it when he wishes. I am not going to table it.

Mr THOMPSON: I assumed the Minister was making a contribution to the point of order. He seems to be arguing the case.

The SPEAKER: I was waiting for him to finish his argument.

Mr Thompson: I would like a response.

The SPEAKER: The position with the tabling of papers is this, and I have made it clear on previous occasions and one would think notice would be taken of the Chair: When Ministers of the Crown quote from documents it is incumbent on them to table the documents when requested to do so under Standing Orders. I do not want to see tabled a file which refers to matters unrelated to the matter before the Chair. For that reason I presume the only course I have is to vet that document before it is tabled. I am sure the member is not requesting a file in order to disclose matters unrelated to this debate.

Mr McIVER: To expedite the situation, and to prove without doubt there is nothing to hide, I will table the complete file.

Debate Resumed

Mr McIVER: I want to point out to members the work that has been carried out by the WA Limestone Company and by Simto Pty. Ltd. I quote from the file as follows—

They have been associated with the construction of the following breakwaters:

- (a) Garden Island Causeway
- (b) Pt Denison Breakwater
- (c) Jervoise Bay Industrial Breakwater
- (d) Success Harbour Breakwaters, Fremantle

Mr Thompson: I am not questioning the competence of Italia.

Mr McIVER: I did not interrupt the member when he spoke. He should allow me to develop my theme and he will get his answer. To continue—

- (e) Two limestone groynes at Sorrento
- (f) 75m extension to the Bunbury Breakwater (all granite)

I point out here in relation to the Jurien Bay situation that it is vital we use granite rocks in its construction. These people have had no experience in that type of work as I will reveal in a little while—no experience whatever. To continue—

- (g) Construction of the granite breakwaters at Esperance boat harbour
- (h) Ocean Reef Breakwater
- (i) Fremantle Northern Boat Harbour.

This indicates the breadth and quality of experience of the successful tenderer which must always be a key element in making a decision on awarding a tender.

Let us now have a look at the record of Simto Pty. Ltd. The file says the company has no previous experience in this type of construction activity. One example of a small breakwater in Queensland was referred to. No details of personnel experienced in limestone quarry operations were supplied.

Mr Thompson: That is rubbish!

Mr McIVER: Is the member indicating that this is incorrect?

Mr Thompson: I have copies of correspondence between the company and departmental officers.

Mr McIVER: I am quoting directly from a departmental file. The member may not like what I am quoting because it cuts his argument to pieces, but I am quoting exactly what transpired.

The file says no details of personnel experienced in limestone quarry operations were supplied. Neither of the principals was experienced in this type of operation and it was evident they would have to engage someone to assist if they were the successful tenderer. The file says the tender did not indicate the price was firm irrespective of where the material was acquired. The tender was based on using 50-tonne capacity trucks, as the

member said in his remarks but the shire strongly objected to the 50-tonne trucks operating in that area if the company was the successful tenderer.

Mr Thompson: You are a joke because that is not the case, and it is clearly pointed out. Your departmental officers queried it and the shire indicated it was happy.

Mr McIVER: The Shire of Dandaragan agreed it would not repair any damaged roads.

Mr Thompson interjected.

Mr McIVER: The member had his full time, now it is my turn. Be fair! That was the situation I had to evaluate as Minister; those were the two comparisons. I say without hesitation to members of the Opposition that one firm has proved itself over 20 years of experience whereas the other firm was only formed in January 1983. I ask the member for Kalamunda: Who would he have chosen on that record?

The Crown Law Department came into this also in relation to the schedule of the tender. It was not just the BMA; it was on the advice of Crown Law that the schedule was set up in the way it appears in the tender. Crown Law could not see that the lower tender would not escalate because we knew the firm we were dealing with, but we did not know the inexperienced firm.

I gave the example last night of our experience with an immature firm when this Government came to office. It cost us in excess of \$1 million for the Jerviose Bay breakwater. As Minister for Works I am not going to take that risk again. I made my decision and Simto telexed the Premier and pointed out to him its objections to the decision, and to the Premier's credit he supported the successful tenderer and the BMA.

If the member for Kalamunda is so sincere in worrying about this project, I point out that it is something the previous Government neglected for years. It neglected the construction of breakwaters in the northern region and concentrated everything on Esperance in order to win that seat. The then Government allocated its priorities to Esperance as a political stunt to try to win that seat. If it had concentrated on the areas to which it should have given attention—Lancelin, Jurien Bay, and the fishermen who bring thousands of dollars into this State—the member would not be standing up now and protesting about the successful tenderer. I have no hesitation in saying my conscience is clear. If the issue were before me tomorrow I would make the same decision.

The SPEAKER: Under Standing Orders the Minister is obliged to table the file, but I suggest that as it is a departmental file perhaps it could lay on the Table of the House until the completion

of proceedings tomorrow. If there is to be a review of that, I will listen to any remarks.

Mr McIVER: I have no hesitation in tabling the file because there is nothing in that file that is not aboveboard.

The file was tabled for the information of members.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE

Misuse: Grievance

MR D. L. SMITH (Mitchell) [4.51 p.m.]: I rise to grieve to the Premier on a matter that has been causing me increasing concern of late; that is, the misuse of parliamentary privilege by some members of this House. I recognise that parliamentary privilege is an essential part of any parliamentary democracy. Every member in this House should have the right to raise matters of genuine concern without fear of being sued by any individuals that he or she might properly refer to in the address.

However, it must inevitably lead to the loss of that right and privilege if it is abused for short-term political gain or as a means of a personal pay back.

I believe that it is abused where allegations of criminal conduct are made about individuals without a scintilla of evidence to support them. It is a worse abuse of that privilege if it is used against individuals who are seeking to advance the interests of our State and its residents.

People are being slandered in a most malicious way without being given any opportunity to defend themselves and without there being any basis to the allegations.

What is worse is that it is being done deliberately at a time geared to getting maximum coverage in the media, but giving the least possible opportunity for individuals to respond. It is being done by malicious minds which want to cause maximum distress to individuals and their families. It seems to have, as some of its aims, the frightening off of any person of talent from the Government service or employment.

Last night's attack on members of the WA Tourism Commission by the member for Gascoyne is typical of the actions about which I complain. He accused Mr Goodridge of weaving a web in a criminal way, yet he could not provide any evidence of criminal conduct. He accused other members of the commission of improperly using the commission's funds and included Mr Basil Atkinson and Ms Cheri Gardiner in that charge.

It was apparent from what the member for Gascoyne said, and from the media response, that the charges against Mr Atkinson and Ms

Gardiner were made recklessly and maliciously without any concern for justice or propriety. The member for Gascoyne has used a miniscule amount of fact to fabricate a story which he could not repeat outside this House and which would not stand up to any examination.

Mr MacKinnon: You have raised this matter when the member for Gascoyne is not in the House.

A Government member: Go and get him!

Mr MacKinnon: You know that he has gone to Useless Loop.

Several members interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Wednesday is the only day on which I am able to grieve, and it is not my fault that the member for Gascoyne is not present.

Surely in this situation there ought to be a method by which the individuals maligned can bring the member before the Bar of this House so that he can be examined and properly exposed for what he is.

Mr MacKinnon: Who wrote your speech?

Mr D. L. SMITH: I did.

This would not reduce the power of this House or the proper use of parliamentary privilege. It would enhance and safeguard parliamentary privilege.

I urge the Premier, in the context of last night's example, to give due consideration to this proposal.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [4.55 p.m.]: The member for Mitchell has made many valid points in stressing the obligation that members of this Parliament have to support allegations that they make from time to time, particularly when they are allegations against people outside the Parliament, people who are not in a position to defend themselves in this forum.

I think the example to which the member for Mitchell referred is probably the most sophisticated example yet to be laid at the feet of the member for Gascoyne who once again demonstrated that he has little respect for the need to substantiate any, or many, of the things he says from time to time.

I want to demonstrate the accuracy and substance of the claims made by the member for Mitchell by simply touching upon information that was sent to me today by the Tourism Commission, information which was in response to the claims made by the member for Gascoyne.

I will begin with that claim made by the member for Gascoyne about the fact that Mr Atkinson's company recommended that Price

Waterhouse should be engaged as the consultant to review the commission. That is not true. The commission received a recommendation from senior officers many months ago and, on the basis of that recommendation, its senior officers decided to conduct a review and I am informed that tenders were called. The result of those tenders was the selection of Price Waterhouse to carry out the review. Therefore, the member for Gascoyne was wrong in his claim that Mr Atkinson recommended Price Waterhouse as the consultants.

The member for Gascoyne then said that five members of the Tourism Commission were sacked. Once again, that is an incorrect claim and, in fact, as a result of Price Waterhouse's review, five members of the commission were offered the opportunity of returning to the Public Service or accepting a severance pay package. There was never any talk nor any suggestion that any of those five people should be sacked, and none of them was sacked.

The member for Gascoyne then said that Ms Cheri Gardiner has been responsible in some improper fashion for causing the total of the commission's radio advertising budget to be spent on radio station 6PR. Once again the member for Gascoyne was wrong. Ms Cheri Gardiner was not a commissioner of the Tourism Commission when a decision was made to call applications from advertising agents interested in handling the commission's account, and when the decision was made to employ Ogilvy & Mather (Aust) Pty. Ltd. to handle that account.

The member for Gascoyne has no regard for the characters of the people he attacks and defames. Ms Gardiner was not even a member of the commission when that decision was made. As far as Ms Gardiner is concerned, it is absolutely inconceivable that she could have influenced the commission in that way as she was not a member of the commission when the member for Gascoyne claimed she exercised that influence.

In addition to that, the member for Gascoyne is wrong when he said the entire radio budget of the Tourism Commission was devoted to advertising on radio station 6PR. The truth is that part of the budget—a much smaller part than that spent with 6PR, it is true—was spent with 6KY. I am informed that a total of \$175 000 was spent at 6PR and \$25 000 with 6KY.

Mr MacKinnon: How much was spent at 6KY?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: An amount of \$25 000.

Mr MacKinnon: That is news to me, because in answer to questions in this House it has been stated that \$5 000 was spent with 6KY.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is the information I have been given. The member for Gascoyne was wrong because he said that Ms Gardiner, as a member of the commission, had influenced the commission's decision to award its advertising budget to radio station 6PR. The truth was that Ms Gardiner was not a member of the commission at that time.

Mr MacKinnon: It is true that 6PR got a large proportion of the budget when in no other part of Australia did the commission advertise to the same extent.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let me ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition if he is happy that the member for Gascoyne said quite incorrectly that Ms Gardiner was a tourism commissioner when the contract was awarded?

Mr MacKinnon: I was not here when he said it. I was ill at home.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member for Gascoyne did not tell the truth; Ms Gardiner was not even a member of the commission when the decision was made. In addition to that the member for Gascoyne's claim that the entire budget was spent at radio station 6PR was incorrect. So Ms Gardiner was not a member of the commission when the decision was made and the entire budget was not spent at that radio station.

I do not know in how many other respects the member for Gascoyne can be wrong, but let me also say something in respect of the allegations made by the member for Gascoyne about Mr Basil Atkinson and the accusation that he was somehow or other responsible for the criminal misuse of funds. I would like to repeat to the Parliament the information given to me by the Tourism Commission. Let the Parliament itself judge the accuracy or otherwise of the member's claims about the criminal misuse or the improper use of funds.

This is what the acting chairman of the commission had to say—

With regard to item (3), the firm Basil Atkinson and Associates was appointed as a consultant earlier this year to make full use of Mr Atkinson's experience and expertise.

Mr Atkinson retired last year as Chief Executive of the Confederation of WA industry and was available to make a bigger contribution to the Commission. The Commission urgently needed a consultant of Mr Atkinson's calibre to undertake some specialised work.

Some of the examples of Mr Atkinson's work are:

Assisting with the development of policies concerning South East Asian markets.

Assessing the future direction of the Tourism Commission's overseas representation as it fits in with the Australian Tourist Commission policies.

Assisting with a review of international airline policy, particularly as it affects the Japanese market.

Assisting in developing stronger ties between the private sector of the tourism industry in this State and the Tourism Commission.

A fee with Mr Atkinson of \$2 500 per month was calculated on the basis of 50 hours consultancy work per month at \$50 per hour.

He was approached by the Commission to ascertain whether he would be prepared to carry out the work at the prescribed fee. At no stage was Mr Atkinson a party to any discussion regarding his appointment.

Mr Atkinson is unquestionably one of the most senior and respected figures in tourism, not only in Western Australia but in the world, and his input is worth far in excess of the retainer the Commission has agreed to pay him.

Whether one agrees with his appointment or not, it is quite clear this is not a criminal misappropriation of funds, as the member for Gascoyne attempted to imply. Let me repeat that Mr Atkinson has the full support of the Government, as do the other members of the commission.

In addition to that, the member for Gascoyne said the appointment of Mr Goodridge was illegal. I want to read to the House the following information from the acting chairman of the commission—

The allegations regarding Mr Goodridge are completely unfounded and my fellow Commissioners and I have total confidence in his integrity and competence. There is no doubt that Mr Goodridge's appointment is legal—Mr Goodridge was appointed by the Commissioners under Sections 14(2) and 17(1) of the Western Australian Tourism Commission Act 1983. (Copy of legal opinion from Parker and Parker is enclosed).

So on every single count the member for Gascoyne has either told an untruth or something that is outside the truth. The member for Mitchell makes a very valid point: Mr Atkinson cannot defend himself; he is not even in the country. Mr Goodridge cannot defend himself; he is not in this

Parliament, although I understand the commission has put out a statement which might scorch the ears of the member for Gascoyne.

The tourism commissioners, acting as they do in an honorary capacity, in most cases receive less than \$3 000 a year. They are committed to the prosperity of tourism in this State. I have shown the member for Gascoyne to be wrong, chapter and verse, on each of the allegations or accusations that he has made. We cannot tolerate the situation where these people cannot answer those allegations by the member for Gascoyne. The member will not repeat them outside the House. Those people know the truth, members of this House know the truth, and the public will slowly learn to understand that the member for Gascoyne repeatedly says things that he cannot substantiate.

PORTS AND HARBOURS: PRINCESS ROYAL

Kemal Ataturk: Grievance

MR WATT (Albany) [5.05 p.m.]: My grievance relates to a matter which appeared in yesterday's *The West Australian* under the heading, "Honour for Anzacs". I would like to quote a couple of paragraphs from that article, so that the House will understand what the proposition is. It reads in part—

The Turkish Government has agreed to give the name "Anzac Cove" to that part of the Gallipoli Peninsula where the Diggers landed 70 years ago.

The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, announced yesterday that in return the WA Government had agreed to rename the entrance to Princess Royal Harbour in Albany after the Turkish soldier-statesman, Kemal Ataturk.

Kemal Ataturk commanded the Turkish forces on the peninsula and was also the founder and first president of modern Turkey.

The Prime Minister said that the Western Australian Government had agreed to rename the harbour channel entrance after Kemal Ataturk. I fail to see the relevance of that action as it relates to Albany.

It must be asked whether it is relevant to rename the channel at Albany in this way. The headline says, "Honour for Anzacs". The renaming of part of the Gallipoli Peninsula "Anzac Cove" is appropriate, but the channel entrance into the Princess Royal Harbour at Albany has no relationship to the Turkish forces at all.

It is true that the Anzac fleet assembled in King George Sound prior to sailing for Gallipoli. For the large majority of troops who sailed in that fleet

it was their last sight of Australian land, although I understand some ships put into Fremantle on the way. For that reason it seems to me that the channel has absolutely no relevance to that event, and even less for the commander of the Turkish troops.

It would seem appropriate for the Australian Federal Government and the Turkish Government to enter into a reciprocal arrangement which would see the renaming of part of the Gallipoli Peninsula "Anzac Cove", and a memorial garden established adjacent to the war memorial in Canberra to recognise that event. However, I can find little justification for a Turkish name to be given to part of Albany.

As I have already stated, Albany has relevance to the Anzac fleet and the Australian and New Zealand soldiers on board those ships, a fact which was recognised in 1964 by the siting of the Desert Mounted Corps memorial on Mt. Clarence, which overlooks King George Sound. That was done after considerable argument with the powers-that-be in Canberra, who wanted that memorial sited in Canberra. It was done on the recommendations of ex-servicemen's associations in both Australia and New Zealand.

I am not happy about the renaming of the channel at Albany, because it would be appropriate for some form of community consultation to have occurred before that decision was reached.

Mr Davies: Does it carry any special name now?

Mr WATT: It is commonly referred to as the channel in Princess Royal Harbour. It does not carry a name. I was about to go on to that point.

In my view, if it was appropriate that some recognition of that event be conferred on that channel, it would be far more appropriate to remember the officer who commanded the Australian and New Zealand troops. I do not even know his name.

It would seem that such a person—and there is probably a choice of many others—would have been far more appropriate. It was disappointing to me to read that the Albany Town Council had given its approval to this decision by the State Government which, according to the newspaper report, occurred a few months ago. In the brief time since this appeared in yesterday's newspaper, I have canvassed local people and I have not found anyone who thinks it is a good idea. I have telephoned the local President of the RSL and I spoke to both him and his wife. They seem to think it is a nonsensical idea. Indeed, it raises all sorts of questions.

Mr Davies: Did the President of the RSL serve in World War I, World War II, or the Vietnam war?

Mr WATT: He served in World War II. There are not very many veterans of World War I taking a particularly active part in the RSL these days.

If some community consultation is not entered into before this decision is made, it will be too late, because once those sorts of things are done, they are done permanently. The people of Albany deserve an opportunity to have a say about this decision. Indeed, as the elected representative of the people of Albany, I would argue that, if the decision were to be made by the State Government, as it apparently has been, I might have been entitled to have some say.

I emphasise that, in raising this grievance today, I cast no reflection on the Turkish people or on Kemal Ataturk. However, it is inappropriate to rename a part of Albany after a Turkish soldier-statesman without any consultation with the local people.

Indeed, it would seem that the cartoonist at *The West Australian* had the same view. While we are now on good terms with the Turkish people, it should be borne in mind that during the war we were in fact fighting with them. In other wars we have fought with other people. We are now friendly with the Japanese, the West Germans, and the like. The cartoon in yesterday's edition of *The West Australian* depicts a motorist saying, "First Albany. . . next?" It shows a heap of signs which say, "Kokoda Trail", "Tojo Drive", "Hitler Fwy", "Stalin St", "Changi Park", "Saigon St", and "Muss. Place". That tells its own story.

I simply make the point that these sorts of decisions should not be made in secret. They ought to be made openly, publicly, and in consultation.

I remind the Government that, when it was in Opposition, it frequently criticised the former Government for things which it claimed were done in secrecy. It always argued that there needed to be more consultation. If some consultation can be entered into, and if, after that consultation occurs, public opinion can be demonstrated to approve the change of name, I shall be highly delighted and entirely happy that that change should occur. However, until some process is followed to achieve that end, I believe public opinion has demonstrated clearly that the change is opposed.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balgas—Premier) [5.14 p.m.]: My understanding is that the change of name was suggested initially by the RSL. That suggestion was made to the Federal Government which contacted the State Government, which, in turn, contacted the local authority at Albany and

indicated that the request had been made. The local authority said there was no objection to the name change and that the proposed change was supported, and that support was passed on with the concurrence of the State Government to the Federal Government.

The RSL has since supported the change and I suppose that it is a change with which people might agree or disagree. However, I do not think people will take exception to it on the basis that, 70 years ago, we were at war with the Turks.

I suppose some people in Turkey are a little aggrieved at having part of their country named "Anzac Cove", but it seems to me it is entirely appropriate that the peace and good relationships referred to by the member for Albany be underlined and cemented in this way.

As far as the State Government is concerned, the RSL, in its support, verified the view of the State Government that it was appropriate to rename the entrance as Ataturk Entrance. The matter was referred to the local authority for its advice and the local authority supported the change.

I suppose, to satisfy the member for Albany, we could have conducted some sort of referendum on the matter, but I doubt very much whether that would have achieved as decisive a result as he suggests, in his implied belief that the public generally do not support the change.

