

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Minister for Education) [9.32 p.m.]: I thank the two members for their contribution to the debate. If they agree—and Mr Dellar, who gave a detailed examination of the Bill, indicated he would—I would prefer to deal with the questions raised when we go into Committee. I believe there is an explanation for the queries raised but it would be better given in Committee.

Mr Dellar indicated his general agreement with the provisions in the Bill, except for his request for additional information.

In answer to Mr Claughton, I would say that the general purpose of the Bill is indeed to provide protection for the news-agent, or, at least, to ensure that he is not the only "bunny" in the exercise so that some action can be taken against those people who are manufacturing, producing, or distributing pornographic literature, audio tapes, or cinema films.

The point Mr Claughton raised about people being able to import such material is well taken. If a person knew where he could sell the material, he could bring it from the Eastern States by car, and so forth. I did not know there was so much profit in such material. Nevertheless, it must be shown or listened to somewhere on some premises. It does not have to be sold, which is the purpose of the Bill; that is, to extend the definition of pornographic material. As Mr Dellar said, it is obvious the situation has existed for a long time and successive Governments have made endeavours to ease the laws or to tighten up certain of them to make them fairer.

This Bill is a genuine effort to overcome the difficulties Mr Claughton highlighted because at present it is the newsagent or actual seller only who has action taken against him.

The other points raised will be better discussed in Committee, so I will content myself with those few remarks, and commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly with an amendment.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AUTHORITY BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health), read a first time.

House adjourned at 9.38 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 22nd October, 1974

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

HOUSING OWNERSHIP AND FINANCE

Royal Commission: Petition

MR BARNETT (Rockingham) [4.33 p.m.]: I have a petition prepared by the residents of Rockingham addressed to the Hon. the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. It reads as follows—

We, the undersigned residents in the State of Western Australia do herewith pray that Her Majesty's Government of Western Australia will give consideration to the appointment as soon as possible of a Royal Commission to inquire into home ownership and all finances pertaining to home ownership in the State of Western Australia.

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

The petition contains 1 235 signatures, and I have certified that it conforms with the rules of the House.

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

The petition was tabled (see paper No. 302).

"THE PILBARA STUDY"

Tabling

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [4.35 p.m.]: I have for tabling the report of the Pilbara study. I should explain that, by arrangement, it is being tabled in the Federal Parliament to coincide as near as is practicable with its tabling in this House. I seek leave to table it.

I also seek leave to table a statement by myself relating to the report. I intended to seek leave to read it out but, having mercy on the House, I shall merely table it. I advise that I will make a copy of the statement available to all members tomorrow.

The report and statement were tabled (see paper No. 301).

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Tabling

The **SPEAKER** (Mr Hutchinson): I have for tabling the report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1974.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 300).

QUESTIONS (30): ON NOTICE

1. SHEEP

Research Expenditure, and Wool Tax

Mr OLD, to the Minister for Agriculture:

If he has such information, will he advise—

- (a) the amount of money spent on research in Western Australia into the sheep industry over the past five years by—
 - (i) the Department of Agriculture;
 - (ii) the Institute of Agricultural Science;
 - (iii) the CSIRO?
- (b) the amount of wool tax paid by Western Australian wool producers over the past five years?

Sir Charles Court (for Mr McPHARLIN) replied:

- (a) (i) \$4 114 350 of which \$481 851 was contributed trust fund and \$173 817 from the Australian Meat Research Committee.
- (ii) and (iii) This information is not available to my department.
- (b) \$12 880 584.

2. ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Revenue, 1970-1974

Mr OLD, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What was the amount of revenue collected from road maintenance tax for the years 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973 and 1974?
- (2) What was the cost of collection of the tax in each of these years?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Collections for each of the last five financial years were as follows—

			\$
1969-70	....	....	3 623 518
1970-71	....	....	3 990 144
1971-72	....	....	3 821 729
1972-73	....	....	3 359 297
1973-74	....	....	3 684 368

- (2) In the same years the cost of collection was as follows—

			\$
1969-70	....	....	206 560
1970-71	....	....	232 774
1971-72	....	....	266 074
1972-73	....	....	321 476
1973-74	....	....	391 669

3.

KANGAROOS

Tags and Harvesting

Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many kangaroo tags were issued in Western Australia in 1973?
- (2) What is the anticipated number of tags that will be issued in 1974?
- (3) How many kangaroos were shot by licensed shooters in the Gascoyne region in each of the last four years?
- (4) What number of dingoes have been killed in the Gascoyne catchment area—
 - (a) in 1973;
 - (b) 1974 to date?

Sir Charles Court (for Mr McPHARLIN) replied:

- (1) Red and Euros—130 200
Greys—17 622
- (2) Reds—120 000
Euros—4 000
Greys—13 000
- (3) This information is held in computer storage by the Fauna Research Branch of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna and is not readily available at present.

It is anticipated that 30 000 will be taken from this area during 1974-75.

- (4) Separate scalp figures for the Gascoyne catchment area are not available. Combined figures for the Upper Gascoyne and Meekatharra Vermin Board areas, in which the catchment is contained, are—

1973-74—1 108

1974 to date—355

These figures represent scalp payment recoups claimed by the vermin boards and do not represent the total number of dingoes destroyed.

4. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Cockburn Sound: Discharge of Gypsum

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Has the investigation referred to in question 48 of 7th August, concerning the discharge of gypsum into Cockburn Sound, been completed?
- (2) If "Yes" what is the result of such investigation?

- (3) If "No" when will the investigation be completed?
- (4) Is it a fact that there is an identifiable mound of gypsum in Cockburn Sound?
- (5) If the answer to (4) is "Yes" has CSBP been asked to remove it as required under section 27 (3) (a) of the Industrial Lands (Kwinana) Agreement Act?
- (6) If the answer to (5) is "No" why has this section not been invoked?
- (7) If the answer to (4) is "No" what alteration to the seabed has occurred?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It confirmed the existence of a mound of gypsum which was investigated and sampled under the direction of the Department of Environmental Protection.
- (3) and (4) Answered by (2).
- (5) CSBP have agreed to meet the cost of restoring an adequate depth of water to the requirements of the Fremantle Port Authority. This action has been endorsed by the EPA.
- (6) Answered by (5).
- (7) Answered by (2) and (5).

