

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 2 April 1981

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 10.45 a.m., and read prayers.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Noise-induced Hearing Loss: Petition

MR HERZFELD (Mundaring) [10.47 a.m.]: I desire to present a petition addressed to the Honourable Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

Mr Carr: Is it the same one as yesterday?

Mr HERZFELD: No, it is not. The petition reads as follows—

We the undersigned, being workers in the boilermaking, steel fabrication and construction industries, and each suffering noise induced hearing loss in varying degrees request the State Government to make provision in its new Workers Compensation Bill for adequate compensation to be paid to those who suffer this affliction.

Further we plead with the Government to take steps to strengthen legislation controlling industrial noise and hearing protection in order that others may be prevented from suffering industrial deafness.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Mr Bryce: Do you agree with it?

Mr HERZFELD: Yes, I do. The petition bears 1 603 signatures, conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, and I have certified accordingly.

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

(*See petition No. 23.*)

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. General Insurance Brokers and Agents Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Hassell (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.

2. State Transport Co-ordination Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Rushton (Minister for Transport), and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr Shalders, leave of absence for five weeks granted to Mr Mensaros (Floreat—Minister for Works) on the ground of ill-health.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Labour and Industry) [10.52 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Industrial Arbitration Act 1979 defines the jurisdiction of the Western Australian Industrial Commission and in doing so provides for the exclusion of certain groups of employees. One such exclusion relates to "Government Officers" as defined in section 96 of the Act.

Under the provisions of the Public Service Arbitration Act "Government Officers" come within the jurisdiction of the Public Service Arbitrator.

The Bill ensures that all officers appointed under the provisions of the Public Service Act are "Government Officers" and thus come within the jurisdiction of the Public Service Arbitrator. This will avoid the possibility that some officers appointed under the Public Service Act may be subject to a different industrial jurisdiction to the remainder of the Public Service.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Parker.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 1 April.

MR E. T. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [10.53 a.m.]: As you, Sir, may expect I intend to use the time available to me during this debate to talk about my electorate and the Kalgoorlie goldfields region generally.

When I delivered my maiden speech in this place in August of last year, you, Sir, will recall that I spoke of a great feeling of optimism in the goldfields. At that time the price of gold was approaching \$600 an ounce and the major mining companies were in the process of further developing the famous Golden Mile.

Although we have seen a significant downturn in the price of gold since that time, as most people would agree, it is still economic and if the price does not decrease much further, everything should go ahead as planned. At the moment most of the development programmes are on target.

Kalgoorlie Mining Associates is well advanced in its programme to redevelop the Perseverance and Lake View leases at Fimiston. At present that company employs 225 men. I believe last August it employed 160 men. This is good news.

I refer only to the underground operations of the company which will increase progressively as it proceeds towards full production.

The new crushing plant and roasters at the Oroya mill, about which I spoke previously, should be completed and fully operational by August this year. As a result, they will have a very modern and large gold treatment plant which will probably be the best in Australia.

Allowing for the fact that, at that time, there will be a rather large stockpile of broken ore to be treated—also it will take a while to be processed—Kalgoorlie Mining Associates' Fimiston leases should be in full production in about 18 months' time. That also is good news.

Previously I spoke about the Mt. Charlotte operation which is situated at the far north end of the Golden Mile. Mt. Charlotte is operated also by Kalgoorlie Mining Associates and it is functioning at full production. It is one of the most mechanised underground mining operations in Australia, if not the most mechanised.

When I last spoke about this particular mine, I stated it had a known life of 10 years and there was every indication that the ore body would continue at depth. This in fact has proved to be the case and plans are now well in hand to sink a vertical shaft to the depth of 4 000 feet at a cost of approximately \$41 million. Indeed, this is an indication of faith in the future of the goldfields on the part of this mining company.

North Kalgurli Mines is continuing to develop its mineral leases and is proceeding towards full production. In fact, I noticed in yesterday's Press that the company is progressing so well that for the six months to January 1981 it recorded a profit of \$570 000 compared with a loss in the previous six months of \$33 000. Indeed, that is good news for the goldfields and for all Western Australians.

North Kalgurli Mines expects to be in full production by the second part of 1981 or perhaps a little earlier.

Other goldmines around the region of a smaller nature are continuing to progress, including the Paringa leases on the Golden Mile, and the mines at Marvel Loch, Mt. Ida, Mt. Magnet, and in many other areas.

Although the gold industry is having problems, the situation looks good at the moment and a number of mining companies are returning to full production. This will aid employment in the area and will give the goldfields the stability it used to have.

The nickel industry is stable and it looks as if it will have a sound future. Kambalda is flourishing, Windarra is being reopened, and the Agnew project is well on the way to production. All in all the goldfields region looks set for a sound future.

Other minerals are being discovered and it appears they will be extracted. The Teutonic Bore copper project north of Leonora is on the way towards production and it looks good for the entire goldfields and Murchison region.

There are some potential problems and I believe the Government should be aware of them so that it knows exactly what we are facing and where we are going.

The first problem, of course, relates to the price of gold. If it drops below \$400 an ounce all the gold mining operations which I have mentioned would become marginal.

The Fimiston leases are narrow veined and most of the ore body has been mined. The extraction of the ore which is left will require residual mining which is a very high-cost activity. It requires a large degree of skill and a great deal of labour. The grade is not that high. Skilled miners always have been hard to come by and always will be. As all members probably are aware, underground mining is a dangerous occupation. Each year four or five miners are killed in the goldfields underground mining operations, and hundreds are injured. They work very hard and at all times are subject to industrial diseases, and have no reasonable superannuation scheme or pension fund.

Mr H. D. Evans: Is that number of four or five fatalities an annual event?

Mr E. T. EVANS: Yes, it is an annual event.

We will have a hard job attracting more labour to the area. Miners must be recruited and people living in the area must be trained. As I said before, the Government should be involved in such matters. The operation of leases always will be labour intensive because of its very nature, and a continuous supply of manpower will be required. The Mt. Charlotte mine is capital intensive and

mechanised and cannot afford a drop in the price of gold. The ore is of a low grade. Seven tonnes of ore is required to obtain one ounce of gold. As I have pointed out, the company was faced with the cost of \$41 million initially for the shaft, and must provide the money for all the other developmental and infrastructure costs which obviously it would not be able to afford if there were a drop in the price of gold—at least, that is if its shareholders are to receive an acceptable return on their investment, and that is only reasonable.

I point out at this juncture that the Labor Party has a price stabilisation policy in regard to gold. The House has been acquainted with it many times and I do not intend to refer to it at length. I make the point that if we are to have an assured future for goldmining and for the people who live on the goldfields, investing their savings in houses and other investments in towns in the area, a price stabilisation scheme is absolutely essential. These people must know they have some sort of assured future.

Problems will occur in regard to the nickel and other base metal industries in the area. Previously we have had problems with nickel markets fluctuating. We have seen huge retrenchments at Kambalda. We do not want to see that occur in the future and believe the Government should be involved, as it is with the iron ore industry, with the nickel and other base metal industries. It should assist the nickel industry in regard to its markets, and forward planning and development.

Other problems in the area are those which probably face most other country centres. In our area we will have 500-odd people unemployed this year, and unless industries of a secondary and tertiary nature are encouraged and fostered in the area we will see the situation of our having on the one hand a shortage of skilled labour, and on the other hand high unemployment amongst school leavers and the unskilled. We will have to search the entire nation for skilled miners and probably recruit some from the United Kingdom and Europe. Kalgoorlie must be developed as a major regional centre and it must have stability. We do not need booms and busts. We want to know that if we attract a miner to the area he will know he can settle down, purchase a home, raise a family and be assured his children will be able to obtain a job when they leave school.

Mr Herzfeld: Do you have the same view in regard to miners in Pinjarra?

Mr E. T. EVANS: I am talking about my electorate. When the Pinjarra area is debated I will contribute my views.

Mr Herzfeld: You should have the same view about Pinjarra.

Mr Skidmore: You are a bit late to come up with that.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I will debate matters concerning Pinjarra and its miners at any time our learned friend, the member for Mundaring, likes to.

Mr MacKinnon: He likes now.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I have only 45 minutes, and I want to talk about my electorate. In the Kalgoorlie area housing has become a critical problem as it is in all major country centres. The State Housing Commission waiting list has 193 names of people in the Kalgoorlie area, as I was told in an answer from the Minister. In the 10 major country centres of Western Australia 1 019 people are on the waiting list for State Housing Commission houses. I regard that as a big problem and something about which the Government should do something. In answer to a question the Minister said he does not know whether in the next three years any State houses will be built in the area. A precious few have been built during the last three years.

The regional manager for the State Housing Commission office in Kalgoorlie is based in Merredin, a situation which I find quite ludicrous. I am sure my colleague, the member for Yilgarn-Dundas, has the same problem in his area and would agree with my belief. If we want to have someone's name placed on the emergency list for housing in Kalgoorlie we must take that person to the State Housing Commission office there. After the application is lodged it is sent to Merredin for the manager of the area to view it. He will then send his answer back, but it all takes a week before someone can have his name placed on that list. That is a ludicrous situation.

A problem in regard to housing does not exist at Merredin, but it does exist at Kalgoorlie, Boulder, and Kambalda, and people in those areas are being offered houses in Merredin. Kalgoorlie is the centre for the district. It is the centre for Esperance, Norseman, Kambalda, and Murchison, and it is where the regional managers of all Government departments should be stationed, not half way to Perth. The present situation is decentralisation in reverse.

Private rental accommodation is not available in Kalgoorlie, and every estate agent there is in the position of being able to ask for and receive whatever rent he so desires. Rents range from \$50 a week for an ordinary iron and weatherboard, cold water house, to \$160 a week for a brick and tile residence.

Those rents apply when houses can be obtained, but generally barely any accommodation is available. The caravan parks and the camping areas are full. Home buyers find it hard to purchase a house. Very few ready built houses are on the market and building societies are loath to lend money to Kalgoorlie residents. One wonders why! The Government is not prepared to put its faith in the town, so how are profit inspired building societies expected to put their money into the town? Banks require a third deposit which is out of the grasp of the ordinary working man.

A Government member: What about the speculators?

Mr E. T. EVANS: I will touch on the subject of speculators. Home buyers have virtually no chance because speculators have come into the area. I have asked questions in this House about the matter. There appear to be no restrictions on the purchase of conditional purchase blocks. At a recent auction held by the Department of Lands and Surveys conditional purchase blocks were bought almost wholly and solely by building developers or speculators. They purchase the blocks, put houses on them, and ask whatever price they decide to set. They probably receive twice the price for a house in Kalgoorlie than they would receive for one in Perth. The situation is quite scandalous, and the Government should investigate to see what it can do about the situation. The idea of conditional purchase blocks was that individuals could purchase homes of their own. The blocks were not meant for building developers who decide to go into an area. They ask whatever price they like for housing.

Mr Bertram: That's private enterprise!

Mr E. T. EVANS: It certainly is.

Mr Old: Dirty word.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I would now like to refer to our health situation and I am sure the Minister would like me to talk about the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital.

Mr Old: He would be surprised if you didn't.

Mr E. T. EVANS: The other evening, the member for Vasse said that it was only a matter of inviting the Minister to Kalgoorlie to show him the problems in the hospital. The member for Vasse said that would be no problem.

Mr Blaikie: I said it was important to invite the Minister because it was better than the incessant writing of letters.

Mr E. T. EVANS: The point is taken. The Minister has been invited to Kalgoorlie on many occasions and he has not quite been able to make it.

Mr Young: Be reasonable! I have been there and looked at the situation and the first stage of the improvements has commenced.

Mr E. T. EVANS: It is nearly finished.

Mr Young: I told you the other night that you have achieved more, in your short time as a member, than your predecessor achieved in 12 years.

Mr E. T. EVANS: Let us have no more nonsense about blaming the administration in Kalgoorlie. The hospital undisputedly would have the top administrators in the field of health in Mr Lou Langoulant and Matron McDonald.

Those administrators have worked very hard to keep the hospital going but their budget is simply not sufficient; they are not receiving enough funds to operate a hospital efficiently, in order to give the people of the area reasonable health care.

Mr Young: Have they said that?

Mr E. T. EVANS: Yes.

Mr Young: To whom?

Mr E. T. EVANS: They have said it to me, Mr Minister.

Mr Young: They have not said it to me.

Mr E. T. EVANS: What have they said about the budget?

Mr Young: With respect, Mr Langoulant and Matron McDonald have not indicated that to me. I am asking you to justify what you have just said.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I can justify that because I visit the hospital at least once a week.

Mr Young: In other words, they did not say it to you.

Mr Grill: You get in contact with them.

Mr Young: They have not said it to me.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume his seat. There is just no occasion for a barrage of interjections such as that which has just existed. The House cannot proceed if that persists.

Mr Crane: He never shuts up when we are talking.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I regret I have to remind the member for Moore, and the member for Morley that when a member is on his feet or has resumed his seat members should not interject before the member who has the call has the opportunity to resume his speech.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I do not intend to tell the Minister for Health what the administrator said to me—

Mr McIver: Don't forget the X-ray machine.

Mr E. T. EVANS: —but I will say to the Minister if he speaks to the administrator and the matron they will advise him and he will obtain the information directly from them, and not via me.

Mr Young: I have done that.

Mr B. T. Burke: The member is offering the Minister an opportunity to go with him to Kalgoorlie.

Mr Young: I have done that and the programme has commenced in Kalgoorlie.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. Burke: I am not the Minister for Health, dope!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! This is an impossible situation. I am trying to call the House to order but the member for Balcatta and the Minister for Health are persistently interjecting. I do not wish to take the drastic action of naming members and other measures necessary. The debate must be allowed to proceed. I would suggest to the member for Kalgoorlie that he should ignore the interjections and address his comments to the Chair.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I wish to talk about the situation of the hospital in Kalgoorlie. We have general ward A which has an availability of beds totalling 27 but the actual number of beds in that ward is 31. General ward B has been closed because of budgetary restraints. That ward had an availability of 19 but 25 beds were being used.

Mr Young: You said general ward B ward was closed. For what?

Mr E. T. EVANS: Because of budgetary restraints.

Mr Young: When?

Mr E. T. EVANS: In the last couple of months.

Mr Young: Was it really? I will check on that because there has been no indication, from my part or the Department of Health and Medical Services, in any way whatsoever, that the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital should close wards. I hope you are right because you are going to make an ass of yourself if you are not.

Mr E. T. EVANS: Do not put any money on it.

Mr Blaikie: Have you advised the Minister of this previously?

Mr E. T. EVANS: Is not this the forum where we are supposed to talk about our electorates?

Several members interjected.

Mr E. T. EVANS: General ward C, which is for permanent care, has an availability of 27 beds with 25 actually being used. General ward D has 31 beds available with 37 actually being used. The maternity ward has 14 beds available and between five and 23 beds being used. One might ask how 23 can be fitted into a maternity ward. Ward B has been opened and closed three or four times for this purpose.

Mr Bertram: And, the Minister does not know about it!

Mr E. T. EVANS: That is correct. The children's ward has 40 beds available and 30 being used. So, there is a total of 180 beds available in the hospital and 176 beds in use. Patients are being shuffled from one ward to another and there is a great deal of improvisation going on—ward B is being opened and closed all the time.

People are working voluntary overtime when workers are not replaced and when others are on holidays. This is occurring in areas such as the laundry, because no provisions have been made as a result of the budget restraint.

With the upsurge in development, surely we could expect an increase in the areas of maternity and child care. Surely, something should be done about it. I ask the Minister to do something about this matter because there will be younger families in Kalgoorlie and more maternity patients and children.

Stage I of the programme for Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital was completed recently, and that involved the operating theatre—there are no beds there. The second stage was to be completed before June 1983; that was the answer I received to question 734 of 10 December 1980.

The situation is that if nothing else goes wrong between now and next year, tenders may be closed, at the earliest, in March 1982. It will take some time for the tenders to be considered—I would say approximately three months—so that brings us to June 1982 before the contract is let. Then, the contract will take approximately 18 months to complete. So, the second stage of the hospital will be completed, at the earliest, some time early in 1984 and no beds are included in that stage of the building. The third stage involves a 60-bed ward block.

However, there are no plans even for its commencement. I would like to ask the Minister whether, in view of the situation, he intends to put the development of stage three further up the list of priorities. That is what we really want.

Mr Young: The Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital development programme was advanced in priority by me personally to the No. 1 spot on the programme, and it can only advance on a step-by-step basis, and each stage is in accordance with the priority programme between the department and the administration.

Mr Grill: That programme has languished for years on a piece-by-piece basis. You have nothing to be proud of.

Mr Young: The member for Yilgarn-Dundas is in his usual form, ranting and raving. I have answered it. The north block of Royal Perth Hospital was due to be finished in 1980.

Mr Jamieson: If we had done that we would have been crucified.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I was making the point that we have an overcrowded, out of date, totally inadequate hospital. There are no plans to increase the number of beds or the ward space in that hospital for at least five years, and that fact should be recorded in *Hansard*. The people of Kalgoorlie are absolutely disgusted.

Another item I would like to raise is the cost of living in the country. Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Watt), the other night you were bemoaning the drain of country people to the city. The cost of living appears to be one of the main reasons for that. I have here similar advertisements which appeared on Wednesday, 25 March in *The West Australian* and the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. They were headed "Coles cut prices: The best price cuts are still at New World". I would like to give a few examples from this advertisement as follows—

	Perth \$	Kalgoorlie \$
2 litres Farmland oil	2.99	3.11
IXL tomato paste	.65	.70
Farmland asparagus	1.15	1.23
Kraft cheese	2.47	2.53

Of course I could give many more examples; between 70 and 80 items are involved in all. I averaged out the difference and found it to be in the vicinity of an 8 per cent increase in prices at Kalgoorlie.

Woolworths also advertised in both papers and there was a difference of approximately 9 per cent between prices in Perth and those in Kalgoorlie.

Even to purchase *The West Australian* in Kalgoorlie costs 25c whereas it is 20c in Perth. The situation is preposterous and country people are badly disadvantaged. It should be investigated by the Government.

Another point I would like to raise is the state of the electoral rolls throughout Western Australia, particularly in country areas. I have

often stated that there is no office of the State Electoral Department in Kalgoorlie. People's names are being struck off the roll in droves. I found some electors had been struck off for not voting at the last Federal election and yet to get back on the State roll the services of a justice of the peace, an electoral officer, or a police officer are required. It is quite ridiculous that a policeman who has just graduated from the Police Training Academy can witness a person's enrolment perhaps without even having voted himself, and yet a well-respected citizen in the town is not capable, under this ridiculous legislation, of witnessing an enrolment.

It seems untenable that the State Electoral Department should be using the resources and records of the Commonwealth Electoral Office to strike people off the roll because they did not vote at the last Federal election and yet it cannot use the same resources and records to put the names back on. While the State Electoral Department is taking names off the roll a Commonwealth electoral officer is going around Kalgoorlie putting names back onto the Commonwealth roll and ensuring that everyone is on the roll. In this age of computers it should be very simple to combine the two rolls and have everyone properly enrolled; that is, of course, if the Government wants them properly enrolled. It appears to me the Government would be happy for at least 10 per cent of the population to be disfranchised. It could be a back-door way of eliminating compulsory voting. There is no real compulsion to be on the roll, and indeed, if one never gets on the roll one is usually not found out. Even if one is found out the offence attracts a fine of only \$2. It appears to me that the State Government does not want people on the roll and would be happy for things to continue as they are.