While it is not of burning moment, most people accept that when wars are over, it becomes appropriate during times of peace and friendship to obviate those difficulties or problems which led to the circumstances of war, and that to cement friendships, things such as the mutual acknowledgment through the renaming of particular landmarks or features are entirely appropriate.

Mr Watt: This has been done in Canberra.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It was part of an arrangement with the Federal Government; that is true.

It is probably true that most people would support the move to underline the friendly status that exists between the two countries that this represents. The Turkish Government has renamed part of the area of the Gallipoli landing as Anzac Cove in place of the name that it had previously, and we are renaming the entrance to Albany Harbour as Ataturk Entrance, to reflect the relationship or the connection which existed between the troops who went to fight at Gallipoli.

If the member objects, all I can say is that we referred the matter to the local authority and no objection was forthcoming.

[Questions taken.]

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 p.m.

HEALTH: MOSQUITOES

Mandurah: Grievance

MR READ (Mandurah) [7.15 p.m.]: I direct my grievance to the Premier, who is also the Treasurer of the State. My grievance concerns a specific problem being experienced in Mandurah at present. All members of the House would only have to drive down to Mandurah to experience the problem the town has with mosquitoes. Members may be aware that this problem has been publicised in the Press.

I have had the experience of constituents bringing their severely bitten children into my office and asking me what was going to be done about the problem. Those small children are unable to play out of doors during the day. Schools are experiencing problems with the mosquito plague as well. People are unable to garden. They are restricted in all ways, even with their sporting activities.

Mr Clarko: What is the Government going to do about it?

MR READ: If the member for Karrinyup listens he will realise that mosquito eradication is a local government responsibility. I am going to ask for specific intervention by the Treasurer in this case.

Tourists to the Mandurah area have come to my office and expressed their disappointment about the mosquitoes in Mandurah.

Of more concern, and one which has been mentioned in the Press, is the fear of Ross River virus infection, which virus I understand is carried by the species *Aedes*. I make the point that the chance of infection is more remote in Mandurah than in many other places in the State.

Mosquitoes, as members will be aware, go through a life cycle of four stages. The breeding cycle lasts between approximately 14 and 20 days. The adults live for one month during which time they breed prolifically. The female is the more vicious as she needs blood to nurture her eggs, which she is continually laying throughout her life. She uses the blood as a ready source of protein and energy for her eggs.

Members will be aware that mosquitoes act as carriers for diseases such as malaria. In Mandurah there are five known species and there are a number still to be identified.

Throughout the area there is a mosquito eradication programme which is a joint Commonwealth and State Department of Health programme funded by a CEP grant of \$1.2 million. The areas

being studied are the Leschenault, Peel-Harvey, and Canning estuarine systems. The terms of reference for that group are as follows—

1. Review current literature.
2. Assess the problem of mosquito control and its environmental and human impact in the estuarine wetlands of the Swan-Canning, Peel-Harvey and Leschenault Inlet estuarine systems.
3. Liaise with Local Authorities with particular reference to:
 - (a) Control measures.
 - (b) Human impact.
 - (c) Identification of breeding areas.
4. Report on recommended changes to the management of the problem.

The various tasks of the committee are to visit local authorities and examine records, complaints, etc., to record personal experiences in respect of particular problems, and to collate relevant literature available to the committee. The committee is detailing the facilities and capabilities of the Public Health Department working group, assembling information on pesticides, the toxicity of pesticides, and new chemicals that can be used to control mosquitoes and, of importance to the environmentalists, it is preparing a submission in respect of the value of wetlands to retain or impact-modify the ecosystems. That programme is being funded by CEP and is going a long way towards the identification of specific breeding areas, etc.

The various methods of control open to us involve chemical methods—the most important use—which primarily involves two chemicals Abate and Naled (Dibrom 14). These chemicals are both used in the Mandurah Shire. Physical control for the elimination of mosquito breeding sites by landfill and reclamation of wetlands is proving not to be desirable now in view of the environmental importance of wetlands.

Biological control was initiated, I think, in 1934 with the introduction of *Gambusia affinis*, commonly known as the mosquito fish, which eats the egg and larvae of the mosquito. Various pathogens, parasites, fungal organisms, and viruses are being tested and their value is not yet known.

I want to specifically comment on the efforts of the Mandurah Shire Council, which body is making a most commendable effort towards the eradication and control of mosquitoes. An examination of the budget of the council over the last three years shows that in 1982-83 it spent \$42 571, in 1983-84 it spent \$37 575, and in the 1984-85 financial year it budgeted \$44 000 towards

eradicating this problem. Difficulty is experienced in the control of such large areas of wetlands. This problem also extends into the Murray Shire and I am sure the member for Murray-Wellington is aware of this. I am not aware of any specific spending by the Murray Shire Council, but that council does have a special problem in respect of mosquitoes in its extensive wetland areas.

My aim in this grievance debate is to seek from Treasury funding for the Department of Health to establish a species entomology section within that department with special responsibility for research into mosquitoes and their habits and to establish sound guidelines for the control and eradication of mosquitoes. I am not certain of the number of personnel required to develop such a section of the Department of Health, but that matter could easily be established by that department.

While I am aware that the Government does not wish to become involved in local government areas of responsibility, I would, however, point out to the Premier that mosquitoes breed on Government-held reserve land and on Government waterways, as well as in other places, and I would ask that this matter be considered and that a budgeted levy be made available for the Department of Health in response to my grievance.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balgownie—Premier) [7.27 p.m.]: I thank the member for Mandurah for his contribution to the grievance debate. His contribution underlines the assiduous way in which he represents his electorate. The matter that he has raised tonight may be greeted with some levity by members on the other side of the House, but the member for Mandurah is simply doing his job and, I think, he is doing it very well.

The Government takes very seriously the matters the member has raised and, while I cannot commit in advance decisions that will be made as part of the Budget process, I can certainly say that the member for Mandurah's grievance will be treated very seriously and within the Budget context we will do our best to satisfy the financial requirements that he indicates are necessary to combat the problem to which he refers.

However, I point out that perhaps the member for Mandurah is drawing a long bow when talking about the origins of different mosquitoes. Simply because some choose to breed on Government as opposed to private land is not, in my mind, a justification for the Government's shouldering all of the financial responsibility for tackling the problem. Nevertheless, the Government takes very seriously the matter raised by the member. It will be addressed in the Budget context and, hopefully,

we will be able to satisfy the concerns that the member has expressed tonight.

The **SPEAKER**: Grievances noted.

HEALTH AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR HODGE (Melville—Minister for Health) [7.29 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I bring before this House today an amendment which, as members will see, constitutes the most significant breakthrough in food legislation for many decades.

The main purpose of this Bill is to adopt the provisions of the model food Act agreed to by Health Ministers at their 1980 conference and subsequently recommended to the Australian States and Territories for adoption across the nation. The model food Act to which I refer was developed by a joint Commonwealth-State-Territory working party with the aim of achieving uniform food legislation throughout Australia. The Act has been adopted in Queensland, passed but not yet proclaimed in Victoria, and is in the process of adoption in South Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory.

The adoption of the model food Act and associated regulations in Western Australia will result in a substantial upgrading and updating of food legislation in this State; but it will also result in far more.

This Bill will—

- Provide more information to consumers to enable them to make a more informed choice;
- assist industry in the marketing of food on a State and nation-wide basis; and
- strengthen the powers of health authorities, thus further protecting the public.

This Bill presents Western Australia with the opportunity to introduce some of the most up-to-date food legislation in the world. This State, along with the rest of Australia, can take an international lead in food legislation by the adoption of this Bill because the model food Act on which it is based encompasses what is considered to be the most advanced food legislation in the world.

The model takes into consideration food laws in Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, and New Zealand. It also takes into consideration the provisions of the model food Act developed jointly by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations and the World Health Organisation.

The need to amend our existing food legislation is clear when I ask members to note that most of

the provisions of the Health Act relating to food have been untouched since 1911.

Existing food laws were developed independently by States and Territories soon after Federation and, although similarities existed between the various State Acts and regulations, there were differences which meant industry has had to work to meet different requirements in various States.

In the existing Health Act, provisions concerning food were intertwined with those concerning drugs and, to a lesser extent, proprietary medicines and pesticides.

This Bill separates such matters as—

- The slaughtering of animals;
- milk and dairy produce;
- drugs;
- medicines and disinfectants;
- the manufacture of therapeutic substances; and,
- pesticides;

and creates a new section incorporating the provisions of the model food Act.

As I said earlier, one of the difficulties of existing legislation is that industry has had to meet different requirements in various States. This has been particularly apparent in food labelling where the individual requirements of the States result in increased costs to industry and, importantly, to consumers.

The adoption of the model food provisions in Western Australia, and ultimately in other States, will enable industry, whether local or interstate, to produce foods which will comply, both in terms of composition and labelling, throughout Australia.

Members will be well aware of the intense interest by the general public in food matters, particularly labelling. This Bill establishes general labelling powers with respect to—

- The declaration of ingredients in descending order of proportion;
- the date marking of the food;
- a declaration of the country of origin of the food; and
- declaration of the name and business address of the manufacturer or packer, or, as an option, the name and business address of the importer.

With this latter option, the Bill acknowledges that large quantities of food are imported into Australia.

Members will appreciate that information about the importer is essential to health authorities, particularly in such circumstances as a recall, to de-

termine the quantity and distribution of an imported food.

In addition, the passage of the Bill will enable us to adopt the National Health and Medical Research Council model food standard regulations which include a food additive numbering system.

This system has long been sought by the medical profession, those consumers who have allergic reactions to food additives, and it will help those consumers who simply want to know more about the composition of their foods.

This Bill protects the public in a number of other substantive ways. For example, the definition of the term "sell" contained in the model food Act details such aspects as bartering, offering for sale, attempting to sell, and having in possession for sale. This definition is far superior to the existing definition contained in and relating to the general Health Act and, consequently, has been brought forward to section 3 of the principal Act so that it applies to the whole Act.

Mr Speaker, you will note that this Bill establishes the model food Act as adopted as the principal food legislation, so that, in the event of an inconsistency between food legislation, the provisions of this Bill relating to food prevail.

This Bill further protects the public by spelling out in a clear and readily understood manner the offences in connection with the sale of food. Basically, an offence is created when a food is prepared, packaged, or sold and is found to be unfit for human consumption, adulterated or damaged, deteriorated or perished.

The Bill establishes separate offences for sale, preparation and packaging with separate maximum penalties.

The penalties in the existing Health Act relating to foods have been criticised as being unrealistically low. This Bill raises the maximum penalties for food offences to levels commensurate with the responsibility of providing wholesome unadulterated food to the consumer.

Members will note that the penalty for preparing adulterated food, for instance, is greater than the maximum penalty specified for selling or packaging that food.

A separate offence is provided for a person who sells food that does not comply with the prescribed standard. This strengthens the existing provisions also incorporated in the model which create an offence for the sale of food not of the nature, substance, and quality demanded by the purchaser.

Another section of the Bill provides that the Executive Director of Public Health may prohibit

the cultivation, taking, or harvesting of food where that food is considered to be dangerous or injurious to health. This would cover such situations as the taking of seafood from polluted waters.

In preparation of this Bill, we have noticed that some of the existing provisions of the Health Act are superior to or are not covered in the model. One such instance applies in the case of a section which prohibits the employment of persons suffering from an infectious disease in food establishments. Obviously the employer has a public liability to ensure staff are free from such diseases when engaged in food preparation, handling, and service, and the existing Western Australian provision has been retained.

An important provision in the Bill is that which sets out the powers of a local authority or the Executive Director of Public Health where any food premises, food vehicle, or appliance is in an unclean or unsanitary condition. Members will appreciate that this is an essential power for the maintenance of public health. There are provisions for appeals by any person aggrieved by any order made under that section.

The model food Act recognises the introduction of food vending machines in today's food distribution system. Such provisions, of course, are not contained in the existing Act. The Bill sets out the requirements for registration of food vending machines and the procedures for sampling of food from such machines.

The provisions of the model food Act are far more specific and detailed than those in the existing Act with regard to the powers assigned to health surveyors. For example, one section of this Bill not only covers the existing powers which enable a health surveyor to take samples, but also enables him to take copies of certain documents.

I am advised analytical procedures are often not able to detect the use of certain chemicals in food because the chemicals break down. Therefore, there are occasions when the only avenue of investigation for a health surveyor to ensure that only approved food additives are used, is to inspect company records.

Under the existing Health Act, all food samples are required to be separated into three parts; one for the owner, one for the health surveyor, and a reference sample for the court.

The model as reflected in this Bill recognises that such separation is not applicable in all circumstances. For instance, the process of division into three parts may result in contamination of food under investigation, rendering it unsuitable for microbiological examination. This Bill sets out three methods of food sampling—

- (1) Where a minimum number of samples is specified in the regulation for a particular food such as testing for salmonella in coconut;
- (2) the division into three parts as explained;
- (3) where the regulations do not specify a certain number of samples and, in the opinion of the health surveyor, division into three parts might render the sample unsuitable for analysis.

The existing provisions of the Health Act relating to legal proceedings for selling adulterated foods have been the subject of much criticism, recently by the Supreme Court of Western Australia. In the latest case, a retailer was held responsible for rat droppings in a sealed packet of muesli even though the court considered the contamination probably occurred at the point of manufacture or packaging.

This Bill would enable a retailer in such an instance to advise the court that he believes that the offence was due to the act or default of another person, whereupon the court would issue a summons to the alleged offender. This mechanism then allows the court to determine, on the basis of all evidence, who is at fault and to take its decision with respect to penalties accordingly.

Members should be aware I have received representations from some sections of the food industry to include further provisions concerning "all reasonable precautions" and also in regard to "warranties". These provisions are currently in Victorian food legislation, but are not in the model.

In the interests of preserving uniformity of food law throughout Australia, I have asked the chairman of the working party on model food law to reconvene the Commonwealth-State-Territory working party to discuss these Victorian provisions and decide whether or not they should be included in the model.

If the model was to be amended in this respect, then we would reconsider our legislation and seek to include the provisions into the Western Australian Health Act.

However, it is my view that this Bill provides a dramatic improvement over and above the existing legislation; it overcomes the criticisms made by the courts of that existing legislation and places the responsibility upon the court to determine who is liable for the offence committed and, depending upon the severity of that offence, to decide upon an appropriate penalty.

As I said at the outset, this Bill provides us with a most significant breakthrough in food legis-

lation. It gives us the opportunity to upgrade and update our legislation in Western Australia, a task long overdue.

It enables us to play our part in the achievement of uniform food laws throughout Australia without lowering our standards and, most importantly, this initiative has the support of industry, consumer organisations, and local government, all of whom have been pressing for this legislation for some time.

I believe Western Australia can be justifiably proud that the Burke Government is introducing such significant legislation in an area of vital concern to the health of the community.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Thompson.

BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Parliamentary Papers Amendment Bill.
2. Commercial Arbitration Bill.

Bills received from the Council; and, on motions by Mr Grill (Minister for Transport), read a first time.

TRADE: EXIM CORPORATION

Private Enterprise: Motion

Debate resumed from 6 March.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier of Western Australia.

Mr Old: Not for long!

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balgas—Premier) [7.44 p.m.]: I do not know what is wrong with Dick Old these days because he is so grumpy. If I am not Premier for much longer I will have been Premier for three years longer than Mr Old has ever been Premier.

In reply to the three speakers from the Opposition benches who have contributed to the debate on this matter to date, it is necessary firstly for me to raise some sort of defence to some of the comments made by the member for Nedlands about the Western Australian Development Corporation. I refer specifically to his attack during this debate on the efforts of the WA Development Corporation in obtaining the headquartering in Perth of a major new banking institution. The member for Nedlands, in a fairly broad brush attack upon the WADC, said that the corporation had prevented private interests from pursuing and obtaining a banking licence. That simply is not true and it is mean, and less than generous, of the member for Nedlands not to acknowledge the very successful and energetic efforts of the WADC in its pursuit of one of the licences that were granted

by the Federal Government after consideration by the Reserve Bank.

The situation is simply this: Without the efforts of the WADC there would not have been a new bank headquartered in Perth. There was not one application lodged by any other interested organisation seeking to be headquartered in Perth; not only that, but extensive invitations were issued to the private sector seeking interests prepared to vie for one of the licences, and the only private interest to come forward was incorporated into the application.

Under those circumstances it would have been irresponsible of the WADC not to have pursued the prospect of a licence to be issued to a bank prepared to be headquartered in Perth. Rather than in an incorrect fashion criticise those people in the WADC who have been so successful, the member for Nedlands should pay tribute to one of those ideals which his father pursued so vigorously and that was the ideal of a foreign banking institution being headquartered in Perth as the first step of this State having a financial centre in relation to South-East Asia.

I am simply trying to underline the point that in the absence of any interest from those people who were invited to express some interest, the WADC stepped into the breach and was able to put together a consortium that included one of the world's leading banks—it is the only Japanese bank to have a triple "A" rating and it is a bank which has a character that is ideally suited to the Western Australian economic involvement.

It is mean of the member for Nedlands not to acknowledge the efforts of the WADC. It is true that in no sense will the WADC have a majority interest in the new bank. It will be a bank run by private interests with a minority interest held by the people of this State, and what is wrong with that?

Why is it that the member for Nedlands and the Leader of the Opposition object so violently to the people of this State holding a 15 to 20 per cent interest in a successful new venture? What is wrong with that?

Mr Court: You are bungling it and you are trying to justify it. You cut the private sector out.

MR BRIAN BURKE: I make no apology for the involvement of the WADC and I believe that its efforts were solely responsible for the bank being headquartered in Perth. Without the efforts of the corporation we would have been like Queensland—not one licence has been issued to an organisation prepared to headquarter in Brisbane—that could have been the case here and none would have been headquartered in Perth.

The truth is that no private interests possessed the capital or the will to seek such a licence. If the member for Nedlands is so smart, let him tell me the name of the private interest which would have pursued and obtained the licence.

Mr Court: You know only too well. Many financial institutions in St. George's Terrace, Western Australian companies, were prepared to go into partnership with foreign banks.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let the member for Nedlands name them.

Mr Court: When your Government corporation went into the bank you cut them out overnight.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the member for Nedlands is so sure that this is the case, I invite him to tell us who was cut out.

Mr Spriggs: What about the Morgan Gallup poll?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will tell the member in a moment. One swallow does not make a summer. Attend to the business at hand. Can the member for Nedlands tell us who was cut out? The member for Nedlands does not know. He is so definite in his accusations yet he does not know.

Mr Court: Do you think I should give information of this kind about financial institutions?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Parliament has every right to question the sincerity of the member for Nedlands, who makes very aggressive and definite statements about private interests being cut out of the applications, yet when asked to substantiate those allegations and definite statements, he will not provide any substantiation whatsoever; not one name.

The new bank, IBJ (Australia) Bank, will prove to be a boon to this State. It will be a boon because its character will reflect the economic needs of potential business people in this State and existing business people. Of course, as a major Japanese financial institution, there will be additional benefits from the presence in Perth of one of the major institutions of our major trading partner.

I want to put that on the record, and say to the member for Nedlands that it is less than generous of him to continue to attack the Western Australian Development Corporation for its efforts, successful as they have proved to be, to obtain a banking licence for an organisation to be headquartered in Perth.

I intend to move the following amendment to the motion—

Delete all words after "that" in line one, with a view to inserting the following—

This House notes the decision of the Exim Corporation to withdraw from W.A. Floral Enterprises and acknowledges the board of Exim view that much of the opposition was based on a misunderstanding of Exim's plans.

Mr Hassell: It had a pretty good understanding, that is why there has been an unconditional surrender.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I suppose the Leader of the Opposition could paint it that way if he likes.

Mr Hassell: We like.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I would rather have a Government prepared to listen, prepared to be persuaded, or prepared to be bullied, if one likes to use that term, than a Government like that of members opposite. As far as the previous Government was concerned, it did not matter what the public said. The Noonkanbah convoy went through, section 54B went through, the Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act was passed, and no-one was listened to. The Government was never big enough to admit it might have been wrong, or to change course.

Mr Hassell: Do you admit you were wrong?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not saying that.