5. TEACHERS

Posting to Remote Areas: Special Lectures

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Further to his answer to question 4 of Wednesday, 16th October last, would he please stipulate the name and location of "special Aboriginal schools" referred to in his answer, existing in areas of the State other than in the north-west?
- (2) Does his answer to the said previous question mean that teachers appointed to schools in the north-west which are not classified as "special Aboriginal schools" will not have the benefit of the special courses referred to in his answer?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Cundeelee Mission
Gnowangerup Agricultural School
Tardun Agricultural School
Tardun Special Native School
Warburton Ranges
Mt Margaret
- (2) Every endeavour will be made to include teachers in schools not classified as special Aboriginal schools but having high Aboriginal enrolment.

6. *This question was postponed.*

7. COMPREHENSIVE WATER SUPPLY SCHEME

Extension to Merredin-Yilgarn

Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the Public Works Department conducted a feasibility study for the extension of the Comprehensive Water Supply into an area of the Merredin-Yilgarn electorate given a priority one rating by the Department of Agriculture?
- (2) If so, when will a submission be made to the Commonwealth Government making application for funds to begin work on the project?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The Public Works Department has carried out preliminary studies on part of the Merredin-Yilgarn electorate with a view to determining cost of constructing water supplies to the area.
- (2) Operating costs and economic studies must be evaluated before consideration to a submission to the Commonwealth can be made. It will be some time before the outcome of these studies can be fully evaluated.

8.

TEACHERS

Trainees: Boarding Allowance

Mr COWAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) (a) Does he know what weekly boarding fees are charged to trainee teachers who board at the Graylands migrant hostel;
- (b) are there any charges made other than board?
- (2) (a) What is the weekly allowance paid to first-year trainee teachers by the Education Department;
- (b) when was this allowance last increased, and by how much?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) (a) \$25 per week.
- (b) There is an additional charge for electricity used beyond a standard allowance.
- (2) (a) \$21.45 per week to a single, non-graduate student under 21 years of age. If a student is required to live away from home, an additional allowance of \$7.38 per week is paid.

- (b) The application of the national wage decision increased the basic allowance by \$1.51 per week from 24th May, 1974.

The living-away-from-home allowance was increased by \$1.25 per week from 1st January, 1974.

9. UNEMPLOYMENT

Comparison of Levels

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) What percentage of the work force was registered as unemployed in Western Australia at the end of September 1974?
- (2) How does this compare with the percentage of the work force registered as unemployed at the end of September 1974 throughout the whole of Australia?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) The percentage of the work force registered as unemployed at the end of September, 1974, was 2.46%.
- (2) The percentage of the work force registered as unemployed at the end of September, 1974, for the whole of Australia was 2.04%.

I might add that of the other States Tasmania had the highest unemployment rate at the end of September with 3.14%.

10. PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Number and Cost

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many pre-school centres are currently operating in Western Australia?
- (2) What is the estimated percentage of eligible pre-school school children in Western Australia who are in fact receiving the benefit of a pre-school education at present?
- (3) How much money was spent on pre-school education centres in Western Australia between 1960 and 1972—

- (a) by the Western Australian Government;
- (b) by the Commonwealth Government?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) 286.
- (2) 49.36% of five year old children.
10.42% of four year old children.
- (3) (a) It is not possible to precisely determine the amount spent on pre-school education centres. During the period

in question, the State Government made the following amounts available—

	\$
Kindergarten Association ..	2 185 300
Student training allowances ..	358 360
Teachers' college subsidy ..	304 209
Teachers' college building grants ..	50 000
Needy kindergarten grant ..	92 300
State Government building grant ..	211 000
	<hr/>
	3 201 169

- (b) During the same period, the Commonwealth Government made available an amount of \$175 000 as a grant towards the construction of the Kindergarten Teachers College.

11. ELECTRICAL RETAIL INDUSTRY

Trading Constraints

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Electricity:

Will he indicate which Statutes enacted by this Parliament serve as constraints in respect of marketing and trade activities of the electrical retail industry?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

Regulations made under the Electricity Act require the approval of an examining authority before certain prescribed electrical articles may be sold. The granting of a certificate of approval is dependent upon the prescribed article meeting specified electrical safety standards. The same regulations provide for the licensing of certain electrical workers.

12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Unemployment Relief Funds

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Which local governing bodies did he approach by telegram, requesting details of proposed projects for the use of "unemployment grants" from the Australian Government?
- (2) (a) Does the State Government propose to allocate funds to local government bodies for unemployment relief;
- (b) if so, will he indicate what amount has been allocated for this purpose?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Every municipality—138 in all.

- (2) (a) and (b) Not specifically. The Government has provided \$1 million for municipalities this year, to be made available through the local authorities assistance fund. This money will be for general purposes and could be utilised by councils to relieve unemployment.

13. BELMAY SCHOOL

Social Worker Unit

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has an application been made for the establishment of a "social worker unit" at the Belmay Senior Primary School?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) when was the application lodged;
 - (b) what is the anticipated cost of providing and maintaining such a unit;
 - (c) when will a decision be made in respect of this matter?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) There is no record of any such application being received at the Education Department.
- (2) Not applicable.

14. BELMAY SCHOOL

Library-resource Centre

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) When will a library-resource centre be provided for the Belmay Senior Primary School?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of providing such a centre?
- (3) How is it proposed to finance such a centre for this school?
- (4) In determining the priority for establishing library-resource centres, is special consideration given to a situation where a junior and a senior primary school occupy the same site?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No listing has yet been made against future fund allocations.
- (2) \$45 000.
- (3) Funds will be allocated from one of the programmes used for financing such centres; viz General Loan Fund, State Grants (1972) Act or States Grants (1973) Act.
- (4) Each school is considered separately.

