

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 11 June 1986

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

[Questions taken.]

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Administration Amendment Bill.
2. Acts Amendment (Trustee Companies) Bill.
3. Bills of Sale Amendment Bill.
4. Public Trustee Amendment Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 10 June.

HON. G. E. MASTERS (West—Leader of the Opposition) [5.08 p.m.]: I wish to respond to the speech made yesterday by Hon. Graham Edwards. He moved a motion which stated—

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

Hon. Tom Stephens: Excellent speech.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I have not finished; in fact, I have not started. Firstly I wish to deal with the nice bits by congratulating Hon. Des Dans on retaining the leadership of his party in this House and the leadership of the Legislative Council. I congratulate Hon. Joe Berinson for tenaciously hanging on to the Budget Management portfolio. I congratulate also Hon. Kay Hallahan for being appointed a Minister. I am sure she is worthy of that appointment. I will not say that we will make her life easy, but I wish her well in her appointment.

The Opposition also welcomes a large number of new members to the House. They are Hon. Max Evans, Hon. John Caldwell, Hon. Beryl Jones, Hon. Tom Butler, Hon. John Halden, Hon. Tom Helm, and Hon. Douglas Wenn. One or two of the members I do know, the others I will get to know much better over a period of time.

I congratulate the newly appointed Leader of the National Party in the Legislative Council, Hon. Mick Gayfer. We wish him well in that position.

A Government member: What about the leader of the Independents?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: He has not bothered to stay and listen to me.

Hon. P. G. Pental: He has gone to a Caucus meeting.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The Parliament of Western Australia reassembles at a time when Australia is in a dire economic crisis. There is no doubt about that at all. I am sure members on both sides of the House will agree that that is the situation. As we heard in the Address-in-Reply, it is no good this Government boasting how well it is doing in Western Australia. This State Government backs the Federal Government in every move it makes with respect to its economic strategy. The result is that we have a financial and economic crisis in Australia today.

Hon. P. G. Pental: A banana republic.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: This Government sits idly by and does nothing. The only matter in respect of which it has moved at all is the gold tax. That was likely to affect one or two of the Labor Party members, who were jumping all over the place to keep their seats; otherwise they do not give a damn about what is happening. The world regards Australia as nearly bankrupt. We are in a worse position now than Argentina.

I recall in this House some years ago talking about the bankruptcy of Argentina, which had a smaller foreign debt than we have today. Unless some strong action is taken, the economy of Australia will collapse. The world views with absolute astonishment the situation in Australia today. This country has immense resources, some undiscovered at this time, and immense land areas, much of it used for farming, which are under a tremendous threat at this time. We have virtually unlimited power resources. It is not surprising that the world looks at Australia in absolute amazement. They want to know how Australia could possibly go wrong. They envy us, our resources, power supplies and the land we have. They shake their heads and say, "What is happening to Australia today?" They look at our tax system, which is a system which discourages people from working and destroys initiative and enterprise. It is a

tax system which has been with us a long time. It was with us when the Opposition was in Government and it is with us now.

Hon. J. M. Brown: Why didn't you do something about it?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am saying in a perfectly fair way that the tax system should have been changed a long time ago. It has got much worse now, as I will explain to members. Members will come to me after this debate and say, "My God, that was a fine speech."

We not only have a tax system, we have a centralised wage-fixing system and an industrial relations system supported totally and completely by the Labor Party on the other side of the House, some much more than others.

Hon. Garry Kelly interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The honourable member does not have to prove anything to his colleagues. They will learn what a fool he is.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I take that back; it was uncalled for. He just irritates me.

The rest of the world views our centralised wage-fixing system and our rigid industrial relations system with amazement. It is a system which undoubtedly destroys initiative and productivity, and affects profit. The mere thought of profit appears to be quite disgraceful to those on the other side of the House. Wages are kept low by the industrial relations system. If members doubt what I am saying they have only to look at the position some years ago when Australia was one of the top countries in the world as far as our standard of living went. In 1954 we were fourth in the world. What has happened since then? We are now about twenty-fifth in the world. That is the result of the sort of failures the unions have achieved.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let us start the session with a bit of order for a while.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am trying to be as restrained as I can. What this country needs is leadership. We have to recognise that there are serious problems which need to be addressed. We do not need a welfare State; we do not need a Government that depends on people receiving handouts.

This Government needs guts, and drive, and strong decisions need to be made. It has to recognise this country is in a terrible state and things have to change. We cannot continue as we are. The public do not want a non-elected Government—the Australian Council of Trade

Unions. Any Government, whether State or Federal, should not have to go to the ACTU or the TLC with the Budget papers to ask whether they are okay. That is union government. It is pathetic. What we have now is a Keating-Kelty alliance whose policies have resulted in this economic chaos which has caused our suffering today.

It is hard for anyone to get the current figures. Our foreign debt in September 1985 was \$70 billion. The figure was \$35 billion when this Government took office. The figure, at present, is estimated to be \$85 billion and by the end of next year will be \$100 billion. The payment of interest on \$100 billion amounts to between \$30 and \$40 a week for every full-time worker. To completely pay off the \$100 billion would cost \$6 000 for every man, woman and child in Australia. That is the extent of the problem today. I think we should take it very seriously. It appears that we are going broke at a rate of \$1 billion a month and \$14.5 billion this year. It is not surprising that the man who boasts to be the best Treasurer now says that we are fast becoming a banana republic, and indeed we are.

I said earlier that we are in a worse position than that of Argentina and that is not much of a compliment to those people who back those who are responsible for the economy. On 27 May 1986 there was an article in the *Daily News* headed, "Banana republic is almost here". It reported a statement made by a person whom, I have no doubt, the Labor Party does not regard very highly. However, he is a man in a very senior position. His name is Hugh Morgan. He knows what is going on and was reported as saying—

MELBOURNE: The banana republic of Australia is almost here, a top mining chief said today.

With respect to our per capita income ranking, he said—

"Today we are about 20th," he said.

"Japan has overtaken us. Singapore may well do so before the end of the century.

That is the state we are getting into. That is the sort of mess we are in today. Labor Party members are busily shouting and trying to defend that position. They should be as worried as everybody else; they should be concerned. They should say, as I do, that things have to be turned around.

Only recently, when the very bad trade figures came out in April, it was stated that we were going broke at the rate of \$1.2 billion.

There was then disarray! There were shouts that there would be a summit, then that there would not be a summit. Mr Hawke phoned from China and said that there would be no summit; Mr Keating said that there would be a summit; it was then decided that there would be a half summit!

Over past days there has been a realisation from the Federal Government itself that things must change. It is a pity that Hon. Kay Hallahan did not read the papers this evening. It would have saved her some embarrassment. However, she may change her mind tomorrow. She had not read the policy, so she did not know of it. She did not realise that Mr Hawke had pinched a policy that the Liberal party has had about for years.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: That has nothing to do with the State Government.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: All we want to know is whether or not Government members support the concept of work for the dole, because they can make it succeed or fail in WA.

Hon. Graham Edwards: Do you support it, Mr Masters?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Yes, I do. There is no doubt about that. It is our policy, so why should I not support it? I ask whether Mr Edwards supports it.

Hon. Graham Edwards: Do I support your policy? No.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I ask the member who interjected to indicate, even by nodding, whether he supports Mr Hawke's proposal to have those who receive the dole work for it.

Hon. Graham Edwards: No, I do not.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The member has already spoken in this debate and may not speak again.

Hon. P. G. Pendal: He has repudiated the Prime Minister.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The country is going broke and business is under threat. Farms are under great threat and our standard of living is being reduced. Ordinary people in the workplace are suffering and will have to suffer much more. The end result is that the Government has now moved to destroy incentive. There is to be more regulation, more taxation, and more bureaucracy. The Federal Government has not learnt and the State Government apparently will never learn, especially if it does not even agree now with its Federal leader. We have all enjoyed a good living in Australia.

Hon. Garry Kelly: Some more than others.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is dead right.

Hon. Garry Kelly: You agree?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Of course I agree, and that fact will always remain. Nevertheless, I point out that we have shifted from a foreign debt of \$35 billion to a debt of \$85 billion in three years. Next year the debt will be \$100 billion. We are in trouble, but the Labor Party does not understand that the bailiff is knocking at the door and wants his money now. Members of the Council run households and bank accounts. Some run their own businesses. Surely they understand that it is possible to borrow only so much; there comes a day when it has to be paid back, and that day has come for Australia.

Hon. Garry Kelly: How much of that overseas debt is private debt?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am speaking on the basis that Australia has a foreign debt of \$100 billion. That represents a debt of \$6 000 for every child that is born. The Federal Government's economic policy has caused much of this. If I am given time, I will tell members opposite exactly what the Government is doing by way of bureaucracy, regulation, and new disincentive taxes. I have already acknowledged that in our time the tax system wanted changing, but it wants changing even more quickly now. It wants changing desperately.

Hon. S. M. Piantadosi: Why didn't you change it?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I could respond by asking about what Mr Whitlam did. I will not blame members opposite for the Whitlam Government's mistakes.

Hon. D. K. Dans: I don't think you should go down that trail.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It just shows how quickly people forget, when they can forget Whitlam.

Hon. Tom Stephens: It took you 11 years.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It took the Labor Party 11 years to get over Whitlam. I hear he is coming back now and is to be an adviser to the Government.

We have listened to the Labor Party for a number of years. We have listened to it talk of consensus, the trilogy, the accord, and all those glossy names. All the Labor Party did was put off the fateful day. All it did was stop the bailiff knocking at the door for another couple of years, but he is here now.