Mr Hassell: No, of course not.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: No, I am not.

Mr Hassell: It is a mealy-mouthed statement.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: What I am saying is this: Unlike those who sit on the other side of this House, if we are persuaded to a point of view which might contradict a point of view previously adopted by us, we will have the courage to change our stance—something that members of the Opposition, with their narrow view, have never been prepared to do.

In the same way as the Leader of the Opposition called the Women's Advisory Council a bunch of hobos, in the same narrow, bigoted way he has never changed his position on anything. At least this Government is prepared to adapt our position, after taking into account all those things that the public might seek to impress upon it.

The second paragraph in the amendment I intend to move is as follows—

This House strongly supports the concept of commercially sound Government assistance to West Australian industry for the purpose of realizing Western Australia's export potential.

I turn now to the objectives of Western Australian Floral Enterprises and put into the record—

Mr MacKinnon: Is it possible for us to have a copy of that amendment?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: When I move it I will send a copy to members opposite.

To turn to the objective of the Western Australian Floral Enterprises as they were set down when the organisation was established, the objectives were as follows—

- (a) Establish a small production unit of selected range of wildflowers, exotic cut flowers and pot plants for specific export markets;
- (b) purchase suitable quality products from existing growers at the best prices possible to the grower and on a continual basis to maintain supply and product range on overseas markets;
- (c) have desirable products grown on contract, to meet the marketing requirements;
- (d) sell these products in available export markets and expand and develop new markets on a product/market target basis;
- (e) provide the necessary co-ordination for freight space allocation and, with assured volume of premium quality produce, negotiate suitable freight rates and space for future expansion of the industry;
- (f) determine specific market capacities for floricultural produce, and provide information to growers as to which areas to expand production;
- (g) provide active promotion drives and information on Western Australian floriculture produce on overseas markets; and
- (h) provide technical expertise to growers of contract grown crops and provide valuable market information and guidance to the State's floricultural industry as a whole.

I know that there are people in the industry who will not be and have not been convinced that the objectives as set out were objectives which went to the advantage or benefit of their industry. There may be a number of reasons for that.

Mr MacKinnon: They could see through it; that is why they were not convinced. Apparently your people have woken up because they have pulled out.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: There may be a number of reasons for those people in the industry not to

accept that the objectives as set down represented something which was to the advantage of the industry. The first obvious reason might be that the objectives do not in fact represent any advantage to the industry. That is at one extreme. At the other extreme, but just as unlikely, is that the industry decided it was not keen to see any expansion of export markets; it was not keen to see any increased prosperity within the industry.

If those are the two extremes, both of which are probably unacceptable, I guess the true explanation lies somewhere in the middle. The true explanation is probably the amalgamation of both sides on the one hand, and on the other a lack of appreciation or a lack of detail in explaining some of those objectives to the people who might have been affected, some of whom probably would not have been affected but who may have feared they would have been.

Let me make it clear, as the second part of the proposed amendment attempts to make it clear, that the Government does not apologise in any sense for attempting to expand the export markets that are presently pursued by floriculturists in this State and for seeking to improve the share of the export market of the State, as the total market is roundly estimated to be worth some \$3 billion in international trade terms. Nor do we apologise for looking closely at ways in which the present share of that market—a share of something less than \$2 million—might be expanded to the benefit of people within the industry firstly, and of all Western Australians secondly.

I guess that even those people—and I do not count the Opposition amongst them because, for the Opposition, it is a political exercise—who were most violently opposed to the Western Australian Floral Enterprises Ltd. concept, must have some lingering doubts about whether this new and different approach might not have brought benefits for this State that the previous Government failed to achieve. The last nine years of the previous Government really is a dismal record of failure.

Mr Hassell: We have heard this tune so many times it really is getting old. Nobody believes you any more.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: In the nine years of the previous Government, we had Bunbury Foods, and all that was exported was a lot of taxpayers' dollars. In those nine years, we saw the West Trade Centre. I suppose if we look at the nine years of our predecessor Government's record, there is not much to boast about.

Mr Court: It is the best export record of any State in Australia.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Perhaps the member for Nedlands was not present during the nine-year period to which I referred. It was a period which plunged this State headlong into the greatest recession it had experienced in the years since the 1930s. That is the truth. Unemployment was at record levels; inflation was at double-digit figures; the economic activity had contracted; the iron ore industry was languishing; the State was saddled with a North-West Shelf gas contract that would have plunged us all into penury had it proceeded unchanged. However, I am talking specifically about the attempts by the previous Government to provoke an expansion in export markets.

As I say, assistance to industry under the previous Government saw such illustrious successes as Bunbury Foods and the West Trade Centre! As I said previously, I do not apologise for the efforts of Exim to pursue a desirable objective, although it encountered criticism and contradiction as to whether that objective would be attained.

It is time for a different approach to the needs of our trading businesses and of the economic sectors that they support.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will tell the Leader of the Opposition why we are not going on with it. It is something that he may not understand, because if he was over here he would go ahead with it. He would not brook any contradiction. That is why it is difficult for the Leader of the Opposition to understand the rationale; and the rationale simply is that the efforts of Exim would not have survived in a basically hostile environment. The efforts that Exim was attempting to put in on behalf of the industry and the State could not have confronted the industry's open hostility; and it was sensible, in a situation where the industry did not believe that the proposed vehicle would be of assistance, to make sure that the vehicle did not persist.

I know what the Leader of the Opposition would have done, and I am aware that he will not change his mind about anything.

The record is clear. The member for Clontarf talks about private enterprise, but a succession of Liberal Governments were the greatest socialists that I have ever seen. It is absolutely unbelievable to hear people like the member for Clontarf braying about private enterprise and free enterprise when, under previous Liberal Governments, there was restriction and regulation; there was suffocation; there was a lack of imagination; and there was a lack of real effort on the part of a Government which had grown old in power to

address the problems of industry in a realistic and modern fashion. That is the truth, and when the Liberal Party was voted out of office—

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Do not talk to me about union tactics. Members opposite spent their whole time in office provoking union confrontation because they believed it advantaged them politically. It cost business a lot to pander to the political motives of members opposite. Every time there was any hint of an industrial stoppage, in went the then Government to exacerbate and extend the industrial disruption. To boast and to bray about the way in which it was aggressively handling unions, and at the same time conveniently ignoring the cost to industry and, worse than that, the cost to the community of a policy that deliberately set one section of the community against another in an unbending and unyielding fashion, quite deliberately to maximise the political advantage of the Opposition when it was in Government—

Mr Hassell: Industry knows the cost of the redundancy case you are supporting.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Industry knows that the present Government is accessible and fair, and that it will make decisions. Industry has been agreeably supportive of the present Government. We are grateful for that, and we suspect that the support of industry and business which is extended to the present Government is largely as a result of our willingness to listen, accommodate, and change our minds.

Mr Court: You did not even talk to them about this project. So much for consultation!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It still remains the truth that, in general terms, the Government has received the support of business and industry, because it has been prepared to listen and because it has been prepared to change its mind.

Mr Hassell: O'Connor got a good hearing from the Attorney General. He listened to him all right.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I repeat, one may wonder just whether Mr O'Connor might not have been done a disservice had the Attorney General, because he was frightened of the political repercussions, refused to enter a *nolle prosequi* in O'Connor's case.

Mr MacKinnon: Do you not think the courts are fair?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is all very well to bray from the Opposition benches; and I accept the role of the Opposition to question. However, I wonder whether, in their quieter moments, members opposite ever stop to regret the fact that they, in

broad brush terms, conveniently ignored all of the rights of people such as Mr Atkinson not to be defamed, or the rights of people on the Western Australian Development Corporation whom the Opposition is fond of vilifying. I wonder whether members opposite ever stop to think about the possible disservice that Mr O'Connor might have been done had the Attorney General been persuaded on the facts and on the advice of the Solicitor General that a *nolle* was appropriate, but he had desisted from entering that *nolle* because he knew of the political repercussions.

Members opposite know as well as I do that they could not find an issue unless we wrapped it up and sent it to them.

In that situation there was no political downside for anyone but the Government. I wonder whether the Government would not have been acting politically if Mr Berinson had been instructed not to act as he did.

In response to the interjections, let me say that I accept that in respect of WA Floral Enterprises, the consultation with the industry was not as extensive as it should have been. I accept that many of the fears expressed by people within the industry were not allayed. I accept that there was no prospect of WA Floral Enterprises operating successfully unless the Government decided, come hell or high water, to pursue its objective and to ignore completely all the people within the industry who were expressing concerns. Had we decided to do that I have no doubt the matter could have been progressed, but I think it is to the Government's credit that it has accepted the advice of Exim Corporation, which made the decision at its board meeting today not to proceed with WA Floral Enterprises.

Mr Hassell: Did you know about the decision beforehand?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not know how often I have to say to the Leader of the Opposition that people such as those on the Exim board do not do things at the behest of politicians and that were politicians to attempt to instruct them they would not be on the board for long because they would resign. The WA Development Corporation Act specifically prohibits the corporation from being instructed by the Government. On that basis the member for Nedlands would imply that the WA Development Corporation directors are prepared to ignore the Act under which they are constituted. But let me return to the situation involving WA Floral Enterprises.

The options the Government faced were simply to ignore the protestations of people in the industry, to proceed to the success that we thought WA

Floral Enterprises could have achieved, and to proceed to the benefit that we thought WA Floral Enterprises could have brought to the State generally and to the industry in particular. We could have proceeded in that fashion, ignoring the objections of those people who thought that the proposal was one that would damage them and those people who were very stridently opposed to us.

I guess that the Leader of the Opposition will, as his interjections would suggest, reply that the Government's decision represents a massive wonder and that he will seek to maximise the political advantage to be wrought from the situation. That is his job and that is accepted. But I put to the Parliament the alternative point of view.

Mr Hassell: You are absolutely right but you are not going on with it!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: There are lots of things which I have believed to be right but which I have not proceeded with or pushed, simply because other people did not believe they were right. The Leader of the Opposition's thinking is that because he believes he is right he pushes on regardless in a narrow and bigoted fashion. He has given the game away entirely when he says, "When you think you are right, ignore the protestations of other people; don't stop".

Mr Old: He didn't say that.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Leader of the Opposition said, "You think you are right but you will stop", and that interjection occasioned mirth on the other side of the House. Certainly that is the inference I draw, fairly or unfairly, from the Leader of the Opposition's interjection, and that is exactly the point I am trying to make. If a person adopts that sort of narrow and closed view of his own inevitably right opinion, he will never listen, he will not stop, and if industry protests he will ignore it.

Mr Hassell: You are still not admitting you are wrong.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not believe that I am wrong. I believe that WA Floral Enterprises could only survive at the hands of a Government prepared to ignore all those people involved in the industry who would object to its existence. The Leader of the Opposition may be prepared to do that, but this Government is not.

We accept the political challenge that can come from people who will say that the Government is weak and has bowed to pressure and has vacillated, having previously made a certain decision. But quite frankly, believing that what we proposed would be of assistance to the industry, if the industry does not want that assistance that we

think would be forthcoming, we will not force it on the industry. We do not take the same view about our inevitable rightness that the Leader of the Opposition takes about his position, a view that has him saying, "Whenever I make up my mind I will pursue relentlessly the opinion I have formed because no-one else can be right". The Leader of the Opposition has underlined that fundamental characteristic for which he is renowned.

We accept those political challenges, but against that we would stand the strength of a Government that is prepared to say that having pursued and put forward a proposition that has incurred the opposition of many people involved in the industry in which the proposition would be current, we are not prepared to force on that industry a proposal that we think is good for the industry, a proposal that we think will expand export markets for all the industry, a proposal that we think will congregate the technical, managerial, and representative skill that will enable bottlenecks to be rapidly cleared. We think the project would be of benefit, but we are not prepared to prosecute our belief to the exclusion of people with firmly and honestly-held views about the wrongness of our position. The practical difficulties that would plunge WA Floral Enterprises into that sort of cauldron would not do the industry or the new organisation any good whatever.

Amendments to Motion

In conclusion I move an amendment—

Delete all words after "That" in line 1, with a view to inserting the following—

This House notes the decision of the Exim corporation to withdraw from Western Australian Floral Enterprises and acknowledges the Board of Exim view that much of the opposition was based on a misunderstanding of Exim's plans.

This House strongly supports the concept of commercially sound Government assistance to Western Australian industry for the purpose of realising Western Australia's export potential.

There were two matters raised during debate by way of interjection with which I would like to deal briefly now. Both matters touch upon the tenor of the Government's action in this matter, and the first was land rights. I think the pressure through which we have passed in respect of land rights very accurately reflects the characteristics which are present in the amendment I have moved this evening.

Points of Order

Mr MacKINNON: I fail to see the relevance of land rights to a debate about the Exim Corporation. We are prepared to debate land rights all week if that is what the Government wants but at the moment we are debating a motion about the Exim Corporation. My point of order is that it is highly disorderly for the Premier to be debating land rights, whether or not it has been raised by interjection, because, Mr Deputy Speaker, as you are well aware, under Standing Orders interjections are highly disorderly.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): In answer to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I have heard interjections about land rights from the back benches of the Opposition and I have heard interjections about the J. J. O'Connor incident. I ask the Premier to confine his remarks to the business before the House at this time.

Mr OLD: On a further point of order, does an amendment have to be seconded before it can be discussed?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): As far as I am concerned the Premier is still on his feet; when the Premier completes his address I will call for a seconder.

Debate (on amendments to motion) Resumed

Mr BRIAN BURKE: In deference to your ruling, Sir, I will not discuss the matters that were raised by way of interjection. I will simply conclude by saying that there are good polls and bad polls and one swallow does not make a summer. I am quietly confident that next May the verdict of the public of this State will see the present Government returned with a thumping majority.

Mr Tonkin: I formally second the amendment.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Leader of the Opposition) [8.22 p.m.]: I oppose the amendment. This is an amendment which seeks to completely negative the motion which was moved.

I wish to deal with the substance of the matter. A great victory was won today; it was a victory for private enterprise and a victory for the business interests in this State which wanted to go about their business and their living without competition from a Government-funded and Government-controlled socialist enterprise.

The victory which was won today was when the Western Australian Exim Corporation and the Government unconditionally surrendered and said they would not go ahead with the floral exports joint venture. Commonsense prevailed, except for the fact that the Premier then came to the House and would not admit that he was wrong. He still wanted to have it both ways. The Premier said

that what the Government had proposed to do was absolutely right, but it would not continue with it, although what the Government was trying to do was right for the State. He said the Government had been completely right, but because the poor fools in private enterprise could not understand it, the Government would not go on with it. The Premier considered them poor fools because they would not swallow his bait. Instead of showing graciousness and simple courtesy by saying, "We made a mistake", the Premier tried to justify the continuation of an establishment of Government enterprise which would interfere with private enterprise to disadvantage Western Australia and the people in business in this State.

A statement was issued today by the Government's media machine saying that the Western Australian Exim Corporation is to withdraw from the joint venture with private enterprise to expand the export market for Western Australian flowers. Of course, that statement is not even accurate in the first sentence. It was not a venture to expand the export market for Western Australian flowers; it was a venture to establish a Government producer of flowers.

The venture was to be 70 per cent owned by the Government, through the corporation. Let us go back to the basis of this Exim organisation. As I understand it, Exim is a subsidiary company of Western Australian Government Holdings which was formerly Northern Mining Corporation and the Floral Exports Company which is in turn a subsidiary of Exim or the corporation, I cannot remember which. However, the fact of the matter is that it all had its beginnings with Northern Mining Corporation. Northern Mining Corporation was the original owner of the interest in the diamond mine at Argyle.

On 13 October 1983 the Premier presented a Bill to the House which was titled the Northern Mining Corporation (Acquisition) Bill. That Bill sought the approval of Parliament for the Government to acquire shares in Northern Mining Corporation. The Premier's second reading speech occupies only a little over two columns in *Hansard*. No mention was made about flowers in that second reading speech. Nothing was mentioned except the matter of the Government's acquisition of the diamond interest. When moving the second reading of the Bill, as is reported on page 3135 of *Hansard*, the Premier stated as follows—

The Bill supplements the proposed appropriation by seeking statutory authority for the purchase of the corporation by the State and such ancillary powers as may be necessary to ensure that the company is able to operate in

a normal commercial manner, under State ownership.

He went on to say, at page 3136—

The Bill is a short, simple measure which is self-explanatory. It provides for the purchase of any or all of the share capital of the company and for the subsequent sale of all or any of the issued share capital should the Government so decide.

The speech concluded with this note—

This Bill and the associated provisions in the Budget are a vital part of the Government's overall strategy to enhance the benefits for the public flowing from major resource developments in this State. It is an integral part of our economic strategy and an extension of the Budget thrust to stimulate a return to economic growth with the Government working in partnership with the private sector.

Nowhere in that Bill was there any suggestion that the authority given to the Government by Parliament would be subverted, as it has been by the use of this corporation as a vehicle for the Government's socialist ambition to get involved in the flower exporting business. The House was misled, if it relied on what the Premier said. The Premier said, "This Bill is a vital part of the Government's overall strategy to enhance the benefits for the public flowing from major resource developments in this State". We now find that the legislation is being used as a vehicle to enter into the flower exporting business, except that the Government has withdrawn from that move in the face of the concerted opposition of the whole industry.

I asked the Government a series of questions about other ventures it was getting into, because this whole situation is getting completely out of control. Last week I asked the Premier what business activities the Western Australian Development Corporation was engaged in. His two-line answer was that they were commercial matters for the corporation. He would not tell the Parliament and the people of this State what the Western Australian Development Corporation was up to. He kept that matter a secret. Today I asked another series of questions. I asked whether the WADC proposed the establishment of, or had it established, a subsidiary or other corporation for any proposed business venture.

I asked a similar question about the Tourism Commission, Western Australian Government Holdings—formerly Northern Mining Corporation—the Exim Corporation, and about Western Australian Floral Enterprises and I received an answer to each of those questions. The answer in

regard to the Tourism Commission was partly relevant because I asked the Minister, representing the Minister for Tourism, if the Tourism Commission proposed the establishment of, or had it established a subsidiary or other corporation for any other proposed business venture. The answer I received was as follows—

In accordance with section 15(1)(a) of the Western Australian Tourism Commission Act 1983, the Commission is proposing, in association with an established operator, to form a company to participate in a tourism development project.

So we have only just got rid of one Government venture into private enterprise and we find that there is another Government involvement in it. In fact, I have heard about people ringing the Tourism Commission and asking it for help with a guarantee of loans for investment in tourism expansion and they have been told that the commission would be prepared to provide money as equity capital. In other words, the Tourism Commission is only too anxious to move into private enterprise and that is what it appears to be doing.

The Government has got out of the area of flowers and it is now into the area of tourism. What will the Government be in next? I will make a suggestion—it will be the meat, vegetable, or fishing industries. From discussions I had in Geraldton this week I have reason to believe that it might be tomatoes. That issue is real especially if we are going to have the Government moving into the area of vegetables and into other areas of private enterprise.

Mr Bateman: You have got it all your own way. You blokes have had sticky fingers for too many years and it is time you got out of it.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): Order! I ask the member for Canning to please desist from interjecting.

Mr Peter Jones interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! That does not give the member for Narrogin the right to counter-interject.

Mr HASSELL: The member for Canning seems to have some difficulty in controlling himself.

Let me go back to the simple point: Why do we need Government involvement in private enterprise? Why do we want to saddle the taxpayers of this State with a liability to support a 70 per cent ownership in a cut flower industry?

If the Premier had come into this House tonight and said that the Government was wrong and that it would never pursue that line again, the Opposi-

sition would not pursue the matter in this way. However, the Premier has made it clear and he has not made one tiny concession to the proposition by saying that he was wrong in doing what he was doing. He said, in effect, that the Government was staging a temporary withdrawal until it found another way to do it.

I ask how long it will be before the Government moves back into this industry and before it comes up with another scheme for floral exports of this kind, and how long it will be before it moves into the vegetable industry. I ask members not to forget that the Exim Corporation idea was founded on the basis that it would permit the export of vegetables to South-East Asia. We will find Exim farms, Exim producers, Exim cabbages, and so on.