I have some information here for the Minister for Health. The general ward B of the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital closed on about 15 December. It had a bed capacity at the time of 19, although sometimes there were 23 patients there.

Mr Young: What was it closed for?

Mr Carr: Because of cutbacks in Government funding.

Mr Young: We will see.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I would not be very proud about it, Mr Minister.

Mr Young: I said "We will see."

Mr Jamieson: You could sell that north block of the Royal Perth Hospital and get yourself some money out of it as real estate.

Mr H. D. Evans: The Minister has been quiet.

Mr Young: I said that we will see. I am getting some information myself.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I would like to digress now to make some observations about the quaint manner in which the Ministers of this Government interpret the Westminster system, and I will refer particularly to the Ministers' replies to questions. The other day I asked the Minister for Health whether it was true that the X-ray machine at the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital had been closed down for four months. The Minister told me that the stripping down of the X-ray machine had been commenced on such-and-such a date. The simple answer would have been that the screening machine was out of order for four months. The Minister should have replied "Yes" and then gone on to give me the other information. It seems to be very difficult for the Ministers to come out with a simple "Yes" or "No" reply.

Mr Young: Would you like to go on and say what else was in the answer?

Mr E. T. EVANS: I have it here somewhere, and I will quote it. I was quite satisfied with the answer.

Mr Young: You say you are satisfied with the answer?

Mr E. T. EVANS: Yes, except that the Minister would not say "Yes, the X-ray machine was out of order for four months."

Mr O'Connor: Would you like to write the answers for us in future?

Mr Young: I asked the member whether he would quote the whole answer, and he said he did not have it with him. The rest of the answer went on to say how many other X-ray machines were in operation.

Mr E. T. EVANS: But no-one could have a barium meal X-ray.

Mr Young: But this was just one X-ray machine.

Mr E. T. EVANS: A very important machine if one had an ulcer or perhaps cancer of the digestive system.

Mr Young: The way you posed the question it was as though there was one X-ray machine in Kalgoorlie. That was the way you were carrying on.

Mr E. T. EVANS: It was not the way I was carrying on; it was the way my constituents were carrying on. It caused quite a rumpus in Kalgoorlie, and even the doctors were most unhappy about it. It was the first time the doctors were on side.

Mr Young: Would you rather it was not fixed up?

Mr E. T. EVANS: No, I am pleased to find it will be fixed by 6 April, and I will be there to ensure it is fixed.

Mr Young: I hope you get the first barium meal.

Mr Jamieson: That is a bad wish on him.

Mr Young: It doesn't do you any harm, it just makes it a bit rocky for a while.

Mr E. T. EVANS: I asked another question of the Minister for Mines concerning the quantity of yellow cake produced at the pilot plant at Kalgoorlie. I was told nothing had been produced. That is incredible, because I read in the paper the next day that 165 kilograms had been produced, and subsequently I received a letter from the Minister saying the quantity was 166.7 kilograms, and that amount is presently stored on the premises in drums.

Mr Old: That would not create a world oversupply.

Mr E. T. EVANS: It might be music to the ears of the Minister, but considering it is only seven kilometres from my back door and is much closer to some other people, I feel at least we should have been told how much yellow cake has been treated and how much waste has occurred. When we ask questions in good faith, we should at least get an answer. The member for Avon took Ministers to task for not answering letters. If they will not answer questions, how can we expect them to answer letters? It is simply good manners to answer letters as quickly as possible. We ask questions to seek information, not just to try to outsmart the Ministers.

In conclusion, I would like to say that whilst Kalgoorlie is enjoying an upsurge in activity and no doubt will continue to prosper, I would remind members of a previous speech I made in the Budget debate last year when I said any boom conditions in the town should benefit all members of the community and not just a few wealthy speculators on the Stock Exchange. The member for Balcatta pointed out most articulately the unfortunate Cliffminex scandal. I would remind members that if one man can sell a piece of ground to his own company and make a profit of \$2.5 million, then unless there is \$2.5 million-worth of gold in the ground someone has to pick up the tab. Of course that person will be the ordinary investor or the man in the street. He is the one who will suffer from the actions of the smarties who can manipulate the Stock Exchange and float bodgie companies and buy and sell

shares to make profits at the expense of bona fide investors.

The Premier seemed to be happy that the Stock Exchange suspended trading in Cliffminex shares for a couple of days and had a look at the matter. I can assure him I am not happy with the Cliffminex affair, nor am I happy about the way the Stock Exchange is allowed to be manipulated by unscrupulous people. The first thing a Labor Government would do is conduct an investigation into the whole securities industry. Certainly we would look to other States and the Commonwealth and endeavour to obtain a Uniform Companies Act so that this sort of thing cannot occur again.

MR TUBBY (Greenough) [11.34 a.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to make my contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate and to bring forward some matters of concern within my electorate.

I would like to say first how pleased I was to see the new Governor (Sir Richard Trowbridge) open this session of Parliament and to hear the interesting comments he made in his opening speech. Next week I will have the privilege of escorting Sir Richard and Lady Trowbridge through my electorate. I look forward to that very much, because the previous Governor, Sir Wallace Kyle, and Lady Kyle greatly endeared themselves to the people in my electorate. They made a special effort to visit the electorate during the bleak days of the worst drought in its history, and they gained great respect from the people of the area by visiting properties and actually seeing for themselves the conditions under which the people were living.

Certainly it was very gratifying indeed to hear Lady Kyle say during a farewell speech to people of that area that if her home were not in England there is no other place she would rather live than the electorate of Greenough. It was most pleasing to hear that remark. That is the way the Kyles endeared themselves to the people in the area; likewise, the people of the area endeared themselves to Sir Wallace and Lady Kyle. I am sure Sir Richard and Lady Trowbridge will receive the same welcome and be favourably impressed with what they see in the electorate.

I was pleased indeed to hear an announcement by the Premier that a high-powered interdepartmental committee has been appointed to give high priority to the problems of soil conservation and, particularly, to give a big shake-up to salinity research in order to remove the personal jealousies, bickerings, and prejudices in respect of particular systems. That was a most

important announcement, and I hope it will speed up research into one of the greatest problems in the cereal-growing areas of Western Australia; that is, the spread of salinity.

Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the staff of the Department of Agriculture and the thoroughness of their research, I believe salinity research needs a massive lift and I hope the involvement of this committee will mean that research is speeded up. I hope recommendations will come from the department in respect of how landholders should handle this colossal problem.

I have been greatly concerned by the wide acceptance of interceptor banks which are part of the Whittington system to alleviate salinity problems, and the fact that such banks are not recommended by the Department of Agriculture. On Saturday, 28 February an article appeared in *The West Australian* dealing with the progress made with the establishment of these banks. The article stated—

WA farmers have constructed more than 4 000 kilometres of banks and drains over the past three years to combat salt—but the Agriculture Department says it may be wasted effort.

The farmers say their banks and drains which cost more than \$2 million, are working.

They claim that the department's methods are cosmetic—and have never reclaimed a single hectare of salt-affected land.

Some farmers allege that the department's recommendations only make salt areas worse.

It goes on to state—

The banks were developed by Brookton farmer Mr Harry Whittington. Farmers then formed WISALTS—Whittington Interceptor Salt-Affected Land Treatment Society—and say they have 950 financial members.

The society strongly disagrees with the department on how the problem develops—and how it should be tackled.

The society claims considerable success and its differences with the department have been bitter at times.

The WISALTS's president, Mr Lloyd Richards, of Quairading, said: "In some cases where the banks have been put in, the salt has gone and the land is back in production.

"Proper installation will immediately arrest salt expansion.

In my electorate alone many hundreds of kilometres of interceptor banks have been constructed, and in some cases complete farms have been treated. I am greatly concerned that farmers in the area have seen fit to go to the tremendous expense involved in the construction of these banks, because as members would all realise over the last five years the weather has not been kind to the area and the people cannot afford to waste funds.

I am greatly concerned to think that this expenditure and development has been undertaken without the blessing of the Department of Agriculture and the Government; however, I believe it will change the farmers' outlook for the future. I also believe the farmers would not be constructing interceptor banks unless they were confident about the system.

Usually, the Department of Agriculture is ahead of the farmers. However, in this case I believe the farmers are taking the lead. This is not a healthy situation and the sooner an announcement is made by the department either accepting or rejecting this method of control, the better.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr TUBBY: I move—

That I be given leave to continue my speech at a later stage of the sitting.

Motion put and passed.

Debate thus adjourned.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Jarrah Class Action: Motion

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier)
[11.42 a.m.]: I move—

That The Parliament of Western Australia views with grave concern the action taken by the Conservation Council of Western Australia Inc. in launching in the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania a class action aimed at restricting and possibly crippling the bauxite/alumina industry in Western Australia.

This Parliament deplores the institution of this action which it believes is directed against the best interests of the State of Western Australia, the livelihood of many thousands of Western Australians and the Australian nation.

The elected representatives of the people of Western Australia in this Parliament

assembled assert their right to determine what matters are in the best interests of the people of Western Australia and their right to make and uphold the laws of the State of Western Australia.

This Parliament directs attention to the fact that the bauxite/alumina industry operates in Western Australia under the provisions of Agreements lawfully entered into with the Government of Western Australia and ratified by Act of Parliament. These agreements specifically state that they will be interpreted according to the laws for the time being in force in the State of Western Australia.

The companies involved in the bauxite/alumina industry in Western Australia have conformed, and are conforming with the provisions of these agreements and the laws of Western Australia, especially in regard to—

their operations generally,

conservation and environment requirements, and

the control of mining.

The companies have shown themselves to be responsible and law abiding and have demonstrated a genuine desire to be part of the community and to conform to all applicable laws.

All of their operations have been subject to strict conservation and environmental requirements, including monitoring, and the companies have, at all times, shown a willingness to co-operate with the Government and other authorities as well as with the community at large.

They are very big employers who comply with the industrial laws of this State. This employment is both direct and indirect and is estimated to affect some 20 000 Western Australian workers. Furthermore, the participation of the companies in the bauxite/alumina industry of Western Australia is of considerable benefit to the activities of local fabricating and service industries and the professions.

For example, the current construction programme at Wagerup for the new Alcoa refinery has spent 85 per cent of the large capital investment for the construction of this refinery within Western Australia. This policy of maximum local participation is followed by both bauxite/alumina projects.

The Alcoa project has already generated huge amounts of export income for the nation and, in addition, supplies alumina to feed the Alcoa aluminium smelter in Victoria, Australia, and will do so for another smelter about to be constructed in that State.

The Worsley project, of which Reynolds Metals Company is a part—will likewise make a major contribution to local industry and to export income.

Both bauxite/alumina enterprises are destined to be important factors in the development of an aluminium smelting industry in Western Australia. This is important in itself and it will also have tremendous benefits to our indigenous coal industry for electric power generation and other purposes.

The Alcoa project will be a big user of natural gas for Alumina production. This gas is to be brought in a 1 500 kilometre pipeline from off the North West coast of the State to the South West of the State where it will be available to domestic and industrial users. The need of the bauxite/alumina industry which is located in the South West is an integral part of the viability of this important offshore energy project. The use of this gas for alumina production is a high energy efficiency use of this form of energy.

The Parliament affirms its view that it is in the best interests of Western Australia that the companies involved in the bauxite/alumina industry should be free to continue their operations in the State.

This Parliament is of the opinion that the Government of Western Australia should take such action as necessary to communicate the views expressed by the Parliament of Western Australia in this resolution in any appropriate quarter and seek the co-operation of the Commonwealth Government of Australia in any representations which might have to be made internationally.

I further move that the resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council and the Council's concurrence desired therein.

At the outset, let me say that I appreciate the co-operation of the Opposition in agreeing to the Standing Orders being suspended so that the motion in question could be considered ahead of the Address-in-Reply. I gave some reasons yesterday as to why it was important this motion be dealt with and I hope when I have finished my

remarks today, and perhaps have answered some queries from the Opposition that it will be fully appreciated why we are taking a responsible stand in moving as we are.

I also wish to say at the outset, in view of some unfortunate comments which have appeared in the media and elsewhere that this motion is no political stunt or political monoeuvre; in fact, it is in deadly earnest. I hope members will appreciate the seriousness of this matter as they consider this motion. The integrity, viability, and sovereignty of this State are at issue and are under challenge. I sincerely hope members will approach the matter on that basis. I ask them to look at this motion as Western Australians and to accept that it is important, so far as the State of Western Australia and the nation are concerned.

If by some mischance this class action in America should be successful to any degree, it could open the way for a series of challenges throughout the length and breadth of Australia which could challenge the sovereignty of the nation itself and which, in turn, could endanger the economic development of the nation.

I ask members to approach the matter on the basis that it is something on which we need to join together as Western Australians and to express an opinion from this Parliament. I readily acknowledge there are many differences of opinion between all of us on matters of detail. No two people do the same thing in the same way; no two Governments or companies approach matters in the same way. In fact, that is the very essence of human beings and human nature—that we do have our differences, particularly in matters of detail.

However, I would like to think that in terms of principle, there are no differences between us in connection with this matter, and what the motion seeks to achieve. In other words, it is a Western Australian issue, not a Government issue.

The importance of this motion must be understood thoroughly by all concerned because our response to the motion as a Parliament could be very important when this motion and the *Hansard* record are disseminated far and wide. Not only the motion but also the sentiments expressed in the *Hansard* record will be equally important in the places where this motion and the *Hansard* record will be distributed. It will be read with great interest not only in Australia but also in America and, I might add, in other parts of the world.

Mr Bertram: Will the *Hansard* record be placed before the court?

Sir CHARLES COURT: This matter is very important not only for ourselves and America, but also for the rest of the world.

Before I commence my formal remarks—so there will be no misunderstanding about the matter, because there seemed to be some doubt yesterday as to what use we would make of the motion—I just wish to say it is intended that the motion and the *Hansard* record will be made available urgently to the Commonwealth Government and to the companies concerned. It is also intended that the State and Commonwealth Governments will confer quickly to decide what is the best way in which the Governments' presence—by "Governments" I refer to the Commonwealth Government, and the Government of Western Australia—should be organised.

I must say with great emphasis that at the moment, it is not quite clear from the advice we have received—and also looking at the practical aspects of the matter—as to the way the Commonwealth and/or the State Government should be joined in this action, or as to whether in fact we should have a presence in the actual court.

On reflection, members will appreciate that if the two Governments did act precipitously and, without knowing the consequences, became involved in this action, they could in fact be giving a credibility to a court which we believe has no jurisdiction and which in fact has no position in this matter. That decision has yet to be made.

I wish to emphasise here and to give an assurance that if the advice is that it would be desirable for the State Government and/or the Commonwealth Government to be joined in this matter in the court hearings, then joined they will be, because we are quite determined to use every legal and proper means at our disposal to make sure that not only is the seriousness of this action understood here and in America, but also the case of the State and the nation is properly represented.

In case there be any doubt about that matter, I emphasise it again: If, following studies of the matter, we find that the State and/or the Commonwealth should be joined, that action will be taken.

In passing, and as a layman, I invite members' attention to the fact that whilst the Commonwealth Government has the national interest at stake, and has a responsibility as the national Government, other aspects of the issue transcend that fact, because the actual laws and agreements under which those companies operate,

and the daily activities of those companies are all very much subject to the laws of Western Australia, not the laws of the Commonwealth.

I acknowledge readily that it would be desirable for the Commonwealth and the State to work in concert on this matter. I have taken the precaution, not only of keeping the Prime Minister informed, but also of advising him that the Parliament would be considering this motion. As soon as the decision of the Parliament is known, I will make available to him both the motion and the *Hansard* record.

Our own legal advisers will be looking at the position and working out the best way of protecting the interests of the State.

I have prepared some comments which are pertinent to the motion. I will now present them to the House as the basis on which we can debate the motion and, hopefully, arrive at an appropriate decision.

Members will be aware that the Conservation Council of Western Australia has launched a class action in a United States District Court. The purpose of the action is to bring to a halt the bauxite/alumina industry in Western Australia. The action is unprecedented in the legal history of this country, and of the United States.

It asks an American court to interfere directly in the affairs of Western Australia. As far as is known, such a request has not previously been made of an American court. Neither has an American court sought to interfere in the affairs of another community in such a way.

In this case, the Conservation Council has asked an American District Court to stop two American companies, Alcoa and Reynolds, from bauxite mining, alumina refining, or aluminium smelting in Western Australia. The request is being made, even though Alcoa and Reynolds are only partners in consortiums for this purpose—partners with Australian companies.

The action is an affront to the 20 000 Western Australian workers now dependent, directly and indirectly, on the bauxite/alumina industry. It is an affront to another 15 000 looking forward to employment as a direct and indirect result of new alumina refineries now being built, and an aluminium smelter now being negotiated. All these people are being asked to forgo their employment futures, unless it can be shown that the industries they rely on will not harm the Darling Range ecological system of the south-west. Under such conditions not one house could be built; not one road could be laid down anywhere; not one crop could be planted; not one tree could be cleared; and not one human being

would be permitted to take any action to advance the lifestyle and living standards of people living in this area.

The proposition is an affront to the intelligence of every Western Australian. It is an affront to the courts of the United States. It presumes that American courts are interested, and willing, to reach beyond their own jurisdiction to meddle in the lives of communities half a world away. No such presumption is justified by any previous precedent.

The assertions made by the Conservation Council in the complaint lodged to support the class action are also a slur on succeeding Governments drawn from this Parliament. These Governments have had legislative and regulatory oversight of the foundation and development of the bauxite/alumina industry. Under the responsible oversight of successive Governments and this Parliament, regulatory requirements, and especially environmental safeguards, have developed in step with the growth of the industry.

The policies developed and implemented by Governments drawn from this Parliament have given responsible expression to the advantages of a multiple-use approach to the large areas occupied by forests in which the timber industry operates; substantially used for water catchments; extensively used for recreation; and used to a minor degree for the mining of bauxite under strictly monitored environmental controls. These policies, as implemented, are a credit to this Parliament and the successive Governments drawn from it. They represent a sensible and responsible balance between adequate preservation of a total environment and advantageous use of its many values for the benefit of the people of Western Australia.

The class action has raised a number of important issues for this Parliament. There is the challenge to the jurisdiction of the Parliament itself. It is an unwarranted and unprincipled challenge for which there is no justification whatsoever. Then there is the implied threat to the future of an industry in which Parliament has long expressed a responsible and favourable interest. There is the threat to the livelihoods of those dependent on the industry—and dependent on Parliament maintaining the lawful jurisdiction under which it has permitted and encouraged this industry. There is also the threat to the economic benefits the industry already confers on Western Australia. In 1980, the industry injected \$350 million into Western Australia in terms of wage and salary payments, royalties, and payments for goods and services and capital expenditures.