Hon. Garry Kelly: What's your remedy?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Give me time.

Hon. D. K. Dans: A very good answer!

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth): Order!

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I know that what I am saying upsets Labor Party members, but I would like to think that they would give me time to develop a speech and explain to them where the problems are.

Hon. D. W. Wenn: You are taking your time.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I have plenty of time. I hope that when I develop my speech Labor Party members will be able to understand the difficulties experienced by some people in the community. The position is very serious indeed. It is no laughing matter. Members opposite can make jokes and ask all sorts of ridiculous questions, but the fact is that the position is very serious for every man, woman and child in Australia today.

Talk of consensus, the trilogy, and the accord has merely put off the day of reckoning. The appearance has been given that everything is okay, but those things have been an absolute failure. The public have woken up to the con job perpetrated on them by those glossy names.

Today we are almost a bankrupt country. We are regarded as being bankrupt. Our interest rates in many cases are two and three times more than those in similar places in the world. Our inflation rate is 9.2 per cent at this time. Our currency is almost a joke. Travellers overseas who try to change Australian money are looked at very critically, because the changer is not sure what it is worth. That is a very serious comment on the state of our currency and was one made to me recently by a member of Parliament.

We have a non-elected government—the ACTU—running the economic policies of Australia. We have big government and a welfare state. Members should take notice of the fact that today we have what is virtually a tax revolt. I spoke earlier about the disincentives and the new taxes and impositions being put on the public. We spoke of the fringe benefits tax. I assume that members opposite all support the fringe benefits tax.

Hon. D. K. Dans: I am a bit doubtful about that.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I ask whether Mr Kelly supports the fringe benefits tax.

Hon. Garry Kelly: Yes.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am sure that the honourable member is reflecting the views of some of the other members opposite. Of course, they support a capital gains tax. They support the removal of the negative gearing allowance. They do not support the gold tax, but they do support the Bill of Rights, as Hon. Kay Hallahan agrees.

What members are saying is that they support the rental property crisis. There is a rental property crisis in Western Australia today because of all these things. Members opposite say they represent the poor people. They are wicked to the poor people. The rental crisis is very serious as it affects them.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: No-one would know better than the Attorney General.

Several members interjected.

Hon. A. A. Lewis: The Attorney General has Mr O'Connor.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth): Order! The Leader of the Opposition will be heard in silence.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We have a State Government which is softening us up with big State Government increases. We have the Minister for Budget Management scared because he realises he has to come to this Parliament saying, "I have to charge you more for power, water, the MTT, and everything else."

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I shall give members some figures in a moment. As I have already said, our currency is fast becoming a joke. Interest rates, although they are coming down a little, are nowhere near as low as those in other parts of the world.

Let me talk about interest rates. I have some information about the level of interest rates at this time. The prime rate for big business, that is loans of over \$100 000, is currently between 18 and 19 per cent.

Hon. Mark Nevill: What was it four years ago? More than that.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: Tell us what it was.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It certainly was not more than that. I can tell members it was 14 per cent at the last Federal election.

What I am saying is that the prime rate for big business is currently 18 per cent. I am sorry I misquoted; the figure was 14 per cent at the last election. These are official figures I have here. The savings bank loan interest rate is cur-

rently 15.5 per cent—in fact some people are being charged 16 per cent. It was 11.5 per cent at the last Federal election.

We are talking about the Federal economic scene. How is that, Mr Nevill? Was the member listening? The small business interest rate is 18 to 21 per cent. It was 14 per cent at the last election. Credit card interest rates, including Bankcard, are 21 per cent. One bank at least is talking of putting these rates up to 22 per cent. We have a situation where we are still above our major trading partners in the world.

Members can understand the great difficulty which that causes. We have an inflation rate—and I am sure that gives Government members no joy at all—of something like 9.2 per cent at this time. That is far higher than many of our trading partners.

Hon. Garry Kelly: You could not blame that on wages, could you?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Some of these questions are very stupid. I will have something to say about that point later. The inflation rate is 9.2 per cent compared with 1.1 per cent in Japan; USA, 2.3 per cent; West Germany, 0.1 per cent; France, three per cent; Italy, 7.7 per cent; UK, 4.2 per cent; and Canada, 4.1 per cent. The OECD average is 3.1 per cent.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Can members not see what that is doing to the community?

Hon. Garry Kelly: That is not the question I asked.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I do not care. If the honourable member does not understand the importance of the point I have just made I am sure it is a waste of time talking to him. We must recognise the accord the Government raves about, and has been raving about for some time, has as its prime objective the lowering of the inflation rate. In the past year it has proved it is failing. There is no doubt at all about that. So the accord has failed miserably in that area.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Let me go on. We have a situation where everyone says we are living beyond our means. Our overseas competitors, the people in other parts of the world, say that Australia is living beyond its means. Even the Premier, Brian Burke, says we are living above our means. What he is saying I am sure is that the Government of the day is living

above its means because the Government is doing all the spending. The Government is setting out the policies.

Hon. Tom Stephens: Who is doing all the borrowing?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am just saying the Government is doing all the spending and has borrowed another \$45 billion in three years.

Hon. Tom Stephens: You do not understand the question.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We are talking about the level and size of government.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I quote from a document—I do not know where it is from but I will table it. It is an official document.

A Government member: He does not know!

Hon. D. K. Dans: Say it is *The National Times* and I will believe you.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It is from the Institute of Public Affairs.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: It is a reputable research body.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It says that there are 16 000 Commonwealth public servants who are administering regulations, and the cost of those 16 000 is estimated at \$700 million a year. It is worse when one looks at the Commonwealth and State public servants who are doing the same jobs—there are between 40 000 and 80 000, costing up to \$3.6 billion.

Everyone is talking about the size of government. Whether we or the Labor Party is in Government, we must face the reality that people are now saying—and Mr Berinson would know this only too well—that government is too big, we must do something about it.

I do not know whether they are dinkum about it, but some people are talking about reducing the size of government, and one cannot argue about that. We have unfortunately a group of people in our society who are talking against even their own Governments. Some people in the ACTU, some of the senior union leaders, are saying they want bigger government. Senator Cook says there will always be bigger government if there are Labor Governments. What I am saying to the Labor Party and to Governments throughout Australia is that we have had enough. Government is far too big and far too costly. People do not want a welfare State. They do not want handouts week after week and month after month.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I draw tonight's *Daily News* to the attention of the honourable member who interjected, and obviously other members have not read it either. Under the heading "PM's Dole Work Plan" an article states—

A work-for-the-dole plan will be announced in tonight's address to the nation by the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke.

We are not saying that we want people to starve. We are not saying there are not people in need, because there are. They need help and it is the responsibility of any Government to help them, but many people are abusing the system; many people are simply taking advantage of the welfare state. That has to be stopped.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Let me go on. What we do know is this: The Government employees in Australia today and people living on welfare combined, outnumber the people in the private sector who are paying the taxes. A worker in the private enterprise area has to work not only for his family but also to keep someone else.

Several members interjected.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Every person working in the private sector across the board is working to keep another. That seems to me to be quite wrong. If the honourable member thinks it is right, that is up to him.

It is a fact that every second person in Australia today regularly receives a welfare cheque. That is staggering but true, and it is the extent of our big government and our welfare state. I suppose one could say that people must work six months of the year for other people.

The cost of welfare in Australia is around \$19.1 billion; the amount changes according to the figures used.

Hon. Mark Nevill: Do you think child endowment should be means tested?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Does the member think it should be tested?

As I said, the cost of welfare is at least \$19.1 billion. What worried me the other day was to hear a comment by a Labor Party member—not a member of Parliament—that the unemployment level of 6 or 7 per cent must now be considered full employment; in other words, in our day some years ago when we had a one or two per cent unemployment level, that could have been considered a full employment situation.

The view of some people now is that full employment ought to make allowance for the six or seven per cent unemployment level. This means it is accepted by many people that they can choose unemployment as a way of life and live off the system.

It is far too easy for people to abuse and to use the system—I refer to the dole cheats, the people who cheat the welfare system. Many reports have indicated that millions of dollars are lost because of people working the system to their advantage. It is becoming an art. The official estimate for the loss is \$100 million, but it is much more than that in reality.

I return now to my earlier comment: The sheer weight of our massive bureaucracy is causing what we call a tax revolt among the people; they have had enough. Certainly in our time in office federally we were partly to blame for some of the things that have happened. But Government members must learn to listen and to understand that now things have got out of hand.

It seems that people like Senator Cook will never learn. He was reported in *The West Australian* of 1 May 1985 as follows—

"The Labor Party is a high-taxing party. It needs to be to carry out its reforms," he told a tax forum at Melbourne University.

W.A. Labor senator Peter Cook told a meeting on tax reform yesterday that the Labor Party would always be a high taxing party.

The people of this State do not take kindly to that sort of comment. There is a rising anger in the community, and woe betide any Government that does not take notice of it. There is a growing belief among the people who create wealth and invest their money and who are prepared to work harder than most other people that the harder they work the more tax they are forced to pay. We have to turn round that situation so that the people who are prepared to work hard and to risk their capital, whether or not they are in the work force, are given a pat on the back and told, "Well done." Given the chance, our work force is better than the work force anywhere else in the world.

The classic move to destroy incentive and initiative is the fringe benefits tax, which members oppose support, apart from Mr Dans, who has expressed reservations about it. This is a very bad tax and will be the straw that breaks the camel's back. It has the potential to destroy the Government of the day if that Government does not pay attention to what is occurring.

What we have with the fringe benefits tax is horrific paper warfare. I do not know how many members opposite, in their support of the tax, have seen the document related to it which has been sent to employers. The document is in small print and covers 57 pages. This document, with all its small print and all these pages, has been sent to both small and large employers.