Mr Court: Is that part of the South West Development Corporation?

Mr HASSELL: I did not include the South West Development Corporation—I missed it. It is another corporation we find moving into private enterprise. I mentioned the WADC and the Exim floral exports, but I missed the South West Development Corporation.

Mr Pearce interjected.

Mr HASSELL: The Minister for Education should not be pathetic, but he does it every time. This Minister chirps away like the silly little bird that he is.

Let us go back to the business of looking at the Government's involvement in private enterprise. If the Government comes up with more and more of these types of ventures it will run into more and more trouble and it knows it. It is an appalling situation.

Mr Pearce: It is amazing how keen you are.

Several members interjected.

Mr Old: Watch it boy, you are not in your seat.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): Order! I inform the member for Katanning-Roe that I have asked that there be no interjections. The member has continued to interject after I have asked on several occasions that there be no interjections, but he is prompting more interjections from the Government benches and it is not really helping the cause. I would like to hear only the Leader of the Opposition speaking in the House at this time.

Point of Order

Mr OLD: Mr Acting Speaker, I acknowledge your ruling.

Mr Pearce: You'll be out again.

Mr OLD: I have no doubt whatsoever. Might I suggest, Mr Acting Speaker, that the member for Perth be instructed not to interject when not in his seat.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I happen to be the Acting Speaker at this time and when I hear the member for Perth interject when not in his seat, I will correct that situation. The Leader of the Opposition.

Debate (on amendments to motion) Resumed

Mr HASSELL: We all know that the nearest we will get to hearing a speech from the member for Perth is a mumbling interjection.

Mr Brian Burke: You complain when he is not in the Chamber and you complain when he is in the Chamber.

Mr HASSELL: I advise the Premier that I am not complaining. It is a delight for the Opposition to have the member for Perth in the House.

Let us get back to the point because it is very important. What I am suggesting is that apart from considering what new ventures the Government may enter into—I suggest there are three real possibilities, vegetables, the fishing industry and meat, and a couple of others that could be considered—let us look at what happened in the situation involving the Western Australian Floral Exports and the impropriety that was pursued by the Government in this case. It is the impropriety that is very much an issue in relation to the other possible ventures that the Government may seek.

What happened in this instance is that an industry which had worked closely with the Department of Agriculture and had worked with its officers, suddenly found that the confidential commercial information its members had made available fully to those officers was to be used in competition against them. What an incredible impropriety that presented. When that action was challenged at a meeting the Premier was not present, the Deputy Premier was not present, and the Chairman of the WADC was not present to defend it. None of those people turned up to the meeting and it was left to the man in the hot seat to try to justify his position. He was responsible for having confidential commercial information used in a competitive way against a business which was already operating. That is not all. Let us look not only to the ventures that this Government may well be moving into and which are on the horizon because as the Premier said they are ventures—

Mr Brian Burke: Are you talking about Geraldton tomatoes?

Mr HASSELL: I am talking about the vegetable industry.

Mr Brian Burke: I thought you said tomatoes.

Mr HASSELL: Tomatoes are part of the vegetable industry.

Mr Brian Burke: What about other vegetables like "oranges"?

Mr HASSELL: What about the information that has been given to the Department of Industrial Development over the years by businesses seeking their co-operation? How will that information be used by officers of the Government in the years ahead or by officers of these Government corporations? The whole foundation of this venture—from which the Government has temporarily retreated today—was immoral and wrong from the start. The Government used the corporation, which it was authorised by Parliament to buy, for the purpose of acquiring an interest in a diamond mine. The officer used in this venture had been entrusted with confidential scientific and commercial information by the people in the business he was serving through the Department of Agriculture. That is the basis upon which this Government proceeded. That is the impropriety and wrongness with which it proceeded. Yet the Premier comes to the House in the face of the withdrawal today and continues to say that the original proposal was right. The original proposal was wrong; the use of the officer from the department was wrong; the structuring of the organisation with 70 per cent Government interest was wrong; and the proposition kept open and alive by the Premier, that other ventures will be gone into, is also wrong.

It is all very well for the Premier to use his numbers—and no doubt he will—to change the motion, pat himself on the back and try to make out that all is well. The truth is that the Premier said to the House tonight that the Government was going full steam ahead and that its actions tonight were a temporary manoeuvre. He has not conceded one iota of wrongness in what he has done.

He has not conceded that he misused Northern Mining Company; that he should not have allowed the officer of the Department of Agriculture to be used; that the Government was wrong to have a 70 per cent interest in the business venture; or, that the Government should not be going into business at all. He has left it open to go on and on and there is every need for this motion to continue. I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 24

Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mrs Beggs	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Bridge	Mr McIver
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Parker
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Read
Mr Carr	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Davies	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Evans	Mr Taylor
Mrs Henderson	Mr Tonkin
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Hughes	Mrs Watkins

(Teller)

Noes 17

Mr Blaikie	Mr Old
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Spriggs
Mr Cash	Mr Stephens
Mr Court	Mr Thompson
Mr Coyne	Mr Trethowan
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr Mensaros	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Bertram	Mr Laurance
Mr Bryce	Mr McNee
Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Crane
Mr Troy	Mr Rushton
Mr Grill	Mr Clarko
Mr Barnett	Mr Grayden

Amendment thus passed.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Leader of the House) [8.45 p.m.]: I move an amendment—

Insert the following passage after the word "that" in line 1—

This House notes the decision of the Exim corporation to withdraw from Western Australian Floral Enterprises and acknowledges the Board of Exim view that much of the opposition was based on a misunderstanding of Exim's plans.

This House strongly supports the concept of commercially sound Government assistance to Western Australian industry for the purpose of realizing Western Australia's export potential.

Mr PEARCE: I formally second the motion.

MR OLD (Katanning-Roe) [8.46 p.m.]: I intend to move a further amendment and to speak to the foreshadowed amendment. I want to say a few words about the activity of the Government. This is one of the most serious incursions by Government into private industry that we have ever seen. It indicates the desire of the socialists of this State to get their sticky fingers into any industry which shows potential for making money. The sector that Exim used as its entry into private enterprise is a truly independent industry because it is made up

of small producers in the floriculture industry. The industry has been taking advice from the Department of Agriculture for some years. The Department of Agriculture to its credit became very interested in the floriculture industry to the extent that it created a small division to cater for the cut flower industry. The participants in the floriculture industry became so interested in the department's preparedness to assist them that they in turn were prepared to discuss all their business attitudes and business undertakings with the department.

It is unfortunate that the confidence in the department of those people engaged in the floriculture industry has been entirely shattered by the removal of Mr Watkins from the Department of Agriculture. That is one of the most despicable things that has been done. I knew Mr Watkins through his activities in the department and knew of the work being carried out not only in the cut flower industry but also in the promotion of the wild flower industry. I was very pleasantly surprised at the activities of the department in that regard and also at the progress being made. The confidence of the people involved in the industry has been completely shattered. The Premier, in his usual bland manner, has been telling us how Exim has reconsidered its position.

That is a lot of rot. Exim was told to reconsider its decision. But it was noticeable that at the industry meeting which the chief of Exim, Mr Horgan, and Mr Watkins attended, neither the Premier nor the Minister for Agriculture was present. This is not unusual; in fact it will be unusual when they decide to attend some meetings when the going gets tough. They say that when the going gets tough the tough get going.

The next move, on the admission of Mr Horgan, is to move into fisheries and the pork industry. What the Leader of the Opposition was saying was not supposition, because this has already been stated by Mr Horgan. Mr Horgan has not only stated he will move into these industries; he has stated the reason for moving into them. The reason that he is moving into them is, in his own words, "We cannot rely on the farmers and miners producing all the products; we have to do it".

The Government has to get its sticky fingers in. Mr Horgan has to get his sticky fingers in. Mr Watkins has become part of this absolutely disgraceful concern which this socialist Government which is temporarily governing this State of Western Australia has created.

What justification is there in the first place for Exim even to countenance moving into the fishing industry? The fishing industry is under continual

pressure; so much so that the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife had to make a decision not very long ago to remove some of the fishermen from the tuna industry. One can imagine what will happen if one has another competitor in the tuna industry.

The Minister failed to take any notice of the scallop fishermen at Abrolhos. There are no scallops. One can imagine Mr Horgan sailing his ship to Rat Island to get a few scallops there.

Mr Court: The kangaroo shooters are fearful he may move into that area.

Mr OLD: That is not impossible. Provided the kangaroo shooters can show they have a viable business, there is no doubt Mr Horgan and his little gang will move in there.

There is a need for the Government to give advice to industry. There is a definite need for this in the agricultural industry. But what has happened now is that the whole concept of confidence in Government departments will be shattered. The whole concept has gone out of the window.

It seems to me that the greatest loser in this fiasco will be Mr Watkins. Mr Watkins has been lured by the Government out of the Department of Agriculture and into this pseudo Government-private enterprise organisation, and then he will be dumped. When he is dumped he will not be without a job because there is always room in the Tourism Commission! It seems to me Mr Watkins may be the fifth director of the Tourism Commission because everybody who gets the shunt now either goes there, or he organises the America's Cup. That is how ridiculous the activities of this Government have become.

I wonder at the gall of Mr Horgan, the executive director of Exim, when he can make frivolous comments such as this one—

The chairman of Exim, Mr John Horgan, said tongue-in-cheek that the new company had already managed to get the nurserymen united—even if in opposition.

I ask members: Is that any way to treat an industry which had no export potential, but which has now moved to the stage where it is contributing, even if it is only \$2 million a year, to the economy of the State? The Premier blithely talks about \$18 billion. That is a global figure. I do not know whether he expects everybody in Holland to stop growing tulips and let Exim take the whole thing over, but I doubt it very much.

The Leader of the Opposition was not being facetious when he talked about Exim possibly moving into the vegetable export industry. The

vegetable export industry in this State is one of the most efficient export industries for its size that we have. I am sure it would be nice to have a slice of the already established export industry into the Asian countries by some of our vegetable exporters.

Mr Court: It is a pity they do not have a shipping service.

Mr OLD: One of the problems of the vegetable exporters is the fact that they have to rely entirely on air freight. They get the odd ship, but they are not sure whether it will come in tomorrow or this time next week. If one has perishable goods ready to go, as the floricultural people will know, they must go when they are ready.

It is fine for Mr Watkins to say, "Let us increase the number of aeroplanes coming into Perth. Let us find an aeroplane to carry flowers away".

This is what he said—

Mr Watkins said that it was essential that the new company could fill a freight space on an aircraft, possibly to Singapore, each week.

Then Mr Horgan said this—

This could be achieved either through guaranteeing aircraft a regular cargo of flowers combined with other perishable goods, or through charter.

I would be interested to find an airline prepared to charter for a cargo of cut flowers. One of the problems with the horticultural or floricultural industry exporters is that airlines would prefer to carry turnips because they are heavier. Unlike shipping, where freight goes by capacity—

Mr Pearce: With a charter flight you pay a straight charter fee.

Mr OLD: By Jove, the Minister is improving!

Mr Pearce: You are not.

Mr OLD: One hires an aeroplane for so many dollars and then divides the number of dollars by the kilograms. Right?

Mr Pearce: Wrong. You charter the whole aeroplane; it does not matter if it flies empty. You pay that fee, either for the weight or per bunch of flowers. That is what makes it viable. That is the economic basis of this business. That is where your supermarket went broke. I am sorry for the small businessmen who lost their livelihoods in your supermarket.

Mr OLD: I need say no more. One of the senior Ministers in the Government has displayed his absolute lack of knowledge of anything to do with this particular subject. He does not even make a good schoolteacher; how can one expect him to

understand anything about freight loads or chartering aeroplanes? Tiger Moths possibly, but do not let us look at 747s.

In conclusion, before I move my amendment, I shall quote a report of comments made by Mr Gale. This statement appeared in a submission by the floricultural industry to the Premier and I do not doubt its veracity. The statement reads as follows—

There is concern in the industry at the type of assurances provided by Mr. K. Gale. For example, carnation growers were assured that WAFEL would be concentrating on wildflowers and wildflower growers were assured that WAFEL would concentrate on exotics.

One way or the other, that is a complete and utter falsehood. It indicates the insincerity of the whole organisation.

Amendment on the Amendment

I move an amendment—

To delete all words in the amendment after "This House" where first appearing, with a view to inserting the following—

- (a) notes the decision of the Exim Corporation to withdraw from WA Floral Enterprises and urges the Government to order Exim to cease any activity which will bring it into competition with private enterprise; and
- (b) strongly supports the concept of commercially sound Government assistance to Western Australian industry that has the potential to profitably improve Western Australia's export performance.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [9.03 p.m.]: I second the amendment. When I moved the original motion some two weeks ago we were dealing with an industry which was under attack. Although the wording of the amendment on the amendment we are debating differs from that of the motion I moved originally in this House, the words "to order Exim to cease any activity which will bring it into competition with private enterprise" are very important.

From the word go we made it very clear that we did not want the Government to be involved in a trading corporation, let alone a trading corporation which was to be involved in producing goods. This Government has scared the living daylights out of the small business community and its various activities have resulted in its own employees losing confidence in it. The Government has made a

botch of the way it has handled the Department of Industrial Development, the Tourism Commission, the Public Works Department, and various other departments. The Government has also lost the confidence of the small business sector and the position in respect of Exim is a classic example of the types of deals the Government is getting into which are scaring the business community.

The Premier has yet to tell us how the Government got involved in Exim, a subsidiary of WA Holdings, formerly Northern Mining Corporation NL, which itself can get involved in anything. When we debated the legislation in relation to Northern Mining in this House, the Premier made it clear the legislation was required for one purpose only: To purchase an interest in the diamond venture. However, it is now involving itself in any activities it wants to go into.

To the credit of the cut flower and nursery industries, they have stood and fought for their survival. They have won that battle, but it is important that the Government give those industries an assurance that it wants to support and help them. The Government should not go into competition with such industries; rather, it should face up to some of the very real problems experienced by exporters in this country, in particular in this State, and give them encouragement. The Government should not take the action it has taken which is to go into direct competition with those industries.

We saw the Government flounder around when it got caught up to its neck in this venture. Obviously its actions were not very well thought through. The Government tried to reassure the industry to the effect that, "We are not going to sell flowers on the domestic market". Two weeks ago, when we debated the motion, the Deputy Premier said the Government was making a great move in respect of this matter. However, now the Government is pulling out of its involvement. As the Leader of the Opposition explained, the way in which the Government is pulling out of its involvement is appalling. The Government has not said that it will not continue to enter into such ventures and that is the reason this amendment is so important and why it contains the words, "urges the Government to order Exim to cease any activity which will bring it into competition with private enterprise".

The flower industry has enormous potential on which it is capitalising already. The achievements in recent years are a credit to the industry. It has reversed the trend from one of Western Australia being a large importer of flowers from the Eastern States to a situation in which this State is largely self-sufficient and, in turn, is exporting goods to

the Eastern State and overseas. That has occurred in a short time and it is a credit to the industry.

It surprised me that the Government decided to take on this industry which has been performing well. However, the industry needs help in many areas and I hope the Government does not avenge itself on the industry, but rather continues to provide assistance to enable it to handle the problems it is facing. The people involved in this industry do not want handouts. They just want a hand to break down some of the barriers which are stopping them expanding further not only internally but also on an export basis.

Exim and the Western Australian Development Corporation are potentially dangerous tools in the hands of this Government. In this House last night I expressed my concern that the WADC is now being given responsibility for the Treasury's short-term money market funds. I explained how that took place and the Premier knows that once those funds are in the hands of the WADC, they are its to invest. Those funds amount to approximately \$400 million. The Premier says that the Government will not interfere in the way in which the WADC goes about its activities, just as it will not interfere in Exim. However, the Government is giving those people \$400 million to invest and that money has gone out of the hands of Treasury. We shall continue to hammer that issue in order that the public are made aware of what is taking place.

Exim may involve itself in any venture without being subject to the scrutiny of this Parliament. It is becoming obvious that the Government does not like small business. Why is that the case? The Government does not like the people involved in the small business sector because they are independent. They are entrepreneurs, and they think and fight for themselves. The Labor Party and the unions cannot organise those sorts of people, and they do not like them, because they do not come under the Labor Party's strict caucus and rules.

Where is the Minister for Small Business whenever we debate these issues? Why does he not defend the small businesses he is meant to represent?

Mr Brian Burke: How can he? He is in Hong Kong.

Mr COURT: The Minister for Small Business has sidestepped this issue. He has said that the Premier is handling the Exim Corporation. During the debate two weeks ago, the Premier handled this matter as it relates to Exim, but the Minister for Small Business should have been fighting for the interests of those small business people. I have been very critical of that Minister's actions in respect of the redundancy decision. Fancy a Min-

ister for Small Business in any Government supporting the redundancy provisions which are currently before the Industrial Commission and which will severely harm the small business community and result in unemployment.

Mr Pearce: Most small businesses will be unaffected by those provisions, as was clearly demonstrated in this House three weeks ago.

Mr COURT: It was clearly demonstrated at that time that those redundancy provisions would affect either directly or indirectly all small businesses in this State, and the Minister for Education knows that. That redundancy decision would have to be the most severe attack ever on business and employment in this State.

Mr Pearce: Small business would be exempted almost absolutely and completely, and well you know it.

Mr COURT: We made it very clear in the House, as the Minister knows, just what effect that redundancy decision would have on employment in this State.

Mr Pearce: It will have almost no effect on small businesses.

Mr COURT: I can tell the Minister that one small business which will be hurt by the redundancy decision is the cut flower industry about which we are debating tonight. It is a labour intensive industry; it employs a lot of people. These businesses can be over the 15-employee limit. And how long will it remain at 15?

Mr Pearce: You have no respect for the intelligence of people in small business. You are just like your father; a chip off the old block.

Mr COURT: Oh well, that will do me no harm. We have said from the outset that a Government trading corporation is totally unnecessary. In Opposition the present Government kept talking about wanting its "windows into industry", about having an equity in industry, so that it would know what was going on. It is nothing short of scandalous for the Government to use taxpayers' funds in this way. The people in this industry have to put their earnings at risk when they put money into their business. These people pay taxes to the Government to provide essential services. But what happens? Their taxes are used by the Government so that it can go into competition against them. It is scandalous that the Government should even have considered this type of activity. As the member for Katanning-Roe said, the Government seems to think that the private sector is stupid. The Government says, "They don't know how to go about it; we can do it better".

This Government will be thrown out at the next election because this State is made up basically of hard-working, entrepreneurial, free enterprise-type people. Not only the people who own the businesses, but also the people who work in them are free enterprise people. They know that they will get a fair wage for a fair day's work.

Mr Pearce: Unless you work for Geraldton truck owners!

Mr COURT: I am glad the Minister mentioned that; he put his foot in it that time. He is prepared to use this House to defame that Geraldton truck operator, yet his Government had the nerve two weeks ago to withdraw extortion charges against Mr O'Connor.

Mr Pearce: That man got eight weeks' worth of wages off a worker.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): Order! I ask the Minister for Education to stop interjecting and in that way allow the member for Nedlands to restrict his comments to the amendment on the amendment before the House.

Mr COURT: I was in Geraldton on Sunday and Monday and I can assure members that the people there have become very concerned to find that one of their people is continually being defamed in this House by many members opposite when he cannot defend himself. The member for Pilbara is a classic case of a person who, during the debate, was prepared to accuse that man of wrongdoing when he had to go before an industrial court.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member should return to the motion before the House.

Mr COURT: Export industries are critical to the future of this State. We must understand the problems they face, and those problems are really being highlighted by the fact that in Australia today the Federal Government, to its credit, has continued the process of deregulating the financial market. It has floated the dollar, and this has enabled the Australian dollar to show its true worth, although unfortunately its value has dropped severely. At the same time the Federal Government is insisting on maintaining a highly regulated labour market. The Federal Government needs to wake up to the fact that one of the best things it can do to help not only export industries but also all industries and employment in this country is to deregulate the labour market in the same way it has deregulated the financial market. The Government is scaring people by saying that we will end up with slave labour, but we will in fact end up with higher levels of employment; we will be able to return to full employment. Furthermore, we will end up by raising our standard of living right across the board.