There is the threat to the benefits conferred upon the community at large through taxation derived from the industry. For example, Alcoa has made provision for taxes totalling \$325 million over the past five years. There is the threat to the export earnings of the industry—exports being a vital source of income for Western Australians. The industry contributes nearly one-eighth of Western Australia's export earnings. There is the threat to the very valuable support the industry gives to forest rehabilitation where the need arises.

The industry spends more than \$3 million per year on rehabilitation of mined areas, more than \$2 million a year on research into environmental questions associated with mining operations, and additional significant sums in other areas of research—including allocation of \$500 000 over a three-year period for research in dieback. This takes the form of various allocations to State, Commonwealth, and academic research groups through a committee chaired by the Conservator of Forests.

There is the threat to the profitable carriage of bauxite and alumina by Westrail, which earned \$16 million from these operations in 1980. There is the very real threat to south-western towns in the event of a major exodus of population due to closure of the bauxite/alumina industry if the class action were successful.

There is the threat to the two new alumina refineries now under construction, and representing an initial investment of more than \$1 300 million—of which between 80 per cent and 85 per cent will be spent in Western Australia. Lest it not be understood, the many threats I speak of would be felt more keenly in Perth than anywhere else. Every worker in the bauxite/alumina industry generates jobs for five other workers elsewhere. Every \$1 million of household income directly generated by the industry creates more than \$5 million of household income through supporting activity.

This list of examples, by no means complete, demonstrates why this Parliament has a right and a responsibility to be concerned about the action taken by the Conservation Council of Western Australia. While it may not succeed, clearly it is an attempt to do significant damage.

This Parliament is entitled to express its deep concern, and to express that concern in the most effective way possible.

One very important reason for this Parliament to be concerned about the class action is the way it sets out to discredit the State's environmental policies, plans, and programmes. Each of the

demands made in the complaint laid before the American court implies neglect of duty by the Parliament and Governments of Western Australia. There are 10 of these demands, and each one of them is an implied insult to this Parliament. Each one is based on the false assumptions and claims made over and over again by environmental activists co-ordinated by the Conservation Council with intent to mislead the public of Western Australia over many years—and now with intent to mislead a court of the United States, with damaging effect on the reputation of this Parliament.

Demand No. 1 implies falsely that bauxite mining and alumina refining could be viable if the operations were pushed outside State forests into private land.

Demand No. 2 implies falsely that current bauxite mining programmes will degrade fresh water supplies through salinity.

Demand No. 3 implies falsely that alumina refineries seriously contaminate the air, water and soils of the Darling regional ecological system.

Demand No. 4 implies falsely that this Parliament would permit aluminium smelting even if fluoride emissions harmed the environment and the people in it.

Demand No. 5 is the one I mentioned earlier, which virtually claims that nothing must happen if it changes the environment.

Demand No. 6 implies falsely that control of bauxite mining, alumina refining and aluminium smelting is, and will be, so slipshod as to endanger water storages for home consumption and irrigation.

Demand No. 7 implies falsely that mining is the major cause of the spread of dieback, when it is in fact only one contributor to the spread, and a substantial contributor to dieback research and rehabilitation. It is also a fact that the jarrah forests are not doomed but cover a very big area and will be flourishing long, long after the doomsayers are gone.

Demand No. 8 sets out to impose an unbroken reserve of not less than 100 000 hectares on top of areas in the northern jarrah forest where mining has already been authorised, and would be disrupted seriously by such a move. By contrast, the Government's approach is to negotiate the progress of mining to steer it in such a way as to minimise disturbance of selected forest areas.

Demand No. 9 requires mining and refining in the Darling regional ecological system to do no permanent damage, and we all know that no place

is exactly the same after it has been mined, even if it has been replanted with trees.

Demand No. 10 implies falsely that the sole operating company at present, Alcoa, is distributing false and misleading information about its operation, and this also implies falsely that both the Parliament and the Government are being misled.

It is interesting to compare this list of twisted demands with the simple facts.

Firstly, of the 1.9 million hectares of State forest, about 1.4 million is occupied by jarrah forest. Since bauxite mining operations began in 1961, about 2 600 hectares of jarrah forest have been cleared for mining, and two-thirds of it has already been planted with trees, while some of the remainder is used for workshops, amenities buildings, administrative offices, and so on. Possibly another 10 000 or 12 000 hectares will be cleared and substantially replanted with dieback-resistant trees by the end of the century.

Secondly, bauxite mining in the northern jarrah forest fits into Government forest policy. A mandatory general working plan approved in 1977 takes care of water supplies, timber cutting, preservation of flora and fauna, and recreation. The overall plan is broken down into subsidiary land use management plans for specific areas.

The land use management plan for the northern jarrah forest has been accepted as the working basis for planning the Alcoa mining operations, and is subject to review in the light of new information—and I repeat "information", not speculation or fiction posing as fact.

Under this approach, mining has been taking place in the western part of the Darling Range, which has high rainfall, is relatively salt-free, but has the worst incidence of dieback.

Both the Government and the company have given specific undertakings regarding the eastern sector, where rainfall is lower, and where large quantities of salt are stored deep in the soil and may rise to the surface to contaminate streams and water catchments if any clearing that is done is not properly managed or controlled. The Government and company undertakings are that these areas will not be mined unless research shows that salinity can be controlled.

The only exception is the Reynolds Worsley operation which will mine in areas where streams have already been made saline by clearing for agriculture, and we cannot turn the clock back.

It is important to note also that, on present indicators, the Alcoa requirements can be met in the safe western areas for a quarter of a century.

This lengthy time scale must surely give this Parliament cause to wonder why the Conservation Council of Western Australia has rushed to the United States to push the panic button in an unprecedented class action. After all, the eastern sector, presently protected from mining, is also relatively free from dieback, and is being quarantined while dieback research goes on in the expectation that some relief may be found from this world-wide scourge of the forests.

Thirdly, as this Parliament knows, successive Governments have been establishing, since 1973, a series of related top-level committees to maintain surveillance of the multiple use of the forest ecology, co-ordinate research, and provide policy guidance.

Fourthly, both the existing operator, the Alcoa consortium, and the future operator, the Reynolds consortium, are subject to environmental review and management programmes through which their operations are under constant surveillance to ensure they comply with environmental requirements.

Finally, the companies concerned deserve to be given credit for the way they have genuinely responded to the need to protect the environment, and such community assets as reservoirs, roads and visual attractions, and to adopt proper measures necessary for the control of the spread of dieback, measures similar to those accepted by other forest industries.

The companies have been good citizens and good neighbours in the regions where they operate. They have contributed far more benefit, and far less disturbance, than the activists who have done so much in their attempts to blacken the name of these good companies and discredit the work they do, which brings so much benefit to Western Australia.

Mr Speaker, Parliament has every right to deplore such a mischievous approach to environmental concern, and especially to deplore this latest example—the class action being taken before a court of the United States.

One more matter deserves to be specially mentioned, in view of the grossly misleading statements it seems to attract from time to time. I refer to the energy consumed by the alumina operation, and that likely to be consumed by future smelting operations.

Energy consumption is somehow presented as a crime when, in the case of our present alumina refiner, Alcoa, it has conferred significant benefits on Western Australia. By agreeing to take gas from the Dongara field, Alcoa provided the high-

volume base load necessary to make it economic as a supplier for Perth.

The company has again stepped into the breach to enable us to get economic gas from the North-West Shelf to Perth and the south-west. Alcoa virtually underwrote the economic viability of the north-west gas supply and the 1 500 kilometre pipeline needed to deliver it southward by agreeing to buy half the gas that was needed to flow through it in order to make it pay at an acceptable price for domestic consumers.

Contrary to the many misleading statements made, Western Australia is not suffering from excessive energy consumption but from the fact that its demand is still so small that it is difficult to get prices down to economic levels. When the north-south pipeline is built, thanks to Alcoa's very strong support, we will enjoy increasing benefits from this major installation as the years go by.

Similar comments apply to the benefits the Reynolds operation at Worsley will have on Collie and its coalfields. When smelting begins, the benefits to our power generating system will be substantial.

As will be known, the most immediate benefit will be to the Collie coalfield because of an additional very big tonnage that will be required for that power generating purpose.

Smelting will create a major increase in power demand and help lift our system up the scale towards larger generating units and economies of scale that will benefit the entire interconnected grid.

With all these aspects in mind, I believe it is most important that this Parliament places on record its views of the Conservation Council's class action in the strongest possible terms. I believe it is important that this be done as a matter of principle. But it is also important that it be done for practical reasons, including the value of having such a statement which can be made available at an appropriate time in an appropriate place in the interests of Western Australia. I therefore move the motion for which I will seek the wholehearted endorsement of Parliament.

There are many people involved in the bauxite/alumina industry which operates so soundly and with such benefit within the enlightened guidelines laid down by successive Governments and by this Parliament.

Earlier I mentioned the number of workers directly and indirectly involved with the industry at the present time—some 20 000—and mentioned also that some 15 000 more would be hoping for jobs resulting from this industry.

Behind those numbers of workers there are also many, many more represented by their families. We are probably looking at between 50 000 and 60 000 people right now, and up to 100 000 people later on. But even these numbers do not spell out hopes for the future that they represent.

Let me remind members, then, of some small numbers that mean quite a lot. As it happens, Alcoa acted in anticipation of future requirements back in 1977, and doubled its annual intake of apprentices in the various trades. Alcoa now has 160 apprentices in its various locations.

To meet the future needs of the Wagerup refinery which it is now building, it decided to provide early job opportunities for local young people, and apprentices were especially recruited last year and this year from the townships surrounding the Wagerup refinery. They are being trained ready to be transferred to Wagerup next year. Over the past two years, the company has also substantially increased its employment of new tertiary qualified graduates. In fact 35 were recruited at the end of 1979 and a further 40 at the end of last year. These included graduates in engineering, personnel, computing, accounting, and environmental sciences.

Training is also continued after recruitment and a wide variety of development courses are provided. For example, some 90 employees are currently taking advantage of the company's education tuition aid programme which helps employees wanting to undertake further studies.

In many ways, these simple facts tell us a great deal about the hopes of individual people—individual young Western Australians—hoping and working for a good future in an important local industry, an industry which will soon be the biggest private employer in the State.

This is the industry the Conservation Council of Western Australia wants to strike down.

It is for this reason that it is important that this Parliament—on behalf of all those people who want a future—should strike back.

Before concluding, I shall refer specifically to the motion, although members will appreciate that my remarks have endeavoured to embrace the motion and the points raised in it, so as to have some record of the circumstances leading up to it and the performance of the industry itself, along with the general experience successive Governments and the community have had with this industry.

I remind members of the significance of the motion that appears as notice of motion No. 4 on today's notice paper. I will spare members the

agony of reading it all to them, because I understand I have complied with what is necessary under the Standing Orders.

However, I should like to feel that all members have studied the motion and understand it is intended to be an all-embracing statement from this Parliament, not only to let the local people and Australian people generally know, but also to let the people of the United States of America and all other countries know that we take strong exception to the class action which has been entered into in a court in the USA. We want to let them know that we do not accept any challenge to the sovereignty, integrity, and viability of our State.

I confirm what I said earlier that, when the latest situation has been studied by both the Commonwealth and State Governments, a decision will be made as to whether either or both of these Governments will be joined in the action.

I have outlined briefly also, for the benefit of members, some of the reasons that it might not be desirable for the Commonwealth and State Governments to be identified with the class action in the American court. However, if the advice transpires that we should be joined, of course we will be.

I repeat what I said earlier that we will be taking the motion and the *Hansard* record and we will distribute it very widely in the hope that it will give a clear indication to the people who take an interest in this matter exactly how we feel about it.

Mr Bertram: Will you be making a copy of the application available to members?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I should like to know to which application the member refers. Does he mean the case mounted by the Conservation Council of Western Australia?

Mr Bertram: Yes—the application to the American court.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I will gladly let the member have the use of my copy. I was able to get only one copy of it, but if it is of any assistance to him, I shall arrange for a copy to be made for him and for anyone else who is interested in it.

I undertook to be more definitive about the dates which make this motion urgent. I want members to divorce in their minds the legal formalities leading up to the mounting of the case and the actual hearing of the case, because the mounting of the case is very important from our point of view. It takes place very quickly, but the

actual hearing of it is in the hands of the court which is dealing with it in America.

Based on experience of the American courts, it has been made very clear to us that if the respondents to the case do not indicate at the beginning the basis on which they approach the matter, they will find it very difficult to make later submissions which will have the credibility and effectiveness we would want them to have.

I have checked the crucial dates and the first one is approximately 15 April when the filing of the action by the respondents will take place. On or about 25 April the respondents have to lodge a supporting brief within the courts; so that it can be seen there is a 10-day deadline in between.

The 10-day deadline is not absolutely final, but based on the best information I was able to obtain yesterday, it is accepted that there will be only 10 days in which to lodge a supporting brief.

I do not want members to confuse that with the actual hearing of the case, but they will understand it is very important that something as vital as a motion of this Parliament—not only a motion of this Chamber, but a motion of this Parliament—and the *Hansard* record which goes with it should be available before that time. That is why I suggested that next Wednesday was the latest day by which the motion should have passed through both Houses of Parliament, bearing in mind that any information would have to be transmitted to America so as to arrive there prior to the first date I have mentioned—that is 15 April.

I hope members will approach this motion on the basis that it is a matter of great principle so far as this State is concerned and whilst members may have differences of opinion regarding the actual implementation and administration of agreements and the operations of different industries, as far as the actual principle is concerned, surely we, as Western Australians, have as our greatest desire the maintenance of the sovereignty, integrity, and viability of this State. Coupled with that is the desire to ensure that the career and employment opportunities this industry has brought to Western Australia in such abundance in the past and will provide to an even greater degree in the future, are maintained.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Deputy Premier) [12.17 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [12.18 p.m.]: Since this matter was brought before the Parliament I have had the opportunity to examine my file of Press cuttings on the action which has been taken by the

Conservation Council of WA. In order to disabuse the minds of many that it seemed to be the ALP which was associated with this move, I should like to point out that it is not in fact the case. The action was taken by the Conservation Council of WA in co-operation with the Campaign to Save Native Forests and it was entirely their decision to enter into it.

The first I knew about the action—indeed the first any member of the hierarchy of the Labor Party knew about it—was when I read about it in the newspapers and I believe that was on 25 February last. As far as I am aware, the first article relating to this issue appeared in *The West Australian* on that day.

I hope that statement places the situation of the Opposition in clear perspective. Although no doubt members of the ALP are associated with the Conservation Council of WA—they must be, because over 30 groups are associated with the council—it does not mean that whatever the council does is part of the policy of the ALP. As I understand it, people of all political persuasions are genuinely concerned with the environment and they give a great deal of their time and, in some cases sums of money, and service to the council. However, the council is, of course, capable of standing up and taking responsibility for all its actions.

Point of Order

MR SKIDMORE: I request that the level of conversation be lowered so that we may hear the member on his feet. I listened with courtesy to the Premier, and I think the same courtesy should be extended to the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: I am rather surprised that the member for Swan has taken the opportunity to raise a point of order as he has. I would have thought the level of conversation was extremely low. It certainly is at this end of the Chamber. It may not be at his end of the Chamber, and in view of that possibility I ask members to refrain from casual conversation. I also ask the Leader of the Opposition to speak up a little.

Debate Resumed

MR DAVIES: I wonder whether this Parliament needs to make a declaration, but I will deal with that query later on. The Labor Party believes it is essential for this Parliament to declare that it intends to maintain sovereignty over occurrences in Western Australia, it intends to preserve its integrity and, to use the Premier's word, viability. We believe the governing of Australia should be controlled

wholly and solely by Australians. For that reason the Whitlam Government decided it would not go to the Privy Council by way of appeal.

Of course, I think this Government is being a little hypocritical because it still believes in its right to go to the Privy Council by way of appeal. It is still prepared to let a body outside Australia decide what should happen in Australia when the time suits it. I think this point is very important. We have suggested many times that appeals to the Privy Council should be abolished, but the Premier stuck very soundly to that avenue. So, when we find him complaining about an organisation going to courts of law in another country we wonder at the stand he has taken in regard to the Privy Council. It points to some hypocrisy on the part of the Premier when on the one hand he is prepared to listen to courts outside this country, and on the other he says that situation should not be so.

The Australian Labor Party when in Government has consistently opposed any interference with its sovereignty, and that goes back to the time of the United States North-West Cape base. One of the prime arguments at that time was that there should be, at least, joint control of that base. I remind the House that after the dust had settled in regard to that matter the then Prime Minister of Australia (Mr R. G. Menzies) said he never attempted to obtain joint responsibility of or control over that base. The United States authorities were quoted as saying that had they been approached, quite likely some deal could have been worked out. Apparently some deal is being worked out in regard to the use of Darwin for B52 bombers.

However, I do not want to stray from the motion before us which relates to Australia's integrity and viability. The Labor Party has never changed its stand on that point. While the Government vacillates and takes whatever line it feels is necessary and suits its purposes of the day, it must take the responsibility for its actions. Needless to say, we have a great deal of sympathy for the action being taken in the United States, and I am quite certain that electorally we will lose votes over our present stand. However, an important principle is involved and one we will not change for electoral advantage.

This morning I had five phone calls to my office from people who are allegedly Laborites. They were disappointed with the stand the State Parliamentary Labor Party has taken; but when I explained to them why we have taken this stand they accepted the explanation and, indeed, were encouraged by it. I hope we do not lose too many votes, but we will not abdicate our principles.

I repeat that it is hypocritical of the Government to support appeals to the Privy Council yet be critical of people who want to go to courts outside Australia. I know the Premier has said the Privy Council is part of our judicial system under the Westminster system. That may be perfectly correct, but if we are to say we want Australians to look after Australians there should be no buts and no exceptions. The Labor Party believes Australian courts are as far as anyone needs to go to deal with matters relating to occurrences within Australia.

Our position is quite clear, and we have expressed previously our deep concern at the fact that no facility was available for such an action to take place within Australia. I know there are those, if we had such a facility, who would throw up their hands in horror and say "Heaven preserve us, we would never get anything done." I also know there are those who would point to the United States legal system and say it is used to delay projects for years and years. Surely we can learn from experience in the United States and make certain such an Australian facility is one that would not have the effect of what happens in the United States.

We have criticised the failure of Australian Governments, both State and Federal, to provide an avenue for interested groups to attempt to seek legal rights in consumer, civil rights, welfare, environmental and other matters. That, Mr Speaker, is a statement taken almost directly with only one or two minor changes to the tense from the words in the Federal platform of the Australian Labor Party. So, the Parliament now knows where we stand. We do not intend to change our stand although it may be electorally unpopular. We have the greatest sympathy—some individuals have more sympathy than others—for the way the environmentalists feel, but we are not prepared to sacrifice principle for votes.