15. EDUCATION

Correspondence Courses, and Pre-school Centres

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many students are currently undertaking—
 - (a) primary; and
 - (b) secondary,
 correspondence studies through the auspices of the State Education Department—
 - (i) in Western Australia;
 - (ii) north of the 26th parallel?
- (2) (a) How many pre-school education centres are in operation north of the 26th parallel;
- (b) will the Minister indicate where these centres are located?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) (a) Primary—
 - (i) 312;
 - (ii) 142.
- (b) Secondary—
 - (i) 67;
 - (ii) 19.

The figures refer to full-time students only.

- (2) (a) 40.
- (b) Balgo
Beagle Bay
Broome (2)
Derby (4)
Carnarvon (4)
Dampier
Exmouth
Fitzroy Crossing
Fossil Downs Station
Go-Go Station
Goldsworthy
Halls Creek
Jigalong
Kalamburu
Karratha
Kununurra (2)
Lombardina
Marble Bar
Newman
Onslow
Paraburdoo
Port Hedland (3)
South Hedland (2)
Roebourne (2)
Shay Gap
Tom Price
Wickham
Wyndham.

16. SEWERAGE

Belmont

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) In the ten years prior to 1973 how much money was spent by the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board on sewerage works in the Belmont Shire?
- (2) How much money has been spent or allocated for sewerage works in the Belmont Shire during 1973 and 1974?
- (3) Will he indicate the source of finance employed for this purpose in 1973 and 1974 (i.e., what amount of funds was found by the Australian Government and the Western Australian Government respectively)?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (3) Statistics are maintained for financial years and not calendar years and the questions are accordingly answered on a financial year basis.

- (1) For 10 years up to and including

	\$
1971-72	1 252 374
(2) 1972-73	783 170
1973-74	2 454 448

- (3) 1972-73—

	\$
Commonwealth Government	553 233
Western Australian Government	229 937
1973-74—	
Commonwealth Government	1 733 253
Western Australian Government	721 195

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) The reason for the Member's questions is not understood, unless it arises from the current criticism of the Prime Minister's overseas visits.

There are no current commitments for me to travel abroad at this stage.

If, however, any visits are undertaken, they would be for official purposes and would involve the minimum absence from the State appropriate to the duties to be undertaken.

Travel details would be announced at the appropriate time, and not necessarily a long way ahead of such visits.

- (3) The same position applies to Ministers as in respect of myself in (1) and (2).

Mr A. R. Tonkin: When is the Premier going to stop squealing?

Mr O'Connor: Ask the member for Perth—he will tell you!

18.

TRAFFIC

Government Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Are exhaust emissions and noise levels of Government vehicles monitored?

- (2) If so, by whom and how often?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No. Exhaust Emissions—Vehicle Standards Regulation 1202 (5) requires every passenger car manufactured on and after 1st January, 1974 shall at the time of first registration, conform to Australian design rule 27—vehicle engine emission control.

The Department of Motor Vehicles is currently placing orders for testing equipment to test for carbon monoxide on the basis of 4.5% carbon monoxide emission. Noise levels are not tested because of the complexity of Australian design rule number 28.

- (2) Answered by (1).

17. PREMIER AND MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas Visits

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Would he please provide full details of proposed overseas travel which he intends to undertake during the parliamentary recess including countries to be visited and reasons for the proposed visits?
- (2) Would he please provide dates of departure and intended return to Australia?
- (3) Would he please provide full details of other Ministers' proposals for overseas visits including dates, itineraries and reasons for visiting any countries?

19.

LAND

Parks: Central Perth

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Minister for Lands:

Would he please indicate the location and area of all public parkland located within three kilometres of the GPO Perth?

Mr RIDGE replied:

A plan depicting location and areas is submitted for tabling.

The plan was tabled (see paper No. 303).

20.

CONTAINER SHIPS*Bypassing of Fremantle*

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Would he please investigate the possibility of obtaining a reversal of the decision by container shipping lines to bypass Fremantle on the outward voyage from Europe, which is causing delays in the transmission of surface mail and goods destined for Western Australia?
- (2) If it is not possible to have the decision reversed would he investigate the possibility of having containers carrying surface mail unloaded on the outward voyage?
- (3) If the companies are not prepared to berth for the unloading of mails would he approach the Australian Government to investigate the possibility of unloading mails from container ships in Gage Roads using RAAF helicopters or some other alternative?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The Government has already been in contact with the Chairman of the UK-Australia Conference concerning elimination of south-bound calls at Fremantle by most conference ships—not just container ships. Our initial approach was unsuccessful in that as far as the conference is concerned, the decision is final. However, we intend to pursue the subject again, and expect to do so early next year when some current studies are completed. The implication in this is that, whilst I think we have little hope for the moment of altering the existing decision, I believe there may be some hope of at least modifying it when the Suez Canal reopens.

In our communications with the chairman, I expressed concern about the effect this change in schedule might have on exports as well as imports, and the mail referred to by the Member.

I confirm that the Postmaster General's Department is having trouble with mail. Mail is being despatched from the UK by both container and conventional ships in the sequence in which the ships load, irrespective of whether they make a southbound call at Fremantle or not. If the ship calls here the mail, is, of course, off-loaded but if the ship does not call here the mail is on-carried to Sydney and returned to Fremantle on the northbound voyage or occasionally, by the Associated Steamships coastal service.

- (2) and (3) The conference having decided that most ships will bypass Fremantle southbound, I see no likelihood that they will divert north from their direct route between the Cape of Good Hope and Sydney just to off-load mail, even in Gage Roads. If, however, they did so divert, there is no way in which we could unload a container ship in Gage Roads and, to my knowledge, there are no helicopters in Australia large enough to lift a fully loaded ISO container.

The Member may be assured that the Government is very dissatisfied with what is going on and is particularly concerned as to what might happen next, for there is no doubt in my mind that there are other pressures which could be detrimental to the interests of Fremantle in particular, and Western Australia in general. This dissatisfaction and concern have been expressed forcibly, but as yet to no avail. Our problem, of course, is that international shipping is one of the areas in which we have absolutely no statutory power.

21.

SOCIAL WORKERS*Salaries: Public Service and Hospitals*

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the salary range for a qualified social worker in the State Public Service?
- (2) What is the salary range for a qualified social worker at one of the five Government hospitals?