That point was highlighted this morning at our small business conference. One of our keynote speakers said that with a deregulated labour market his firm alone would employ 1 000 extra young people tomorrow.

Mr Brian Burke: He did not exactly say that he could do that with deregulation; he said that if you dropped their wages to \$90 he could do that. But that is not deregulation; that is wage cutting.

Mr COURT: It is not a matter of dropping wages to \$90. As he explained, it would be doubling their wages from \$42 to \$90. There would be 1 000 additional people employed.

Mr Brian Burke: What would it do to the wages of those already employed?

Mr COURT: People asked questions just like that; they asked what would happen when those people reached 18 years-of-age. He said that the 15-year-olds currently received \$42 while they were on the dole but that under his system they would get \$90 while working, and that is what we want in this country.

Mr Parker: What about the people currently working and getting whatever the current award wage is, people between the ages of 15 and 18 years?

Mr COURT: The problem is that very few people are working. The problem is that 25 per cent of young people are out of work. It seems that every time anyone other than the Government comes up with a proposition to help solve the youth unemployment problem, every time someone mentions deregulating the labour market, Government members cry out, "slave labour", yet they are prepared to allow 25 per cent of young people in this country to be unemployed. That is a national disgrace; it is a scandal.

Another area where the Government should be helping export industries is that which involves cost pressures, not only the wage costs but also other costs which go to the very high f.o.b. prices which are hurting our exports. The Opposition has debated in this House and has expressed its concern that the many costs—the shipping costs, the wharf costs, the handling charges and all the rest—which go to make the f.o.b. price make it difficult for the State to expand its overseas markets. We also have the problem of the unreliability of shipping and the problem of airfreight in some cases.

It was a classic case when two weeks ago, in the very week that Mr O'Connor was let off those charges, he orchestrated the disruption at Perth Airport. It put flights days behind schedule. If one was a cut flower grower and the flowers were cut, prepared, packaged and ready to export, and out

at the airport on schedule, what would happen if the planes were not flying? The planes were not flying because Mr O'Connor pulled them out. What did these people do? They had to dump those flowers onto the local market because after a day or so, flowers are not in an exportable condition.

They are the types of problems which we want this Government to face up to in order to help that industry. The flower industry must be applauded for the stand it has taken on this issue.

Credit must also go to the member for Darling Range. He should be commended on his wise handling of this unfortunate issue. I hope the Government has learned its lesson over this exercise and that it stays out of the private sector. I urge the Government to support our export industries and not to harm them.

I support the amendment moved by the member for Katanning-Roe.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.22 p.m.]: I also support the amendment moved by the member for Katanning-Roe and I do so, firstly, because the amendment moved by the Leader of the House cannot be supported by the Opposition parties, as members will understand when they read even the first paragraph of that amendment.

Mr Parker: I thought you spoke for only one Opposition party.

Mr MacKINNON: Yes, we do. The amendment reads as follows—

This House notes the decision of Exim Corporation to withdraw from WA Floral Enterprises and acknowledges the Board of Exim's view that much of the opposition was based on that misunderstanding of Exim's plans.

I want to use for the basis of my explanation as to why we cannot support that amendment, Exim's own papers that were presented last week to a meeting of flower producers in this State. This piece of information provided by the corporation was an attempt to explain to people in the industry what the Government proposal was all about. There was no misunderstanding by the industry. As members will soon see, at the very beginning of the handout the Exim people had this to say—

To ensure that a quality product is available, WAFE is to set up over the next five years, a 200 hectare production unit to grow wildflowers, exotic cut flowers and flowering pot plants for the specific export targets of South East Asia, Hong Kong and Japan, in addition to established markets.

I am no expert in this industry; far be that from the case, but people to whom I have spoken in the industry know that it is already exporting to these specific export targets of South-East Asia, Hong Kong, and Japan. These people are already in that business and they see the Government setting up a 200-hectare production unit in the areas I have indicated to go into direct competition with them in these overseas areas. One might ask how I know that. The clients of people to whom members of the Opposition have spoken have been approached by representatives of Exim saying, "We will be ready to supply you very soon. Make sure you are aware of that. Make sure that you check the price with us before you buy." That is why there is no misunderstanding and that is why the industry is so up in arms.

Secondly, the document continues as follows—

WAFE aims to negotiate with airlines in order to increase air freight space available to WA floriculture exporters. A lack of existing air freight space severely hampers current floriculture exports.

At some times of the year the latter point is true, but let us assume that WAFE was successful in negotiating that airfreight space. Which company do members think would have priority on those aircraft? Do members think it would be a producer called A Pty. Ltd. or B Pty. Ltd? No. Members can rest assured that WAFE would be the company receiving priority—the company which would be in direct competition with existing producers for that space. Again there is no misunderstanding at all. Blind Freddy could see what would happen to his business should WAFE be able to negotiate that package and control the airfreight space, as would probably be the case, with Government support.

In addition, the document continues as follows—

Mr Watkins said that WAFE will be able to research market developments so that it can advise growers on which crops have the best selling potential.

Mr Watkins and the Government, as I have said in this House, must think we and the producers in this State came down in the last shower. If WAFE is to conduct that research and market development who will be the first to obtain that information? Who will have the best access to that information? WAFE will know which flowers are the best, which have the best potential, and who will get the left overs. Members know as well as I do that existing producers will be cut out of the market. By whom will they be cut out of the market? They will be cut out of the market

through a company set up with their own tax and which will put them out of business. If that is not rubbing salt into the wounds of these flower producers, I do not know what is. I hardly think that is a misunderstanding.

I could quote from many other areas, but I want to quote a final paragraph to demonstrate that no misunderstanding has occurred. The document went on to say the following—

To determine specific market capacities for each product, particularly new products to prevent oversupply and to provide information to growers in which areas to expand production.

Again, who do members think will get first bite at that information? Who do members think will know into which areas production will be expanded, and what confidence will I have as a producer when my direct competitor comes to me and says, "I don't think you should develop into that area but you should go into this one", knowing full well that probably WAFE is into that area, and it would know there is probably not much potential over here so it wants me to grow those particular flowers for which it thinks there may be a small market or for which there may be a very volatile market. There is no misunderstanding on the part of industry. That is why its members have been so vigilant and so virile in their opposition to this measure, and it is full credit to them that they have been able to withstand the full pressure of Government that was brought to bear to ensure that the Government has now reversed its decision. We could not support that amendment because it is not true. It is not based on fact.

We have also moved the amendment for other very good reason. The wording of our amendment is quite clear and we want to make sure that the Government gets the message and learns its lesson. The Premier claims that he listens to people, that he listens to the community, and that this Government has great communication and listens to the business community. Let him listen to this amendment and get this message. We want the motion to read as follows—

This House notes the decision of the Exim Corporation to withdraw from W.A. Floral Enterprises . . .

But most importantly,

. . . and urges the Government to order Exim to cease any activity which will bring it into competition with private enterprise;

Members have heard tonight from previous speakers that we believe Exim is already planning to enter into direct competition with people just

like those who have been threatened by the Government—small business people and producers in this State who, by the sweat of their brow and their hard-earned savings, are trying to earn an honest living. We do not want that to happen again.

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the Government only today indicated other areas where it intends to get into business, so to speak, "Because it knows best". We will not have a part of that either. In relation to Exim specifically, we want the Government to get the message; but if Exim thinks it can get away with this practice in other areas, it has another think coming, because the flower growers in this State have set a great example for others in this State to follow; and follow it they will, if they are threatened by this Government as they have been previously by this Exim action.

Secondly, our amendment should be supported because we say this House—

Supports the concept of sound Government assistance to West Australian industry that has the potential to profitably improve Western Australia's performance.

Let me again refer to the handout which was distributed last week to give me justification for that and to indicate where the Government does have a role and where it should be playing a role to support the industry.

The member for Nedlands has already indicated some of those areas. Obviously the Government knows it can do that in some areas, and should use its research to ensure that future assistance is based on that information. To quote further from the publication—

Having established markets the production unit will be used primarily for research and development of new flowers for those markets.

Is not that what the Department of Agriculture research officers should be doing now? Should not they be given assistance to carry out that research and develop new flowers for new markets in order to assist the industry? That is what we view as Government assistance. That is how it should be used. To continue from the publication—

What WAFE plans to do is negotiate more air freight space, guaranteeing the airlines a year-round demand for space from our exporters.

The member for Nedlands has already indicated that there is a problem, so we do not need the Government to form an airline to solve that problem! The Government should get together with the

producers, find out their problems, and support them in their direct negotiations with the airlines. Government support should be provided, and the industry should not be harmed by the Government's direct competition. To continue—

To provide active promotion and information on WA floricultural produce to overseas markets.

Is not that what the Department of Industrial Development does now? If not, then we heard the Deputy Premier of this State say how good the Government's building industry products promotion was in Singapore and Hong Kong. We support that type of activity, where the Government goes in and assists private enterprise operators to get into these markets. The Government should show its support in that way rather than set up a company in direct competition with them. How could the companies trust such a competitor who provided them with that information? They could not trust such a competitor and would not want to.

The final section I wish to quote states—

To offer technical expertise to growers of contract crops.

Is not that the role of the Department of Agriculture Research Division? Why is it not giving assistance to do just that? We do have an industry which is expanding—in the words of the Government—at the rate of 25 per cent every year for the past 10 years. Is not that what one would call a healthy industry? The industry deserves Government support: It is not an industry which deserves direct Government competition. Let us pose a few questions about this sad affair.

What will be the cost to the taxpayers of this State as a result of this Government's folly? What was the cost of the advertisements which have already been placed in newspapers around this country in order to recruit staff to work in the Western Australian floral export industry? How much of the taxpayers' money was wasted before this decision was made today? How much money was spent on Mr Watkins' trip to South-East Asia, before the Government launched into this exercise? How much money was spent for Mr Watkins' time and energy—

Mr Old: He is the victim of the whole show.

Mr MacKINNON: Yes. How much has been spent on hotel expenses and air fares for Mr Watkins? As the member for Katanning-Roe has said, Mr Watkins was the victim of the Government's bidding. He merely carried out the Government's wishes. How much has it cost the taxpayers all this time? What of Mr Watkins' future? Where will he go? The member for Katanning-

Roe gave us a good idea when he said there are plenty of vacancies in the Tourism Commission.

Mr Court: Did he have a contract with the new company?

Mr MacKINNON: I am not sure. It is a good question.

If he does have a contract with the new company what is to become of him?

While many people may not have much sympathy for Mr Waldeck, I do. He was given an opportunity, created by the Government. Mr Waldeck has obviously spent some of his hard-earned money—I think he raised \$30 000 of which he probably borrowed a portion. Who will compensate him for that loss?

Mr Waldeck went into a business venture with the Government which said, "It is all together this fine weather, so let's make a profit". Who will recompense Mr Waldeck for the Government's folly?

I will be pursuing those questions in this Parliament because the taxpayers of this State are entitled to that information. They are entitled to know how much of their money has been spent. The Premier spent about \$9 000 of our money on Press advertisements recently under the headline "You are entitled to know how your money is spent". I am a taxpayer, as is the Deputy Speaker, as are many thousands of people in this State, and we are entitled to know how that money has been spent in this exercise. The money has been poured down the drain and it will continue to be poured down the drain if Governments attempt to run businesses. Time and time again it has been illustrated that Governments do not know how to run businesses and our money is placed at risk every time such an attempt is made.

I urge members to reject the amendment moved by the Premier and to support the amendment which was so ably moved by the member for Katanning-Roe.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [9.36 p.m.]: The National Party supports the amendment to the motion moved by the member for Katanning-Roe to insert words to replace those put forward by the Government.

There is no need for the Government of Western Australia to be actively involved, through Exim or any other company, in matters which have been pioneered by private enterprise and which has shown some degree of profit.

That move is a little like a provision which was passed the other day: Whenever the Government sees a money-making concern it tends to extend its fingers to take a little bit of revenue off the top. I

am referring to the beer ticket sales. In this particular case, the Government chose to become involved in the floricultural industry and the export industry. Predictions have been made over the last two or three years that the production of cut flowers and native wildflower seeds is one of the fastest growing industries in Western Australia.

Those industries will not contribute greatly to the overall agricultural earnings of WA. Nevertheless, they are expanding industries and that is not something one sees often in the agricultural industry.

The National Party is not so much concerned about the matter of the Exim withdrawal from the Western Australian Floral Enterprise—although it is pleased to see that the Government has done so—it is more concerned about the reference in this motion which has some form of direction to Exim not to get itself involved in activities which make it competitive with private enterprise. We agree with that wholeheartedly.

There is no need for that. Primary industry in this State and the people involved in it can boast that they are efficient and there is nothing a Government corporation can teach them. I suggest that if this Government is interested in offering assistance to primary industry it should offer assistance rather than competition.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): Order! Would those people having little meetings to the left and right of me please cease. We have favoured the Deputy Leader of the Opposition with a fair degree of silence and it would be a good idea to extend the same favour to the member for Merredin.

Mr COWAN: The Government should spend much more time in endeavouring to assist industry rather than entering into direct competition with it. Assistance can be given in a great number of areas.

Although the wording of this motion deals with the specific issue of the Western Australian Floral Enterprises exercise, part (b) is the section of the motion which interests me more than anything else. It must be recognised that some areas of agriculture are suffering a great deal of financial stress. Agriculture along with mining, that other primary industry, generates the majority of this State's export income. That is what this motion is about—export performance. Mr Acting Speaker, you would know from your experience before entering this place that one of the greatest problems facing people involved in producing goods for export is not so much the price they receive for their goods but the cost of producing the product.

We can look to Canberra as being responsible for a majority of the savage increases in costs, and I refer to fuel prices, tariffs, and issues of that nature, and some of the spin-off we have to put up with from fuel costs arises from the fact that most of our fertiliser, pesticides, and herbicides are petroleum based. The Government should be directing its assistance towards reducing those costs, particularly in Western Australia. I have referred to some of the costs imposed by the Federal Government or the Federal bureaucracy, but the State also imposes costs.

The greatest cost is transport, there is no question of that. In the electorate of Merredin and certainly of Mt Marshall, the cost to each producer of meeting his transport charges would extract something like 25 per cent of his total income. In other words, disregarding the other taxes and charges the producer must meet, one year in four is absorbed in meeting his transport costs. I have not seen the Government terribly keen to establish all sorts of corporations, committees, or bodies which will do something about reducing transport costs.

I will concede that the current Minister for Transport is endeavouring to tackle the problem which is not one he created. He has the responsibility to cure it, but it was created by a succession of inept Governments which have allowed a situation to develop such as Westrail's predicament. Westrail receives absolutely no capital inflow from either the State or the Commonwealth and must meet its capital costs through its charges to consumers whereas a competitive industry such as road transport does not have that particular handicap. Its construction and capital costs are met by grants from Federal and State Governments.

Those are the issues the Government of Western Australia should address. It should not establish corporations or companies or whatever and look around to find out where the most profitable area or the greatest growth is in private enterprise and decide that because there is growth or great profit it should become involved as a Government and see if it can siphon off some of the profits.

I do not think any Government will earn any credibility by plundering those sections of private enterprise which are profitable. That is what has happened in this case. The Government has decided it will enter those areas of private enterprise which are successful instead of addressing itself to those issues where, not this Government, but previous Governments have contributed very solidly and rather sadly to the costs of industry, particularly the agricultural industry, which is one of the greatest contributors to export income.

We are quite pleased to be able to support the amendment moved by the member for Katanning-Roe, and we reject the wording suggested by the Government.

Amendment on the amendment put and negatived.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 24	
Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mrs Beggs	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Bridge	Mr McIver
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Parker
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Read
Mr Carr	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Davies	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Evans	Mr Taylor
Mrs Henderson	Mr Tonkin
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Hughes	Mrs Watkins

(Teller)

Noes 18	
Mr Blaikie	Mr Mensaros
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Old
Mr Cash	Mr Spriggs
Mr Court	Mr Stephens
Mr Cowan	Mr Thompson
Mr Coyne	Mr Trethowan
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams

(Teller)

Ayes	Pairs	Noes
Mr Bertram	Mr Laurance	
Mr Bryce	Mr McNee	
Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Crane	
Mr Troy	Mr Rushton	
Mr Grill	Mr Clarko	
Mr Barnett	Mr Grayden	

Amendment thus passed.

Motion, as Amended

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 24	
Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mrs Beggs	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Bridge	Mr McIver
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Parker
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Read
Mr Carr	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Davies	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Evans	Mr Taylor
Mrs Henderson	Mr Tonkin
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Hughes	Mrs Watkins

(Teller)

Noes 18	
Mr Blaikie	Mr Mensaros
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Old
Mr Cash	Mr Spriggs
Mr Court	Mr Stephens
Mr Cowan	Mr Thompson
Mr Coyne	Mr Trethowan
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams

(Teller)

Ayes	Pairs	Noes
Mr Bertram	Mr Laurance	
Mr Bryce	Mr McNee	
Mr Gordon Hill	Mr Crane	
Mr Troy	Mr Rushton	
Mr Grill	Mr Clarko	
Mr Barnett	Mr Grayden	

Question (motion, as amended) thus passed.

POSEIDON NICKEL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Parker (Minister for Minerals and Energy), and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 9.55 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH: NURSES

School of Nursing: Trainees

2643. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Which nurses are now trained at the Western Australian School of Nursing?
- (2) Have the numbers trained at the Western Australian School of Nursing varied in the last three years?
- (3) If so, in what way?
- (4) Will the numbers at the Western Australian School of Nursing continue at the same level, or rise, or fall?
- (5) Have any nurse educators at the Western Australian School of Nursing been relieved of teaching duties?
- (6) If so—
 - (a) how many;
 - (b) were their services terminated, or transferred;
 - (c) if transferred, where to?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) General nurses and enrolled nurses.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The number of nurses at this school will remain the same until 1987. However, the number undertaking re-registration courses has increased from 50 in 1982, when this course was introduced, to 84 in 1984.
- (5) No.
- (6) Not applicable.

PORTS AND HARBOURS: JETTIES

Act: Maintenance

2735. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does the Government consider there is any real reason for maintaining the Jetties Act?
- (2) What administration or function under the Jetties Act could be undertaken by other Government departments and instrumentalities?
- (3) If "Yes" to (1), for what reasons must this Act be maintained?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) None. All of the Government's duties and responsibilities under the Jetties Act are carried out by the appropriate department; that is, the Department of Marine and Harbours.
- (3) The Jetties Act relates to the management, use, maintenance and preservation of jetties not covered by a specific port authority Act. That is, it relates to jetties within active ports which are managed by the Department of Marine and Harbours, and to jetties and other similar structures, which fulfill port-type functions only occasionally.

In general terms, under the terms of this Act, the Department is responsible for the control and handling of cargoes at ports and jetties under its jurisdiction. It also provides for the licensing and control of private jetties.

PORTS AND HARBOURS: FREMANTLE

Disputes: Statistics

2736. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Which Government department or instrumentality maintains records and statistics directly relating to disputes and stoppages within the Port of Fremantle?
- (2) Are these details published?
- (3) If so, where?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The Fremantle Port Authority maintains a record of any disputes or stoppages that occur within the Port provided that it is aware of those stoppages or disputes. As the member knows from answers to previous questions on this subject, the Port Authority is not directly involved in most of the industrial disputes on the Fremantle waterfront. A dispute between an employer of maritime or waterfront labour and a maritime or waterfront union is not necessarily brought to the attention of the Fremantle Port Authority.

The Commonwealth Department of Transport maintains statistics on time lost in industrial disputes which occur in ports throughout Australia. The statistics are compiled from returns submitted by the Association of Employers of

Waterside Labour and by stevedoring companies.