I spoke yesterday about the rather surprising need for this motion to be dealt with urgently. Although the Premier endeavoured yesterday to explain why it is so urgent, he was vague. However, I must thank him for the additional information he gave us today, although the information still failed to convince me that there is an urgent need to pass this motion. Today he gave us some dates, but according to information given to me this morning by the member for Swan, the Premier is not up to date with the latest times. The House will recall that the application referred to in the motion was lodged in the United States courts, according to Press reports, on 21 February and 20 days were allowed for a

response. As I said, that is according to the Press reports: Some say 30 days were allowed but it appears the number is 20.

After an application by the companies an extension of 45 days was granted. The member for Swan was able to inform me today that a further extension of 45 days has been granted for the respondents to answer the claim. There will be 110 days from the last week in February till when the action is heard by the court. This means that the companies have until something like June of this year when they must enter a response or defence. Therefore I can see no need for us to suspend the business of Parliament to deal with this motion as a matter of urgency. Indeed, I would not be surprised that many of the statements which will be made in the House today are out of date by the time the application is heard. The member for Swan also was able to inform me this morning that the Conservation Council has retained in Pittsburgh—I understand that is the region in which the action will be heard—the firm of Messrs. Baskin and Sears as its solicitors. It may also be interesting for the House to note that Mr Sears of that company was the first campaign manager for Mr Ronald Reagan, the present Republican President of the United States.

The firm of Baskin and Sears is acknowledged as a leading Republican law firm, but apparently the council is quite happy with it.

I find it strange that the information the Premier has provided does not tally with what was generally accepted: to wit, the first 20 days' extension and then a further 45 days' extension. As I said, that does not tally with the dates he gave us.

I do not wish to argue about that, but the point I wish to make is that on top of that extension which he claims will take us to 15 April, and a further 10 days to 25 April, there is a further 45 days' extension. It may have been better had the Parliament waited and canvassed public opinion a little later.

Perhaps, the Government wishes to adjourn the matter but it seems to me Government members are not very sure of what they are doing. The motion, is of course, a statement of what the Government believes the position to be in regard to the bauxite/alumina industry in this State. The statements contained in the motion are wide and arguable. Indeed, some of the statements contained in the Premier's speech today—his prepared text—are also arguable.

I have no way of checking everything the Premier has said in his speech. I have no way of

assessing whether his statements are correct. I am quite certain that if he were to argue, either publicly or privately, with the Conservation Council, its members would be able to convince him that some of the statements are incorrect. However, I doubt very much whether they could, the Premier being the man he is. I am sure the Conservation Council would be able to put up some very substantial arguments.

Members on this side of the House are not in a position to argue these points or accept them as being 100 per cent correct. If one were to look at the figures which the Premier quoted in his speech and the figures quoted in Press cuttings, one would find that some tally and some do not. It seems to me that the Premier has been inclined, in some instances, to increase the figures or exaggerate them a little.

However, I am unable to challenge them because I do not have the time or the resources to do so. If we look carefully at the motion we will find that strong language is contained in it. The language does not seem to fall into the general tenor of motions moved in this House. In some instances the verbiage is more severe than it is usually. It seems strange to me that the phrases in the motion, which appeared in Press cuttings also, were alleged to be statements made by Alcoa.

It seems to me that they have either elevated those statements or have had someone else prepare the motion.

Mr Herzfeld: Is it relevant?

Mr DAVIES: I think it is relevant if this Parliament is being made a puppet for a company: I object to that.

Mr Pearce: It is a very important principle, too.

Mr DAVIES: The motion skims very lightly over the class action—approximately half a page was used to refer to it—but the motion continues to extol the virtues of the company and if the debate is to be circulated then I cannot see any reason for all that detail to be contained in the motion.

I do not know whether it was thought it would be a good idea and it was promoted that way, or whether the tactics were thought out before the motion was written. However, the motion fails to acknowledge in any way whatsoever, or appreciate, why the action was taken. I think it would have been quite easy for some consideration to be given to that fact.

The main body of the motion deals with a projected smelter, and as we all know that smelter is a long way off at the present time. I think a

great deal of water will flow under the bridge before we get to that stage.

The Government has not attempted to appreciate the reasons for the Conservation Council's action. The council has had a great deal of support from all quarters of the community. If one were to peruse the file of Press cuttings, one would be surprised—as I was—as to how spontaneous the support appears to have been. The action will cost a considerable amount of money and there is no indication that it will be financed by other than public support.

I said that I had five telephone calls from people objecting to the statement in today's issue of *The West Australian* which was attributed to the Opposition. However, when the reasons for our position were explained to the people they were readily accepted.

The conservationists have been frustrated for a long period by the lack of Government response and the insensitivity shown by the Government to their requests. Perhaps, those requests were demands at times. They are as much entitled to make demands as other groups in the community which make demands. However, their demands or requests have been rejected out of hand by the Government. The Government has shown a complete lack of response and sensitivity. Indeed, ridicule has been heaped on the conservationists and their motives have been doubted.

The Government cannot recognise the fact that the conservationists are a valuable safety valve in the community. They are there to remind us that we may have gone too far, as we are apt to do in this place. They say at times we should pull on the reins and stop a while to see exactly where we are heading.

I am grateful they are there to act as a conscience for me and the members of the Opposition. They are there to make certain that we do not go too far. I am prepared to argue with them when I think they are wrong, but I am also prepared to listen to them. I try to offer them assistance whenever possible.

The conservationists have been abused and derided. Indeed, the Minister said they needed investigation and "Let us cut off their funds". That is a typical reaction by this Government. If we withdraw their money, they cannot operate.

We should consider what happened to the Tree Society. That society was critical of the Government because it was building freeways and other projects. That is a small group which was, once again, a valuable conscience for the community, but its funds were cut off by this

Government because its spokesmen were saying things the Government did not like.

What was the Government's reaction to the Conservation Council's class action? The Minister for Resources Development said "Let us investigate them and let us get Canberra to cut off their funds. They are receiving \$20 000 a year." According to a Press statement the Council's secretary said they receive \$8 000 a year, most of which goes in office expenses and part-time salaries.

This is a reaction of the Government: These people are doing something we do not like, let us get rid of them. When Governments act like this I am reminded of what has happened in Germany and other totalitarian countries where people can disappear overnight, I am pleased to say we are not anywhere near that stage.

Mr Hodge: The money does.

Mr DAVIES: As the member for Melville says, people may not disappear overnight, but the money can disappear overnight.

Yesterday, following our party meeting, we expressed concern, which is the legitimate and genuine concern of thousands of Western Australians, about the impact on State forests of large-scale bauxite mining. The Court Government's attention was drawn to its failure to treat seriously the expressions of concern, and the views of those making them, which has engendered a sense of frustration and hopelessness amongst well-intentioned and loyal Western Australians. We drew attention to the fact that Australian Governments, both State and Federal, had failed to exercise sufficient control within Australia over the actions of transnational corporations and we also drew attention to the failure of the Court Government's repeated requests to hinder the wide-ranging public inquiry into the costs and benefits of the alumina industry in Western Australia. They are very sound concerns that we have noted and expressed, and here are reasons for them all.

We have tried to be responsible in dealing with these matters. We support resource development with proper safeguards, although the Government goes around the country saying we do not. We support bauxite mining with adequate and proper safeguards.

We have endeavoured to inform ourselves of the benefits or otherwise of bauxite mining because the Parliament as a Parliament has failed to do this. The Opposition, being responsible, has set up a wide-ranging committee in an endeavour to ascertain the benefits, and what has happened? The Government has refused to let its senior

officers—or any officers for that matter—appear before this committee. I would like to read an instruction which was issued on 18 March by the Director of Agriculture. It says—

The Hon. Minister has requested that should an approach be made to you for information on the possible impact of alumina smelters on the environment by a Labor Member of Parliament, the Member should be advised to make the approach through the Minister or the Premier's Department.

That is not unreasonable of course. It continues—

Should an approach come from a body which might be expected to use the information broadly in opposition to Government policy, such as the Union movement or private conservation organisations, the enquirer should similarly be referred to the Minister's office.

We have requested that senior officers appear before our committee to give information. This is not to oppose any aluminium industry but that we might inform ourselves of the activities that are or are not taking place and to see that the necessary safeguards are being taken. If the Minister wishes he may also come before the committee. Indeed, he or any member of his staff can sit and listen to the evidence, or if he does not trust any member of his staff, he may send an outsider of his choice. There is nothing subversive about the committee; we are trying to inform ourselves, yet the Government has refused to let a Government officer attend before the committee.

Mr H. D. Evans: This is a most complex subject, too.

Mr DAVIES: As my deputy says, it is a most complex subject and one that will take weeks to investigate.

Mr Jamieson: And in contradiction of the firms concerned who have been most co-operative.

Mr DAVIES: The member for Welshpool is a member of the committee and he is able to tell the House that the firms concerned are anxious to come before the committee and state their cases but the Government is not allowed to be represented or to tell its story. Is it any wonder, with this Government's track record on the environment, that we are suspicious of what it is doing?

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr DAVIES: Before the luncheon suspension I was saying that had the Government had a little more sensitivity we might not be in the position in which we find ourselves now. I spoke about the

hope we had that people in Government departments would be able to assist us with information, and I spoke about the reaction which is a matter of great concern not only to the Opposition, but also to Government employees themselves, if a letter I have received is any indication. The letter says—

Dear Sir,

The enclosed instruction—

I interpolate to say that I have already read the instruction to the House. The letter continues—

—has been circulated to officers of the Department of Agriculture and I believe that you should be made aware of this attempt to prevent dissemination of scientific information to the public.

As a member of the Public Service capable of informing the public on matters of my expertise, I resent being gagged in this way and as a member of the public I resent the Government's attempt to prevent other areas of expertise from releasing scientific information.

This is a scandalous misuse of secrecy and I hope that it is possible to expose the attempt.

Please excuse the lack of signature which I feel is irrelevant to the fact of the matter and which could react against me should inadvertent disclosure occur.

Yours faithfully,

As you can see, Sir, the tenor of that letter also gives cause for concern not only to the Opposition, but also to the Government because it reflects on the attitude the Government has expressed over a long period of time.

I remind the House that the Premier has consistently refused to release the Stanford Institute report on land use for the Darling Range; and if we are considering matters relating to salinity and the future of the Darling Range we should consider that report. Probably it has not been released because not only is it critical of the present position but also it is critical of the way the Government is handling the matter. Possibly that is the reason the Government has not released the report.

I remind the House also that the Government has changed the construction of the Environmental Protection Authority. It has changed the representation on that body in a manner which has not improved the standing of the EPA at all. The Premier gave an assurance that the EPA Worsley report said the project was all clear; he said we had nothing to worry about.

Of course, subsequently we found that matters of genuine concern existed which the Premier had not mentioned—either inadvertently or otherwise.

This all adds up to a very poor attitude by the Government to environmental matters. Such has been the track record of the Government. I believe it is as a result of that the Government has found itself in this position today.

Of course, it is not only from the Ministers of the Government that we hear this kind of talk; we heard it the other night from the member for Mundaring when he used the word "vile" about an environmentalist. That is really carrying it a bit too far. He was also reported in the Press as saying he saw it as an international campaign aimed at bringing about the downfall of western democracy. No longer are we looking for reds under the bed; now we are looking for environmentalists under the bed.

Mr O'Connor: Do you support the view of Mr Bartholomaeus?

Mr H. D. Evans: Don't put words in his mouth. That is not what he said.

Mr O'Connor: I just asked a question.

Mr Pearce: Appeal to the Privy Council.

Mr DAVIES: I will not go over all that again. If the Deputy Premier has time to read my speech—

Mr O'Connor: I have been here and listened to all of it.

Mr DAVIES: Then I am sorry I have not made myself clearer to the Deputy Premier. He would not use the word "vile", would he? He would not think that is reasonable and decent language, would he? Of course he would not, because he is not that kind of person. Yet another member in this House has spoken about an environmentalist and described him as "vile". That is completely unacceptable to me. I do not know of any vile person.

So we find the Government has felt it necessary to bring this motion to the House, and we cannot help but feel the Government is shooting from the hip and has reacted without properly thinking out the situation. The Government believes that if it waves the flag and presents the House with a long motion followed up with a lengthy statement which is in effect purporting to be a defence to the class action, everything will be all right. I do not believe everything will be all right.

As I said earlier, I have some doubt about the way the motion was presented to the House, and I wonder how it was inspired. I have drawn attention to the fact that some of the wording of the motion falls neatly into the phrasing used in

some Press releases of the alumina company. We have spoken about the lead time which, according to the Government, makes this a pressing matter; but in point of fact it makes it anything but a pressing matter.

I draw attention once again to the Government's indecision as to how it will be involved in the action when it is eventually brought to a hearing. We have heard the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr Anthony) say the class action has no standing, and we have heard him give his fairly firm opinion on it, which can be found in the file of Press cuttings. After some six weeks we find the Government uncertain about where it is going. I accept the statement of the Premier that the Government is looking at the matter very closely to see how it can be best defended. If it is looking at it very closely, I suggest this is not the best way to defend the action.

I wonder what will be done with the motion, and the ensuing debate? The Premier has indicated the motion, and the *Hansard* record of the debate will be spread fairly widely. I do not know exactly what that means; I suppose it rests with one's own imagination. I wonder how many people will be interested in this matter. Their conception of the Parliament of Western Australia may place it in the same classification as some of the South American banana republics; others may have a very concise view of what we are and what we stand for.

I would hope that with any dissemination of the motion and the debate will go a detailed account of what Western Australia is and what its Parliament represents so that people in other countries may see we are a reasonably civilised nation. While sometimes, distance lends enchantment, distance often creates confusion. What we know the position to be is not what the position is imagined to be by other people in other countries. Anyone who has journeyed overseas has found some strange concepts of what other people believe Australia is like.

So, there is a danger in how this material will be received by the people among whom it will be disseminated. What standing will it have in a court of law? The Premier has made a number of statements, many of which I accept, some of which I doubt, and some of which I find a little incredible. However, there is no chance to make a cross-examination on those statements; they are going to be taken as statements of fact, agreed to by the Western Australian Parliament, because the Government has the numbers in this place and can carry any motion it likes.

I do not know what standing this motion will have when it gets to a court of law, if that is what is going to happen to it. I do not know what force it will carry.

Mr Bertram: Probably very little.

Mr DAVIES: I may stand corrected, but my understanding is that the *Hansard* record of debate is not acceptable to a court of law in Australia. Nevertheless, that is not for us to worry about. We understand the Government's concern. However, we believe the motion contains too much verbiage. It really should express only the fact we are not happy about the class action being taken.

I can understand that the Government wants to maintain our sovereignty, integrity, and viability; that is precisely what the Opposition wants to do. However, I do not believe the motion needs to be padded in the way it has been padded. We want to make absolutely certain, however, that any court of law anywhere in the world knows that the Opposition in Western Australia and the Parliament of Western Australia believe these matters are solely the prerogative of Australian Parliaments to deal with.

I have said what we would do as a Government. I have pointed to how we would hope to ease the position, and that we very much regret this action has been taken in the way it has, because of what could come out of it. We believe the motion contains unnecessary verbiage and too much padding. We are not satisfied with the whole content of the Premier's statement; we believe it could be cut down to one expression of opinion as to what this House believes.

Amendment to Motion

Mr DAVIES: To that end, Mr Speaker, the Opposition moves the following amendment—

Delete all words after the word "Australia" in the first line with a view to inserting the following words—

Opposes the jarrah class action in a United States court as an inappropriate means of pursuing a matter which should properly be determined in Australia.

Our amendment is as simple as that. We want everyone to know what we stand for. We want them to know we jealously guard our sovereignty, integrity, and viability. Apart from that, I do not believe we should be debating in this Parliament matters which could easily be brought up in due course in a court of law.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands Premier) [2.28 p.m.]: The Government intends to oppose

the amendment, because what the Leader of the Opposition seeks to do is simply to—

Mr Pearce: Get rid of all the propaganda.

Mr O'Connor: You have not heard anything yet, big mouth!

Mr Pearce: We now hear from the courteous Deputy Premier.

Sir CHARLES COURT: —express in a very convenient few words the situation as the Opposition sees it, so that it is not required to get to the meat of the subject matter and the very crux of the whole situation which faces us.

I want to remind members that in the case presented in America, 10 demands have been made. I hoped to record those demands when responding to the motion for the information of members who have not had the chance of reading them in the case presented to the court in America. Ten demands have been made, not only to stop bauxite mining but also to stop any further expansion of the industry into aluminium production.

I want to make it clear that the reason the motion is in its present form is so that the court, if necessary, and the public, in particular, can see exactly what is the response of the Parliament of Western Australia to the action taken in America. It is as simple as that. If we made a simple statement like the one proposed by the Leader of the Opposition, it would achieve precisely nothing. It would be very convenient and compact; but I remind members of the people who have taken this action. They were represented as being nice, cosy, lovely people who had nothing but the best of intentions—

Mr B. T. Burke: You are acting on the instructions of Alcoa lawyers.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am acting in the interests of Western Australia and of this Parliament—no company, no person.

These lovely people the Leader of the Opposition portrayed for us have seen fit to go to the court in another country with a view to stifling completely not only the existing industry, but any extension of it. Thus it is imperative that we present a motion which sets out some substance, and carries a response to the demands that have been made.

I repeat that 10 demands have been made in the jarrah class action. I have given a precis of them in my presentation to the Parliament today. If the opportunity arises, I will gladly record the full text of the demands before the American court. Members will be shocked when they see the 10 demands. They will be more shocked than they

have been by anything I have said today in presenting this case.

I have tried to present our views in a fairly calm and precise way; but I remind members that 10 demands have been made; and any one of those demands could mean the end of this industry, if the court acceded to them.

I am sorry that the Opposition has not joined willingly with the Government in this motion. I felt this was one time when the Parliament could express its views, as a Parliament, on a matter of great principle.

Mr Pearce: Rubbish! This is a test of your sincerity. You could have had a unanimous vote on the class action, if you had dropped your propaganda points.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order!

Mr Pearce: You could have a unanimous vote on this issue—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Pearce: —but you are not big enough for that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Gosnells is just sounding off. I remind him we are dealing with something which is more important than the scoring of a point or two.

Mr Pearce: That is what we say.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am not prepared, and the Government is not prepared, to settle for a few words which say merely that we oppose the class action.

Mr Harman: The rest is in *Hansard*.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We are doing something to win for the State. It is not just a case of saying "Look in *Hansard* on page 32 of 1978, or some other page in 1960," and so on. We have to bring it together in a concise answer so everyone has a reasonable understanding of what the Parliament was talking about. If the people then wanted to go further, they could read the *Hansard* record of these debates.

I was hoping that the Opposition would see the position in its proper light, and move right behind us—

Mr B. T. Burke: Don't be a humbug!

Sir CHARLES COURT: —so we could have gone forward as a State Parliament, with the knowledge that there was unity on this particular issue about the sovereignty of the Parliament and the State, and the integrity and the viability of the State.

The Government opposes the amendment that has been moved.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [2.33 p.m.]: I am concerned the Premier has adopted the attitude he has, because the strongest wording in the motion was that the Premier deplored what was being done. Our amendment is more positive in that it says that we oppose the jarrah class action. The Premier is running away from the situation.