Mr RIDGE replied:

	\$
(1) Social worker—	
1st year	7 291
2nd year	7 783
3rd year	8 437
4th year	8 940
5th year	9 361
6th year	9 802
7th year	10 328
Senior social worker—	
1st year	10 561
2nd year	10 789
3rd year	11 019
Social worker supervisor—	
1st year	11 294
2nd year	11 783
3rd year	12 100
Social work supervisor (special)	12 759
Senior social work supervisor	13 725

(2) Level 1 (diplomates)—	\$
1st year	6 541
2nd year	7 033
3rd year	7 687
4th year	8 190
5th year	8 611
6th year	9 052
7th year	9 578
Level 2 (graduates)—	
1st year	7 033
2nd year	7 687
3rd year	8 190
4th year	9 052
5th year	9 578
Level 3—	
1st year	9 811
2nd year	10 039
3rd year	10 269
4th year	10 544
Level 4—	11 350

22. SOCIAL WORKERS

Salaries: Public Service and Hospitals

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that qualified social workers employed at the five Government hospitals are in receipt of a salary substantially lower than that of qualified social workers with similar experience and responsibilities in the State Public Service?
- (2) If "Yes" is there any justifiable reason for the difference in salaries being paid?
- (3) If not, will he assure the House that salaries paid to qualified social workers in Government hospitals are adjusted and the increase is applied from the date it was granted to qualified social workers in the State Public Service?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The two groups are paid under different salaries agreements. Rates applying to hospital medical social workers are currently under review and an amendment of the agreement is expected to be processed through the Industrial Commission within two or three weeks.

23. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Graylands Laundry

Mr T. J. BURKE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many staff are employed at the Mental Health Services laundry at Graylands hospital—
 - (a) senior males;
 - (b) senior females;
 - (c) juniors?

- (2) When is the laundry due to be closed?
- (3) Will he assure the House every endeavour will be made to find suitable alternative employment for the staff particularly those who have given many years of service to the Government?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) (a) Senior males—15.
(b) Senior females—43.
(c) Juniors (under 19 years)—3
(1 male, 2 females).
- (2) April, 1975.
- (3) The staff of the laundry have been advised that employment is available with the hospital laundry and linen service without any loss of pay or other entitlements. A limited number of staff will be retained for linen collection and distribution duties at Swanbourne/Graylands Hospitals.

24. TRAFFIC LIGHTS

North Beach Road-Odin Road Intersection

Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Since it is planned by the City of Stirling that channelisation at the intersection of North Beach Road and Odin Road, Innaloo will be completed within two months, has it been firmly decided to install traffic lights at this intersection?
- (2) If (1) is "Yes" when is it anticipated that such traffic lights will be in operation?
- (3) If (1) is "No" will he reconsider the matter since the intersection is a traffic hazard?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) At present there are other intersections ranking higher in priority. However, priorities for traffic signal installation are reviewed annually in order to ensure maximum benefit from the limited funds available.

25. TOWN PLANNING

East Victoria Park School: Zoning

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

With reference to my question 3 of 18th September, 1974 regarding the future of the East Victoria Park primary school's site, can he now advise the present position please?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

Owing to the current financial situation, the negotiations with the developers concerned are in abeyance.

26. ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Preservation

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Conservation and Environment:

- (1) Has he or his department had under consideration the future of the Anglican church (St. Bartholomew's) situated in the East Perth cemetery?
- (2) If so, is he able to advise what action is being taken to preserve this building?

Mr STEPHENS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Subject to acceptable vesting arrangements being made, this project will be recommended for consideration in the National Estate programme for 1974-75.

27. SUPERPHOSPHATE

New Zealand: Price and Subsidy

Mrs CRAIG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Can he verify, or otherwise, the accuracy of the statement that New Zealand farmers are paying \$26 per tonne for superphosphate?
- (2) Can he tell the House the percentage of available phosphate in superphosphate available in—
 - (a) New Zealand;
 - (b) Western Australia?
- (3) Does the New Zealand Government subsidise superphosphate?

Sir Charles Court (for Mr McPHARLIN) replied:

- (1) I am informed that prices vary between works with a range of NZ\$25.20 to NZ\$27.60 per tonne.
- (2) (a) 7.5% as available phosphorus.
(b) 8.6% as available phosphorus.
- (3) Yes. I understand the British Phosphate Commission is paid a subsidy of NZ\$28.75 per tonne of rock phosphate. This is equivalent to a subsidy of NZ\$18.25 per tonne of superphosphate.

28. MR R. COWLES

German Shepherd Dog: Importation

Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it a fact, as reported in the *Daily News* dated 16th October, 1974, under the headline "Cowles defies the law on German shepherds", that Mr Rob Cowles, the

secretary of the Transport Workers' Union, secretly imported into this State an unsterilized German shepherd dog which is being kept secretly near Perth, and that the dog has been mated for a fee of \$75 with eight other animals?

(2) If so—

- (a) is it intended that a prosecution will take place;
- (b) if not, does the Government propose to change the law relating to German shepherd dogs in Western Australia?

Sir Charles Court (for Mr McPHARLIN) replied:

- (1) The Press statement has not yet been confirmed but is being actively investigated.
- (2) (a) This will be considered when precise information is obtained.
(b) I have received submissions from the German Shepherd Dog Association and other interested parties and these are being examined.

29. MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Beef, Sheep Meats, and Pork: Sales

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

- (1) What amounts of beef, sheep meats and pork has the Midland Junction Abattoir Board sold in its own right as a trading concern in each of the first nine months of 1974?
- (2) What was the total amount of trading in each of the above meats conducted by the board in both 1972 and 1973?
- (3) Has any limitation been placed on the meat trading operations of the Midland Junction Abattoir Board by the Government, and if so, what are they?

Sir Charles Court (for Mr McPHARLIN) replied:

(1)—

	Beef	Tonnes Sheep meat	Pork
January	5.00	Nil	1.36
February	24.83	2.88	9.80
March	0.41	Nil	33.74
April	0.55	1.05	34.34
May	9.33	187.17	40.07
June	6.88	37.26	2.28
July	Nil	224.55	14.73
August	0.02	451.00	Nil
September	0.24	1 034.98	Nil

(2)—

	Beef	Tonnes Sheep meat	Pork
1972	95.79	550.96	48.44
1973	410.68	196.61	743.02

(3) No.