Hon. J. M. Brown: Is that the document your leader suggested they should send back?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: This document was sent out before the tax was law, and our leader said that as it was not law when it was sent out, the booklet should be sent back because there was no authority for it to have been sent out. Now the situation is different and people obviously have to obey the law. People should not disobey the law. I know some people have suggested the law should be broken; I know Tom Stephens has told people to disobey the law—section 54B of the Police Act, for example. I am not saying that the law should be broken. People must obey the law.

Surely some Government members have been in business for themselves and understand the pressures faced by people in business. How many of them running their own business would like to be faced with understanding this sort of document?

Hon. Mark Nevill: What about people on high incomes who are walking round the income tax system?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Some people will always break the law and cheat the system. But that is no reason to penalise every man and his dog.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Honourable members should cease their interjections and the honourable member addressing the Chair should do just that.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Again I draw the attention especially of members opposite to this document entitled "Guides to the Fringe Benefits Tax". There are four volumes of it here. These are documents prepared by K.M.G. Hungerfords, chartered accountants. These are guides to explain to employers how to deal with the fringe benefits tax. How would members opposite like to be faced with a 57-page docu-

ment in close print, including about 50 amendments, all to explain the fringe benefits tax? If an employer could not understand the guide, his accountant would suggest that he look at these four volumes in the hope that he might understand the tax. These are public documents.

The Australian Financial Review produced a supplement to tell people what the fringe benefits tax was all about. There are pages and pages of information. This edition is dated 19 May 1986 and on page 31 we find the sentence—

Government worried about resistance by Democrats.

The Government was worried, but that was apparently overcome. On the next page there is a piece about a company waiving a debt, and we find the headings—

Loans by companies

All staff purchases at a discount now taxed

Cheap air fare tax proposal modified

There is page after page of information telling employers how to calculate, for instance, the tax to be paid on the company car, and a photograph is included of Mr Keating!

The point I am making really relates to what can be found on page 34 of this supplement, and is the reason for all these guides and these pages and pages of information explaining the fringe benefits tax. I quote as follows—

A few of the lurks for gaining perks under the changed rules.

So people are being told how to get round the fringe benefits tax. People will cheat the system; people will find ways round it. Why on earth do members opposite want to go through all this paraphernalia except to destroy initiative and incentive and to undermine a system that has been operating for years?

Hon. S. M. Piantadosi: Do you condone tax cheats?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If the honourable member gives me the time, I will tell him about some of the things that have happened.

Hon. P. G. Pendar: You will have to go slowly.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I refer now to the 28 May edition of *The Australian*, and an article written by Kent Acott. I quote as follows—

Coupled with the increase in company tax, they estimate that WA employers will be \$122 million out of pocket.

Further on—

As a result, the tax's effect on various industries is hard to ascertain but if the immediate reaction to the tax is any indication, most industries are taking a pessimistic outlook. The WA secretary of the Australian Bank Employees Union, Mr George Simm, believes that 3000 members will be affected by the decision to tax low-income finance given to bank staff. He believes that banks will stop offering the low rates.

It is not the wealthy person who is being attacked; the person being attacked is the ordinary member of the work force, because he will be paying for it. Every member of the work force will be paying something because of this tax. The tax does nothing except to penalise the people who can least afford it.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The car industry is a perfect example. I refer to an article in *The Australian* of 30 April 1986 headed, "Car Industry Stalls in a 12-year low". I note that—

The motor industry has recorded its worst March sales in 12 years, registrations falling almost 33 per cent from last year's record levels.

This is really before the fringe benefits tax takes effect fully, and it is obviously the result of the Government's other economic programmes and its deliberate attempts to maintain the very high interest rates that now exist on finance.

As the tax revolt grows, and as the resentment towards this fringe benefits tax develops—and as it will develop in the future—the Government now wants to be able to get rid of the problem. In fact I would suggest, as I mentioned earlier in my speech, that this tax will do the Federal Government more harm than any other single thing that the Government has done since it has been in office.

Senator Button, a Federal Government member, has expressed strong reservations about the desirability of this tax in an article in *The Weekend Australian* headed, "Tax Revolt Grows as Button aids car firms". Senator Button, representing as he does an area that has

many car firms and car assembly works, is deeply concerned about this tax, and I am sorry that some members on the other side of the House have indicated very strong support for the fringe benefits tax. Mr Dans, as one would expect, has expressed some reservation because he, with his experience, knows the dangers that are possible as a result of this fringe benefits tax.

I would draw the attention of members to an article in the *Daily News* of 11 June 1986. It seems that the *Daily News* is now printing one or two useful pieces of information. One article deals with the requirement of Mr Hawke and his Government that people must work to earn the dole, which is a very good move and one that I commend. There was also reference in the paper to the perks tax in New Zealand. This is referred to on page 8 of the *Daily News* under the heading, "A perks tax fails". I quote from that article as follows—

NEW ZEALAND'S perks tax is a gigantic flop. After the first year of the so-called fringe benefits tax the Government reaped only \$NZ104 million—way below the \$NZ400 million predicted last September by Parliamentary Under Secretary for Finance, Trevor de Cleene.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: What went wrong?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I will tell Hon. Fred McKenzie what went wrong. I am sure it will interest him.

The point I am making is the one I made earlier—that is, that the rich people will not pay this tax. It is the ordinary working people who will pay. The article continues as follows—

And that was paid by only eight per cent of New Zealand's 150 000 employers—92 per cent claimed that under the tax laws, they were not liable to pay anyway. Embarrassingly—but not unexpected in this country's overloaded bureaucracy—the \$NZ104 million cost almost \$NZ10 million to collect.

What I am saying is this: The same result will occur in Australia—

Hon. A. A. Lewis: You can make a 90 per cent cop.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If one adds this to all the other charges, I suggest that this is a bad tax which will affect people desperately, and many people will lose their jobs as a result of it. If we look at how this tax will affect the ordinary people in the work force I would say that I have

never seen a better advertisement in the newspaper regarding any tax imposed by a Liberal Government or a Labor Government than one which appeared in *The Weekend Australian* of 31 May 1986, addressed to Hon. Paul Keating and signed by the staff of the Fury Group of Companies. Each member of the staff signed his or her name to that advertisement, which demonstrates—even to the Labor Party members who are committed to this tax—just how serious it is to the ordinary working person. The advertisement reads as follows—

May 21, 1986

The Hon. P. J. Keating, M.P.
Treasurer
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

We are a concerned group of employees who have all contributed to the cost of this letter to you. Our concern is not with the company we work for, our concern is with you and what you are doing to our company.

Our boss started the company in 1977 with 52 employees. Over the past 9 years, with his guidance and our hard work, we together have built this company to where it is today and The Fury Group of Companies now employs 264 people.

We know that you, and all politicians, have cars provided, which we as taxpayers pay for. Why then, do you feel that no other company in Australia should be able to give their employees this same benefit?

Mr. Keating, we have a very real reason to feel worried, because as you know, in our business, nothing happens until someone purchases a vehicle.

Under you, interest rates have risen dramatically, the Australian Dollar has fallen drastically, especially against the Yen and now you are going to put the final nail in our coffin with the fringe benefits tax on motor vehicles

Mr. Keating, we want to keep working, but if you keep penalising our business, many of us will be retrenched, and the only person we will blame, is you.

Yours sincerely,

The Staff
The Fury Group of Companies
Fury Ford Fury Mitsubishi
Fury Bobcat Fury Engineering

P.S. If you don't believe us, the new car sales figures for the last quarter compared to the same period last year, show a drop of 20%, and this is before your fringe benefits tax.

That really demonstrates the concern about these taxes of which I am speaking, and illustrates the increasing burdens on business, whether it be large or small. These increasing burdens through bureaucracy and regulations are strangling our community to the stage where it has had enough. As I said earlier, if Governments, regardless of their political persuasion, do not take notice of that pressure from the community, and the strength of feeling that is there, then surely to goodness they will go down.

I hope this message from those many little people—although that may not be the right expression to use—who are concerned working people will go right to the minds and thoughts of Government members, whether State or Federal.

In the *Sunday Times* of 23 May 1986 there is a headline, which says, as follows "We've had enough blunders Mr Keating". This sort of thing is going on every day, but I will quote from this article—

This predicament is particularly ironic for Mr Keating, who claimed the fringe benefits tax from motor cars would accrue \$350 million in extra revenue for the Government.

Quite the reverse; according to estimates, the sales slump will deny the Government almost twice that amount that would normally be gathered from car sales.

When Governments all over the world think that someone might be cheating a little bit, they bring in legislation to catch a few people and they end up by bringing in everyone—they penalise everyone in the community, big and small. The working people will suffer and no one will gain.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: How does it apply on cars?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am not proposing to go through this in detail. I will ask the Clerk to pass these copies of the the fringe benefits tax information to Mr McKenzie, and I suggest that he spend four or five hours studying it, and then perhaps he could explain to the House what he makes of it.

I ask members to study these problems and the difficulties involved in order to ascertain what is happening. This is a typical example of overkill: It is expected that \$350 million will be raised from the car tax, but double that amount will be lost in car sales. What is the common-sense in that situation?