Mr Harman: How dinkum is he?

Mr JAMIESON: He is not dinkum at all. He talks about the interests of Western Australia, and then he scurries away from it. The Premier is trying to score points on this issue. If he was dinkum about the issue, he would be prepared to go along with our proposal.

I support the amendment, because it is the right and proper thing to do. All the verbiage in the motion will not move us anywhere. We have heard many comments about the necessity for the motion; but the basic thing is that we will not accept the judgment of any country other than our own.

Of course, the Premier changes his mind about that topic, depending on what sort of judgment he wants. He will go to a foreign court if he thinks it desirable. However, we have remained consistent on this; and, as a party, we intend to remain consistent on it.

The meeting on Monday night of the State Executive of the ALP was open to the Press. At no time was it closed; so all the proceedings at that meeting were public and open. At the meeting, an issue was raised as a matter of urgency for the purpose of expressing support for the jarrah class action. As the acting State president at the time, I ruled that matter out of order as it was not urgent enough. When I did that, of course, I did not know that the Premier would give notice of his motion the next day. If I had known that, I would probably have had different thoughts about the matter on Monday night; because it is better to obtain a mass indication of the thinking of a party or a group of people rather than take the opinions of a lesser number.

We all know the Labor Party's attitude towards taking court action outside Australia. That attitude has been stated over and over again. However, it is hard to judge what amount of support there is within the Labor Party for the jarrah class action. The same would apply to the Liberal Party.

Lately I have been to a number of lectures dealing with different matters associated with the Darling Range study group; and people I have known to be Liberal supporters, not Labor

supporters, have asked questions which gave me the direct impression that they were inclined towards the class action group. That was not surprising, because people in the community have a rather unusual concept of what is taking place.

We as a Parliament should state clearly that we do not want to have a bar of anybody moving into and out of our sphere, whether it is in relation to United States law, Japanese law, or any other foreign law. We want to stick with our own law.

There was no hurry in making this decision. I knew some of the facts about extensions of time that my leader mentioned today. I had read various reports about the 20 days for the first response, and then a 45-day extension. I did not know there had been a further 45 days. At present we are well within the first period of time, so there is no degree of urgency associated with this.

The matter of concern to me is the fervour of the conservationists. Many of them are like mushrooms on various issues. They become very enthusiastic about one or two events, and then nothing more is heard of them.

If anybody cares to study *Hansard*—and it is pretty hefty reading if one goes back into it—before all these conservation groups grew on the tree of society, I was proclaiming myself, in this House, as a person who was concerned about conservation. In the Parliamentary Library in the late 1950s I had come across Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*; and from that time I began making comments about what I thought may take place in the environment. Many of these mass groups have arisen from that.

To the credit of Rachel Carson and the likes of her who wrote about these things, they did create an awakening and an awareness in the people of the western world, in the English-speaking world, that care should be taken. I do not know about the creation in other countries of an awareness about conservation but from a reading of English literature—I am unable to read any other literature—there was an awakening created by Rachel Carson and we found that the number of groups which spread throughout the United States was not alarming, but an indication to me that in the minds of people forming these mass groups there was a need that care should be taken for the environment. This concern has spread to Australia and there is no reason for us not to heed the requests of these groups from time to time.

It has been the Premier and his Government's confrontation with these groups that has caused the situation to develop as it is now. These groups have had to grasp at straws and now someone has thought of taking a class action outside the

jurisdiction of the Australian courts in order to do something about the situation.

I suggest that it is wrong even to suggest that we should go outside the Australian law system. The Premier said there was danger in this sort of action and I agree with him. We should be very wary of taking on anything like that.

We know too that foreign courts are very often unable to assess things properly. Perhaps it was not an American court which made the decision I have in mind, but members know what happened when the determination was made in the United States about kangaroos being an endangered species. We found that the United States stopped the importation and use of kangaroo skin products.

That action resulted in our having a plague of kangaroos because it became no longer commercially viable for anyone to consider culling their numbers. With the development of waterholes and so forth the natural culling of the kangaroos did not occur and so we had a backlash and their numbers increased.

The same sort of lack of perception could happen with this class action. The court might not be able to perceive the situation in the same way as people in Australia perceive it. If there is any action to be taken it is very much out of our constitutional ground and very much in the constitutional ground of the Commonwealth Government in its foreign affairs section, because we will be dealing with a foreign power and it is something which must be dealt with by a higher order than this Parliament.

There is little use in having a motion before us unless it says something specific and contains some indication of where we are going. It should not simply indicate that we deplore the situation but that perhaps it is all right for them to go on with their action. If this Parliament is dinkum in its belief that the matter should rest with Australian courts and that they should be the sole determining courts, it should say so. That is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition's amendment does.

The Premier should be thinking again about including all this verbiage—all this guff and nonsense—in his motion which is there only to score political points. If we had no experience of the Premier over the years in his attempts to score political points we might have thought he was dinkum, but unfortunately for him we know him too well. I have known him for the 28 years we have been in this Parliament. I have seen all his sly tricks, ploys, and plots to put the Opposition in a situation where it is less than favourably

regarded by the public than perhaps it should be. This is one of those occasions.

If the Premier wants our support let him say, as we are trying to say, that where there is a matter dealing with Australian law made by a Federal or State Parliament, people do not have the right to deal with an outside body in an outside court of law. He should state that we will not have a bar of people entering into litigation in foreign courts.

Some people would be very hostile with what I am saying but, after all, it is probable the same people in respect of other issues which might be taken outside the jurisdiction of this country would be alarmed to think such a situation was occurring. One must be consistent.

The people involved have a worthy cause. They are trying not only to stir the people's responsibility with respect to environmental matters but also to give them a lead in the environmental field, and to that end they have performed creditably. But there is a danger when they come to a play such as this.

I feel the only courts of law to which we should be responsible are our own State and Federal courts. Of course, there are certain international courts of law. The situation might be different if there were some way this sort of action could be taken to an international court under the jurisdiction of the United Nations charter. I would not oppose that arrangement; it would be a different kettle of fish in those circumstances. But these people are going to another sovereign power's court of law, and this is not on. Perhaps the only other laws we should be prepared to accept outside our own and international courts are those of the International Labour Organisation which, from time to time, sets down covenants we should endeavour to obey as much as possible. The ILO sits as an international body and not as a sovereign power.

I wonder whether the Premier knows where he is leading us if he forces us into the situation where we cannot go along with all the verbiage contained in his motion. We should probably ask that the Legislative Council agree with what we are proposing, although my leader did not mention that. We would be quite happy to have the Legislative Council agree to our position. We will not have a bar of the jarrah class action under the present circumstances, and accordingly we feel our amendment would provide a far more definite statement to the population of Western Australia as to what their Parliament thinks of the situation. I support the proposed removal of the words outlined and the substitution of the words submitted by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR HERZFELD (Mundaring) [2.48 p.m.]: I rise to oppose the amendment. Before I speak to it, I feel it is most important that I correct a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition in which he claimed I referred to certain people as being vile. I have a galley proof of the speech I made in the House two nights ago from which I shall quote so that there shall be no misunderstanding.

Mr Pearce: We were here and heard it. It would be a most serious thing if you have changed the *Hansard* proof.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order!

Mr HERZFELD: The *Hansard* record shows nothing has been altered. The record will reveal that I said—

One wonders perhaps whether he might not be a little punch drunk with the power given to him by the media which seem to enjoy promoting his views. Unquestionably some of his actions have been vile.

I referred to some of his actions, which is a vastly different proposition from the one promoted by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr B. T. Burke: Rubbish! If you are going to be embarrassed by what you say, you should not say it.

Mr HERZFELD: I stick to what I said on that occasion.

Mr Barnett: He is on the slops again.

Mr HERZFELD: I shall turn now to the amendment through which it is proposed to substitute certain words in the motion and I put it to members that the proposed words comprise a very weak statement which has little meaning.

Mr Bertram: Can't you read?

Mr Skidmore: Don't you understand English?

Mr HERZFELD: It is not surprising that the Leader of the Opposition should promote those words, because he has made it very clear in his comments, both on his own behalf and on behalf of his party, that he wants two bob each way on this question.

Earlier the Leader of the Opposition tried to impress us by saying he was strong enough and his party was strong enough not to be concerned about losing four or five votes. I believe that is what he said. Although he may have said that, his actions belie that statement.

Mr Pearce: The amendment we have moved is quite unequivocal.

Mr Harman: Why don't you tell the truth?

Mr HERZFELD: Let us look at the arguments espoused by the Leader of the Opposition—arguments designed to persuade members to alter the motion. His first line of argument was to the effect that there is no urgency about the motion which would warrant it being dealt with prior to the other business of the House. The Leader of the Opposition maintained there was insufficient urgency to disturb the normal course of the debates which take place in this House. I do not believe that argument is effective.

Mr Bertram: Why is that?

Mr HERZFELD: I believe when the sovereignty of this State, this Parliament and indeed this nation is under attack it is a matter of such great importance that we should give it our urgent attention.

Mr B. T. Burke: Your Premier does not mind selling the State to the Japanese.

Mr HERZFELD: By treating the motion as urgent, the Government has indicated the importance this Parliament places on the question of sovereignty.

Mr Bertram: When does the time limit run out to do something about it?

Mr HERZFELD: That aspect is perhaps the principle of the matter. More important, or equally important, are some of the practical ramifications of this case. The other night I mentioned some of the implications which would result should this class action be successful. However, let us not take the matter that far, but rather let us examine the situation today while the outcome of the case is still in doubt.

It has been indicated already that one effect of this class action has been to create a degree of insecurity and uncertainty on the part of the people who are thinking about investing in this State. That is a very serious implication of the class action which is proposed to be taken in the USA.

Mr Davies: We want to give an assurance that they will be quite safe.

Mr B. T. Burke: What evidence do you have of that?

Mr HERZFELD: The Opposition would tend to feel somewhat embarrassed on this question if indeed there is to be some credence in the new look with which it has been trying to clothe itself to the effect that it supports development in this State.

Mr B. T. Burke: What evidence do you have of this turnaround in regard to investment?

(17)

Mr H. D. Evans: Who expanded the bauxite industry?

Mr Davies: We want to give the investors an assurance they will be safe.

Mr HERZFELD: The attitude of the Opposition is passing strange when one bears in mind that, only two years ago, the member for Warren stood up in this place and supported bauxite mining on behalf of his party.

Mr H. D. Evans: The Tonkin Government expanded it.

Mr HERZFELD: Having supported bauxite mining on that occasion, it is strange that the Opposition should be so wishy washy now.

Mr H. D. Evans: It is far stronger than the motion moved by the Premier.

Mr B. T. Burke: Let us have some of this evidence. You have avoided that.

Mr HERZFELD: It is most important that this Parliament indicate in no uncertain terms that not for one moment does it countenance the action which has been taken—

Mr Jamieson: It has not said that.

Mr HERZFELD: —or relinquish the powers it has over this State. For that reason alone, I believe this motion has a great deal of urgency. If time is allowed to elapse before this motion is passed by both Houses of Parliament, uncertainty will continue to exist.

Mr Pearce: Your side could have had a unanimous vote on this question and it has decided not to do so in order to score political points. That is how serious your side is!

Mr Williams: Go back to school!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume his seat. I ask members who are indulging in cross-Chamber exchanges to desist from that practice. I am sure it is particularly disturbing for the member for Mundaring who finds himself midway between the two people involved in that exchange.

Mr HERZFELD: The second reason advanced by the Leader of the Opposition for the necessity to amend the motion is that he feels the views of conservationists have not been treated seriously by the Government. I put it to members—and this is my view—

Mr B. T. Burke: Where is this evidence of a turnaround in investment?

Mr HERZFELD: —that for some time the Government has been far too tolerant in answering the allegations made by the

Conservation Council of Western Australia and the Campaign to Save Native Forests.

The Government has been far too patient, because time and time again it has had to refute the assertions made by members of those organisations. These assertions have been devoid of backing of a technical nature and without any expert advice. Indeed, when the expert advice and the evidence has been made clear to these people, they have continued to make the same assertions time and time again. If that is not an indication of the way in which the Government has seriously handled the views of these groups when answering their contentions, I do not know what is.

The third point made by the Leader of the Opposition is that the Government should have shown a little more sensitivity.

Mr Bertram: I go along with that.

Mr HERZFELD: What more can it do than listen to the submissions put forward by these organisations, take them into account, and answer them? The whole issue of environmental protection has been treated in as sensitive a way as is humanly possible.

Mr Bertram: Poppycock!

Mr HERZFELD: Every opportunity has been given for people to make known their views. Any company which wishes to carry out a development in this State is required to lodge an environmental review and management programme which is submitted to very detailed analysis and review by the Environmental Protection Authority and the Department of Conservation and Environment. These experts have been given the task and they must examine all submissions. During the review process anyone who wishes to make known his views is given an opportunity to look at the document and comment thereon.

But it does not stop there. This Government set up the research structures to ensure that the authorities involved in the analysis and review of the programme had the proper technical base on which to advise the Government. It was quite a number of years ago that the Hunt committee was established, and its reports have come forth at regular times and been made public.

Mr Pearce: The Government's actions don't make sense.

Mr HERZFELD: I supported the bauxite mining on the western side of the escarpment. We continue to have representations made by people involved with organisations such as the Australian Conservation Council and the Campaign to Save Native Forests. They say the results of the research are incorrect. One of the 10 points

contained in the writ served in the United States bears out that that is the contention.

Mr Bertram: Have you read the writ?

Mr HERZFELD: I have not read the writ.

Mr Bertram: Have you seen it?

Mr HERZFELD: I am reading from a document prepared by the Campaign to Save Native Forests.

Mr B. T. Burke: Have you met any solicitors from Alcoa?

Sir Charles Court: I have not spoken to any Alcoa solicitors.

Mr O'Connor: What about apologising?

Mr HERZFELD: The document prepared by the Campaign to Save Native Forests states that 10 points were dictated over the phone from the United States.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HERZFELD: If I cannot accept this paper I do not know what we can talk about in this place.

Mr B. T. Burke: If you want to know the truth, no-one knows what you are talking about.

Mr HERZFELD: The 10 points include contentions that run quite contrary to the research conducted and discussions had by top experts in this State.

Mr Pearce: This is a pathetic effort; it has lowered the whole tone of this debate.

Mr HERZFELD: It is wrong for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to contend that the Government has been insensitive—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HERZFELD: —to the environment and its conservation. I do not believe any Government could have done more; but nonetheless I believe if anything is to be done to ensure that the environment is cared for in sensible ways this Government will certainly do it.

Mr Barnett: I don't think you have the numbers on your side, you know.

Mr HERZFELD: I will conclude with one further point.

Mr B. T. Burke: Thank God!

Mr HERZFELD: The matter under discussion is of a serious nature. It is far more serious than something that could be covered by the proposals contained in the amendment put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. Very clearly what the writ proposes to do is bring the alumina industry in this State to a sudden halt, and that intention is contained in the words of the writ.

Mr Jamieson: You don't object to it, you only deplore it.

Mr HERZFELD: Therefore it is most important that the House not accept the proposal before the Chair at this point, and we return to debating the motion.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [3.05 p.m.]: We are presently in a rather unique situation. The House is debating an amendment which opposes the jarrah class action. In fact, the motion also opposes the jarrah class action. Quite frankly, the principle behind the decisions of members in this place will not be based on whether members are opposed to the jarrah class action but on what type of expression of opinion this House has to offer.

The member for Welshpool stated when he addressed the House on the amendment that he felt the original motion is purely a matter of political point scoring. I am not so convinced that that is the case. My understanding—I would like someone to correct me if I am wrong—is that this motion is likely to be presented as evidence before the court in the United States. As I understand it, that court will conduct one hearing as to whether there is a case to answer and, if so, a trial by jury. If a trial by jury is conducted then quite obviously the original motion would be a far better thing to have before the jury in its deliberations. The motion contains all the emotive clap trap that one associates with the Government and the Premier in relation to resource development in this State.

Mr Bertram: It will be in *Hansard*.

Mr COWAN: The member for Mt. Hawthorn has raised the point that the Premier's words will be in *Hansard*. I would like to point out to him that in the State of Western Australia *Hansard* is not admissible as evidence.

Mr Bertram: We are not talking about the State of Western Australia.

Mr COWAN: That is right, but I make the assumption that the same will apply in the United States. Nobody has told me something different so I would follow the assumption that a copy of the Votes and Proceedings of the House will be presented to the United States court. The Votes and Proceedings do not contain any *Hansard* quotations, only matters dealt with by the House. Therefore the Premier's motion in total will be presented in copies of the Votes and Proceedings.

Mr Bertram: Do you disagree with the Premier on the *Hansard* issue?

Mr COWAN: I know *Hansard* is not admissible as evidence in Western Australia and I assume it will not be admissible in the United

States court. It will not matter whether the Premier's original motion is passed because it and the emotive details in it will be in a copy of the Votes and Proceedings, and *Hansard* extracts will be superfluous.

The point I wish to make and emphasise is that we have an amendment before us which has the same intent as the motion. It is couched in completely different terms from the motion—in fact, one would never see an amendment more opposite in terms of verbiage. So, whichever way members vote today they will be opposing the jarrah class action. As far as I am concerned it is a matter of conscience for each member of this House whether he or she approves of the simple amendment put forward by the Leader of the Opposition or prefers the rather more emotive motion put forward by the Premier.

Mr Pearce: Do you accept our point that the Premier could have had the unanimous vote of the House if he were to drop the propaganda? He could have had the unanimous vote of this House on the issue.

Mr COWAN: By making that point, the member is indicating to the House that he intends to oppose the original motion put forward by the Premier. I will not make a presumption about what the Opposition is prepared to do but I am attempting to put forward my point of view; that is, that the individual members in this House have before them an amendment which states in very explicit terms exactly what the original motion says. It really is a matter of—

Mr B. T. Burke: Are you saying the National Party will not vote for it?

Mr COWAN: It may very well be the case. However it is up to the individual members to vote according to their consciences.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 22

Mr Barnett	Mr Grill
Mr Bertram	Mr Harman
Mr Bridge	Mr Hodge
Mr Bryce	Mr Jamieson
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Parker
Mr Carr	Mr Pearce
Mr Cowan	Mr Skidmore
Mr Davies	Mr Stephens
Mr E. T. Evans	Mr Wilson
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Noes 24

Mr Clarko	Mr Nanovich
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Connor
Mr Coyne	Mr Old
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Dr Dadour	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewar	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr Laurance	Mr Tubby
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Watt
Mr McPharlin	Mr Williams
	Mr Young
	Mr Blaikie

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Mensaros
Mr Tonkin	Mrs Craig
Mr Taylor	Mr P. V. Jones

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.15 p.m.]: It is regrettable that the Premier has rejected the amendment and the way it was put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. If nothing else, it means that the opportunity to put forward a unanimous opinion on behalf of this House has been lost.