30. *This question was postponed.*

QUESTIONS (6): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. IRON ORE COMMITTEE REPORT

Reply of Ex-Premier

Mr J. T. TONKIN, to the Minister for Mines:

Will he table a copy of my reply, as Premier, in March this year to the iron ore committee's report, an extract from which reply he used in his letter to the editor of *The West Australian* which was published this morning.

Mr MENSAROS replied:

I assume the Leader of the Opposition is referring to his reply of the 3rd April, 1974, to the iron ore committee's March, 1974, report.

I will table the minute with the Speaker's permission.

As the 3rd April, 1974, minute was addressed to a specific officer, the addressee's name has been left off the minute tabled.

A complete copy will, however, be made available to the Leader of the Opposition for his personal records.

The minute was tabled (see paper No. 304).

2. TOWN PLANNING

Whitfords Shopping Development

Mr NANOVIK, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

It is with regret that I raise this question concerning an article in tonight's issue of the *Daily News* indicating that the MRPA has rejected a \$30 million plan submitted by the Whitfords City consortium for development on a commercial basis in that area. On short notice, is he able to answer the following—

- (1) Is it envisaged that further commercial development will be permitted within close proximity to the proposed development in the plan submitted by the Whitfords City consortium?
- (2) Could he inform the House of the total square feet of commercial and retail area the MRPA is prepared to support?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) This is an issue which will probably be coming before me on appeal as the Minister responsible. I have the article in front of me now, and I am not prepared to prejudge the issue. However, I can say that I know of the interest of

the Shire of Wanneroo in the issue because it was raised with me recently. The shire disclosed its support for the shopping facility. As indicated, the MRPA has rejected the request for 650 000 square feet of shopping space, but apparently it is prepared to approve a lesser area. It is my understanding that this is something like 150 000 square feet, but I may be wrong because I am going on hearsay.

All I can say to the honourable member at this time is that I will be prepared, as on all appeals, to give every consideration to it should it come before me; and it will be my objective to make a decision as quickly as possible.

3.

IMMIGRATION

Building Company Nomination Scheme

Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Immigration:

In view of the hostile and unwarranted attack on me by the Minister on the 8th August after I had tried to draw the attention of the Minister and the public to Landalls' financial difficulties and had asked him to investigate the situation on behalf of the migrants concerned, will he now—

- (1) Apologise for his mishandling of the question and his failure to take action at that time?

Mr O'Connor: How much notice did you give?

Mr BARNETT: How much notice does the Minister need? To continue—

- (2) Assure the Western Australian public that he will do all in his power to ensure that migrants still in the pipeline, and direct and indirect employees of Landalls, will be adequately looked after by the Western Australian Government?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) In reply to the member for Rockingham, I want to say, first of all, that he did not set out to convey any information to me. He set out, in concert with other individuals on that side of the House, to bring about the demise of a firm.

Several members interjected.

Mr GRAYDEN: He is now gloating over it, and he can continue to gloat, but there are many Western Australians who will suffer as a consequence of that individual.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GRAYDEN: In order that I may give this question the answer it deserves, I ask that the honourable member place it on the notice paper.

Several members interjected.

Sir Charles Court: You will rue the day you ever did that to a company.

4. FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES LEGISLATION

Newspaper Advertisement

Mr MAY, to the Premier:

Last Wednesday I asked the Premier whether he could give me the cost of the full-page advertisement which appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper and whether he could advise who actually compiled the advertisement. Is the Premier now in a position to advise the cost of the full-page advertisements in *The West Australian* and the *Daily News*, and who compiled them?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The honourable member disappointed me the other day. I brought in a nicely typed answer, assuming he would re-ask the question. I do not have it with me now but I think I can give the answer from memory.

The main text of the advertisement was prepared by the Minister for Industrial Development, Mines, Electricity, and Fuel and Energy. It was subjected to some further vetting by the Public Relations Officer of the Premier's Department to reduce it to a smaller space and fewer words in journalese. Because of the fact that the Public Relations Officer of the Premier's Department was under so much pressure at the time, for the vetting and preparation of the final draft he co-opted the services of W. W. Mitchell & Associates.

Mr B. T. Burke: You are unreal!

The SPEAKER: Will the member for Balga watch his laughter.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Balga carries on like an animal here sometimes.

Several members interjected.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I will complete the answer to the honourable member. Does he want the answer or not?

Mr May: I am still waiting.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I understand the advertising space was booked with *The West Australian* and the *Daily News* by the Government advertising clerk, who normally does this kind of work. The "metal" was prepared by the firm of Art Photo Engravers and delivered by them to *The West Australian*. The all-up cost of the two advertisements, in *The West Australian* and the *Daily News*, I am advised, does not exceed \$1 500 but the final figure is not in yet.

5. FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES LEGISLATION

Newspaper Advertisement

Mr HARTREY, to the Premier:

In regard to the last question put to him, was the substance of the advertisement based upon a legal opinion which he refused to disclose to the House?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I am told by my colleague that it was based partly on that and partly on a general approach to the Bill. It will be realised that he was trying to present information on the total Bill in a form which would be understood by the public.

Mr Hartrey: So it would not really matter whether he was telling the truth or not?

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the honourable member challenges anything contained in the advertisement, I would like to know what it is, because none of the legal people to my knowledge has challenged what was in the advertisement. I would dearly like to hear whether the honourable member disagrees with the substance of the advertisement.

6. FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES LEGISLATION

Newspaper Advertisement

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Premier:

Does he intend to follow the practice of spending the taxpayers' money to defend his Government's position whenever it is criticised?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The answer is very simple: On appropriate occasions, yes. I invite the honourable member's attention to the fact that a very prominent member of the Trades and Labor Council demanded that the Government do exactly what it has done.

Mr B. T. Burke: Explain, not defend.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The honourable member should check with his TLC mates.