- (2) and (3) The Fremantle Port Authority published details of stoppages in its 1983-84 annual report. The Commonwealth Department of Transport publishes statistics on man hours lost by employees of stevedoring companies due to industrial disputes. The relevant statistical bulletin is released monthly.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS: DISPUTE

Fremantle Waterfront: Cause

2737. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Adverting to the replies given to questions 2439 and 2555, what was the cause of the dispute which resulted in stoppages to work on the vessel *Negara*?
- (2) Did the Premier's Industrial Relations adviser become involved on the day the dispute commenced?
- (3) For what reason did it take six days to resolve the dispute?
- (4) On what basis was the dispute resolved?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The dispute arose over a claim by the Maritime Workers Union to lash deck cargo which, previously, had been lashed by Waterside Workers. This resulted in a demarcation dispute between the two unions.
- (2) No, he became involved on Monday 18 February.
- (3) There were a number of factors involved which caused the dispute to take six days to resolve. One important factor was the inability of the two unions to reach a compromise on the matter. Because the issue involved a State registered union and a Federal union, it was necessary to arrange for a joint sitting of the two arbitration commissions. However, before these arrangements could be finalized the unions agreed to confer.
- (4) The dispute was resolved on the basis that a meeting would take place in Sydney on 26 February between the Waterside Workers Federation and Maritime Workers Union so that they could discuss the demarcation issue in full.

SIR LENOX HEWITT

Employment: Functions

2738. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

Adverting to the reply given to question 2608, what specific duties or functions has Sir Lenox Hewitt performed on behalf of the people of Western Australia since 1 July 1984?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

As referred to in question 847, some matters dealt with under the consultancy are between the Government and Sir Lenox and must remain confidential for commercial reasons. However, projects undertaken by Sir Lenox include arrangements for an investment mission from the Middle East to Western Australia, general advice on possible export and business opportunities in a number of countries and informal liaison and advice on Commonwealth-State relationships. Should the member wish clarification on any specific issue, I will be happy to consider the request and provide a written response.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS: DISPUTE

Maritime Workers Union: Fremantle

2739. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2561 on 7 March 1985, concerning loading operations on the vessel *Sunny Ocean*, by what means has he established that he was not made aware of the industrial action taken by the Maritime Workers Union at Fremantle on 26 February 1985?
- (2) Was any other Government Minister or agency made aware of the dispute?
- (3) Is he still not aware of the disruption which affected the *Sunny Ocean*?
- (4) If he has become aware, on what date and by what means has he now become informed?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) to (4) At the time of replying to question 2561 I was personally unaware of the events pertaining to the vessel *Sunny Ocean*. However, I have since found the loading of the vessel *Sunny Ocean* was not held up in Fremantle on 26 February 1985.

On February 27, Mr Peter Dowding, the Minister for Industrial Relations and I both received telexes from the ship's agents complaining about demands made by the Maritime Workers Union in relation to work on the vessel's bilge seals. Officers from Mr Dowding's department looked into the complaint and found that the union was seeking work which was customarily undertaken by its members. This information was passed on to the ship's agents.

TRAFFIC: SPEED LIMITS

Road Trains

2752. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will he please advise what is the maximum speed limit road trains may travel on—
 - (a) the Brand Highway;
 - (b) the Great Northern Highway?
- (2) Is there a difference in speed limits for road trains and trucks?
- (3) If "Yes", what is the difference?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) (a) 80 km/h;
- (b) 80 km/h.
- (2) No.
- (3) Answered by (2).

2754. *Postponed.*

PASTORAL INDUSTRY: LEASE

Ord River Station: Sale

2770. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Lands and Surveys:

- (1) Have there been any negotiations regarding the sale of Ord River Station?
- (2) If so, how far have the negotiations proceeded?
- (3) If this is to be a joint venture, who is the joint venturer with the Government?
- (4) If "No" to (3), who is the potential purchaser?

Mr McIVER replied:

- (1) to (4) I refer the member to parliamentary question 2269 of 21 February 1985. The situation remains unchanged since my reply to that question.

ARTS: NINE CLUB

Grant: Audit

2771. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for the Arts:

- (1) Further to question 2710 of 14 March, in view of the fact that the Auditor General has advised that under the terms of the grant of \$90 000 made by the previous Government to the Nine Club, he does not believe he has the legal authority to undertake an examination of the accounts and records of the organisation, will he ascertain from Crown Law if indeed the Auditor General does or does not have the authority to undertake this examination?
- (2) What is the deduction of Crown Law?
- (3) If "No" to (1), will he say what steps the Government can take to ensure that the money has been properly accounted for?
- (4) Will he give an assurance that these steps will be taken?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) and (2) The Auditor General did receive advice from Crown Law that he had no legal authority to audit the books of the Nine Club concerning the grant of \$90 000 to that organisation.
- (3) and (4) I have instructed the Western Australian Arts Council, in its role as administrator of Instant Lottery funds, to continue to press for a full accounting of the grant and pursue the matter with diligence to a satisfactory conclusion at the earliest possible date.

TRANSPORT: RAILWAYS

Crossing: Lord Street

2772. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware of the growing concern expressed by road users on the delays being experienced at the Lord Street railway crossing in East Perth?
- (2) What action is the Government currently taking to alleviate this problem?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) I am aware that over some period of time this location has suffered from traffic congestion in peak traffic flow periods.
- (2) The most practical solution to ease the problem is in future major construction associated with plans for the City Northern Bypass. Subject to future funding

from the Commonwealth, these works should be completed in the early 1990s.

YOUTH AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Ms Karen Begbie: Secondment

2773. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Youth Affairs:

- (1) Was Karen Begbie seconded by the Education Department to a position with the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (Inc)?
- (2) If "Yes", did the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (Inc) utilise Commonwealth Employment Programme funds to pay her salary?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Ms Karen Begbie was employed under CEP (Commonwealth Component) to provide typing support to CEP employees within the Department of Education and Youth Affairs.

A separate Commonwealth CEP project for International Youth Year, employed 2 persons (a project officer and a typist/support person) located at the Youth Affairs Council of WA.

The typist/support person contracted Repetitive Strain Injury in the early stages of the project and was unable to perform essential duties.

The Director of the Department of Education and Youth Affairs therefore agreed to the transfer of Ms Begbie into that position, allowing the RSI affected officer to continue on light duties with the Department where other typing resources were available.

When the IYY project concluded on 15/2/1985 Ms Begbie returned to the Department of Education for the duration of her employment under CEP.

- (2) During the time that Ms Begbie was located at YACWA her salary continued to be paid from the CEP Grant administered by the Department.

2774. *Postponed.*

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Board: Invitations

2775. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) Who has been approached to join the Board of the Western Australian Development Corporation?
- (2) Are those approaches being made by him or by the Chairman of the Western Australian Development Corporation on his behalf?
- (3) Who has refused an invitation to join the Board of the Western Australian Development Corporation?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) As Minister responsible for the Western Australian Development Corporation Act 1983, I invited Mr John Horgan to make recommendations on membership of the Board of Directors prior to its formation in 1984. I have again formally requested that Mr Horgan, as Chairman of Western Australian Development Corporation, recommend a further person to fill the vacancy that now exists on the Board of Directors.
- (3) An invitation to join the Board of Directors of Western Australian Development Corporation has not been refused and it is expected that Mr Horgan will provide advice on this matter in due course.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Subsidiary: Establishment

2776. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Has the Western Australian Development Corporation proposed the establishment of, or has it established, a subsidiary or other corporation for any proposed business venture?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

It is normal commercial practice that such matters are confidential to the Corporation. Furthermore, the member should be aware that the Corporation, largely at the insistence of the Opposition, is not obliged to provide information to the Government outside the terms of the Companies code and the

limited specific provisions of the Western Australian Development Corporation Act. However, it is likely that the Corporation will shortly need to incorporate a company in Western Australia to be known as the IBJ Australia Bank, for the purposes of conducting banking business with headquarters in Perth, in partnership with The Industrial Bank of Japan, Ltd., Town and Country WA Building Society and the State Government Insurance Office.

TOURISM COMMISSION

Subsidiary: Establishment

2777. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Has the Tourism Commission proposed the establishment of, or has it established a subsidiary or other corporation for any proposed business venture?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

In accordance with section 15(1)(a) of the Western Australian Tourism Commission Act 1983, the Commission is proposing, in association with an established operator, to form a company to participate in a tourism development project.

MINERALS: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HOLDINGS

Subsidiary: Establishment

2778. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Has the Western Australian Government Holdings (formerly Northern Mining Limited) Company proposed the establishment of, or has it established a subsidiary or other corporation for any proposed business venture?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The WA Exim Corporation is a subsidiary of WA Government Holdings.

TRADE: EXIM CORPORATION

Subsidiary: Establishment

2779. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Has the Exim Corporation proposed the establishment of, or has it established a subsidiary or other corporation for any proposed business venture?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The announced Western Australian Floral Enterprises is a subsidiary of WA Exim Corporation.

HORTICULTURE: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FLORAL ENTERPRISES

Subsidiary: Establishment

2780. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Has Western Australian Floral Exports proposed the establishment of, or has it established a subsidiary or other corporation for any proposed business venture?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

No.

TAXES AND CHARGES: ADVERTISEMENT

Cost

2781. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

(1) What was the total cost of recent advertising by the Government concerning the State accounts headed: "It is the right of all Western Australian taxpayers to know how their taxes are being used"?

(2) What was the production cost?

(3) What firm undertook production?

(4) What fee or other remuneration was paid to that firm?

(5) What was the advertising cost?

(6) Where did the advertisement appear?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) \$9 245.02.

(2) \$925.70.

(3) McCann-Erickson Advertising Pty Ltd.

(4) \$645.00.

(5) \$7 674.32.

(6) *The West Australian*; *the Sunday Times*.

PRISONERS

Contact Visits: Transport

2782. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Prisons:

(1) Are prisoners regularly transported to Perth from country centres or from Perth to country centres for contact visits with relatives?

(2) Do new rules or procedures apply in this matter?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) Yes.

- (2) No substantial changes to rules or procedures have occurred.

PRISONERS

Conjugal Visits

2783. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Prisons:

Has the Prisons Department proposed, tested or instituted a programme of so-called conjugal visits between prisoners and their spouses?

Mr GRILL replied:

No.

POLICE: VEHICLES

Servicing

2784. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Has the Police Department, with his approval, instituted a maintenance of vehicles system which requires police vehicles in country towns to be returned to manufacturers' representatives for all servicing?

Mr CARR replied:

No.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: DOOR TO DOOR (SALES) ACT

Enforcement

2785. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Is the Door-to-Door Sales Act enforced by the police?
- (2) If not, by whom?
- (3) Where can complaints be lodged?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3). The Department of Consumer Affairs, 600 Murray Street, Perth.

2786. *Postponed.*

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS: LAND RIGHTS

Claims: Community Services Department

2787. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister with special responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs:

Will he please advise the House in detail of—

- (a) all Department of Community Welfare establishments and properties;
- (b) other Government properties, other than unallocated Crown land;
- (c) any private properties (including Church mission properties), which will be available for claim under the Government's proposed land rights legislation?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (a) As per Schedule 1 of the Aboriginal Land Bill.
- (b) As above.
- (c) No other properties or lands will be claimable other than those specified above and as pursuant to sections 13, 20 and 83 of the Aboriginal Land Bill.

TAXES AND CHARGES: TAX SUMMIT

Submission: Drafting

2788. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) Who will draft the State Government submission to the Federal Government's tax summit?
- (2) What process of consultation on the submission is proposed?
- (3) Who will be involved in any consultative process?
- (4) Will the State Government be represented at the tax summit?
- (5) If so, by whom?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) An interdepartmental committee chaired by the Under Treasurer will prepare the initial draft for consideration by Government.
- (2) and (3) As the Leader of the Opposition would be aware, community views were sought through the Tax Hotline. The views of State departments which are in close contact with the State's industries will be considered in drafting the submission. A process of widespread consultation is already underway.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) By myself, as Premier and Treasurer. Other Government representation will be finalised closer to the time of the Summit.

TAXES AND CHARGES: INCOME TAX

Reimbursement: Decrease

2789. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Federal Government or the Treasurer indicated to the State an intention to reduce the State's personal income tax reimbursement this year?
- (2) If so, to what level in percentage terms of increase?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) Presumably the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the arrangements under which the States receive a specified share of the Commonwealth's total tax collections. The share for this year is specified in the States (Tax Sharing and Health Grants) Act and neither the Federal Government nor the Treasurer has indicated an intention to alter that Act to reduce the grant paid to the State. However, as I indicated in my published half yearly report on the State's finances, inflation has been below the original estimate and this is expected to result in a reduction in the State's tax sharing grant which is tied to movements in the Consumer Price Index.

TAXES AND CHARGES: CAPITAL GAINS TAX

Support: Premier

2790. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Does he support (as indicated in his remarks broadcast on ABC news at 6 a.m. on Tuesday, 19 March 1985) a capital gains tax based only on the present provisions of the income tax law?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

As I said in the ABC broadcast mentioned, the present sections of the Income Tax Act offer considerable scope to impose a capital gains tax. However, having said that, it would be futile to eliminate consideration of capital gains taxes at the Tax Summit.

TAXES AND CHARGES: INCOME TAX

Reimbursement: Decrease

2791. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Will he oppose any reduction in—

- (a) the tax reimbursement expectation of the State under the present formula;

(b) the relativities entitlement of the State,

in each case in respect of payments for 1985-86 and years beyond?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (a) and (b) The present formula was agreed to at the May 1981 and June 1982 Premiers' conferences and the agreed formula expires in 1984-85. The Leader of the Opposition can be assured that I will continue to strongly press for the best possible funding arrangements for the State for 1985-86 and future years.

2792. *Postponed.*

ROTTNEST ISLAND: WATER SUPPLIES

Report: Secrecy

2793. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Why was the Binnie and Partners report on the Rottnest Island water supply, which was dated June 1984, kept secret until February 1985?
- (2) Why has the report included consideration of water needs for an 18-hole golf course on Rottnest Island when this proposal has been rejected by the Premier?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The status of the report was explained in answer to question 870 on 25 September 1984. Hon. Andrew Mensaros was given access to a copy.
- (2) In undertaking any technical study of this nature it is fundamental that there must be some basis on which long-term water consumption forecasts are made. At the time the study was being undertaken, the Rottnest Island Master Plan 1983 was being circulated for public comment, and this Plan was used by the consultants as the basis in assessing future water needs on the island up to the year 2015.

However, many aspects of the Master Plan, including the golf course, were rejected by the Government subsequent to the completion of the report on the water supply study.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Facilities

2794. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

What facilities are to be included in "the plans of stage one" of the Leeming High School which will not be completed until June 1986, as referred to by him in his response to question 2566 of 7 March?

Mr PEARCE replied:

Stage one will comprise—

- (a) Year 8 block;
- (b) Science facilities;
- (c) Manual Arts facilities;
- (d) Home Economics facilities;
- (e) Art-Craft facilities;
- (f) Administration;
- (g) Canteen;
- (h) Recreation facilities proposed to be funded jointly with the City of Melville and the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation;
- (i) Library.

All of the above will be ready by July 1986.

SPORT AND RECREATION: YACHTING

America's Cup: Advisory Committees

2795. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) What committees or advisory bodies has the Government formed to assist it with the organisation of the 1987 America's Cup series?
- (2) Who are the members of each of those committees?
- (3) What are their roles?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) The Government has appointed a Ministerial Advisory Committee.
- (2) The members are—
Messrs W. Martin (Chairman), E. Archer, R. Chandler, S. Lodge, J. Minervini, C. Nelthorpe, K. Turtle.
- (3) The Committee is to advise the Minister on aspects of the America's Cup preparations which they deem necessary for special consideration.

TRADE: EXIM CORPORATION

Operations: Expansion

2796. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Does Exim Corporation intend expanding its operation into the horticultural, fruit and meat industries?
- (2) If "Yes", what consultation will Exim Corporation have with the industries concerned?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The WA Exim Corporation will examine any approaches made to it, but it has made no decision to enter the industries mentioned.

GRAIN: POOL

Exim Corporation: Takeover

2797. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

Is the Exim Corporation going to absorb or take over the Grain Pool of Western Australia?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This has not been considered by the WA Exim Corporation.

ABATTOIRS: LAMB MARKETING BOARD

Exim Corporation: Takeover

2798. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

Is the Exim Corporation going to take over the Western Australian Lamb Marketing Board?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This has not been considered by the WA Exim Corporation.

TRADE: EXIM CORPORATION

Taxation: Payments

2799. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

Does Exim Corporation have to pay—

- (a) sales tax on vehicles and other capital items;
- (b) company tax;
- (c) payroll tax?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (a) to (c) Yes.

TRADE: EXIM CORPORATION

Mr Keith Gale: Position

2800. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

What is Mr Keith Gale's official position with Exim Corporation?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

Mr Gale is a consultant to the Government seconded to the WA Exim Corporation.

(b) the winter flow of the tributary;

(c) the applicant has indicated his intention to irrigate 325ha. It is doubtful if sufficient water will be available to irrigate to this extent.

(3) An objection was received from the Shire of Mandurah.

(4) Yes.

2803. *Postponed.*

ALUMINIUM SMELTER: BUFFER ZONE

Pine Species

2801. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Forests:

(1) Which species of pine are intended to be planted in the buffer zone of the proposed aluminium smelter?

(2) Are the species compatible with the fluoride emissions from an aluminium smelter?

Mr DAVIES replied:

(1) *Pinus radiata*, *Pinus pinaster*.

(2) We believe so, on the best scientific evidence currently available.

SPORT AND RECREATION: OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Drivers: Age

2804. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) Is there an age which a person has to have attained before he or she can drive an "off-road" vehicle?

(2) If so, what is that age?

Mr CARR replied:

(1) and (2) Yes. Eight years of age on permitted areas as defined in the Control of Vehicles (Off-road areas) Act.

WATER RESOURCES: IRRIGATION

Murray River Farms

2802. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Water Resources:

(1) Has an application from Owston Nominees No. 2 trading as Murray River Farms been received to draw water from the Murray River for irrigation purposes?

(2) If so—

(a) where is the property concerned;

(b) how much water is involved;

(c) how much land is to be irrigated?

(3) Have any objections been received to the proposal?

(4) Can any property along the Murray River apply for these rights?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) No, but an application has been received from Owston Nominees No. 2 to build a dam on a minor tributary of the Murray River.

(2) (a) Six kilometres north of Waroona on the eastern side of the South Western Highway;

SHOPPING: TRADING HOURS

Inquiry: Terms of Reference

2805. Mr CASH, to the Minister representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

(1) What are the terms of reference for the Government Inquiry into Trading Hours?

(2) When will the Government's Inquiry into Trading Hours be completed?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) Terms of reference are tabled.

(2) Completion date for the Inquiry has not been determined.

The terms of reference were tabled (see paper No. 515).

"HANSARD"

Staff

2806. Mr MENSAROS, to the Speaker:

How many persons were employed with *Hansard*, including reporters, typists, personnel handling computers and any other ancillary staff, as at 30 June, (or

any other day of the year for which statistics are available) of—

- (a) 1970;
- (b) 1973;
- (c) 1976;
- (d) 1979;
- (e) 1983, and
- (f) 1984?

The SPEAKER replied:

I have been advised by the Acting Chief Hansard Reporter as follows:

Year	Reporters	Clerical & Trainees	
		Typists	
1/1/1970	10	6	1
1/1/1973	10	6	1
1/1/1976	10	6	2
1/1/1979	11	6	2
1/1/1983	11	6	2
1/1/1984	14*	6	3

* Reporting staff increased by two subeditors and one reporter to bring the Western Australian staff into line with staff in comparable States as at 1983. Other States have further increased their staff since.

The word processing consultant (Mrs Alessandrini) is employed by the Clerk of the Legislative Council and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

2807. *Postponed.*

COMMUNICATIONS: RAYMOND N. CONDER SCHOOL OF BROADCASTING AND FINE SPEECH

Government Assistance

2808. Mr MENSAROS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has the Government given, or is it going to offer, any assistance to the Raymond N. Conder School of Broadcasting and Fine Speech?
- (2) If so, what form is this assistance going to take?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The application for assistance to the Director General of Education was not considered to warrant funding.