There are a number of reasons that the amendment should have been adopted. I should like to answer some of the points brought forward by the Government members. Even though the Premier postures as the champion of Western Australian sovereignty—and he made that clear on several occasions during the course of his speech—the actions that he and his Government members have taken are not reconcilable with that fact. The pressure and urgency he claims to be associated with this action does not tally with the information which has been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. There is no great pressure.

Sir Charles Court: I wish to respond to the query raised by the Leader of the Opposition. At lunch time I checked the date which had been suggested in a news item and the date I gave you, which was the approximate date for the first submission, still stands.

Mr Davies: You had better get them to recheck that.

Sir Charles Court: I checked that at lunch time. That was the date I was assured of at lunch time.

Mr Pearce: Who assured you?

Mr H. D. EVANS: I thank the Premier for that information and I assure him it is something we will endeavour to check.

Mr O'Connor: Did your information come from Mr Bartholomaeus?

Mr H. D. EVANS: No.

Mr Davies: I received the information from the member for Swan.

Mr O'Connor: Who got it from Mr Bartholomaeus.

Sir Charles Court: There was a news item of this nature.

Mr Pearce: Checked by whom?

Sir Charles Court: They were quoting an old piece of news and the date still stands. That is the date the company is working on.

Mr H. D. EVANS: I accept that interjection in good faith but it is one we will endeavour to verify in due course.

The policy of the Government regarding appeals is one which vacillates with the expediency of the situation. For instance, if it is an appeal to the Privy Council it is acceptable, but if it is an appeal to a foreign court, it is not. It has been clearly explained and the Opposition agrees with the distinction which was made by the member for Welshpool when he said an international court is a different proposition altogether. A foreign court is not acceptable at all.

Another point which was made relates to the fact that the amendment contains far stronger language than the language in the motion moved by the Premier. The word "opposed" is unequivocal and perhaps it would have been well for the member for Mundaring to have taken account of that point. The member for Mundaring said that the conservationists were seeking to ruin this State and he despises that action. The Opposition is unequivocally and unambiguously opposed and there can be no prevarication in that regard.

Another point which must be considered is the definitiveness with which the Opposition has expressed its attitude as distinct from the way the Government has put forward its views. It has been suggested, so ably, by the member for Gosnells, that the grandstanding in the wording and phrases used by the Premier is quite obvious. He is seeking to make a political ploy with his verbiage and phrases. In some cases they have been extracts from newspaper items: some from very biased sources.

The question of sovereignty is the main point at issue and there has been no misunderstanding on the part of the Opposition.

The Premier states that he is concerned vitally with the sovereign rights of Western Australia, its

integrity, etc. I agree with the Premier's statement wholeheartedly. It would be repulsive to refer a matter on the destiny of Western Australia to a foreign court. Such a matter should be decided by Western Australians. That is the whole crux of the issue, and from that standpoint the Opposition put forward its point of view. However, certain aspects of the motion are not valid, and I refer particularly to the paragraph which reads as follows—

Both bauxite/alumina enterprises are destined to be important factors in the development of an aluminium smelting industry in Western Australia.

The operative words in that sentence are "are destined". It does not say that the enterprises may be important, but that they are going to be important. That statement is made in a manner which could influence a court in another country, and that is not only unfair, but also ill-advised. This presumptuous statement is something of which the Government and the Parliament should have no part.

I interpolate here to refer to the State Parliamentary Labor Party committee which was set up to research the problem of the smelting industries. There are a multiplicity of problems, and a start has not been made to their resolution. I point out that the record of the companies, in contradistinction to the record of the Government, is extraordinary. Every co-operation and courtesy has been shown by both Alcoa of Australia Ltd. and Westal. These companies flew representatives from the Eastern States to meet with the committee. The committee has met on five occasions.

Alcoa of Australia Ltd. is prepared to go to considerable lengths to ensure that the committee is fully informed on all facets. The Government has refused to allow discussions between this committee and key personnel of the department concerned who are charged with the responsibility to research the subject.

The committee requested that I should write to the Premier to raise this point, and part of his reply reads as follows—

I am sure you will appreciate that the smelter proposals are at a very sensitive stage of negotiation, particularly in relation to commercial aspects such as the conditions and price under which power will be made available.

We accepted that statement, and we accepted it on an earlier occasion in regard to the bauxite industry. I might add that we did expect to come across areas of confidentiality. The previous

Minister for Industrial Development, who is presently absent on sick leave, appeared before the committee and he was quite hopeful about matters of power and industrial development.

I replied to the Premier asking him to review the rejection of the request made to him. I registered the bitter disappointment and concern of the committee at his attitude. I said this to him—

You will appreciate that the Opposition under our particular Parliamentary system, holds a responsibility to debate any legislation in as full and meaningful manner as possible in the overall interests of the State. To enable the Opposition to fulfil its role in this regard it is essential that the Members of the Opposition should be as fully informed as possible. It was for the reason of basic research into a complex matter that the Aluminium Industry Committee of the S.P.L.P. was established.

I would like to refer to the last debate on alumina. On that occasion the agreement was debated before the environmental review and management programme was available; in fact, before it had been started. And yet we were expected to have a meaningful debate on the agreement.

Let us look at the verbiage and the semi-propaganda contained in the Premier's motion and in his subsequent remarks. If those words are to go before a court of the United States, the courts should be informed of such things as the secrecy on the part of the Government which has shrouded its approach to the establishment of these industries. The American courts should be aware that the Opposition in this State has not been given anything like reasonable opportunities for research by the Government. The Opposition had to make its own arrangements. The people of America should be told of the attitude the Government adopted at the time of the expansion of the Wagerup project as well as its attitude to the extension of the smelting industry.

The wording of the motion makes it appear that the extension of the smelting industry is an accepted fact. Any court in America would be entitled to assume that the people of Western Australia are happy to see a smelting industry established. There is no prevarication or equivocation in the words "are destined". It appears that the project is inevitable, and yet it has not even been debated. As a matter of fact, in the discussions which the Opposition committee has held with Alcoa and Westal, it has been shown that no environmental impact statement has been commenced, and the power costs and

requirements have not been examined. Even the site has not been determined at his stage. Several sites are being considered, but the only research into the environmental aspect has been very preliminary. In fact, all that has taken place is the recording of climatic conditions such as wind direction and velocity in particular areas.

Surely the people of Western Australia should be able to ask what the real position is. I remind members that during the previous debates in regard to the Wagerup agreement we were not able to view certain documents. The report of the Stanford Institute still has not seen the light of day.

Mr Skidmore: And it is never likely to.

Mr H. D. EVANS: So we are supposed to go into a debate on a major expansion in a major industry—and one which will have tremendous implications—before the ERMP is completed, let alone debated. I suppose that from necessity the plans will be changed from time to time to overcome various objections. To say the least that is an *ad hoc* rather than a scientific approach.

The Premier went on at great lengths about the 10 demands—as he called them—presented to the court in America. He said that the matters raised had been resolved completely. In his opinion it was almost treason, and at least treachery, to have raised these points. However, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, there is no way any member of this House could be absolutely certain about the matters raised. Certainly there is room for a diversity of opinion on some of them. The Premier referred to the spread of dieback in demand No. 7. He stated—

Implies falsely that mining is the major cause of the spread of dieback, when it is in fact only one contributor to the spread, and a substantial contributor to dieback research and rehabilitation.

However, what he does not say is that where pits have been established the spread on the downside is thousands of times faster than is the case in normal forest circumstances. When a pit is excavated a collection of water occurs which creates a facsimile of the environment at lower levels, but in fact that environment is elevated. The pathogen of the *phytophthora cinnamomi* is able to move down the grade much more quickly than normally is the case. If any member cares to look at the experiments carried out he will see that on the upward side the movement is about half a metre, whereas on the downward side the movement is about 300 metres, and that has occurred in a period of less than 18 months. That is the manner in which the pathogen spreads.

Therefore, the rebuttal by the Premier provides only a very small part of the answer.

Anybody reading the Premier's reply is entitled to draw a different conclusion from the situation that exists. That verifies the contention of the Leader of the Opposition in respect of the Premier's statement with regard to rehabilitation. The Premier said we have 25 years to go, and that is a long time during which the difficulties could be resolved. However, 25 years is nothing in terms of forest life. There is a prognosis that we will never see high forest again in the areas concerned. The prognosis is that we will see woodlands and cover, but not high forests. Whether or not high forest will ever be seen again is problematical, and no-one can say for certain it will come back. On the other hand, no-one can say anything to the contrary with any certainty.

It is a matter of time proving whether that contention is correct, and a period of 25 years is not even minimal in respect of proving something of that kind. Again, the part-answers of the Premier are, to say the least, dangerous. The people in America are certainly not entitled to accept his responses as being authoritative and full answers, because such is just not the case.

The matter comes back to a very important question: the sovereign right of the Parliament of a State of Australia to determine the destiny of the State. A Parliament is not only entitled to do that but also has a responsibility to do it. For that reason an objection in the strongest terms needs must be made against the class action. That was proposed in the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, in which he summed up the entire attitude of the Opposition. The words proposed to be added by the Leader of the Opposition were that this Parliament opposes—that is the operative word—the jarrah class action in the United States court because it is an inappropriate means of pursuing a matter which should properly be determined in Australia.

Sir Charles Court: In other words, you are supporting a class action in Australia?

Mr H. D. EVANS: Do not put words in my mouth. I am stipulating that we should not support that action; in fact we are in direct opposition to a class action in a foreign country.

Mr O'Connor: What about here?

Mr H. D. EVANS: In due course we should conduct an examination of our legislation with a view to enabling people who wish to initiate class actions to do so in our own courts. That is a different matter which is not under discussion at the moment; yet it should be regarded very seriously.

Sir Charles Court: And put a whole industry in jeopardy.

Mr H. D. EVANS: What we are talking about is the establishment of a proper and acceptable process to determine whether or not a Western Australian action is fair and just and able to be determined by Western Australians.

I am tempted to give the Premier another go by moving an almost identical amendment to let him have the chance of having the Parliament of Western Australia declare unanimously that a direct opposition to the class action should be lodged. I regret that his obstinacy does not permit that.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [3.35 p.m.]: If I were a prosecuting attorney in America representing the people who brought forward this class action and the defence attorney produced the *Votes and Proceedings* of this Parliament in which this motion appeared, I would immediately procure a copy of the *Votes and Proceedings* relating to the passage of agreements with Alcoa in respect of its establishments at Wagerup and Pinjarra. The reason I would do that is that it would give the people of America a very clear indication of the influence of this Parliament in the decision-making process.

Mr Bertram: Not very much.

Mr COWAN: That is correct. This Parliament is being asked today to support a motion which opposes the class action. But it is being asked also to present this motion as an example of how the Parliament of Western Australia is able to reach decisions and to declare its right to make decisions relating to Western Australia's sovereignty. However if anybody read through the process which led up to the agreements with Alcoa, it would become very apparent that the Parliament had very little at all to say.

The Parliament has absolutely no influence and, consequently, this motion itself can be taken to have very little influence.

Mr Bertram: This Parliament would not be tolerated in the United States.

Mr COWAN: It is a great disappointment to me that this Parliament at no stage is able to procure information upon which to base its decisions.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition brought forward the point that when the Wagerup agreement was introduced the ERMP had not been provided for scrutiny by the Parliament. Yesterday the National Party moved an amendment to a motion in an endeavour to bring before the Bar of the House the person who

initiated the class action in the hope that the Parliament would be given some information upon which to base its decision. This would, therefore, give its decision some validity and value when presented in a court of law in another country.

The National Party clearly opposes the initiation of the class action. We oppose the decision to go before the court of another country to have matters of this type determined because they should rightly be determined in Western Australia. However, I think the Government will have to accept that there is a great deal of public support for the jarrah class action and that in itself is something of an indictment of our parliamentary system. Quite clearly, this Government has stultified and nullified the avenues available to the conservationists and environmentalists in Western Australia to have their wishes—even compromised wishes—implemented. They have had no opportunity to present their points of view.

Mr H. D. Evans: One-third of your members voted with the Government.

Mr COWAN: What is the difference? In either case, it represents opposition to the class action.

Mr H. D. Evans: It makes a big difference. Why are you debating the issue now?

Mr COWAN: We are back on the original motion and I am simply making a few points.

Mr Bertram: Would you favour a class action in Western Australia?

Mr COWAN: No, I would not. I would favour this Parliament making a decision independent from the dictates of Government, a decision which would be in the best interests of the people, rather than simply of the company.

I have no argument with Alcoa: it has complied rigorously with all the terms of the agreement contained in legislation passed by this Parliament. Nobody argues with Alcoa's good intentions. The problem is the willingness of Governments in Western Australia of whatever political colour to make agreements that are far too lenient. For that reason, a class action has been implemented in another country in the hope that, under American law, the parent company will be forced to comply with the type of environmental controls which would be applied in that country.

It seems to me we should be rather embarrassed and ashamed that as parliamentarians, we give Governments in this State *carte blanche* to go ahead and ratify agreements which give conservationists and environmentalists absolutely no say.

MR McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [3.42 p.m.]: I do not think any of us can prejudge what will happen in a court of law in another country, just as we cannot assess what will happen in a court of law in our own country. Any suppositions along those lines are superfluous. Most of us would have visited Alcoa's operations. One cannot help but be impressed by the work the company is doing and by its genuine attempt to comply with environmental requirements. One wonders just how much the company is prepared to take in the way of strike action and actions of the type we are now discussing.

Recently, I listened to a "talk-back" show on the radio where this matter was being discussed. A person made the point that in his view, precedent for the class action already existed in that, for years, State Governments have taken matters to the Privy Council in the United Kingdom. He maintained that was no different from taking a matter to a court in America.

Mr Bertram: Do you agree with that?

Mr McPHARLIN: I do not agree with it at all; I believe the analogy is incorrect. We are part of the British Commonwealth of Nations and for as long as we have been in existence it has been the practice to appeal to the Privy Council in the United Kingdom.

Mr Bertram: Would you be in sympathy with attempts by the US Government to curb the actions of US-based companies in other parts of the world?

Mr McPHARLIN: I have never claimed that big companies are blameless and not deserving of censure and criticism in an endeavour to bring them into line. However, when one sees the genuine attempts Alcoa is making to comply with what it considers to be the best interests of the State, it represents a reflection on the integrity of those who support the group taking this class action. Nobody denies that people who are genuinely concerned for the environment should be able to express their views.

I wish to refer members to an article which appeared in *The West Australian* on 28 March this year under the heading "Alcoa puts its case". It is an abbreviated report of an address to the Perth Press Club by Alcoa's General Manager in Western Australia (Mr J. Vann). He mentioned that the lawyer hired by the Conservation Council as its legal representative in the United States made the following comment—

It is not a few trees, it is the western half of an entire continent. It is the most critical protection for Perth's water supply.

How could that person know how wrong he was in making such statements? Does it not follow that the lawyer being briefed by the Conservation Council to represent it in court would be misled in the same way?

There is no doubt in my mind that the motion before the House should have the unanimous support of this Parliament. The General Manager of Alcoa (W.A.) has said that if the class action is successful, the company would consider closing down its operations.

Mr Skidmore: Industrial blackmail!

Mr McPHARLIN: That may or may not happen; if it did, there would be very serious implications.

Mr Skidmore: It will not happen. There is too much capital invested for the company to think of shutting down. Be realistic. Do you think the company will throw millions of dollars overboard?

Mr McPHARLIN: There are limits. I make it clear to the House that the motion has my full support.

Question put and passed.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

House adjourned at 4.15 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

229. *This question was postponed.*

NUCLEAR ATTACK

Fallout Shelters

230. Mr BRYCE, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) (a) What are the locations and numbers of underground nuclear attack shelters in Western Australia;
- (b) how many people can be housed in each shelter; and
- (c) for what periods of time?
- (2) (a) What discussions has the Government had with the Federal Government with respect to building nuclear attack shelters in this State;
- (b) when did such discussions occur;
- (c) what locations are being considered;
- (d) what is the estimated cost?
- (3) How many key personnel and civilians can be housed in each shelter and for what period of time?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) A schedule showing the requested detail has been drawn up. I am prepared to allow the member to examine the schedule in my office at a suitable time.
The member will appreciate that, as many of the buildings are privately owned, it would not be in the best interests of all concerned for such details to be made public at the present time.
- (2) (a) None.
- (b) to (d) Not applicable.
- (3) See answer to (1) above.

NUCLEAR ATTACK

Fallout Shelters

241. Mr BRYCE, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) With reference to answer to question 12 of 1981 relevant to fallout shelters, which governmental agency has done the work to identify public and commercial buildings in Western Australia which could provide shelter from nuclear attack?

- (2) When did the identification work commence?
- (3) Can he nominate or identify yet, such buildings which could provide shelter?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The Federal agency responsible is the national fallout shelter survey team.
- (2) 17 December 1966.
- (3) See answer to question 230 (1) (a) to (c).

HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

Funding: Jamison Report

248. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the State Government made representations to the Commonwealth in respect of the recommendation of the Jamison report that the Commonwealth-State hospital cost-sharing agreement be abandoned in favour of a system of *per capita* grants to the States?
- (2) If so, what was the nature of the Western Australian Government's representations?
- (3) Is he aware that the *per capita* costs of providing health and hospital services in Western Australia are greater than in the major Eastern States?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The Commonwealth Government is well aware of the State Government's grave reservation with respect to any proposed system of *per capita* grants to the States. The State has also made it clear to the Commonwealth Government that we object to any decisions being made arising from the Jamison report by the Commonwealth on a unilateral basis. In other words, there must be Commonwealth-State consultation. All State Health Ministers made this clear to the Commonwealth Minister for Health at the recent Health Ministers' conference. Prior to that, I had made our wishes known to the Prime Minister.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Yes. This is because we serve a small population scattered over one-third of the continent. Despite the handicaps of distance and isolation, Western Australia is recognised as providing high quality hospital and health services.

The higher *per capita* cost of health services in Western Australia illustrates the budgetary problems the State faces in the provision of all services.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Details

284. Mr GRILL, to the Treasurer:

- (1) How many regional administrators are there for Western Australia?
- (2) Where are they stationed?
- (3) How many assistant regional administrators are there for Western Australia?
- (4) Where are they stationed?
- (5) How many staff are attached to the offices of each of the respective regional administrators and assistant regional administrators?
- (6) (a) What is the overall budget for the operation of the system of regional administration; and
(b) how is that budget broken up between the different regions?
- (7) Who is the person in charge of the regional administrator programme and where is that person stationed?
- (8) How many persons are attached to his staff?
- (9) (a) Is accommodation provided for any of the regional administrators or assistant regional administrators; and
(b) if so, at what cost in each case?
- (10) (a) What is the salary for each regional administrator; and
(b) what other perquisites and expenses are they allowed?
- (11) (a) What is the salary for each assistant regional administrator; and
(b) what other perquisites and expenses are they allowed?
- (12) What is the normal function of regional administrators and what additional or other duties do they carry out?
- (13) What special relationships do regional administrators have with the Premier and the Premier's Department?