BILLS (3): ASSENT

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. State Housing Act Amendment Bill.
2. Teacher Education Act Amendment Bill.
3. Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act Amendment Bill.

Mr Davies: Shame!

The SPEAKER: I would like to remind members who either talk or interject when the Speaker is on his feet that it is most disorderly and reflects no credit on either themselves or this House.

Mr Davies: Or credit on the Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not like such remarks being made. The member for Victoria Park has experience in this Chamber and knows that the little homily I read is completely right. It does not do him any good, either, to say such words immediately upon my resuming my seat. I am very disappointed in the way an experienced member and former Minister acts. Let him take other opportunities—

Mr Davies: I will take those, too.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will ask the member for Victoria Park to apologise to the Chair for the way in which he has spoken.

Mr DAVIES: I will apologise to the Chair.

BILLS (9): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Superannuation and Family Benefits Act Amendment Bill.
2. Perth Mint Act Amendment Bill.
3. Public Authorities (Contributions) Bill.
4. Liquor Act Amendment Bill.
5. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
6. Stamp Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
Bills introduced, on motions by Sir Charles Court (Treasurer), and read a first time.
7. Rights in Water and Irrigation Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Neil (Minister for Water Supplies), and read a first time.
8. Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill.

9. Machinery Safety Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr Grayden (Minister for Labour and Industry), and read a first time.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Constitution Acts Amendment Bill.
2. Distressed Persons Relief Trust Act Amendment Bill.
3. Western Australian Institute of Technology Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Stephens (Chief Secretary), and returned to the Council with amendments.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AUTHORITY BILL

Third Reading

MR RIDGE (Kimberley—Minister for Lands) [5.18 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

During the second reading debate on this Bill, the member for Victoria Park asked some questions which I was not able to answer at that time. I undertook to provide the information at the third reading stage.

The first point raised by the honourable member related to the finance to establish the various institutions nominated in the Bill. Quite rightly, the honourable member drew my attention to this matter and I undertook to seek the information. I regret that it was not until late last Wednesday afternoon that confirmation of finance was received from the Commonwealth Government, and even this was a brief message with no breakdown of figures attached. However, I have been informed that once the breakdown of these figures is provided, the information will be conveyed to the honourable member as quickly as possible, and hopefully, before the debate is completed in another place. Broadly speaking, the figures stated by the member for Victoria Park in his second reading speech are correct.

The proposed budget for the centre, which includes the outpatient clinic at Ord Street, is as follows—

	\$
Furniture and equipment	11 250
Rent of premises	6 750
Salaries	81 161
Other operating costs	33 075
	<hr/> \$132 236

This is 90 per cent of the operating costs, and 75 per cent of the capital costs; the on-cost of \$20 087 will be an adjustment at the end of the financial year in line with the policy of the Commonwealth community health programme. The balance will be found by the State Treasury; that is, 10 per cent of the operating costs, and 25 per cent of the capital costs. These figures were quoted to the honourable member in answer to a question last week. Even at this late stage the finances for the Byford centre have yet to be resolved and the matter is still being considered by the Commonwealth Government. Unfortunately I cannot give the honourable member the exact figures of the contribution which will be made by the Commonwealth.

The member for Victoria Park suggested that perhaps a place could be found for a reformed alcoholic on the authority. At the time I stated that the Government was not prepared to agree with this, and the Minister for Health has now asked me to stress the fact that alcoholics will play a large and active part in the work of the authority. It is envisaged that their talents will be more profitably employed in direct contact with patients rather than acting as members on the authority which will deal mainly with administrative detail.

The member for Victoria Park also questioned the confidentiality of patients' records. I am assured that this confidentiality will be maintained. As the honourable member is aware, complete confidentiality is assured to patients who attend the VD clinic, and probably he knows that medical records in a hospital are never made public, even to employers of patients. It is envisaged that assurances will be built in the regulations. Without the Minister's approval, normal confidentiality which exists in doctor-patient relationships will be maintained.

The member for Victoria Park asked some questions about admissions and discharges at the centres. I am informed that the power given to the authority to decide who shall be admitted to any one of its facilities and who shall be discharged was felt to be essential. For example, the authority may decide not to admit a person suffering from brain damage, TB, or any other illness or condition which would render him unsuitable for admission to any of the facilities because of some influencing medical or behavioural factor. If a patient has already once discharged himself from a hospital, the authority would reserve the right to refuse him admission on a future occasion. This follows standard hospital procedures.

I believe I have answered the points raised by the honourable member. I commend the third reading of the Bill to the House

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [5.23 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for the courtesy he has extended to me, a courtesy we sometimes experience when Government Ministers obtain information which can be of assistance to us. Of course, he has indicated a deplorable lack of planning in regard to the financial aspects of this measure. This is reflected not only in the preparation of the Bill, but also in the action taken by the Government to allow St. John of God Hospital to become a teaching hospital. I will say more about that matter at a later date.

It is a pity in a matter of such importance that much greater attention was not given to working out the financial position in regard to the operation of the out-patients' clinic, the assessment centre, and the hospital.

Mr Ridge: But the request has been made to the Commonwealth. I indicated that we are waiting to find out what level of assistance the Commonwealth will provide for the Byford centre.

Mr DAVIES: The answers given to questions relating to the authority and the assessment centre clearly indicate that the figures for these facilities had not been worked out. The figure given for the clinic to be provided at Ord Street was \$132 236. However, I imagine the eventual figure may be quite different from the one we have been given. It does not behave us to be too critical, however, because we are aware that some action will be taken very quickly, and these unfortunate members of our community will be able to seek treatment. Money expended on these facilities will come back to the community in the way of additional manpower and resources when these people are cured of their complaint.

I was rather unhappy to hear that reformed alcoholics will be used only to deal with patients who are being treated rather than to help in any policy-making decision of the authority. I do not believe any statement I have made anywhere has received as much support from the community as did the brief statement that was buried in the back pages of *The West Australian* last Thursday. A considerable number of reformed alcoholics contacted me, and only one of these was looking for a job.

Mr Ridge: I think you are being a little unfair. The Bill provides for setting up committees to advise the authority and former alcoholics can be used in this capacity. It is not necessary to appoint a reformed alcoholic as a member of the authority.