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Wanneroo: Capacity

2809. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the average general quantitative yearly capacity of the Wanneroo groundwater area?
- (2) To what extent can this capacity be exploited with the presently available equipment (bores, pumps, etc.)?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) There are two proclaimed areas for the management of groundwater abstraction in the Wanneroo District. They are:

The Wanneroo Public Water Supply Area proclaimed under the MWSS & D Act; and

The Wanneroo Groundwater Area proclaimed under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act.

The MWA records do not contain information on the actual capacity of pumps in private bores in the latter area.

In respect of the Public Water Supply Area the annual allocation for the MWA accepted by the EPA is 12.2 million cubic metres, and the total installed capacity of the pumps in the MWA bores is sufficient to utilise this allocation. The actual quantities pumped during the last three years were—

1981-82—6.116 million cubic metres

1982-83—9.883 million cubic metres

1983-84—11.578 million cubic metres

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Western Australian Cricket Association Ground

2810. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

What is the situation relating to the replacement of the covered-in artesian well in the Western Australian Cricket Association ground; has a new licence been issued yet?

Mr TONKIN replied:

A licence for the replacement artesian well was issued on 14 February 1985. A condition of the licence was that the existing collapsed well be sealed off.

**WATER RESOURCES: WATER
AUTHORITY**

*Day Labour Force: Voluntary Retrenchment
Scheme*

2811. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

After the voluntary retrenchments with the offered severance pay, what is the number of the Metropolitan Water Authority's day labour force—

- (a) in the sewerage area;
- (b) in other areas?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (a) 297.
- (b) 1 756.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND
MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES**

Developmental Projects

2812. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Is there a Government policy as to the circumstances and characteristics of a developmental project (whether mineral, industrial, water resource-connected, etc.) for which the submission and proper procedure of an environmental review and management programme is required?
- (2) If so, would he please describe this policy?
- (3) If not, when can it be expected that a comprehensive and generally applying policy will be announced?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) No; the Environmental Protection Authority makes a recommendation to the Minister as to the level of assessment required, if any, after receiving a Notice of Intent or formal referral of a proposed development.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) It is not proposed to vary the current practice since environmental impacts vary widely from project to project.

ENVIRONMENT: REPORTS

Water Supply Authorities

2813. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Has there been an agreement between his department and the Public Works Department Engineering Division administering currently country water undertakings and/or the Metropolitan Water Authority that these Government agencies dealing with water resources and supply will have to submit triennially a comprehensive environmental report and in the in-between years an intermittent summary report?
- (2) If so, will the public have any opportunity for comment and/or hearing towards these reports?
- (3) When and how will these reports be made public and especially will they be made public before the Environmental Protection Authority is recommending their acceptance or otherwise?
- (4) Will these reports substitute in all cases an environmental review and management programme for specific projects?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) The Metropolitan Water Authority has agreed to provide the Environmental Protection Authority with comprehensive reports on a triennial basis with shorter annual summaries of the environmental effects of the Jandakot, Wanneroo and East Mirrabooka Groundwater Schemes.
- (2) and (3) The reports are available to the public at the Department of Conservation and Environment Information Centre after receipt and review by the EPA.
- (4) No.

STOCK: LIVE SHEEP

Air Pollution: Controls

2814. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

In view of his commitment that live sheep exports through the Port of Fremantle will not be interrupted during the period of the America's Cup races, is it intended to make special arrangements during this period to control any odours or olfactory unpleasantness resulting

from the continuation of this important activity?

Mr GRILL replied:

The problem of smell associated with live sheep trade ex Fremantle only occurs during the loading of very large vessels in particular weather conditions. Those weather conditions involve a combination of cloud, rain and wind patterns such as occur most infrequently during the months in which the major America's Cup activity will take place. Indeed, it should be pointed out that there has been very little smell problem at all over the last twelve months. Consequently, it is difficult to envisage that there will be the need to make any special arrangements of the sort alluded to in the member's question.

UNION: PORT OF FREMANTLE

Levy: Redundancy Pay

2815. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2595 of 1985, concerning levy for redundancy pay, what was the request received from the Maritime Workers' Union?
- (2) When is it expected the Co-ordinator General of Transport will report?
- (3) Will his report be available for comment by shipping companies, agents and other interested parties?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The Union requested that the current levy per man-hour of work by Registered casual ship painters and dockers charged in addition to wages (to support the various accounts which form part of the agreed award conditions) be replaced by a levy on vessels entering the Port of Fremantle. The proposal was for a uniform levy per gross registered tonne sufficient to raise the equivalent annual amount to that from the man-hour levy. It was claimed that the resulting lower hourly cost of employing painters and dockers would encourage employers to use them more, giving more efficient utilisation of this work force and therefore an overall saving in costs to ship owners.

- (2) As soon as the report is cleared by the members of the Working Party indicated in the reply to question 2595.

- (3) The report will be from the Working Party, under the Co-ordinator General of Transport's chairmanship. The groups mentioned will therefore be a party to the report through their representatives on the Working Party.

2816. *Postponed.*

TRADE: EXIM CORPORATION

Floral Exports: Agreement

2817. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2337 of 1985, what agreement has now been reached regarding the proposed organisation to establish a floral export company?
- (2) Where is it proposed that the export company will establish its production operation?
- (3) On whose advice or instruction was Mr Watkins appointed to the position he now holds within the proposed organisation?
- (4) Will the land upon which the company's production activities are to be conducted be subject to all the same Government and local government taxes and charges as if it were a private company operation?
- (5) Who will be the directors of the proposed operation?
- (6) What role has so far been taken by Mr Keith Gale in the proposed operation?
- (7) Is any continuing role envisaged for Mr Gale?
- (8) If so, why?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (8) A copy of a statement outlining Exim's decision to withdraw from WA Floral Enterprise Ltd is tabled.

ENERGY: GAS

Markets: Premier's Comments

2818. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2334 of 1985, concerning comments regarding liquid petroleum gas markets,

has he yet been able to trace the comments he made on 10 March 1983?

(2) Is he still seeking to do so?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) No.

2819 to 2822. *Postponed.*

ALUMINIUM SMELTER: EQUITY

Inquiries: Western Australian Development Corporation

2823. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

(1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2480 of 1985, in what form was the formal invitation to the Western Australian Development Corporation made to investigate and negotiate an equity involvement in the proposed aluminium smelter?

(2) By whom was the invitation issued?

(3) Is it fact that the "invitation" was verbal, and no written submission from the Government to the corporation, setting out the reasons for the Government's involvement and policy, was made in January 1985?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) The formal invitation to Western Australian Development Corporation to consider undertaking investigations and negotiations associated with the proposed establishment of an aluminium smelter in Western Australia arises from discussions with the Corporation over several months, culminating in the Corporation becoming formally and actively involved in January 1985.

(2) The Minister Co-ordinating Economic and Social Development and the Minister for Minerals and Energy.

(3) The member is referred to the Western Australian Development Corporation Act 1983 and in particular, its charter,

the principal objective of which is to promote the development of economic activity in Western Australia. The Corporation has undertaken this project because its involvement would, among other things, fulfil its statutory obligations and functions for the benefit of Western Australia.

AGRICULTURE: TAX SUMMIT

Indirect Taxes: Submission

2824. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2560 of 1985, concerning submission to the taxation summit, who has been appointed to prepare and co-ordinate the agreed submission?

(2) When is it proposed to have discussions with interested parties and groups wishing to make inputs to the submission?

(3) When is it expected that the submission will be completed?

Mr EVANS replied:

(1) to (3) A Working Party comprising representatives of producer organisations, the Rural and Allied Industries Council and Departments of Agriculture and Premier and Cabinet has been appointed to organise a State Agricultural Costs Conference to be held next month.

The Conference will pay particular attention to taxation issues and all interested parties will be represented at the Conference.

Following the Conference, the Working Party will consolidate a submission on taxation in relation to agriculture which will be submitted to the Government by late April to form part of the State's overall contribution to the National Tax Summit.

2825 to 2827. *Postponed.*

TRANSPORT: FREIGHT

Wool: Deregulation

2828. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) With regard to the reply given to parts (3) and (4) of question 2550 of 1985, concerning future regulation of wool carting to Westrail, on what basis is it considered that the Westrail proposal for consolidated wool receival facilities will assist wool growers?
- (2) By whom was the proposal developed?
- (3) What are the estimated financial savings for Westrail in the proposed system?
- (4) What are the financial benefits for growers in the proposal?
- (5) Is it intended that growers will have transport freedom to deliver their wool to the proposed centres by whatever transport method they may choose?
- (6) If established, will the proposal end any intention for the complete deregulation of wool transport?
- (7) Has the Government considered the proposal and approved Westrail's intentions in this matter?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Establishment of wool consolidation centres would result in lower freight rates for wool consigned through consolidation centres compared with wool consigned from a low volume siding.
- (2) The proposal was developed by Westrail following a series of discussions between wool growers, wool brokers, primary industry and Westrail representatives.
- (3) For commercial reasons this information cannot be divulged.
- (4) Financial benefits to growers result from reduced freight rates for consolidated consignments. Already, wool consigned in lots exceeding 25 bales receive freight savings exceeding 25 per cent from selected sidings.
- (5) Growers can continue to cart their own product in their own trucks and in other cases delivery will be through Westrail sub-contracted road hauliers.
- (6) No. See answer (2) to question 2550.

- (7) Yes. Westrail has outlined its proposal for increasing the number of consolidation depots and has general endorsement to proceed with more detailed planning. This is now progressing.

ENERGY: FUEL

Prices: Increases

2829. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2699 of 1985, concerning increasing fuel prices, what were the amendments referred to in part (1) of the reply?
- (2) Have these amendments increased the margin between metropolitan and non-metropolitan petroleum prices?
- (3) What was the result of the review of petroleum distribution costs applicable to Western Australia carried out in December 1984?
- (4) What specific changes were implemented as a result of this review?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The scheme concerned is extremely complex involving many locations.

The changes to the scheme were mainly of an administrative nature designed to simplify the scheme. It is important to note that consumers pay no more than 1.2cpl of freight costs and the subsidy scheme subsidises the total costs of transporting motor spirit, automotive distillate and aviation fuels to non-metropolitan locations.

- (2) The "consumer pays" portion was not affected by the amendments.
- (3) This referred to the total costs of freight and did not affect the "consumer pays" portion.
- (4) It is not practical to list the changes in freight subsidy with approximately 10 000 separate locations throughout Australia.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: REVIEW

Committee: Members

2830. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2696 of 1985, concerning the State Emergency Service, who are the members of the committee referred to in the reply?
- (2) When is the committee expected to report?
- (3) Will the report be referred to local government authorities for comment before the Government makes any determination on the recommendations?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) Mr K. McKenna (Chairman)
Mr J. Porter
Mr R. Brazier
Mr R. Ellis
- (2) The review has been completed and I expect to receive the report later this month.
- (3) It is proposed to release the report for comment prior to any action to implement it.

2831 and 2832. *Postponed.*

TRANSPORT: FREIGHT

Wool: Katanning

2833. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Adverting to the reply given to question 2701 of 1985, concerning establishment of a wool transport handling facility at Katanning, what are the precise guidelines for the evaluation referred to in parts (1) and (2) of the reply?
- (2) How can such a facility be more "cost effective" to Westrail's customers?
- (3) How will a decision whether any such facility will be owned by Westrail or private enterprise be made?
- (4) What other locations are being considered for such a facility as asked in part (6) of the question and not identified in part (6) of the reply?
- (5) Would wool growers be required to deliver to such centres (if established) rather than direct to metropolitan woolstores?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) To evaluate the establishment of a wool handling and transport facility that will improve the efficiency of wool handling and transport whilst maintaining a good service for the wool grower.
- (2) Higher volumes of wool passing through the facility lower Westrail's unit costs—these cost savings can be passed back to the grower through lower freight rates.
- (3) Broadly, the decision will depend on comparative costs of a Westrail operation compared with a private enterprise operation, and appropriate expressions of interest by private operators who are capable of providing a satisfactory service to the wool growers. For example, the Esperance wool consolidation depot is very successfully run by private operators.
- (4) Some preliminary consideration is being given to Merredin and Kalgoorlie.
- (5) See answer to part (5) of question 2828.

2834 to 2836. *Postponed.*

MINERALS: DIAMONDS

Price: Reduction

2837. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

Am I to assume from the reply given to question 2605 on Tuesday, 12 March 1985, that—

- (a) the Government has no further interest in the price per carat received by the Western Australian Development Corporation for the equity interest which it manages, other than for determination of royalty payments;
- (b) the "commercially confidential" relationship referred to precludes detailed price information being available to the Government from the Diamond Trust;

- (c) the Government will not now have to explain why the margin between the carat price being received by Argyle Diamond Sales and the Diamond Trust is less than that promised by the Government when the Northern Mining Acquisition legislation was before the Parliament in 1983?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (a) The Government has no further right to information regarding the price per carat received for Argyle diamonds by the Western Australian Diamond Trust.
- (b) Detailed price information is commercially confidential and only available to the manager of the trust.
- (c) The member's question follows from an incorrect premise which again seeks information on the price performance of Argyle diamonds which, as a former Minister, the member should understand is confidential to the joint venturers.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: BANK

IBJ (Australia) Bank: Local Equity

2838. Mr PETER JONES, to the Premier:

- (1) With regard to the reply given to part (1) and part (2) of question 2602 of 1985, which were the financial institutions and business organisations considered for participation in the IBJ Australia Bank?
- (2) By whom was the "consideration" undertaken?
- (3) On what basis was it assessed or "considered" that Town and Country WA Building Society would be more able to "satisfy Reserve Bank and Treasury requirements" than any other institution being considered?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) The identity of the financial institutions and business organisations in Western Australia which were considered for and took part in discussions in relation to participating in the formation of a new Australian trading bank with headquarters in Perth is confidential to the parties involved.
- (2) and (3) By the major parties considering the formation of a new Australian trading bank to be based in Perth.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Armadale: New Site

2839. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the alternative site for the Armadale primary school been selected?
- (2) If "No", when is it expected the decision will be taken to firm up arrangements for the transfer of the school?
- (3) If "Yes" to (1), where will the school be located?
- (4) What is the expected timing of selecting the site, building the school, occupying the school and selling the present school site for commercial use?
- (5) What special features now on the present Armadale school grounds will be preserved after the school is transferred?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) An alternative site has been selected, subject to satisfactory concept plans for a school on the site being developed.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The alternative site is located to the east of the intersection of Carradine Road and Albany Highway, Armadale.
- (4) No firm timings have been established for the building and occupation of the new school and the disposal of the present school site for commercial use.
- Such timings will be firmed up when the school community has been fully consulted.
- (5) The Government intends disposing of the freehold title to the present school site. The way in which the site is then developed will be determined after the developer liaises and negotiates with the Town of Armadale.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: COMMERCIAL TRIBUNAL ACT

Proclamation

2840. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Has the Commercial Tribunal Bill yet been proclaimed?
- (2) If not, when is it expected to be proclaimed?

(3) What boards or tribunals are currently being considered for incorporation under the legislation?

(4) When is it anticipated that the consequent changes in these boards or tribunals will be made?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

(3) and (4) Several occupational licensing boards are subject to preliminary examination for possible incorporation within the ambit of the Commercial Tribunal Act.

TOURISM: COMMISSION

Investment: Equity

2841. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

(1) Has the Western Australian Tourism Commission made any decisions to invest directly in any tourism projects as an equity participant?

(2) If so, will the Minister list for me those projects and the details of that investment?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) Approval in principle has been given in relation to two projects.

(2) As agreement has yet to be finalised, the details of the projects are confidential to the Commission.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING: SKILLS WEST '85

Darcy Farrell and Associates

2842. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Employment and Training:

(1) Has Darcy Farrell and Associates been involved in preparing or implementing the Skills West '85 promotional campaign?

(2) If so, what payment will Darcy Farrell and Associates receive for this work?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Darcy Farrell has now been paid any funds direct by the Department of Employment and Training.

However, it has now been brought to the Minister for Employment and Training's

attention that Mr Farrell is paid Consultancy fees by Smith Dailey Advertising.

Arrangements between Smith Dailey Advertising and Darcy Farrell and Associates are a private matter.

It is understood that a sum of \$2 163.76 has been paid by Smith Dailey Advertising to Mr Farrell for consultancy services that include Skills West '85.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

TOURISM COMMISSION

Chairman: Applicants

851. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

(1) Approximately how many applicants were there for the position of Chief Executive and Chairman of the WA Tourism Commission when the selection of Mr Hitchen to that position was made by the Government?

(2) Why was he selected by the Government and Premier as Minister at that time, to fill the positions?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) I had no notice of the question and I do not know how many applications were received.

Mr MacKinnon: I said, "Approximately".

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not even know approximately how many were received. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is serious about his question and is not trying to be cute, one hour's notice—

Mr MacKinnon: I do not think I am very cute.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is not very cute. I said, "If he is trying to be cute . . .". I am not saying the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is succeeding in that area. However, if he is dinkum about trying to obtain the information, 10 minutes' or one hour's notice would mean that I could tell him exactly how many applications were received. However, to be asked for a specific or even an approximate figure of this nature is absurd. The member can put the question on the Notice Paper if he wants a detailed or considered answer.

HEALTH: HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICE

Expansion: Funding

852. Mrs WATKINS, to the Minister for Health:

In his Budget Speech the Premier advised funds had been provided to enable further expansion of the hospice palliative care service. Can the Minister advise whether the service has yet expanded to cover the entire metropolitan area?

Mr HODGE replied:

I am pleased to advise the member that I have been invited to officiate at formal celebrations this Friday to commemorate the extension of the hospice palliative care service to the entire metropolitan area.

This very valuable service allows the terminally ill to be nursed at home rather than in an institutional setting and has attracted the services of a number of dedicated volunteers. The service, a joint Silver Chain Nursing Association and Cancer Foundation venture, has been expanded into three new areas—City Beach to Sorrento; Balga to Two Rocks; and Naval Base to Warnbro—and now covers the entire metropolitan area.

Costs associated with the expansion to these three areas have been calculated at \$413 900 for 1984-85 and \$1 059 500 for a full year.

I am proud to say that the current approved budget for the hospice palliative care service is \$2 million.

CHEMICALS: SPILLAGE

Brambles Manford

853. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

Referring to the chemical spill at Brambles Manford on Tuesday, 19 March 1985, I ask—

- (1) What was the chemical involved?
- (2) In what toxicity category is this chemical?
- (3) Were any health problems experienced by any of those individuals in the clean-up?

- (4) If "Yes" to (3), how serious were the problems?

Mr PARKER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows—

- (1) Furfuraldehyde, also known as Furfural.
- (2) The chemical is highly to moderately toxic if taken orally, but because of its low vapour pressure it does not normally present an inhalation toxicity problem in the open air.
- (3) Yes. The vehicle driver and one employee of the Fremantle City Council were examined at Fremantle Hospital and, after treatment, were allowed to go home.
- (4) The effects produced, namely one with a sore throat and one with nausea, were assessed as only "slight".

Furfural is a class 3.2 flammable liquid with a subsidiary risk of 6.1 (poisonous substance). The emergency action code is 2W, which requires full protective clothing and containment of spillage. It can be violently or explosively reactive.

With this in mind, the police and WA Fire Brigade ordered the evacuation of a factory immediately downwind from the area of the spillage. The building remained vacant until the leaking drums were removed from the premises.

APIARY SITES

Forests: Rental

854. Mr TROY, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) Can the Minister advise me the present per annum rental fee for apiary sites in State forests?
- (2) Is it true that there is a proposal to increase this fee by \$2 per annum?
- (3) What does the Minister intend to do in this regard, bearing in mind the recession in the beekeeping industry at present?

Mr DAVIES replied:

I thank the member for notice of the question, which might well be the last

question addressed to a Minister for Forests in this Parliament, something which in itself is a great leap forward because under the new Department of Conservation and Land Management we will now be able to use all the Government's resources to much greater advantage. If the member for Narrogin thinks otherwise we will soon show him that once again he is wrong, just as he was wrong when he forsook his own party for what he no doubt hoped would be the safer precincts of the Liberal Party. The answer to the question is—

- (1) \$30 per annum.
- (2) and (3) The Government has considered increasing the fee from \$30 per annum to \$32 per annum. However, in view of the current recession in the industry and the adverse effect that any increase would have upon beekeepers generally, a 12 month deferral of this increase has been agreed to—a generous Government if ever I saw one!