- (14) What office equipment and facilities are made available to regional and assistant regional administrators?
- (15) Are any part of regional administrators' private home telephone accounts paid for by the Government?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Seven.
 - (2) Kununurra Bunbury
Karratha Albany
Carnarvon Kalgoorlie
Geraldton
 - (3) Seven.
 - (4) Kununurra Albany
Port Hedland Kalgoorlie
Geraldton Esperance
Bunbury
 - (5) Staff attached to each office excluding regional administrators and assistant regional administrators.
- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Kununurra | 3 |
| Port Hedland | 1 |
| Karratha | 4 |
| Carnarvon | 2 |
| Geraldton | 2 |
| Bunbury | 3 |
| Albany | 2 |
| Kalgoorlie | 3 |
| Esperance | 1 |
- (6) (a) \$1 795 000;
(b) the operating expenses not including salaries, pay-roll tax and Commonwealth-funded Aboriginal projects are as follows—
- | | \$ |
|----------------|--------|
| Kimberley | 44 500 |
| Pilbara | 54 000 |
| Gascoyne | 31 500 |
| Greenough | 32 600 |
| South West | 27 800 |
| Great Southern | 27 000 |
| Goldfields | 38 500 |
- (7) (a) R. A. Hamilton, Director, Office of Regional Administration and the North West;
(b) Perth.
 - (8) Fifteen.
 - (9) (a) GEHA housing is provided for regional administrators and assistant regional administrators under the normal rental conditions;
(b) the normal GEHA rental is paid by the employee.

- (10) (a) \$29 558 per annum;
 (b) travelling allowance in accordance with Public Service miscellaneous allowances award 1976 No. 17—of 1976.
- (11) (a) The salary range for the assistant regional administrators is as follows—
- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Minimum..... | \$18 695 per annum |
| Intermediate..... | \$19 217 per annum |
| Maximum..... | \$19 728 per annum |

(b) As (10) (b)

- (12) Normal functions of regional administrators are—

Assist and, where required, represent Government departments in the regions.

Assist all departments and instrumentalities to decentralise their activities and to increase the authority and decision-making powers of regional officers.

Act as chairmen of regional development committees and generally assist in the development of their regions.

Disseminate information.

Be a sounding board for local opinion.

Be a focal point for visitors from overseas, eastern states or other regions.

Be a liaison and co-ordination focal point.

- (13) No special relationship.
- (14) Normal Government office equipment and facilities.
- (15) The normal Government policy of paying the rental and any charges relating to official calls applies where a regional administrator is required to have his residential telephone number listed in the telephone directory as an after-hours office number.
 Payment in relation to the above must be approved by the Under Secretary, Premier's Department.

EDUCATION

"WA Parent"

292. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

(1) How many copies of the *WA Parent* are published in each quarterly edition of this publication?

- (2) What were the costs including distribution of putting out this publication in March, June, September, and November 1980?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Editions 1 and 2—21 750;
 Editions 3 and 4—21 950.
- (2) No. 1 \$2 194.
 No. 2 \$2 387
 No. 3 \$2 339
 No. 4 \$2 522.

EDUCATION

Charter of Parents and Children's Rights and Responsibilities

293. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Government aware of the proposed charter of parents' and children's rights and responsibilities in schools?
- (2) If "Yes", what is the Government's attitude towards the introduction of such a charter particularly in respect of the possible need to make the education system more accountable to responsible parent demands regarding the quality and values involved in the education being offered to their children?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A draft document was discussed at the 1980 annual conference of the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations and has been circulated to parents and citizens association groups for further consideration. Until the final form of the charter has been determined and made public it is not possible to make an informed comment concerning the attitude of the Government to it.

294. *This question was postponed.*

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Alexander Drive-Gordon Road Intersection

295. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Has consideration been given to the need for traffic lights at the intersection of Alexander Drive and Gordon Road, Dianella?

- (2) When is it likely that this intersection will be listed for the installation of traffic lights?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) The position has not changed materially since I advised the member in answer to question 976 on 9 August 1979 that traffic signals could not be justified at this location then or in the near future.

However, the Main Roads Department has a regular monitoring system which ensures that changing circumstances at all locations in the metropolitan area are taken into consideration in drawing up the annual works programme for traffic light installation, so as to direct funds to those locations with the greater need.

HOUSING

Balga

296. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) When does the State Housing Commission intend to proceed with the further development of the land bounded by Ravenswood Drive, Mirrabooka Avenue, and Majella Road in Balga?
- (2) (a) What proportion of this land does the commission propose to sell off for private development; and
(b) when is this land likely to be offered for sale?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) No timetable has been determined and the further development of the land will depend on public demand as well as requirements for commission programmes.
- (2) (a) This is not yet determined;
(b) answered by (1) above.

RECREATION

Mirrabooka Sports Complex

297. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) What stage has been reached in his department's consideration of the request for financial assistance from the

City of Stirling for the development of a sports complex in the Mirrabooka regional open space?

- (2) Is financial assistance for this complex being considered in terms of the programme of grants for such purposes announced by the Prime Minister last September on a joint Commonwealth-States basis?
- (3) Has his department yet established priorities for sporting and recreation complex developments to be assisted under this programme?
- (4) If "No", when is it expected that these priorities will be established?
- (5) When is the City of Stirling likely to be advised of the success or otherwise of its request for assistance?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) In October 1980 Stirling City Council submitted a proposal for the funding of a sports complex on the Mirrabooka regional open space. The project was estimated to cost in the order of \$3 million. The Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation was advised that the council had approved the project "in principle" only. Without council approval and funding, the project could not be considered for funding from the community sporting and recreation facilities fund in 1980-81.

As recently as last Friday and Monday, officers of the Stirling City Council and the council's consultant architect met with officers of the Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation to discuss a revised proposal that the council intends to submit for assistance. This project is estimated to cost \$1 million.

As all of the 1980 budget has been allocated the project cannot be considered before 1981-82 funds become available.

- (2) No. The Commonwealth funds are for international standard sports facilities. The Stirling City Council proposal is to construct a regional indoor sport and recreation facility.
- (3) The department is currently seeking information from State sports associations to assist with the establishment of priorities for funding under this programme.

- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Should the Stirling City Council be in a position to submit a formal application before 30 September 1981, it should be advised of the success or otherwise of the request by 31 December 1981.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

Complaints: Victimisation of Employees

298. Mr BRYCE, to the Deputy Premier:

How many complaints in each year since 1974 have been forwarded to and/or investigated by the Department of Labour and Industry involving victimisation and exploitation of employees in the metropolitan area and the non-metropolitan area respectively in—

- (a) Government instrumentalities;
- (b) private firms?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (a) and (b) Information on complaints and inquiries received by the Industrial Inspectorate is published in the annual reports of the Department of Labour and Industry.

Very few of these inquiries would have included claims of victimisation and exploitations.

Separate statistics are not kept for Government instrumentalities and private firms.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Meat and Allied Trades Industry

299. Mr BRYCE, to the Deputy Premier:

How many jobs have been lost in the meat and allied trades industry in Western Australia since 1975?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Employment statistics relating specifically to the meat and allied trades industry are not published separately.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Visual Display Unit Operators

300. Mr BRYCE, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) In respect of State Government employees classified as visual display unit operators, have regular eyesight tests been conducted for the operators?
- (2) Who conducts the tests in Government departments?
- (3) What, if any, adverse effects have been revealed by the tests?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Regular eyesight tests are not conducted for operators of visual display units in Public Service departments.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1) above.

BUILDING INDUSTRY

Builders' Registration Board

301. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) How many complaints were received by the Builders' Registration Board during 1979 and 1980?
- (2) How many of the complaints referred to in (1) were resolved in favour of the client and the builder respectively?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) 1979—309
1980—363.
- (2) Statistics are not maintained. In many complaints there are numerous items under consideration.

WATER RESOURCES

Filtration Projects

302. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the water filtration programme for country and metropolitan areas over the next 10 years?
- (2) What are the specific locations, costs, and timetabling in each instance?
- (3) (a) Have any water filtration projects been deferred;
(b) if so, which are they;
(c) what was the original timetabling; and
(d) what is the deferred timetabling?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Water filtration in the Metropolitan Water Board system is a component of groundwater schemes.

The Public Works Department has no water filtration programme, as such, for country water supplies. Water filtration is normally only part of the more complicated process of water treatment.

- (2) The current Metropolitan Water Board development plan schedules the following schemes involving water filtration over the next 10 years.

Financial Year	Scheme	Location of Filtration Plant	Estimated cost of total groundwater scheme (\$1M—Dec. 1980 prices)
1986-87	East Mirrabooka Stage III	Mirrabooka	4.2
1987-88	(i) Pinjar Stage I	Wanneroo	11.5
	(ii) Jandakot Stage II	Jandakot	3.0

The only water treatment plant outside the Metropolitan Water Board area involving filtration currently scheduled is at Walpole. The water treatment component of the augmentation of that scheme's headworks is estimated to cost \$114 000 and the work is scheduled for completion in the 1981-82 financial year.

Problems of water quality at Geraldton are currently under investigation and could require the early construction of water treatment facilities.

- (3) (a) Yes, in the Metropolitan Water Board area, but not in the country;
(b) Jandakot stage II;
(c) 1982-83;
(d) 1987-88.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Staffing Arrangements

303. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the Education Department's formula for determining the staffing arrangements at secondary and primary schools?
(2) If categories vary, will he please provide details?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) The secondary schools staffing formulae for 1981 is as follows—

High Schools and Senior High Schools—

$$\text{Teaching staff} = N \times 1.5 + 3$$

Where N is equal to—

- (i) the number of lower school form groups of 32 pupils and part thereof; of
(ii) the number of upper school form groups—year 11 and year 12—of 25 pupils or part thereof.

District High Schools—

$$\text{Teaching staff (Class I)} = N \times 1.5 + 1.4$$

$$\text{Teaching staff (Class II)} = N \times 1.5 + 0.5$$

Where N is equal to the number of lower school form groups of 32 pupils or part thereof.

The above staffing formulae apply only to teachers who have classroom contact with pupils and do not apply to librarians, guidance officers, remedial teachers, district youth officers, or youth education officers.

(2) General Primary Staffing Formula, 1981—

Enrolment Years 1-7	Staff excluding administrative relief	Recommended number of classes	Administrative Relief
1-15	1	1	11-15 0.1
16-20	P + 0.4	1 + 0.4	0.1
21-30	P + 0.6	1 + 0.6	0.1
31-50	P + 1	2	0.2
51-76	P + 2	3	0.2
77-104	P + 3	3 or 4 ‡	0.2
105-120	P + 4	4	0.2
121-150	P + 5	5	0.2
151-180	P + 6	6	0.2
181-210	P + 7	6 or 7 §	0.2
211-240	P + 8	7	0.3
241-270	P + 9	8	0.3
271-305*	P + 11	9	0.3
306-340	P + 12	10	0.4
341-375	P + 13	11	0.4
376-410	P + 14	12	0.4
411-445	P + 15	13	0.4
446-480	P + 16	14	0.6
481-510	P + 17	15	0.6
511-545	P + 18.4	16	0.6
546-580	P + 20	17	0.6
581-615	P + 21	18	1.0
616-650	P + 22	19	1.0
651-685	P + 23	20	1.0
686-720	P + 24	21	1.0
721-750	P + 25	22	1.0
751-785	P + 26	23	1.0
786-820	P + 27	24	1.0
821-855	P + 28	25	1.0

‡ Where enrolment exceeds 90.

§ As appropriate in terms of accommodation and policy on size of year 1 groups.

* For enrolments greater than 270, the principal does not have a teaching responsibility.

Further information and explanation is available from *Staffing Policy for Primary Schools, 1981*, policy from the Director-General's Office, No. 28, November, 1980.

This information is also made available annually in the *Education Department Pocket Year Book*.

304. *This question was postponed.*

ANIMALS: DOGS

Destruction

305. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Local Government:

What is the estimated number of dogs destroyed by local governing authorities each year in the metropolitan area?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

This information is not held in my department.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Security

306. Mr BRYCE, to the Speaker:

When was the last review of security practices for the Western Australian Parliament carried out, what recommendations were made, and what recommendations have been carried out?

The SPEAKER replied:

The security of the Western Australian Parliament House is the responsibility of the Joint House Committee.

The question will be submitted to the Chairman of the Joint House Committee who, I am sure, will communicate with the member direct.

EDUCATION

Drugs

307. Mr BRYCE to the Minister for Education:

(1) How many cases of—

- (a) drug taking;
- (b) drug trafficking;
- (c) pill popping;

were reported in Western Australian schools during 1979 and 1980?

(2) How many juveniles and adults were arrested and/or convicted as in (1) above?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) No cases of this type were reported to the Education Department.
- (2) Such data is not available to the Education Department.

POLICE: DRUG

Marihuana

308. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What was the value and the amount of marihuana discovered by the Police Department in Western Australia during 1980?
- (2) How many people in Western Australia were prosecuted in 1980 for—
 - (a) growing marihuana;
 - (b) distributing marihuana;
 - (c) selling marihuana?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Statistics of estimated value are not kept. Statistics concerning amounts of marihuana are not kept for a calendar year, but are calculated on a fiscal year basis. For the fiscal year 1979-80, 15 376 cannabis plants were recovered and 52.75 kilos of seed were recovered.
- (2) (a) 225 persons were arrested, resulting in 258 charges of cultivation;
- (b) and (c) 59 persons were arrested and charged on 77 counts of dealing in cannabis.

309. *This question was postponed.*

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Art Gallery

310. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

Am I to understand from the answer to question 183 of Tuesday, 31 March 1981 that the positions of education officer and assistant curator at the Art Gallery were filled by the Art Gallery Board without being previously advertised?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The post of education officer vacated by Miss Anne Gray was filled by Mr Lance Hyde, who was previously employed as a temporary education officer until a permanent vacancy arose.

Miss Janda Gooding was promoted from gallery assistant to assistant curator on 5 March 1981. This did not affect the staff establishment nor require advertisement.

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) The commissioner has made some amendments in regard to the burning-off of railway reserves and appropriate procedures have now been resolved with the Bush Fires Board.

A further review of Westrail's firebreak policy will be made before July 1981 and the representations from interested parties in recent months will be fully considered in this review.

WOOL

Research and Promotion

311. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What is—

- (a) the total amount contributed by levy by Western Australian woolgrowers for research and promotion;
- (b) the percentage of the above amount allocated to research;
- (c) the total of this percentage spent in Western Australia;
- (d) the percentage of (c) spent directly on field applicable research?

Mr OLD replied:

- (a) to (d) This information has to be obtained from Canberra and endeavours are being made to obtain it.

RAILWAYS

Burning-off

312. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Further to question 1549 of 1980 relating to the new firebreak policy to be adopted by Westrail, has the Commissioner for Railways completed the review with regard to the number of items that have caused concern to the local authorities?
- (2) If "Yes", will he indicate the recommendations made and which ones will be accepted?

PRISONS

Prisoners: Sentences

313. Mr TONKIN, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) How many prisoners are there in Western Australian goals at the present time serving sentences—

- (a) up to one month;
- (b) of between one and three months;
- (c) of over three months;

in—

- (i) the metropolitan area;
- (ii) outside the metropolitan area?

- (2) Of these prisoners in each of the categories referred to, how many were sentenced by—

- (a) justices of the peace;
- (b) magistrates;
- (c) other?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The most recent records available on this matter are as at 15 March 1981 and provide the following information—

- (a) Prisoners serving sentences of up to one month—10 in the metropolitan area and 26 outside the metropolitan area;
- (b) prisoners serving sentences of between one and three months—52 in the metropolitan area and 73 outside the metropolitan area;
- (c) prisoners serving sentences of over three months—703 in the metropolitan area and 462 outside the metropolitan area.

- (2) (a) to (c) It is not possible to answer this question. The Department of Corrections does not routinely collect data on this topic as sentencing falls within the jurisdiction of the Crown Law Department. However, it is envisaged within the next two years that a system will be established for recording the court in which prisoners are sentenced.

TRAFFIC: RTA

Computer

314. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Is the Road Traffic Authority proposing to purchase a computer or has it recently purchased one?
- (2) If so, of which type is it?
- (3) Is it a fact that this computer is one which is not compatible with the computer at present used by the Police Department?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Computer equipment for the Road Traffic Authority will be installed on a rental basis during May 1981.
- (2) ICL 2956—International Computers—Australia—Pty. Ltd.
- (3) The police computer is of a make different from that to be installed by the Road Traffic Authority. Some degree of compatibility can be achieved between most modern computers. The computer will be used for motor driver and motor vehicle licensing and the activities of a number of other departments in the justice and welfare areas. The selection of the ICL machine was made after a long exhaustive study by an evaluation committee. The recommendation to acquire this equipment was approved by the Western Australian Government computing policy committee as it was considered that it was most suitable to the needs of the Road Traffic Authority and other likely users.

EDUCATION: PRE-PRIMARY

Teachers and Teacher Aides

315. Mr TONKIN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many full-time pre-primary teachers are there—
 - (a) in the Perth metropolitan area;
 - (b) outside the Perth metropolitan area;
- (2) How many part-time pre-primary teachers are there—
 - (a) in the Perth metropolitan area;
 - (b) outside the Perth metropolitan area?
- (3) How many full-time teacher aides are there engaged in pre-primary education—
 - (a) in the Perth metropolitan area;
 - (b) outside the Perth metropolitan area?
- (4) How many part-time teacher aides are there engaged in pre-primary education—
 - (a) in the Perth metropolitan area;
 - (b) outside the Perth metropolitan area?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

As at July 1980—

- (1) (a) 184;
- (b) 107.
- (2) (a) 22;
- (b) 55.
- (3) (a) 179;
- (b) 81.
- (4) (a) 64;
- (b) 164.

STATE FORESTS

Management Priority Areas

316. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What are the names and locations of all management priority areas—MPAs—within State forest which contain vegetation dominated by karri and karri in association with other eucalypts?
- (2) What are the defined boundaries of the MPAs referred to in (1) above: i.e., roads, map references, etc.?
- (3) What is the area of each of the MPAs referred to in (1)?

- (4) What is the total area of karri and karri in association with other eucalypts in each of the MPAs referred to in (1)?
- (5) What is the condition—i.e., cut-over, virgin, etc.—of the karri and karri in association with other eucalypts in each of the MPAs referred to in (1)?
- (6) What area of karri and karri in association with other eucalypts in each MPA is included in each of the conditions referred to in (5)?
- (7) Which of the MPAs referred to in (1) above include “forest parks”?
- (8) What are the defined boundaries of the “forest parks” referred to in (7)?
- (9) What is the area of each of the “forest parks” referred to in (7)?
- (10) What is the extent of karri and karri in association with other eucalypts in each of the “forest parks” referred to in (7)?
- (11) What is the condition—i.e., virgin, cut-over—of the karri and karri in association with other eucalypts in each of the “forest parks” referred to in (7)?
- (12) What is the extent of forest in each condition referred to in (11) in each “forest park”?
- (13) What is the area of karri and karri in association with other eucalypts within the parts of the South Coast National Park proclaimed on 28 November 1980?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (13) Answers currently available to the member's questions are to be found in Forests Department working plan No. 86 of 1977 together with the following answers to earlier parliamentary questions, viz—
- (a) No. 1220 of 16 August 1978 posed by his colleague, Hon. H. D. Evans, MLA;
- (b) No. 2444 of 16 November 1978 posed by his colleague, Mr Skidmore, MLA;
- (c) No. 1126 of 21 October 1980 asked by the member himself.