Other industries are also involved; for example, the restaurant industry maintains that it is suffering quite seriously and that the situation will deteriorate. The president of the Restaurant and Caterers Association of Western Australia, Mr Gordon Traill, made a complaint in this regard which was reported in the Federal Parliament. It is unfortunate that when replying to Senator Knowles' question, Senator Walsh made the following statement, which shows a typical lack of feeling by that Minister—

According to Senator Knowles, quoting the President of the Restaurant and Caterers Association of Western Australia, there had been a drop in business of between 25 and 40 per cent. Perhaps there was in the particular restaurant that Mr Traill operated, perhaps because it was a pretty sleazy second-rate restaurant, but in the industry as a whole the fact is that employment has increased in the four-month period by a massive 6.9 per cent.

Mr Traill, representing the restaurant industry, had a genuine concern and Senator Walsh has shown callous disregard for the problems in the restaurant industry.

I move now to the mining industry and I am aware that one or two members in this House may have been involved in the submissions to the Federal Government dealing with the effects on the mining industry. I understand a lengthy document was prepared which included submissions from the Western Australian Mining Co. Pty Ltd, backed up by documents from the Western Australian Iron Ore Industry Consultative Council. I suggest that one of the Government members in this House was involved with that submission, which put forward the problems that will occur in the mining industry. For example, it will discourage the employment of workers with families and encourage the employment of single people.

The problems I am dealing with at the moment refer to sales and it is expected that the depreciation of the dollar may increase their prospects but that is only in the short term. The consultative council has recognised these prob-

lems and has pointed out that the cost involved is \$17 million, even though the Federal Government has been a little more lenient with regard to housing in the north of the State and has agreed not to charge the fringe benefits tax to the fullest extent. Nevertheless, it will have a significant impact on the mining industry, and I am referring now to five mining companies and not the many other small businesses that will be affected. An additional tax of \$17 million will be imposed on those five major iron ore companies; that is tragic and it will obviously have a serious effect. The Government cannot keep taking money from these people and expect them to continue their operations forever and a day. Eventually, it will not be the mining companies that suffer but the people employed by them. The tax will have a disastrous effect on the mining industry.

An interesting point is that Mr Keating was reported as saying that the tax was a good one and that it would encourage investment, create more jobs, and be a great help to the community. I do not know of any statement that could be more ridiculous and reflect a greater underestimation of the impact of this tax. Presumably Mr Keating believes that statement to be the case, and if that is so it indicates that he has no understanding of the effects this tax will have. He is reported in the *Daily News* on 6 June, under the heading "Tax law passed" as saying—

... the tax would hit at tax evasion, promote economic growth and encourage jobs and investments.

One despairs of the future and of any hope of persuading Mr Keating and his Government to give consideration to the problems in the community when one reads statements like that from a person of Mr Keating's calibre.

In addition to the fringe benefits tax, a capital gains tax will be imposed. The State Government has refused to condemn, and therefore one assumes it supports, this tax. Taking into account the withdrawal of the negative gearing provisions, the so-called election promises and the like, it can be seen that this State is suffering a great deal under this Government. I suppose all members will recall that famous statement made by Mr Hawke with regard to the capital gains tax before the 1983 election, when he said in front of a large gathering—and it was televised—that he could assure the public that there would be no capital gains tax. He repeated that statement to make sure, he said, that the Liberals understood him. Those were his words, yet a few weeks later the

announcement was made of the proposed tax. He is very quiet about it now. That dreadful man stood and repeated that there would be no capital gains tax, knowing that he would break his word as soon as he was re-elected.

The tax is causing more and more damage in the community. The Treasurer, Mr Keating, has taken three different positions in the matter: First, he said that he liked the tax; second, that it was no good after all; and third, that Mr Hawke only intended it to be used for the time being and that he could change his mind. How can the public understand what is going on when those sorts of statements are made?

It is interesting to note a report which appeared in *The West Australian* on 5 September 1985 when Mr Burke refused to condemn the capital gains tax. Under the heading "Burke rejects tax plea" it stated—

THE State Government last night refused to join the Opposition in rejecting Federal plans for a capital gains tax.

It goes on and on. I mentioned earlier in this House, and Hon. Sam Piantadosi interjected when I said it, that the rental market and accommodation in Western Australia was in a disastrous state. I pointed out that the capital gains tax, the rejection of negative gearing allowances, and the fringe benefits tax were creating a situation in which there was no spare rental accommodation. Hon. Sam Piantadosi is aware of this disastrous situation which affects the poor people—those about whom he is supposed to be concerned. The rents have increased by 25 per cent in six months. Who does the Government blame for that?

Hon. S. M. Piantadosi: Your little mates, the rip-off merchants.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Mr Piantadosi ought to speak to his Ministers before making that sort of statement. He should read the answers to questions asked in the Parliament today. My colleagues in the other House asked the Minister for Housing (Mr Wilson) what were the increases in rents over the last six months. He said that it was estimated at 25 per cent this month. He was asked what was the reason for the increase in rents and the shortage of accommodation. Mr Piantadosi says that it is my rotten little mates charging too much. Mr Wilson does not agree. I will read comments made by the Minister so that Mr Piantadosi can have a chat with him and explain to the

Minister that he is wrong. I refer to the reply to a question on 11 June 1986 by the Minister, the second part of which reads—

The major factor behind the increase has been the shortage of vacant rental accommodation. Industry sources instance many reasons for the tightening of the rental market including high interest rates; proposed capital gains tax and non-allowance of negative gearing; little or no new building for rental purposes;

Those are the reasons. Mr Piantadosi's own Minister went on to say—

The range of factors involved demonstrate the complex nature of the housing/accommodation industry and the need to retain housing provision as an attractive investment avenue if the accommodation needs of the community are to be satisfied.

Mr Piantadosi should listen to the next part of the answer to the question, which reads as follows—

This point was one that I vigorously pursued at both the Australian Housing Council and the Housing Ministers' conference where I urged that the investment incentives relating to housing should be restored.

Mr Piantadosi's own Minister recognises we have a dreadful rental property crisis and the fact that increases in rents are due simply to the fact that people are not being encouraged to invest in rental properties, because it does not pay them to do so.

I suggest that Mr Piantadosi have a chat to his Minister in order that he may be briefed and enabled to make a speech here.

It is unfortunate that Hon. Joe Berinson is away on ministerial business and not in his seat, because he would understand better than anyone in this place the fact that we have a rental crisis in Western Australia. Hon. Joe Berinson has been involved in that business for a long time and I do not criticise him for that. Everyone is entitled to have his own business interests. However, were Mr Berinson in this House listening to me talking about the reasons people are not investing in rental accommodation and referring to the difficulties experienced by those subject to increased rentals, he would be nodding his head in agreement, because he would know that his own Minister had agreed with that.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: They have not increased Homeswest's rentals by 25 per cent.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I imagine the member is saying that, if Homeswest has not increased rents, it should be able not only to make properties available at those rental levels, but also that it should be able to increase the number of properties available. In fact, the member expects the Government to bail out these people again. He is saying that, if the Federal Government is so greedy that it imposes taxes on people and prevents them from investing, the Government should bail out those seeking accommodation.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: I did not say that.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The argument is lost completely on the member. The Government cannot continue to pick up the tab. We cannot have bigger and bigger government.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: I think we can.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We can overcome these problems by encouraging people to invest.

Today I have indicated the problems we are experiencing and the fact that big government and increased taxes are financially depressing. What I have said indicates what we can expect to find in our State Budget in the near future. I say to the Minister for Budget Management: Woe betide any Government which does not understand the depth of feeling in the community at this time, because it will certainly suffer as a result of that ignorance.

After the election in 1983 the Government lifted taxes and charges by approximately 30 per cent and then immediately cut the salaries of some top public servants by 10 per cent. In that way, the Government created a smoke-screen, but it will not be able to get away with that again, because the public are aware of what is going on and are deeply concerned.

Indeed, it was fortunate for the Government that the by-elections were held last weekend, because it would have been in trouble had they been held at a later time.

New members in this place are laughing at what I am saying. They think it is funny that some people in the community are suffering. Mr Piantadosi does not believe his own Minister, and Government members could not care less about the position. I do not think any Government member has ever risked his own dollars. Rather, Government members have been in protected positions all their lives. They have either worked in union jobs where they were fully protected and have been giving orders to others, or they have worked as Government advisers.

When I talk about people suffering because they cannot obtain rental accommodation, Government members laugh. The situation is pathetic. However, it will go on record that members opposite burst out laughing when I referred to the poor and suffering people who could not obtain rental accommodation.

The Government will not again get away with the huge hoax it perpetrated previously when it increased Government charges. The other day the Premier said on television that, as far as possible, he intended to keep increases in Government taxes and charges in line with inflation. However, as he walked away, he said, "That does not mean in the first year increases in taxes and charges will be below the rate of inflation."

Hon. Tom Stephens: Did Peter Wells write this speech?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Had Peter Wells prepared this speech, members would be here for another three hours. However, no-one would argue with me when I say that, if Peter Wells prepared something, it was right.

Point of Order

Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I ask the Minister to stop playing with his thing while the Leader of the Opposition is trying to speak.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member ought not to fiddle with that microphone.

Debate Resumed

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: In relation to increases in Government taxes and charges I shall draw members' attention to some figures. In 1982-83 the total tax collection for Western Australia was \$474 million. In the first year that the Labor Government was in office that figure was increased by \$110 million. The following year it was increased by \$93 million and in the year before the election the increase was \$45 million.

In the three years prior to the Labor Government taking office, under the Liberal Government taxes and charges rose by 14.3 per cent in real terms. I am basing these figures on the levels of inflation and the like. Under the Labor Government, the increase doubled and was in the order of 28.8 per cent.

Someone said that was a good, healthy rise and represented a good, healthy dose of socialism. Bearing in mind that statement, it is clear the Government will try to do the same again.