Mr DAVIES: I believe it is important to appoint a reformed alcoholic to the policy-making section of the authority. I made the suggestion to the House as a passing comment, but in view of the amount of

support I have received for my suggestion, I believe it has a considerable amount of merit. I presume that the membership of the authority has been decided upon already, although I may be unfair in saying that. I hope there will be no political perks or political appointments, and that people appointed to the authority will have wide experience in matters relating to this subject. There is ample scope for a person of the category I have suggested to be appointed to the authority. I want it to be on record that I received many inquiries and suggestions after this article appeared in the Press.

As I said earlier, I congratulate the Government on this measure, but I think it could have done more homework in its preparation. A special committee was appointed several months ago on this aspect, and it is disappointing to see that the financial arrangements are so sketchy. It is understandable that if the State Government has no money it must rely on the Commonwealth.

Mr Ridge: Sketchy or not, and regardless of the Commonwealth, we would have set up facilities. The present State Government is just as determined as you were to see this proposal get off the ground, so that these people can be assisted in this way.

Mr DAVIES: This confirms my belief that much more homework should have been undertaken on the financing of the scheme. The Minister says that irrespective of the financial assistance from the Commonwealth, these facilities would have been established just as we would have done had we been returned.

Mr Ridge: I said, "just as determined as you were."

Mr DAVIES: This matter was in our policy speech. However, irrespective of who pays for it, I would have thought that more careful costing would have been undertaken and more details given to the House. I realise that the Minister here represents the Minister in another place, and I thank him for obtaining the information and for his courtesy. I support the third reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MONEY LENDERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Works) [5.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Money Lenders Act is regulatory in nature and is designed to protect borrowers from harsh and unconscionable terms of lending. The principal Act was enacted in 1912 and has been since amended on

seven occasions. The amendments generally had as their purpose the tightening up of registration procedures and contract formalities and the setting of a maximum rate of interest which could be charged to conform with the particular financial climate at the time.

The rate was fixed at 12½ per cent per annum in 1913 and in 1941 the maximum rate of interest which could be charged on loans was raised to 15 per cent per annum. Sections ensuring protection for short-term borrowers have been tightened up since the legislation was originally introduced, and in 1962 borrowings by incorporated companies and bodies corporate were removed from the restrictions of the principal Act excepting as regards the maximum rate of interest per annum which still applies.

The Act requires all persons who are engaged in the business of lending money to register annually as money lenders. It also requires persons who are not engaged in the business of lending money but who lend money at a rate of interest in excess of 12½ per cent per annum to effect registration. In addition, as I mentioned earlier, it prohibits any money lender from advancing funds at a rate of interest in excess of 15 per cent per annum.

Persons who are specifically exempted from the need to comply with the provisions of the Act are listed in section 3. Section 20A makes it an offence for any person to offer to borrow money at a rate of interest in excess of 12½ per cent per annum.

The remaining sections of the Act deal with definitions, the duties of money lenders, registration procedures, penalties, the rights of borrowers, and the like.

However, apart from varying the interest rate limits and introducing some other restrictive provisions, the legislation is in substantially the same form as when originally enacted.

Therefore, at this point I would mention that as commercial practices have changed considerably since 1912 the Act quite clearly requires a complete review to bring it into line with modern commercial and financial operations to provide the protection which it originally was designed to give. It is the Government's intention to make such a review with the object of bringing forward a Bill more suited to modern conditions.

Of necessity a review of this kind requires considerable research by legal officers and will take some considerable time to complete. Nevertheless, the Government intends to undertake such a review.

In the meantime, following the unprecedented increases in interest rates, it is necessary to take action to overcome difficulties which the present Act is causing, and for this reason this minimal measure has been placed before the House.

Representations have been received from many quarters requesting a revision of the existing rates of interest now stipulated in the legislation.

In brief, the provisions causing most of the current difficulties are those which impose a maximum limit of 15 per cent per annum, the requirements to register if a person lends money in excess of 12½ per cent per annum, and the restriction on offering to borrow at a rate of interest in excess of 12½ per cent per annum.

Currently in a number of situations persons are either contravening the Act or seeking exemption where appropriate. Others are finding it necessary to register, or are abandoning transactions or, rather unfortunately, are carrying them out in other States where the maximum limits and conditions have been amended in line with the current interest rates situation.

In considering this amending Bill, which provides for a lifting of the interest rate, members are reminded that when the interest rates which are currently prescribed in the principal Act were inserted by amendments in 1941, the long-term bond rate was 3½ per cent per annum, bank overdraft rates were 5½ per cent per annum, and general financial organisations lent at approximately 12 per cent per annum. Today, the corresponding rates are 9½ per cent, 11½ per cent, and an average rate of 19 per cent.

An examination of the rates imposed in similar legislation elsewhere in Australia reveals that in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory, there is no restriction on the maximum rate which may be charged on funds advanced by money lenders.

In Victoria, a maximum rate of 48 per cent is prescribed, and in Tasmania the maximum rate is 20 per cent per annum. In these other States there is no provision similar to that of our section 20A which makes it an offence to offer to borrow money at more than 12½ per cent per annum.

In current circumstances this makes it impossible for a person to offer to borrow money at more than 12½ per cent per annum without breaking the law and risking the application of a monetary penalty.

The major problems associated with this legislation which have arisen in recent times as a result of the increase in the level of interest rates have been the requirement to register as a money lender each year by all sorts of persons and the fact that our upper rate is causing moneys raised in this state to be lent in the Eastern States thus making it difficult for persons in Western Australia to obtain funds for commercial and private activities. This diversion of funds particularly is affecting the real estate and commercial market.

The restriction on offering to borrow at more than 12½ per cent has also meant that investable funds are finding their way into the Eastern States to the disadvantage of Western Australia.

Confidential information has been sought and obtained which discloses that money is being raised in this State but as a result of the current restrictions in the Money Lenders Act here is being invested in the Eastern States. It would also be equally acceptable to say that investors in this State are apparently investing in the Eastern States simply because of the advertising restrictions which currently exist in our Act.