CHEMICALS: UREA FORMALDEHYDE

Plant: Negotiations

855. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

In relation to the answer he gave yesterday at question time when he referred to the likelihood of the State's getting a urea formaldehyde plant, I ask—

- (1) What is the progress of negotiations involving that project?
- (2) When is it likely that a firm announcement will be able to be made?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) Once again I should point out to the Leader of the Opposition that if he wants a detailed or considered answer, if he is dinkum about his question, a little notice would be of great assistance.

Mr MacKinnon: Your answer took up two pages of *Hansard* yesterday.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am prepared to give members opposite three or four pages, but in the absence of sufficient notice I am unable to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition precisely the likely timetabling of the developments he asks about, which is a similar situation to that of last evening. As I said then, the success of the Minister for Minerals and

Energy in renegotiating a contract, left in such poor shape by the Leader of the Opposition's colleagues when they departed the Treasury benches, has meant that the prospect of an ammonium nitrate plant is now much more likely than it has ever been. My understanding is that about four different interests have approached the Government seeking to inquire into the possibility of such a plant being established and expressing their interest in carrying out the establishment of the plant. What has been difficult to provide until now—it is still difficult but is much more likely now to be able to be provided—is an attractive price, which is essential to the success of an ammonium nitrate plant being established. My understanding from the Minister for Minerals and Energy is that he is confident that the State Government, through the SEC, will be able to offer a price that will make such a plant viable. However, I am not in any position to tell the Leader of the Opposition when the announcement might be made about whether the plant will be established. If he puts the question on the Notice Paper or perhaps directs a question without notice to the Minister for Minerals and Energy, the detailed information might be forthcoming. Once again I can only say that in the absence of any notice of the question, to give a time when the announcement might be made in terms of weeks or days is very difficult.

COMMUNICATIONS: TELEVISION

Programme: "No. 10"

856. Mr BURKETT, to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform:

Has the Minister influenced or sought to influence the management of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to bring about the screening of the programme on Asquith in the television series entitled "No. 10" at a time that seems to suit the purposes of the Government?

Mr TONKIN replied:

I thank the member for adequate notice of the question.

The flaw in theories about politicians influencing the media is that some media people have minds of their own. Appearing in time as it has between the tabling of the report of the Royal Commission

into parliamentary deadlocks and the possible announcement of legislation flowing from it, the programme on Asquith has appeared at an ideal time. Just as Brian Burke faces a hostile second Chamber, so too did Asquith.

Mr Peter Jones: Is Asquith of 1911 part of your ministerial responsibility?

Mr TONKIN: Parliamentary deadlocks certainly are. If the member cannot see that what Asquith did for England over 70 years ago has relevance to something we still have failed to do in Western Australia, I am sorry. Members opposite claim that this Parliament is based upon the Westminster system, but that is nonsense. The Westminster system has a system of resolving deadlocks, something this Parliament has not yet addressed.

To me the programme was embarrassing because, while the Parliament at Westminster was capable in 1911 of realising the need to make the House of Lords into a genuine House of Review without obstructive powers, our Parliament in Western Australia has still to make these essential constitutional advances.

I did not influence in any way the ABC management decision to screen the programme on Asquith at this time, but I am delighted that it has. Discussion of the problem of excessive power held by the second Chamber of this Parliament may be informed by the programme.

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Promotions: New System

857. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

Will females who are currently on the class 2 principal promotion list be disadvantaged in comparison with class 1 deputy principals (female) by the proposed new promotion system?

Mr PEARCE replied:

In my view the answer is, "No". The simple fact of the matter is that with the new changes being brought into the promotion system, I suppose it could be argued that there will be a mix of advantage and disadvantage, compared with what was previously the case. If any system is changed it is obvious that some people will be upset by that change and

that some people will be better off. The changes that are to be made are being introduced with a view to being as fair as possible to everyone concerned in the long run.

It does not seek to protect people's advantage. It will be the case that people who may be disadvantaged under the new system may have been advantaged under the old system. Neither of those things is absolute, but merely comparative. The decision that has been reached is what is best for everyone. It is not an attempt to protect the interests of people who were advantaged under the old system.

I cannot say, off the top of my head, that the consensus of judgment would be that females in the positions mentioned by the member are comparatively well-off under the new arrangements. All I can say is that there are so few women who are principals in schools that to speak of any significant advantage would be quite fallacious. There are so few of them that where they have fought themselves into those positions, from a position of considerable disadvantage, I cannot imagine that the new system, which will open up new opportunities for women, will result in any disadvantage to the women who have already made their way, despite the disadvantages.

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Western Australian College of Advanced Education: Bunbury

858. Mr P. J. SMITH, to the Minister with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000":

One of the promises for "Bunbury 2000" was a Bunbury College of Advanced Education. Could the Minister inform the House of the current status of the project?

Mr GRILL replied:

This project is on schedule. An earthworks contract was recently let and the Building Management Authority is about to invite tenders from registered contractors for construction of the first stage of the project. There are two stages due for completion prior to the beginning of the academic year 1986. It is expected that the first tender will be for a classroom and administration block, followed a little later by library and other education facilities.

AGRICULTURE: RURAL SECTOR HARDSHIP

Seminar: Arrangements

859. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

It was reported in the Press last month that it was the Minister's intention to conduct a seminar to investigate or follow up hardship in the rural sector. Can the Minister report to the House what progress has been made in arranging that seminar?

Mr EVANS replied:

A meeting of the relevant and appropriate groups which have an interest in rural hardship and the problems facing the rural industry has been called.

The initial meeting of this group was held yesterday morning in my conference room and a steering committee was appointed. The steering committee is to meet on Friday and will determine the appropriate agenda and arrangements for such a conference. This hopefully will be held in mid-April.

PORTS AND HARBOURS: BUNBURY

Extensions: Glen Iris

860. Mr D. L. SMITH, to the Minister for Planning:

Can the Minister inform the House of the Government's response to the meeting of land owners of Glen Iris which expressed its concern that the Government had not made a firm decision on the purchase of land in the Glen Iris area for the Bunbury port extensions?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The Cabinet has decided to allocate up to \$1 million for the South West Development Authority to purchase land in the Glen Iris area, the area which will be for the proposed extensions to the port at some time in the future. That should settle the future of the area and compensate those landowners who have been under a cloud because of the uncertainty about whether the port development would go ahead.

Much of the land in that area is already owned by the Industrial Lands Development Authority and this \$1 million should enable the rest of the lands affected to be purchased. The land will be in

the ownership initially of the South West Development Authority, pending transfer of that land to other authorities such as the port authority, the Bunbury City Council, and others that would have an interest.

Financial transactions for the transfer of lands from the South West Development Authority to those other bodies will be settled at the time the transfer of the land is necessary. All the financial transactions will be monitored by the Crown Law Department.

BUSINESS: MANAGEMENT

Rearrangement: Price Waterhouse

861. Mr BLAICKIE, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a report in the January edition of *Business Review* wherein the Chief Justice of the Northern Territory was highly critical of a business management rearrangement by the firm Price Waterhouse?
- (2) As a member of the group that was criticised by the Chief Justice is in Perth with Price Waterhouse and assisted in the preparation of a report on the State's Tourism Commission, which led to the displacement of a majority of the commission's more senior staff, is the Government still adhering to its decision that the rearrangement of senior staff had foundation and was properly based?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government's attention was drawn to this matter by none other than that paragon of accuracy and forthright honesty, the member for Gascoyne. That is the first occasion on which this matter was drawn to the attention of the Government, and that was yesterday. I have not inquired into the matter any more than to have heard the allegation made. I do not know of the details or circumstances surrounding it. I am not sure that the person alleged to have been named in this way was one of those people who took part in the work of the reviewing committee of Price Waterhouse, but I do understand that the person is the manager in Western Australia for Price Waterhouse. I am not about to label Price Waterhouse in the same way as the member for

Gascoyne appears happy to do, or as the member for Vasse by his joining in today seems happy to do. The implication is quite clear. It seems to me that this man is accused by implication of being an unworthy man who should not be involved in undertaking any sort of review. I refute that.

Mr Blaikie: You are refuting a statement of the Chief Justice of the Northern Territory.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not refuting anyone. I am saying, on the basis of the innuendo and the derogatory sort of way in which this matter was raised—and which is now amplified by the member for Vasse simply on the member's say-so—that I am not about to condemn this man who is involved. I am not about to say that a report which was completed for the Tourism Commission, not even to my knowledge by this man, is somehow or other a less than substantial document. I do not know when the Opposition will wake up to the fact that it can slander and defame only so many people in the community before it reaches the stage where those defamations come home to roost. I am sure that abroad in the public domain today there are not too many people who believe that Mr Basil Atkinson was somehow involved in the criminal or improper use of funds. That was what was said last night. Perhaps the Opposition thinks it is good politics; we happen to think it is not.

So far as this matter is concerned, if the member for Vasse has a solid point to make, and has some evidence to indicate that one or other of the people involved in the Price Waterhouse study are scoundrels or blackguards, let him produce the evidence.

GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES

Decentralisation

862. Mrs WATKINS, to the Minister for Planning:

Will the Minister outline the details of the Government's proposal to decentralise Government departments?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The Government is keen to rejuvenate the concept of subregional centres by ensuring that they are given a degree of

activity that is currently lacking. The subregional concept is an important part of the corridor plan for Perth and unless we can get some significant levels of development in the major subregional centres related to the corridor plan, the whole corridor plan is likely to falter because of the problems of traffic densities along what are now lengthening corridors.

The Government has taken the main five subregional centres in Joondalup, Armadale, Fremantle, Rockingham, and Midland and undertaken a study which has been ordered by me and the Department of Town Planning of the ways in which Government departments might be decentralised in part to the five subregional centres. There are a number of rules that underline the study, one of which is that discrete sections of Government departments should be moved to subregional centres.

Mr Rushton: The information is there.

Mr PEARCE: The former Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning in the Liberal Government assures me that the information is available. I can assure him that current information about the potential for the transfer of parts of Government services to subregional centres is not there.

No action has been taken on this matter in the past under Liberal Governments. Under Liberal Governments two models were proposed in the various subregional plans. One was a kind of *laissez-faire* model which was put into the subregional centres to see whether private enterprise rushed there and the other was a Government-driven affair which was a direct decision to relocate people into the subregional centre areas in a sense so that they could live in the area and help attract commercial activities there. The Liberal Government made no effort to decentralise Government departments to the subregional centres. Through the study, which we have initiated for the first time, we are seeking to ensure that there is a possibility of some sections of Government departments moving to subregional centres. That is on the one level.

On the second level is the intention to have the sort of consumer services sec-

tions of Government departments that relate to individual electors in the subregional centres where people can pay bills and make contact with services provided by the Government. That does not mean that all activity will be centred in the subregional centres because a number of our centres, such as Carousel and Garden City, have significant developments and it would be appropriate for sections of Government departments to be relocated to service electors in those centres.

These are some of the things which are under way as a result of the study. I believe it will be a significant boost for the subregional centres.

The Government is already negotiating to provide regional offices of the Community Services Department, the Police Department, and the Crown Law Department in the Joondalup community and retail centre development. It is proposed to provide for the Community Services Department office in the next State Budget and the Police and Crown Law Department offices in the 1986-87 financial year. Details of those proposed developments are currently being negotiated with the developers in the area.

TOURISM COMMISSION

Mr Brett Goodridge: Appointment

863. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Premier:

- (1) Did the Government receive or seek any information from the Public Service Board regarding the appointment of Mr Goodridge to a most senior position in the Western Australian Tourism Commission?

- (2) If so, what was the nature of the advice?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) As I indicated to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition it is very difficult to provide detailed answers to specific questions when absolutely no notice of the question has been given.

Mr Blaikie: You wrote a letter to Parker and Parker.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I did not write to Parker and Parker.

Mr Blaikie: To whom did they write?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: They provided an opinion to the Tourism Commission. The reason I was able to refer to that was that the Tourism Commission sent it to me today.

Mr Blaikie: Why would it do that?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the member asks a question on notice I will ask the Tourism Commission for him.

Mr Blaikie: I thought the Public Service Board handled these matters.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the member does not get the question right first, he should not pop in another one. As far as I am aware the matter was discussed with the Public Service Board. However, I cannot tell him the occasions on which it was discussed or the specific advice that was received. If the member puts the question on the Notice Paper, I will do my best to provide the answer for him in as much detail as he requires, even to the extent of asking the Tourism Commission why it wrote to Parker and Parker.

ENERGY: FUEL

Excise: Indexation

864. Mr TRETOWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

Will the State Government press the Federal Government to—

- (1) Remove the automatic indexation of the excise on fuel?
- (2) Provide total exemption from the fuel tax for off-road use by primary producers?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government will press for both of those matters.

ENERGY: FUEL

Price: Increases

865. Mr TRETOWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What consideration has been given by the Government to the inflationary effect of the current major fuel price rises on the cost of transport throughout the State?
- (2) Will this additional cost of transport be mainly borne by those Western

Australians who live outside the metropolitan area?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government is profoundly concerned about the current increase in fuel prices and about the projected increase in fuel prices over the next few months. In that regard I made my opinions very clear in a Press statement yesterday. The Premier is in the process of sending a letter to the Prime Minister indicating our profound concern and requesting that the matter be considered at the forthcoming tax summit. In the meantime, the Prime Minister should give some consideration to remedial action.

On top of that, I am making representations to my counterpart at the Federal level. Hopefully, we will not see the increases in fuel costs which have been projected.

PLANNING

Public Participation: Mandurah

866. Mr READ, to the Minister for Planning:

Can the Minister outline recent efforts by the Government to develop public participation in the planning field and, in particular, in developments which relate to the Mandurah planning study?

Mr PEARCE replied:

In Mandurah, on Friday, I released the Mandurah district planning study for public comment for a period of three months. That is a major study initiated by the Government to deal with planning considerations, particularly in the Mandurah area, but also affecting the Harvey, Waroona, and Murray areas. There has been a considerable degree of local participation by councils in the formulation of the study. The planning issues which affect that important corridor of development between the metropolitan area and the Bunbury area transcend local government boundaries and are of very great significance, not only to people in those areas, but also to people in the metropolitan and Bunbury areas.

It is important that the long-term planning decisions which are about to be taken for that area are made with a great level of public participation. It is this

Government's policy to allow for a great level of public participation at all levels of Government decision-making and there is no better example of that than the significant number of planning studies which this Government has commissioned.

The Government has made no decision with regard to any of the recommendations in the study but is releasing it for a period for public comment and will carefully consider any public comment before any decision is made. The implementation of the report will not be a matter merely for the Government but will, of course, affect the operations of local authorities. The implementation of those decisions will be made in close consultation with the local authorities.

TOURISM COMMISSION

Price Waterhouse: Report

867. Mr BLAICKIE, to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Premier make available for the perusal of all members the Price Waterhouse Associates Pty. report that led to the redeployment of a significant number of the senior officers of the Western Australian Tourism Commission?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I am perfectly happy to relay the member's question to the Tourism Commission which commissioned the Price Waterhouse report and ask it to consider the member's question.

In addition, I am perfectly happy for the member for Vasse and the member for Gascoyne, if they are interested, to be fully briefed on the present status of operations of the Tourism Commission in an effort to lift the veil of ignorance about the commission's activities from which they appear to suffer.

Whether they accept the offer remains for them to decide, but the Tourism Commission tells me that it is perfectly happy to explain, in great detail, to members of the Opposition, the position as it relates to tourism in this State.

Mr Blaikie: Will it be tabled?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Did the member listen to the answer, or is the member being tricky? It is a real shock to the system but I will repeat what I said. I am happy to inform the Tourism Commission that the member has requested a copy of the report that it commissioned.

Mr Blaikie: For all members?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am happy to tell the commission that the member has requested on behalf of that sea of silent faces behind and beside him that they be given a copy of the Price Waterhouse report and I will relay its decision to the member. Implicit in that answer is that I will not instruct the commission to do it. If the member wants a full briefing of all of the activities of the commission—and he may bring all the Opposition members with him—the commission tells me that it is only too happy to provide that briefing. The member will just have to let me know that he wants the briefing and it will be provided.

TOURISM COMMISSION

Ministerial Direction

868. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

Is the Premier aware that under the Tourism Commission Act the commissioner is subject to ministerial direction and that if the Premier wished the Tourism Commission report by Price Waterhouse to be made public, he could require that it be tabled?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I presume, although I am not aware of the specific part of the Act to which the Leader of the Opposition refers, that the Minister has the ability to direct the commission and if the Leader of the Opposition implies that I have the ability to direct the Minister, I am not sure it is true. No doubt the Minister would respond to a request from the Premier that he consider instructing the commission.

I thought my answer made it patently clear that we operate in a slightly different fashion from the Hitleristic way in which the Leader of the Opposition discharged his duties as Minister for Police and Prisons. I am not going to stand over the Tourism Commission and tell it that it should release the report to members of the Opposition. I will tell the commission that the Opposition has requested a copy of the report and I will

relay its response to the member for Vasse and to the Leader of the Opposition, if he wants to know the response. If, on balance, it looks to me as though the Tourism Commission should release the report, I will consider asking the Minister for Tourism to make the direction. I certainly will not jump all over the Tourism Commission on the basis of the scurrilous sorts of allegations that people on that side of the House have been making in the past two days.

TOURISM COMMISSION

Mr Brett Goodridge: Appointment

869. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

Will the Premier indicate whether he knows why Mr Brett Goodridge was appointed to his important Tourism Commission position without any public advertising for the position?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I can only read to the member part of the Press release that was put out today by the Acting Chairman of the Tourism Commission, and that may explain the situation to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

An Opposition member: Who is the acting Chairman?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Mr Hales. I know that the member for Gascoyne would probably say Mr Hales offers boiled lollies to little girls outside kindergartens but he is not here to tell us. The release states the following—

Mr Laurance's personal attack on Mr Goodridge is particularly irresponsible . . . Mr Goodridge was approached by the Commissioners to become Managing Director. His appointment was a unanimous one.

I and my fellow Commissioners have total confidence in the personal integrity and professional expertise of Mr Goodridge, who in our opinion is the ideal man for the position" Mr Hales said.

For Mr Laurance to imply that Mr Goodridge had acted with any impropriety is totally unfounded.

That answers the question of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is fortunate that I had a copy of the Press release

with me; it simply says that the commission approached Mr Goodridge and his appointment was a unanimous appointment made on the basis of his being the ideal man for the position.

ENERGY: FUEL

Import Parity Pricing Policy

870. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does the statement that he issued yesterday about the impact of the import parity pricing policy for crude oil on transport costs stand?
- (2) Does the State Government advocate the abandonment of the parity pricing policy?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The statement I made yesterday stands in so far as I do not want to contradict the prognostication and calculation of the RAC in respect of possible future price increases.
- (2) We do not argue with the pricing policy itself because we think it is a correct one. However, we take issue with the way in which the mechanism under the policy operates and we feel that it needs to be looked at closely. We have made, and will in the future make, representations to the Federal Government in respect of that mechanism.

ENERGY: FUEL

Import Parity Pricing Policy

871. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

The Minister has indicated that the Government supports the parity pricing policy; but what is the mechanism he thinks should be changed to allow it to reduce the price of fuel?

Mr GRILL replied:

I would have thought the Leader of the Opposition appreciated that the mechanism was tied to the price of Saudi Arabian light oil, which is expressed in terms of American dollars.

Because the American dollar is rising and the Australian dollar is plunging in terms of those relativities, we should look at a mechanism that is more realistic and perhaps consider—I am not saying that this is what we shall finally prescribe—a basket of currencies against which our mechanism could operate rather than against the US dollar.

Perhaps Saudi Arabian light crude is not the particular petroleum against which we should measure it, and we should rather be measuring it against the price which an Australian exporter could receive for his fuel overseas or a more relevant mechanism which fits in with Australia's present economic state and does not create what appears to be a fairly chaotic system at present.