Regardless of how much people are suffering, we do not expect the Government to show any compassion in the first Budget it brings down in its new term in office. The only way in which expenditure can be cut back is by the State Governments leading the way. If the Federal Government does not take the lead, the State Governments will have to do so.

It is of no use to say that, because the Federal Government has not given us enough or has taken away too much, we will give this State a dose of socialism and increase charges again. The Government cannot continue to be a pace setter in the wage area. Wages have increased dramatically over a period and the Government cannot afford to set the pace in this field.

The Treasury issued a note from Mr Boylan which indicated staff levels would not increase and allowance must not be made for increased staff numbers. Mr Boylan asked that, in analysing expenditure options, an increase of 11 per cent be assumed for increases in salaries and wages. He was quite right to say that that sort of level of increase must be assumed, because flow-ons are taking place already or are due.

However, one cannot continue to pass the bill to the public and the Government cannot continue to set the pattern. A number of hints have been made by the Premier that Government taxes and charges must increase, because the wicked Federal Government is doing all sorts of nasty things. The Premier is grabbing at the actions of the Federal Government, clawing at them in desperation so that he can soften up the people to prepare them for these increases. The Minister for Transport has indicated there will be an increase in fuel tax. We all remember that approximately three years ago in a full page advertisement Mr Burke said that there would be no increase in the price of fuel.

Since then it has gone up and up and up. If I am not making matters worse by bringing another point to the attention of the House, let me draw members' attention to an article which appeared in the *Sunday Times* last weekend under the heading "Burke's fat cats grow ever fatter". A few members of this Chamber at one time or another were fat cats of Mr Burke.

The article reads as follows—

THE public service in WA has grown 11 per cent since the Labor Government

came to power—despite a guarantee by the Premier, Mr Burke, to reduce numbers.

In 1982 there were 14 997 officers listed under the Public Service Act—last year there were 16 649.

If that is not bad enough, I further quote—

And the lists do not take into account those people working under contract, or the Government's advisers.

Hon. S. M. Piantadosi: Would you name them?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: In the *Sunday Times* of 8 June appears an article under the heading "Charges will rise—Burke". It reads as follows—

WIDE-RANGING increases in State government charges are inevitable, the Premier, Mr Burke warned yesterday.

He also indicated the axe was poised to cut through the Public Service.

I hope he means it. There appears to be an attempt at a cutback. I hope this is one way that the Government will save some money. Nevertheless, I point out the Public Service cannot continue to grow, nor will the public permit it to happen, so the Government must take some very simple steps. Instead of softening up, threatening and throwing smoke-screens, at a State level we must cut spending and cut the size of the Government. We must give tax incentives even at State level if we can but, above all, we must cut regulation, bureaucracy, and the size of the welfare state. If that does not happen, indeed there will be a tax revolt of great magnitude. We will be amazed to see the attention it will draw to Western Australia on a national basis.

I implore the Government to take notice of what is happening in this State and to come out and criticise a Federal Government which lacks understanding and is determined to bring this country to a state of bankruptcy.

I support the motion.

HON. TOM STEPHENS (North) [8.02 p.m.]: We have just listened to an absolutely abominable speech; in fact, it was one of the worst speeches I have heard in my time as a member of this Chamber. What absolutely annoys me about Hon. Gordon Masters is that he has not learnt a thing during the three years he

has spent in Opposition. One thing which would have to have been brought home to the Liberal Party as contributing to the defeat that it faced at the polls during the last election, was its negative criticism and refusal to acknowledge even one good aspect of the Government's track record. This has been constantly demonstrated in the past.

Hon. P. G. Pental: What do you think about land rights?

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: That fact is again clear as we start the current session of Parliament. It disgusts me that the Leader of the Opposition has not been able to learn that lesson and to recognise that the Burke Labor Government has a track record which is second to none and of which we are fiercely proud.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: Hear, hear!

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: We are extremely proud of the ministerial front bench. To sit here and listen to the harping, negative, hopeless criticism of the Leader of the Opposition is too galling altogether.

I did not really want to begin my remarks with a condemnation of the previous speaker—

Hon. A. A. Lewis: Why did you?

Hon. P. G. Pental: You should have started with an apology.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I wanted to begin my remarks by associating myself with the comments made by my colleague, Hon. Graham Edwards, in moving the Address-in-Reply when he noted the sad passing from the Western Australian Parliament of our valued colleague, Clive Hughes. As we are assembled in this Parliament we are obviously missing a valued friend and a valued colleague whose contribution was well recognised by his political party and his electorate and, I am sure, the people of Western Australia.

I take this opportunity to congratulate our front bench. It is a front bench of which we in the Labor backbenches are fiercely proud. Hon. Des Dans, Hon. Joe Berinson, and now Hon. Kay Hallahan are Ministers whose track records over the previous three years—in the case of Hon. Kay Hallahan over the last few months—have been very impressive. As a relative newcomer to this House—I have been here for four years—

Hon. P. G. Pental: It seems much longer to us.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: It seems longer to me at times, too.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: A mighty contribution; that's why.

Hon. G. E. Masters: It comes in very handy at times.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I do not want to miss this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the new members to this Chamber. We have two new political opponents and I extend a warm welcome to them. I also want, of course, to extend a warmer welcome to my own political colleagues. It is a sheer delight, as members would appreciate, to see the numbers on this side of the House.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. N. Caldwell: There, there!

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: As members are aware, the Government is committed to the cause of parliamentary reform.

Hon. P. G. Pental: Which one, Arthur Tonkin's or Bryce's? Would you spell that out? The one for one-vote-one-value, or the other one?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: We are looking forward to being able to address this House in good time—

Hon. P. G. Pental: When you know what it is?

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: There is no doubt what it is. We will also consider suggestions which have come from the Liberal Party and I am sure Opposition members will be very impressed by those suggestions.

Hon. P. G. Pental: Just like land rights.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: It is worth noting that the Labor Party in Western Australia currently needs to be a little careful about what we do in relation to electoral reform this session, for the obvious reason—

Hon. P. G. Pental: It might succeed!

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: —that if we maintain our track record of the previous three years we will be returned at the polls in the next election with the other half of the seats we have won at this election, and that will put us in a position for the first time in the history of Western Australia of having the majority of members in this place, which will mean that we will no longer have to listen to the claptrap—

Hon. G. E. Masters: You are giving it away.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: —and the sidetracking away from the principles of democracy of members oppose.

Hon. P. G. Pental: Which democracy, Tonkin's or Bryce's, or the one you have been working out?

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: We will begin instead to bring about genuine reform, by ensuring the implementation of the policy of one-vote-one-value, that minimal mechanistic definition of democracy in this State, rather than be sidetracked by a waffling compromise which might lead us in other directions. Members on this side of the House must be aware that we do have the opportunity to improve the excellent track record we have had over the last three years. If we maintain that momentum—and I am sure we can—we on this side of the House will replace—

Hon. A. A. Lewis: Don't look at me like that. You have absolutely no hope of replacing me.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: Hon. Sandy Lewis was one member I was thinking of, as a matter of fact.

Hon. A. A. Lewis: Have a look at the record. You have got no hope. Mr McKenzie will come down and work for me.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: We will see the implementation of our own policy of bringing democracy into Western Australia for the first time.

Hon. P. G. Pental: Why didn't you let Arthur Tonkin do it? Did he embarrass you?

Hon. G. E. Masters: They sacked him.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: What rubbish!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. G. E. Masters: He was forced out; you know he was.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: New members will find that there is much to be learnt in this Chamber. That may sound surprising when considering that many speeches, such as the one we have just heard from the Leader of the Opposition, become our staple diet. However, I have learnt some painful lessons as I have learnt some pleasant lessons.

Hon. P. G. Pental: You have taken them on the chin.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: At the end of it all, one realises that there is something to be learnt from each and every member in this Chamber. Perhaps that is why I was offended by the contribution of the previous speaker, because there was no recognition of many of the good points

that have come from this Government's previous three years in office. The speech was negative.

I am indebted to my wife for her observations of my political career in this place to date. She has said very often that there are many bad aspects to the parliamentary process and we are reduced, too often, to slinging off at each other, ignoring excellent contributions that others make, suspecting each other's motives, doubting each other's initiatives, and maligning each other's political performances. That is to our mutual disadvantage. One of the advantages of this Government has been that we have learnt the lesson and the Opposition is yet to learn it. As long as the Leader of the Opposition maintains his negative attitudes, which he demonstrated in his speech tonight, he can be assured that he will make an excellent Leader of the Opposition and have a long career in that role. We cannot afford that waste of energy. We do not have sufficient human resources in this State to ignore the valued human contributions that each and every one of us brings to this Chamber.

If I had to say anything to my new colleagues on both sides of the House, it would be to tell them to listen and to learn from each other and to value what should be valued and weigh carefully what they feel should be dismissed.

Hon. P. G. Pental: You are starting to sound like a statesman.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: He is a statesman.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I thank the Minister. I would not have thought that I deserved that praise.

I thought the Governor's Speech was riveting. I have found myself absolutely delighting in the Governor's words in each of the Speeches he has made on the occasions of his opening Parliament. Indeed, they were even more riveting than the lectures which he gave at university in 1973 when I was studying political science.

One of the matters to which the Governor referred was the fact that, in this session of Parliament, we will see the expansion of the Ministry from 15 to 17 members.

Hon. A. A. Lewis: You have done a deal with the National Party, have you?