Updated statistical information is being compiled as a basis for and will be published in the proposed working plan revision which is subject to approval by His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council.

Once approved it is again proposed to follow the practice established in 1977 of releasing part I of such plan as a public document.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Ballajura Students

317. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) To which high school are students from Ballajura being directed?
- (2) Is it envisaged that students from this area will continue to be directed to the same school in 1982?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) Numbers of children completing year 7 at the Illawarra School are expected to be quite small for several years and, while this situation continues, it is not intended to lay down directions about the high school they should attend.

LOANS

Instrument Levy

318. Mr WILSON, to the Treasurer:

- (1) At what rate is the loan instrument duty levied on loans greater than 15 per cent in Western Australia?
- (2) What amount has the Government gained as a result of this levy on bank overdraft loans in the month of March?
- (3) What was the amount raised by this levy in March 1980?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) There is no loan instrument duty as such in Western Australia. A maximum of 1½ per cent duty is levied on lending transactions on which interest in excess of 15 per cent is charged.
- (2) Nil.
- (3) No separate statistics are maintained.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Children's Institution at Forrestfield

319. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Having recently received a petition from 35 residents at the Walldridge Retirement Village, Berkshire Road, Forrestfield, expressing fears at the

housing of juvenile delinquents in the immediate vicinity, particularly with regard to the numerous attacks on elderly women as reported by the media, would he give urgent consideration to relocating this proposed housing development elsewhere, bearing in mind the possible additional threat to any further growth of the village as a consequence of the above?

(2) If not, why?

(3) If "Yes", would he kindly give a detailed report on the relocation?

Mr HASSELL replied:

(1) to (3) There is no evidence which sustains the inference in the question that there is an association between attacks on elderly women (and other people) and the presence of juvenile detention centres.

The honourable member is perhaps unaware that two of the department's secure detention centres, Longmore and Nyandi, have been situated amongst elderly people's homes for years, without causing any danger to their residents. In fact, extensive development of these homes has taken place right next to the department's boundaries since Longmore and Nyandi were established.

The answer to the question is no, obviously I will not consider relocating the Waldrige Retirement Village because irrespective of where the proposed detention centre is situated, it will present no threat to the safety of the elderly people there. Notwithstanding that, the Government is still considering the matter, in search of the solution which best meets the overall needs and wishes of the whole community.

FARMLAND

Salt Affected

320. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Was there a survey of salting of cleared farmland carried out in Western Australia in 1974?

(2) If "Yes"—

(a) what area of cleared land was revealed to be salt affected;

(b) were there any such surveys carried out between 1945 and 1974, and if so, what area of cleared farm land was revealed as being salt affected;

(c) have there been any surveys of salt effects on cleared farm land carried out since 1974, and if so, when and what area was shown to be salt affected?

(3) Will he table a copy of the 1974 survey report and any other reports compiled since 1945?

Mr OLD replied:

(1) Yes, in the South West Land Division.

(2) (a) 167 294 hectares of land previously cleared for agriculture were salt affected.

(b)	hectares
1955	73 504
1962	123 591
(c) 1979	263 752

(3) Photocopies of the 1955, 1962 and 1974 salt land survey reports are tabled. The report of the 1979 survey will be published in the next issue of the WA Journal of Agriculture which is currently in print.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 131).

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Staff

321. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Works:

(1) How many senior members of the Public Works Department staff are now in higher acting capacity?

(2) When is the inquiry on the future of the administration likely to be concluded?

(3) Is the present situation detrimental to the smooth working of the Public Works Department?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

(1) Six.

(2) As advised in answer to question 209, officers of the Public Service Board have been examining whether there is a need for changes to the organisational structure of the Public Works Department and their decision will be implemented in the near future.

(3) No.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Jarrah Class Action: Writ

81. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

The Premier was good enough earlier today to intimate that he would supply me with a copy of what I shall refer to as "the Alcoa writ". I have not received that yet. There may be some excellent reasons for that. I ask him whether, since the matter is of such significance and public importance, he would table that document in due course?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I said that if the member so desired he could have a look at my copy; and that still stands. I explained to him that I had one copy only. If the member thinks it is appropriate, I will obtain another copy, or have my copy photostatted; and I will have it tabled on Tuesday for him.

EDUCATION

Endowment Grants

82. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

In view of the apparent discrepancy in information on income eligibility levels governing grants under the education endowment trust fund as provided to me in answer to question 124 in which it was indicated that grants were allocated on the following basis—

one dependent child family: \$100 gross weekly income or less;

two dependent child family: \$110 gross weekly income or less;

three dependent child family: \$120 gross weekly income or less;

and that provided by the member for Karrinyup in a paper tabled following his speech last night in which it was indicated that endowment trust funds of \$160 per annum were made to needy parents subject to a means test of \$160 per week; will he clarify the true situation on income eligibility pertaining to such grants?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

The means test limit in previous years has been \$160. However, with the large increase in applications received this year, and in spite of additional funds being made available, it was necessary to reduce the means test limit and in doing so equate more closely with the means test limits for school book assistance.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Art Gallery

83. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

(1) Further to my question 310 of today, in the reply to which the Minister concedes, without putting it into so many words, that the positions of education officer and assistant curator at the Art Gallery were filled without the posts being advertised, is it the policy of himself, his department, or the Art Gallery Board that significant positions at the Art Gallery may be filled without advertisement?

(2) Can he tell me which positions are required to be advertised before they are filled; and on what basis the positions as assistant curator and education officer are filled if nobody knows that they are open, because they are not advertised?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(1) and (2) It would seem that the main object in life of the member for Gosnells is to denigrate the Art Gallery Board.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Davies: Your main object is not to answer questions.

Mr GRAYDEN: Today the member for Gosnells asked the following question—

Am I to understand from the answer to question 183 of Tuesday, 31 March 1981 that the positions of education officer and assistant curator at the Art Gallery were filled by the Art Gallery Board without being previously advertised?

The answer to that question, and the answer to the present question is that the post of education officer vacated by

Miss Anne Gray was filled by Mr Lance Hyde, who was previously employed as a temporary education officer until a permanent vacancy arose—

Mr Pearce: Was it advertised or not?

Mr GRAYDEN: Miss Janda Gooding was promoted from gallery assistant to assistant curator on 5 March 1981. This did not affect the staff establishment; and it did not require advertisement.

HOSPITAL

Kalgoorlie Regional

84. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Minister made inquiries about today's allegations by the member for Kalgoorlie that "B" block at the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital was closed due to Government cost containment?
- (2) If so, can he say whether those claims are correct?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The claims are not correct. I have been informed by the Director of Hospital and Allied Services that he spoke to the Administrator of the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital this morning. The administrator informed the director that the "B" block was closed in late November 1980 as part of a normal, seasonal rationalisation of "in use" beds.

Mr Carr: That is not what the matron said.

Mr YOUNG: I will deal with what the matron said later.

The beds were kept out of use because of the disturbance to patients by the noise of construction work being carried out in converting part of "B" block to a cardiac unit. The ward will be reopened as a cardiac and general ward when work on the conversion is complete.

The administrator has informed the Director of Hospital and Allied Services that this information was given to the member for Kalgoorlie when he visited the hospital recently. Any contrary information given to him or any other member by any other employee of the hospital—

Mr Skidmore: That is not true.

Mr YOUNG: —including the matron, is incorrect.

The information which was given by the Administrator of the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital was given by the man described by the member for Kalgoorlie this morning as "the foremost administrator of hospital services in this country".

HEALTH

Insurance Benefits

85. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Was the State Government consulted before the Federal Government announced wide-ranging changes to health insurance benefits that will result in many people being denied refunds not only for so-called cosmetic surgery, but also for a whole range of other very important surgical procedures?
- (2) If the State Government was consulted, did it oppose the changes?
- (3) If the State Government was not consulted, does it intend to protest to the Federal Government, and will it campaign to have the medical benefit payments restored?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) The matter is under very serious consideration.

HOSPITAL

Roebourn

86. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What were the assurances given by the Minister in regard to—
 - (a) the future role of the Roebourn Hospital; and
 - (b) the upgrading and repairs of hospital buildings and facilities?
- (2) Is there currently any plan to downgrade existing facilities by removing sections of the hospital?
- (3) If it is the Government's intention to carry out an upgrading programme, what is the extent of the work proposed, and what are scheduled commencement and completion dates?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Planning is in hand for a major repair and renovation programme. Special consideration is being given to outpatient services and the provision of inpatient accommodation for permanent care patients. A number of acute care beds is proposed. In the formulation of these plans the Aboriginal community has been involved and will continue to be consulted. Their particular needs will have a high priority.
- (2) In the upgrading programme, some of the temporary buildings could be replaced by more permanent facilities.
- (3) Final plans have not yet been completed. A number of alternatives are being evaluated.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

TLC Nominee

87. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

My question relates to the Workers' Compensation Board. Has he had an approach from the Trades and Labor Council to replace, on an official basis, Mr Keith Summers, who has been stood down from the board because of charges having been placed against him? If he has had those approaches, has he considered such a replacement, bearing in mind that the charges are unlikely to be determined for a considerable period of time?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I do not believe I have had a written request although I understand the department has received a phone call from Mr Cook of the TLC asking whether consideration would be given to a replacement for Mr Summers. This has been considered bearing in mind the new Bill which I expect to introduce into Parliament during the next week or two. The Government is considering what should be done about the future of the board and how it should operate.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Interstate: Commonwealth Government's Policy

88. Mr CLARKO, to the Premier:

I address my question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister for Transport—

- (1) Has the Premier seen today's newspaper report of the reaction to Mr Hunt's announced changes to the Commonwealth Government's domestic air policy?

Mr Bryce: Shame!

Mr CLARKO: To continue—

- (2) Is he concerned to read that the chief concern of the ALP appears to be to maintain Government ownership and control of TAA—

Mr Parker: Not true.

Mr CLARKO:—and not to achieve direct competition in air services in Australia—

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will terminate question time if this sort of behaviour continues.

Mr CLARKO: —nor to obtain air fare justice for Western Australians?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kalgoorlie has adopted a practice over a fair period of time of interjecting at frequent intervals. I have reached the point where I must tell him that if he continues with that behaviour I will have to take the appropriate action.

Points of Order

Mr PEARCE: It seems to me that what the member is doing is seeking an opinion and, further, seeking an opinion on ALP policy. If he is seeking an opinion I believe he is out of order and if he is seeking a statement about ALP policy he should direct that question to the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Order! I agree with the member for Gosnells that part of the question appeared to be out of order; that part which referred to the Premier's opinion of the ALP's attitude on this matter. I must therefore rule that part of the question out of order.

Mr BRYCE: I wonder if someone could enlighten this Chamber on the facets of the Premier's ministerial responsibility

concerning the question asked by the member for Karrinyup—a would-be Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the members reflect on what happened they will recall that the member for Karrinyup said he was asking a question of the Premier in the absence of the Minister for Transport. In my view it is perfectly all right for the Premier, representing on this occasion the Minister for Transport, to answer the question.

Questions Without Notice Resumed

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) and (2) I assume the member for Karrinyup is referring to this afternoon's paper rather than this morning's paper, because I have not seen the particular item to which he has referred. Quite frankly it does not surprise me to see that the ALP is more concerned—

Mr Pearce: That is out of order.

Sir CHARLES COURT: —about TAA remaining a Government concern than about having cheaper air fares.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Interstate: Commonwealth Government's Policy

39. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

On what grounds does the Premier base his statement that the ALP is more concerned with the future of TAA than with cheaper air fares in view of the representations we have made and the offer not only to him but also to the Minister for Transport to join in an approach to Canberra to overcome the insult that has been dished out by his colleagues there?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I have every reason to make my statement.

Mr Davies: Give us your evidence.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am going to. The Labor Party boasts about the fact that it is a socialist party.

Mr B. T. Burke: What is your evidence on this matter?

Sir CHARLES COURT: As such, it believes in Government ownership and it has made its position very clear that it wants TAA to remain a Government enterprise.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. If the member for Kalgoorlie interjects once more I shall name him.

Mr Skidmore: What about all the others?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kalgoorlie was warned a little earlier because of what I consider to be too frequent interjections on his part. I believe I am in order and in fact have a responsibility when I think a member is transgressing the Standing Orders to see to it that he desists.

Mr Skidmore: I agree, but there has to be a degree of fairness.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Therefore, by simple logical deduction, if the ALP must choose between TAA being a Government enterprise and air fare justice it would opt for it to be a Government enterprise.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Trans Australia Airlines: Conversion to Public Company

90. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

I ask a follow-up question on about precisely the same level as the question put to him by the member for Karrinyup. Will he indicate to members of the Legislative Assembly which of his friends—I mean friends in the Liberal Party—stand to benefit directly or from kick-backs from the sale of TAA shares to the public?

Point of Order

Mr CLARKO: Mr Speaker, you might be surprised I should attempt to take a point of order on the member for Ascot. However, I ask you to rule whether his question is admissible.

The SPEAKER: Order! At the outset of this series of questions I attempted to bring the House back to what I believe to be the area in which it may operate. A question was asked and I ruled that part of it was out of order. In replying to that question the Premier chose to make reference to the matter which in my view was out of order. Therefore I think the matter has been opened for a

response from the other side. I still adhere to the view that the personal opinion of the Premier with respect to ALP policy is not something that comes within his area of ministerial responsibility and is not something on which he can be questioned. However, as I said earlier, the matter has been canvassed and it seems to me I cannot preclude some response from the other side.

Questions Without Notice Resumed

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Let me say firstly that I find the member for Ascot's question to be offensive.

Mr Bryce: We found you offensive in precisely the same way.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Karrinyup's question dealt with a matter of party policy. As far as I am concerned I do not have the faintest idea who is seeking to own or who is interested in acquiring TAA, and therefore his question is completely scurrilous.

Mr Grayden: A fitting answer to a scurrilous question.

Mr Davies: What about worrying about Western Australians for a change, instead of the Liberal Party?

Sir CHARLES COURT: You have kicked WA in the teeth today on the class action motion.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Interstate: Fares

91. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) What is his Government's attitude to the rather small decrease announced in east-west air fares by the Federal Government yesterday?
- (2) What practical steps will his Government take to ensure Western Australian air travellers receive a fairer deal, remembering how bitter was his criticism of an opposition to so many things that the Whitlam Government did during its term of office?
- (3) Are we to expect that the Fraser Liberal Government will, without any serious change in its course, proceed to do what it likes because we have a Liberal State Government?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) When I heard the result announced in connection with air fares I had some very strong things to say yesterday. I expressed complete amazement. I said something to the effect of "Will they ever learn" because it was assumed that the Government with any sense would have come out with something quite spectacular or dramatic, or at least discernible as a major reduction in the fares. On one hand the Federal Government seems to have done what was advised to do by the Holcroft report in connection with putting up fares on short hauls in the Eastern States, which I commended, but we did not get our share of what was left. I have protested to the Federal Government. In the meantime I have asked the Minister for Transport to get his experts to study the announcement made by Mr Hunt and seek further information if necessary to see whether or not we can find some logic in the figures announced.

There was no yardstick that I could apply or that the Minister for Transport's advisers could give me quickly yesterday evening which fitted the decision which was made.

I assumed an announcement would be made which contained some logic, but we could not find any yardstick at all. Therefore, I have asked the Minister to get his officers working on it today so that we can find out, either by our own calculations or information from Canberra, just how those figures were arrived at.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Intrastate: Onslow

92. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the recent disruption to the Onslow air service?
- (2) Has the service been restored to normal?
- (3) Does he anticipate any further problem with continuity of the service?

Mr Grayden (for Mr RUSHTON) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.

- (3) With the co-operation of the company concerned the Commissioner of Transport is examining the operations of this service with the objective of overcoming any further problems.

AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD

Blackberries: Eradication

3. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What has been the total amount spent by the Agriculture Protection Board in the eradication of blackberries in the south-west of Western Australia in each of the past three years?
- (2) What amount does the APB intend to spend on blackberry eradication this year?
- (3) Is he aware of the concern of the lower south-west zone of the Primary Industry Association regarding the spread of blackberries on Crown land?
- (4) In view of the concern expressed by the PIA does the Government intend to increase its efforts to eradicate blackberries and if so, what action does it intend to take?

Mr OLD replied:

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| (1) | \$ |
| 1978-79 | 24 513 |
| 1979-80 | 24 309 |
| 1980-81 | 25 431 |
- (2) An amount of \$32 000 has been provided in the 1981-82 Agriculture Protection Board draft estimates for blackberry control on Crown land.
 - (3) Yes. In 1978 the APB organised a committee of Government organisations, local authorities and farmer organisations to co-ordinate control and formulate mutually acceptable blackberry control programmes. The committee has met three times on an annual basis.
 - (4) The approach towards blackberry control in 1981-82 will be considered when a meeting of the committee—see (3) above—is held later in 1981.

HOSPITALS

Ambulances: Delay

4. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can the Minister confirm the accuracy of newspaper reports indicating that on Monday of this week an injured

waterside worker had to wait 45 minutes for an ambulance to travel from Armadale to Fremantle to transport him to hospital?

- (2) Can the Minister explain why it was necessary for an ambulance to be brought from as far afield as Armadale?
- (3) What steps is the Minister taking to prevent a repetition of this unfortunate event?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) to (3) The member for Melville has not given me any notice of this question. I do not recall having seen the article to which he has referred and I ask him to put the question on the notice paper.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Intrastate: Kalgoorlie-Perth

95. Mr GRILL, to the Premier representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Premier aware that MMA prices air tickets from Perth to Kalgoorlie in a 10-seater, one pilot plane, without refreshments or air crew, at the same price as tickets in its F-28 jet which is much faster, more spacious, carries two crew and two hostesses, gives in-flight meals and refreshments, and requires more ground crew?
- (2) If he is aware, how does he explain it and what can he do about it?
- (3) If he is not aware of it, will he investigate this obvious overcharging by Ansett on the slower plane with vastly inferior services?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) I am not aware of the exact case to which the member referred, but I shall pass on the question to my colleague, the Minister for Transport. However, I remind the member it is not unusual for a plane of small capacity to have a much higher unit cost than a plane of larger capacity. I will not pass judgment on the matter and will refer the question to the Minister for Transport.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Director: Special Allowance

96. Sir CHARLES COURT (Premier):

I undertook to provide additional information to the House following a question by the member for Balcatta on Thursday, 26 March 1981, regarding payment to the Director of Public Relations of a special allowance in lieu of his wife and family taking up residence in Western Australia.

As previously advised, I reiterate that matters of this nature are determined by the Public Service Board. In this case, the board agreed that a sustenance allowance of up to \$50 per week be paid from the date the director took up his appointment with the Premier's Department until he was scheduled to be joined by his family at the end of the school year. The specific date the sustenance allowance was paid was from 11 August until 19 December 1980.