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I welcome that initiative. I was amused that the strongest criticism of that initiative came in the form of a motion from a member with no experience of government, a new member who has had no

experience of being a Minister but who has criticised the expansion of the Ministry. He has not recognised the incredible needs of this State to have a wider contribution to government to ensure that the rural and remote regions of this State are represented in Cabinet. As I said, I welcome that initiative and welcome the appointment of Mr Ernie Bridge to the Ministry as Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Water Resources, The North West, and Aboriginal Affairs. I have known the member for 10 years and it was with great pleasure that I saw his elevation to the Ministry. He has a track record of a turbulent 10 years leading up to his new position in this Parliament. All sorts of difficulties have been placed in his path and were presented to him by his political opponents aimed at frustrating his endeavours to serve this State, our region, and his people. I am sure we will see an excellent contribution from him.

Hon. W. N. Stretch: I quite agree, but there was no need to create two new Ministers.

Hon. N. F. Moore: Don't you remember the outcry from Brian Burke when we decided to increase the Ministry?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members are not permitted to carry on conversations across the Chamber or with each other. They are certainly not permitted to carry on private conversations across the Chamber while a member is addressing the House. I ask members to refrain from doing so.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I heard part of an interjection and am loath to let it go because it came from an Opposition member who, in his performance over the last three years as shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, did more damage to Aboriginal relations than any other person in the history of the State. He has set back the interests of Aboriginal people very significantly because he stirred up the race question over a sustained period and disadvantaged that community by ensuring that bipartisan support for Aboriginal needs was removed. He ensured that no common ground could be reached on that subject between the Government and the Opposition. God help education if he does as much damage to that portfolio as its new shadow Minister as he did to Aboriginal Affairs. He will be hounded from his position quick smart.

I hope that the Opposition might have learnt another lesson from the polls in that, despite all of its efforts and all of the lies told about Abor-

iginal affairs in the lead-up to the campaign, those lies fell on the wise heads of the Western Australian public.

Hon. N. F. Moore: Brian Burke changed his attitude, that is all.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: If one sifts through the lies that were told on one side of the political fence one will see the enormous damage that was done to the Aboriginal community by ensuring that they were not involved in the economic development of Western Australia.

The Governor, in his address, referred to the track record of the Burke Government. He spoke about the maintenance of a very high level of job creation with the number of people employed increasing by almost 70 000 during the three years to March 1986. He noted that this represented a 12 per cent growth in employment and compared favourably with the national growth rate of 9.8 per cent. It was noted that, since June 1985, Western Australia had recorded the second lowest rate of unemployment of any State.

The Governor remarked also that the Government's policy for improving labour relations has contributed to a significantly greater fall in the number of working days lost from industrial disputes compared with the national average. The latest figures show that in 1985 the number of working days lost in the State was 22 per cent less than the previous year, compared with a four per cent decline for Australia as a whole.

Of course, those two items fall within one Minister's portfolio responsibilities, but indeed the credit for that achievement is shared by the entire Cabinet. The portfolios in this instance include Tourism, the America's Cup, Technology, Regional Development, Small Business, The Family, and Youth. The involvement in all those portfolio areas has led to the achievement to which the Governor referred.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government's front bench for its achievement in those specific areas.

In passing, I would like to mention one of the painful areas in which this Government, as of necessity, often finds itself involved; that is, the very challenging area of change in the Public Service. In the past the change has been a painful process not only for the Government, but also for those who are involved. However, there have been some very significant achievements of which the Government and the Public Service can be very proud.

Some members of the Government's Caucus committee recently had the opportunity of being briefed by the Leader of the House on developments associated with the Building Management Authority and the new Department of Services. For my part, I wish to go on record as congratulating the Minister for his involvement in those areas, and for the significant achievements in those two particular departments.

I was delighted to hear, from the head of the Building Management Authority, about the significant improvement in what was the old Public Works Department. The authority has now successfully involved itself in a tendering process which has led to it obtaining contracts in the private sector. That is an achievement for which the public servants and the Minister can be very proud. I know that process will be continued and I hope that the lessons of the last few years will be quickly learnt and, in fact, I am sure they have been learnt, especially when one reads carefully the comments of the Governor in his address to this House. He spoke about an anticipated ministerial statement dealing with management change in the public sector. I am sure that that statement will take on board the need to accommodate the personalities who could be painfully affected by that process.

I am aware also that my parliamentary colleagues, in particular Hon. Garry Kelly, have assisted the Government in this process of change and that their contribution will lead to worthwhile inclusions on the Government's agenda as it addresses itself to change. This collaborative approval to change by the Government and its preparedness to accept contributions from my colleagues to ensure that change is implemented in order to benefit the interests of the Western Australian community, is indeed welcome.

A few moments ago I referred to parliamentary and electoral reform. It appears to me that one of the things we need to avoid in this House is the waste of human resources. I believe that the Westminster system does run the risk of being a great waste of the human resource which is, in part intrinsic to the process of government and opposition—it is particularly more painful for the Opposition.

Hon. P. G. Pental: We would agree with that.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: It is certainly a waste of human resources for the period in which one finds his party in Opposition. I believe I have been very fortunate because I was in Opposition for a few months only.

Hon. P. G. Pental: If you had any heart you would resign.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I assure the honourable member that I will be doing everything possible not to repeat my experience of being in Opposition.

A Government member: You will be an old man next time you do.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I hope that is the case.

The Government does appreciate that the skill of talented people is not drawn upon as thoroughly as it could be under the current parliamentary process. I know that the Government is taking steps to ensure the involvement of a wider range of parliamentary representation in the process of government.

One thing is absolutely clear: The Burke Government would be silly to accept an involvement in the process of government from a House like this in its current formation. We desperately need to reform the Legislative Council in order that a more useful deployment of human resources can be implemented in this House through a committee system which could grow and be usefully developed in the activities of government.

One could hardly expect the Government to willingly involve itself in that process while this House is so unfairly stacked against it. For that reason alone, I commend to the Opposition a process of parliamentary change and electoral reform that could lead to the establishment of a well developed committee system. Members from both sides of this House should do everything possible to develop a committee system to ensure that their contribution, which would reflect the wishes of the Western Australian community, can be fed into that process in a fair and democratic way.

In his speech the Governor referred to the Government's plan to dispose of the existing system. I welcome the renewed commitment to dispose of the existing system; that is, the disproportionate number of Opposition members who clearly would not be elected if the electoral process was more democratic and representative of the wishes of members of the Western Australian community.

As I listened to the Governor I was thinking of an assignment that His Excellency gave my political science class in 1973. He set our political science 1 class at the Australian National University in Canberra an assignment entitled: "Is political equality possible?" I was lucky enough to find in my files my assignment.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: What did you get?

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: A very good mark, I might say.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: I thought that was why you raised it.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: The answer to the Attorney's question is that the mark I received was 80 out of a possible 100.

Hon. P. G. Pental: He was known to be overly generous.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: When dealing with that question, I was horrified by some of the statistics that I uncovered about the situation that faced some electorates in Texas. In a book by Rees, I discovered a disparity of 211 000 electors in one electorate and 950 000 in another. De Garis came up with some figures in another reference that I unearthed from that book. The figures were from the United Kingdom. In 1973 I found them to be staggering. In the electorates of Caithness and Sutherland there were 28 736 electors and in Abers Tillery there were 37 388 electors, compared with Epping which had 115 543 and Billericay which had 123 297 electors.

Even worse statistics could be found in Canada. A place called Cardigan had 23 000 electors, and Egmont had 31 000 electors. Those figures can be compared with St Catherine's with 101 000 electors, Scarborough East with 149 000 electors and Peel South with 172 000 electors. Of course, it never occurred to me that one day 10 years hence I would find myself in a Chamber with greater statistical horrors: with one electorate with an enrolment of 9 000 and another with an enrolment of 92 000. In 1973 as I looked around the democratic world for disparities in the numbers of electors enrolled, it never occurred to me that I would find myself in a Chamber so heavily weighted against the interests of democracy.

I was very pleased to find that in the United States, as a result of a decision by the US Supreme Court that electorates must be as near as practicable equal in population size, the Texan

anomaly was about to be removed. The opinion of the court in the case of Reynolds v. Simms on 15 June 1964 read—

The fact that an individual lives here or there is not a legitimate reason for overweighting or diluting the efficacy of his vote. Population is of necessity the starting point for considerations and the controlling criterion for judgment in legislative apportionment controversies. A citizen, a qualified voter, is no more or less so because he lives in the city or on the farm. This is at the heart of Lincoln's vision of Government—of the people, by the people, for the people.

The United States was able successfully to address itself to the difficulties it faced at that time. This year, we await the challenge of at last dragging ourselves into the twentieth century and accepting a democratic formula for our Chamber.

An argument is constantly trotted out by the other side in favour of weighting the country vote, as if from a concern for the country or remote areas. If the Opposition had a genuine concern for those areas it would have placed a different emphasis on the representation given to the most remote regions of this State—the regions of Kimberley and Pilbara and the electorate of North Province. If the Opposition believed its argument, by now I would have the support of additional Labor colleagues in this Chamber and there would be additional Labor colleagues in the other House because the Opposition would have weighted those areas in accordance with its trotted-out view that there was a need to weight the remote area or country vote. That was not the consideration of our political opponents. Their only consideration has been to ensure that they were entrenched in power.

Tourism is particularly significant for the development of the Western Australian economy. The tourism industry is an exciting one. So much has been done, but so much more remains to be achieved. In my electorate tourism is one of the most exciting industries available for the development of our region. We are blessed with magnificent natural beauties in the Kimberley and Pilbara electorates.

Hon. W. N. Stretch: Geographic beauties.

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: Both geographic and social. Hon. W. N. Stretch, with his front-bench colleague, had the pleasure of accompanying me through my electorate during the last session of the House. He saw the

beauty of my electorate and, no doubt, could not help but accept that that natural beauty has yet to be fully tapped and developed for the benefit of the community of Western Australia. We need to involve actively all sections of the community in that process.

Hon. N. F. Moore: Quite right, and we should not put fences around with a big sign saying, "Keep out."

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: On occasions that means some steps will have to be taken to ensure that no section of the community is left behind in that process of development. Positive steps will need to be taken to ensure that the Aboriginal community can be involved in tourism development of the north-west. There is an unlimited market for the Aboriginal people to be involved in the tourism industry. Sam Lovell has proved that. Perhaps it is worth noting that Sam Lovell is an Aboriginal constituent of mine who has involved himself in the operation of a tour route from the town of Derby to the Mitchell Plateau areas and up to Kalumburu. He has taken tourist after tourist; he is booked most of the year taking tourists through that region and showing to them the beauty of the Kimberley region. As people sit around the camp fire that he establishes for them at night and are guided through that area they are absolutely charmed. The stories go back to other sections of the community, not only in Western Australia, but also throughout the country and internationally. People come rushing to try to fill the seats of the four-wheel drive vehicles.

I commend the Government and our new Minister for Tourism for looking for opportunities to involve Aboriginal people in the development of the tourism industry, particularly in remote areas. I hope those opportunities will also be associated with the Cape Leveque development north of my home town of Broome where the Aboriginal communities of Lombadina, the Djaridjin Aboriginal Corporation and the One Arm Point Community, the Bardi Community, will have the opportunity in the not-too-distant future to involve themselves in a tourist destination at the magnificent site of Cape Leveque. If my memory serves me correctly, some of my parliamentary colleagues were with me when I flew that route and enjoyed the beauty that abounds in that part of my electorate.

The history of tourism is indeed a history of grasped opportunities; grasped indeed by individuals and corporate entities, but facilitated by Government; this history needs to continue

in order to ensure that the industry continues to expand and grow throughout the State, and especially in the remote regions where economic growth is so desperately needed.

There are individuals in my electorate associated with the tourism industry whose names come to mind as individuals who have grasped an idea and run with it. I can speak of one woman, Judy Arrow, associated with the development of luggers sailing out of Broome. She has been able to attract people onto the pearling luggers in beautiful Roebuck Bay. My electorate office is magnificently situated overlooking Roebuck Bay. I am often able to look out and watch the pearling luggers sailing past while speaking on the telephone to people in Perth, where it is cold and wet. I take the opportunity of reminding members of how individuals such as this business woman have been able to grasp excellent opportunities available for growth in tourism.

The developers associated with Australian City Properties, which is Lord McAlpine's firm in the north-west, fill me with admiration for the sheer logic and value of their contribution. The sympathy and empathy which those developers have displayed are excellent, and I hope that some of my parliamentary colleagues will have the opportunity to visit my region and see some of this development.

There are plans for new development associated with the town of Derby. Obstructions seem to land in front of the developers, affecting future growth in some of these areas. Sometimes that obstruction seems to come from operators who no doubt have ensured job opportunities for themselves but cannot see the need in regions such as mine for job opportunities. If one industry needs all the support and assistance possible in the north-west, it is the tourism industry. These obstructions are frustrating, and I commend to my colleagues, particularly my ministerial colleagues, the need to grasp the nettle and expedite some of these processes which seem to have slowed down the deliberations concerning whether or not they are to be implemented.

The recent purchases by the Western Resorts group of companies which have been announced in the Press are really pearls in that group's crown of hotels throughout Western Australia. It has purchased the properties associated with the Northern Lights group of companies—or it will have done by the end of this month. The Western Resorts group is managing this investment for the Superannuation Board of Western Australia. The Government

and private sectors have joined together in this excellent opportunity for the tourism industry, and will work through Mr Peter Prendiville, the senior officer of that company, in the sound management of the investment. No doubt in a short time it will be valued by the people of this State and by the people of our region.

There is value in the linking up of these hotels in the north-west and ensuring that people coming to Western Australia have the opportunity of going all the way through the State through one company of hotel managers. The Walkabout chain is part of that operation. The value of this cannot be overestimated. I understand already here in Perth enormous growth is associated with the occupancy of the hotel associated with that chain.

The individuals associated with the tourism industry are to be congratulated. The northern travel associations, which cover the Gascoyne, Kimberley, and Pilbara, have been presented last week in the Karrinyup shopping centre. Previously there was an exhibition at Booragoon. This year, with the assistance of Ansett WA, that promotion of our area has been repeated. Thousands of shoppers go through that shopping centre. I was delighted to join my colleague, the Minister for Tourism, in the opening of that bureau.

The individuals associated with those travel associations should be heartily congratulated for their efforts with that promotion. I hope they have the opportunity during promotions for the America's Cup in Fremantle to ensure that we can continue to attract a flow of tourists from the south.

With the growth of the tourism industry, hopefully the Aboriginal community will join the wider community in my own area and participate in the economic development associated with that growth. The Aboriginal people have a track record of being left behind when development has gone on in this State, particularly in my electorate. I suppose many things have contributed to that.

All of us have memories, but one of the most poignant that I have was of an experience I shared with Hon. Kay Hallahan, Hon. Norman Moore, and Hon. Bill Stretch. We went to Cundelee and were taken on an inspection of an Aboriginal community, and in the corner of a house an Aboriginal lad was sniffing petrol.

I am embarrassed when I think of my own response now. I was so worldly wise that I took it in my stride. My sense of shock was not as strong as it should have been. My outrage was

not significant enough for that human event which we shared. We saw a young lad who had already experienced brain damage. He was in the process of perpetrating enormous bodily harm to himself by sniffing this petrol in the corner of a hut. This continues to be a poignant memory added to so many others associated in my own region and in my parliamentary career, where I have experienced the depths of the problem with which so many Aboriginal people are faced.

It is for that reason I am particularly pleased to see that the Federal Government, in collaboration with the State Governments, has taken some very valuable steps towards addressing a campaign against drug and substance abuse. In my own electorate the alcohol problem is a very severe one for the Aboriginal community. The resources of the State and Federal Governments sometimes seem to be almost dwarfed by the size of the task that confronts us in the area. No level of support that we have yet managed to muster seems to have adequately addressed itself to the serious problems confronting the Aboriginal community there, a problem which I am sure is shared by other groups in our State. But certainly in my own electorate the Aboriginal people are desperately in need of assistance to combat the alcohol problem.

The Federal Government has contributed to a national programme against drug abuse over three years. That programme will involve expenditure in the area of \$100 million. It will focus on education, treatment, rehabilitation, research and law enforcement. All the Governments of Australia are committing themselves to doing everything possible to combat the growing problem of drug abuse and addiction in Australia.

The Prime Minister has commented on the great cost of this problem to the Australian community. The cost is so very high, whether measured in terms of death or illness, the waste of human potential, violence to property and other crimes, the loss of production, and especially social misery. These are all problems associated with alcohol abuse.

In Western Australia the State Government is involving itself in a programme of treatment, rehabilitation, and education, which will involve expenditure this year of \$1.6 million for treatment and \$534 000 for education. The figure for 1986-87 is of the same order. This money is to be used to work towards prevention strategies related to substance abuse, in-

cluding alcohol abuse in Aboriginal communities. It will involve workshops to give instruction on the prevention of drug abuse.

The Government has entrusted most of this programme and the administration of the national campaign in WA to the Alcohol and Drug Authority. I want to go on record as expressing my concern about the difficulties becoming obvious in the administration of this campaign by this authority as it affects the Aboriginal community in particular. I am concerned about the inadequate response that seems to be delivered by the Alcohol and Drug Authority in the area of Aboriginal affairs. The authority has not yet shown significant regard for initiatives in which the Aboriginal people themselves have been involved in addressing the question of alcohol abuse.

In my own electorate, in my home town of Broome, I have had the pleasure of working with constituents who are associated with the Milliya Rumurra Rehabilitation Centre, which is an Aboriginal-run alcohol rehabilitation centre. Milliya Rumurra means "brand new day", and there is a song about which the locals sing in the reggae beat of Broome talking about the brand new day; because there are opportunities that will be afforded to Aboriginal people if they can break the hold that alcohol has on them. This centre, although it has received some help from church groups, has by and large been run by Aborigines themselves. These people have seen the degradation associated with alcohol abuse by their people and they have set themselves the goal and the task of ensuring that they are resourced adequately so that they can do a good job for their community and expand their operations to cope with the vast problems associated with alcohol abuse among the Aboriginal people in my area.

It ill-behoves Perth-based organisations to fail to recognise the significant contribution by Aboriginal people in tackling this problem. They are the ones who have the problem; their community has the problem; they are the ones who, by and large, have been finding the solutions to this problem in my electorate.

I take this opportunity to warn the Alcohol and Drug Authority that it will find an implacable opponent in me if it attempts to tamper with the self-determination associated with organisations such as Milliya Rumurra as it desperately tries to address this problem of alcohol abuse. Milliya Rumurra has been doing a great job.

All that these people need is the financial resources to continue their programme. It is most important that the resources find their way to such organisations. By and large the private sector has been more generous than have Governments, because sometimes we find bottlenecks associated with organisations which are too big, especially with Perth-based organisations which do not generally understand the problems associated with alcohol abuse in Aboriginal communities. I hope we will be able to seriously ensure some change in this situation and that the Alcohol and Drug Authority will start to see the light of day and perhaps take note of the motto of that organisation and thereby bring about a milliya rumurra—a brand new day for Aboriginal people.

I support the Address-in-Reply.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. H. W. Gayfer.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Assembly Personnel

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

SUPREME COURT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [8.58 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

It is proposed to facilitate the enforcement of District Court judgments in overseas countries which participate in the reciprocal enforcement of judgments.

The Bill will have the effect that a District Court judgment creditor may enter a judgment in the Supreme Court of Western Australia, which will enable that judgment, after certification from the Supreme Court, to be registered in reciprocating countries.

The reciprocal enforcement scheme, to which Western Australia is a party, is based on the United Kingdom Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcements) Act 1933.

The scheme requires a receiving Superior Court to register a judgment that has been entered in a designated Superior Court of a reciprocating country.

In Western Australia the designated superior court is the Supreme Court.

As a result, if a Western Australian judgment creditor enters a judgment in the Supreme Court and obtains a certificate from the Supreme Court, that judgment can be registered in a reciprocating country without the need for fresh legal proceedings in that country.

Although the scheme is based on a notion of reciprocity—that is, recognition of judgments of superior courts of reciprocating countries—some Australian and foreign jurisdictions permit the removal of inferior court judgments to superior courts to bring those judgments within the reciprocal enforcement scheme.

This occurs in respect of judgments of the Local Court. Pursuant to section 142 of the Local Courts Act 1902, a Local Court judgment creditor can have judgment entered in the Su-

preme Court and, consequently, obtain a certificate under the Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1963. At present a District Court judgment cannot be so certified.

It is not appropriate that Local Court judgments and not District Court judgments can be enforced overseas.

The Bill, accordingly, fills the legislative gap which recently came to attention.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. John Williams.

House adjourned at 9.02 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ABATTOIR: MIDLAND

Sale: Stamp Duty

2. Hon. NEIL OLIVER, to the Attorney General representing the Treasurer:

With regard to the sale of the Midland abattoir complex—

- (1) Has the stamp duty on the contract been assessed at the actual sale price or on the basis of a "not at arms length" valuation by the Valuer General?
- (2) What is that valuation?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) I am advised the contract has not yet been produced to the State Taxation Department for assessment of stamp duty.
- (2) Not applicable.

NOXIOUS PLANT: ANGEL'S TRUMPET

Report: Action

3. Hon. W. N. STRETCH, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Minister received the National Safety Council report relating to the angel's trumpet *Datura* plant?
- (2) Is he satisfied that the public is sufficiently aware of, and protected from, the dangers of this plant?
- (3) Is he aware of the world-wide voluntary research undertaken by Mrs Ursula Worts of Kojonup on behalf of victims of this plant, and does he recognize the sincerity and seriousness of her claims and her collated evidence with regard to the plant *Datura*?
- (4) Will the Minister instruct the Health Department to further investigate the plant *Datura* and formulate protective, or at least advisory and educational measures, against the dangers of the *Datura* plant?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) I am aware of the work being done by Mrs Ursula Worts and have no reason to doubt her sincerity. I do have reason to doubt any claim that the

plant is a serious threat to public health generally any more than, say, oleander.

- (4) No. There can be a wide variety of reactions to a vast range of plants in different individuals, especially in persons sensitised. Lists of these have been published from time to time by the National Safety Council and the Department of Agriculture. To date there is no evidence the *Datura* plant is any more dangerous than many of the others. Mrs Worts' activity has ensured widespread general knowledge among the public about this particular plant.

GAMBLING: TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Racing Fields

4. Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Who provides the racing fields and "Fairplay" selections displayed in metropolitan and country TAB outlets?
- (2) Who meets the cost of providing this service?
- (3) What are the costs?
- (4) Is the Minister aware that if a punter, wishing to enter a ticket in the favourite numbers, was to follow the ticket marking example, after placing his ticket in the machine, he would be asked to pay \$6 435 for that ticket?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Fairplay Print—on the basis of information provided by local and Eastern States racing and trotting clubs and/or the TAB.
- (2) Wallcards—i.e. race fields only—TAB meets full cost.

Fairplay Countercards—i.e. Race Fields and Selections—

outlets managed by TAB—TAB meets full cost;

outlets managed by agents—agent pays for countercards and is reimbursed by TAB via a special commission component.

- (3) Wallcards—\$520 000 per annum.
Countercards—\$113 000 per annum.

- (4) The Minister has been advised this is correct. However, the example referred to is intended to emphasise the correct method of marking a ticket. It is not a suggested bet format. Any punter not happy with the details printed on his/her ticket has the facility to immediately cancel the bet.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

AMERICA'S CUP

Impact: Study

3. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister with special responsibility for the America's Cup:

- (1) Is a study of the economic impact of the America's Cup on Western Australia soon to be completed?
- (2) If so, who is conducting the study?
- (3) Who commissioned it?
- (4) Will the results of the study be made public?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) to (4) The study has been completed. It is printed and I hope to release the study late next week.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Food Vouchers: Misuse

4. Hon. P. H. LOCKYER, to the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that when food vouchers are handed out by the Department of Community Services, an instruction from the department is issued that shops servicing these vouchers are to supply anything except alcohol, and that includes cigarettes, dog food, and items which are not necessarily food for the house?
- (2) If the Minister is not so aware, will she take some urgent steps to make herself aware of this situation and will she take some steps to cause the practice to cease and to ensure that these emergency food vouchers are used only for food?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) and (2) I will look into the matter that the member raised. However, in general terms, while money granted for emergency situations is given to

people, it has been the practice of people providing emergency finance, be they governmental or non-governmental bodies, to try not to put too many constraints on its use. We leave people in charge of their own affairs. I will look into that matter and will get back to the honourable member. However, I do have some concerns about the step of directing in a very limited way what people can do with the vouchers.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Food Vouchers: Misuse

5. Hon. P. H. LOCKYER, to the Minister for Community Services:

In her consideration of this matter, will the Minister investigate situations that can occur in country towns where these emergency vouchers are issued for food in order to assist families with children and in which cases the vouchers are used entirely for cigarettes when the intention for which the voucher was originally given was only for food?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

My previous answer stands.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social Security Payments: Government Action

6. Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister for Community Services:

Does the principle of work for dole run parallel to State Government policy?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

No.

AMERICA'S CUP DEFENCE

Donations: Tax Deductibility

7. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Minister with special responsibility for the America's Cup:

With reference to his Press release on tax deductions for donations to the America's Cup defence, will the Minister inform the House—

- (1) In what areas are deductions allowed?

(2) Are these deductions allowed on the Minister's say so only or do they have to be referred to a Federal body?

(3) If so, what is that Federal body?

(4) How are the deductions applied?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

(1) to (4) This deduction was applied by the Federal Government, and if Hon. Sandy Lewis puts his question on notice I will give him a detailed answer.

PRISONERS

Mickelberg Brothers: Classification

8. Hon. P. H. LOCKYER, to the Minister for Prisons:

(1) Can the Minister inform the House as to why Peter and Raymond Mickelberg are being kept in a maximum security prison in Fremantle?

(2) Is this because Raymond Mickelberg is classified as a dangerous prisoner?

(3) Will the Minister direct his department to reconsider having them transferred to Canning Vale?

(4) Is it a fact that at least one of the Mickelberg brothers has been given the opportunity of transfer to Canning Vale Prison in the past?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

(1) to (4) The assessment of prisoners for purposes of placement in the prison system is a matter under the day-to-day administrative control of the department, and I would not propose to intrude my own opinions onto their judgments in that respect. Assessments are made on well-established guidelines and criteria. In the case of the Mickelbergs it is a fact that one of the brothers has been assessed as being appropriate for transfer to Canning Vale Prison, but he has declined that transfer until his brother is similarly in a position to be transferred.

I have already indicated that I would not see it as my role to attempt to override the judgment of the department in such matters which go fundamentally to the question of the good order and security of prisons. My understanding is, however, that the Mickelberg brothers' position will, in

any event, be due for review within approximately the next two or three months.

PRISONS

Violence: Letter

9. Hon. E. J. CHARLTON, to the Minister for Prisons:

Is he aware that Raymond Mickelberg wrote a letter to the Superintendent of Prisons in April 1985 stating his concern at the violence that was taking place in Fremantle Prison and pointing out that he believed a tragedy would result if no action was taken?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

I cannot recall any such correspondence being brought to my attention. Perhaps it was. However, a lot of correspondence has come my way in the last 18 months or so.

PRISONERS

Fights: Reports

10. Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Minister for Prisons:

Yesterday, the Minister said he had not received a report from the police relating to the conflict between one of the Mickelbergs and some Aborigines. Do the police report upon conflicts in prisons or does the Prisons Department report upon such conflicts?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

The Prisons Department reports to me in respect of all matters affecting the administration of the department. However, where a criminal offence has taken place or is alleged, investigations are carried out by the police, as would be the case where criminal activities occur outside the prison. I would expect to be informed of progress as a result of police and prison consultations which are proceeding all the time.

"DAILY NEWS"

Article

11. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Community Services:

The question is supplementary to her reply to Hon. Mick Gayfer. Has the Minister read the front page of this evening's *Daily News*?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

No.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social Security Payments: Government Action

12. Hon. E. J. CHARLTON, to the Minister for Community Services:

Bearing in mind what has been printed and what is likely to be heard on the radio and television tonight, will the Minister give an undertaking that this Government will review its thinking on the answer she gave to Hon. Mick Gayfer?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

The question of social security payments is a matter for the Federal Government. The State is not involved in income maintenance.

COMMUNITY SERVICES: UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Working for Payment

13. Hon. P. H. LOCKYER, to the Minister for Community Services:

Is the Minister aware that, this afternoon, the Prime Minister suggested that people on the dole should work for it?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

No.