For these reasons the Bill now before the House contains provisions to remove the specified rates of interest of 12½ per cent and 15 per cent and replace the statutory provisions with others which will allow appropriate rates of interest to be prescribed by regulation. This procedure will permit the prescription of interest rates which reflect the ruling market rates but, at the same time, the Bill ensures that Parliament, through this amending Bill, retains control of the maximum interest rate chargeable. Members would realise that this will be done by disallowance of the regulations.

It is the Government's intention, subject to approval of Parliament of the regulation, initially to prescribe a maximum rate of interest of 20 per cent so that this State will not be placed at a disadvantage compared with most other States of Australia.

The Bill also contains a provision to repeal section 20A and so remove the restriction on advertising to borrow at rates of interest in excess of 12½ per cent.

As earlier indicated, I emphasise that it is the Government's intention to review this legislation completely, and place the results of that review before Parliament in the form of a Bill. This review will enable such matters as the registration procedures, exemptions, and protection for borrowers to be examined thoroughly and brought into line with current needs.

Therefore this measure constitutes merely an interim step, introduced with a view to overcoming the difficulties which have arisen as a result of the substantial increase in the interest rates at the present time and pending the introduction of the Bill containing the results of the projected review. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bertram.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 17th October.

MR WATT (Albany) [5.39 p.m.]: In supporting this Bill, I join with other speakers from this side in complimenting the Treasurer on the Bill he has presented to the House, in spite of the difficult times he faces. I join with the Treasurer in complimenting the Treasury officials, who must have had a most difficult task and could perhaps be described as professional jugglers to produce a Budget in these days of rapidly escalating costs and shortage of funds from Canberra.

I do not suppose any of us is ever completely satisfied with Budgets, perhaps least of all the Treasurer but—to use a fairly well-worn cliché—"you cannot please all the people all the time". Of course, at the moment, newspaper comment on the state of the economy reads like something out of a horror story, with daily reports of apparently economically sound companies going to the wall. There is no doubt that this Government is caught up in an economic situation and a set of circumstances over which it has no control. For example, the week-end announcement of the financial problems of Landall Holdings Limited, which was blamed at least in part by the company chairman on "vicious attacks by State and Federal members of Parliament", may give some feelings of smug satisfaction to those responsible. Quite frankly, I cannot imagine how anyone could feel satisfaction at knowing that people were losing their jobs and other people were losing capital because of investments they had made.

Mr Bertram: Did Landalls produce evidence to support that statement?

MR WATT: Plenty of other statements have been made without supporting evidence, so that has nothing to do with it.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Does that mean that if we stand and make a speech about a company, that company will collapse?

The SPEAKER: Order!

MR WATT: To return to the Budget, by way of interjection on the honourable member for Toodyay the other day, the Leader of the Opposition said—

What do you think of the taking away of the water rate concessions from the country people that we gave them?

As a member representing a country electorate, I feel I should comment briefly on that interjection. It is well known that country water supplies incurred a loss last year of about \$20 million; of course, that loss must be absorbed and carried by the taxpayers. This year, with escalating costs, it is estimated that the deficit will be in the region of \$24 million.

I should like to refresh the memories of members on exactly what the Premier said in relation to increasing water rates. The Premier stated—

Annual losses on the operations of the Country Areas Water Supplies are

imposing a severe burden on the Budget. It is not unreasonable that the Metropolitan Water Board, whose operations are confined to the more economical terrain and distances of the metropolitan area should assist in meeting losses on country operations.

Members will recall that it is to be levied at a rate of 3 per cent. The Premier continued—

The present system of uniform country water charges was introduced on 1st January 1963 when the pay as you use scheme was adopted. Water rates were fixed at that time at 7.5 cents in the dollar for domestic consumers and 10 cents in the dollar for commercial properties.

In 1972, during the rural recession, the rates were reduced to 6 cents and 9 cents respectively as a means of assisting the depressed rural community.

The Government is no longer able to continue that concession and accordingly it is proposed to restore the rates to their former value from this year.

Mr Taylor: By the same logic, how could the former Government reduce rail freight rates to Albany to assist Albany during a period of depression?

MR WATT: In times of rural depression or recession, special measures are required to meet the situation. This cannot really be regarded as an increase; it is simply the restoration to a figure previously regarded as necessary, but which was reduced—and wisely—during a period of economic recession. There would not be too many commodities which have maintained the same price level since 1963.

In effect, there has not been an increase in the domestic water rate since 1963. I might add that while the Budget does not provide much reason for excitement, it does give an indication that the Government is prepared to help to some extent the people in the country regions.

Mr H. D. Evans: Will you fill in the details?

MR WATT: The honourable member will have his turn to speak later. Two or three proposals to assist the country people have been put forward by the Government in the Budget. I refer to the 3 per cent levy on the Metropolitan Water Board; this is an indirect way of helping the country water supplies.

Mr Taylor: Cut it out!

MR WATT: Another proposal is a levy of 3 per cent on the Fremantle Port Authority, as a means of assisting the regional ports to meet their high cost of operation. The Government has also established a principle which I have been actively promoting for some time of granting pay-roll tax concessions to selected industries as

an active means of encouraging the decentralisation of industry. Although as expressed in the Budget it is limited in scope, nevertheless an important principle has been espoused by the Government and included in the Budget.

Mr T. D. Evans: How much has been set down in the Budget?

Mr WATT: The honourable member knows that as well as I do.

Mr T. D. Evans: Tell us how much.

Mr WATT: I have already made the comment I intended to make.

Mr T. D. Evans: Tell us how much.

Mr WATT: I have noted that the member for Kalgoorlie does not pay particular attention to interjections from this side of the House, so on this occasion I do not think I should pay him the courtesy of replying to his interjection. I now turn to another area.

Mr T. H. Jones: You had better get off that subject. You are on shaky water.

Mr WATT: What other sort of water is there? I would now like to discuss the operations of the fire brigades, and the method of financing them. No doubt members are aware from the answers given to questions asked by other members and myself that the present method of maintaining the fire brigades is by contributions—12½ per cent from the Government, 12½ per cent from the local authority in which the particular brigade operates, and 75 per cent from the insurance companies.

Mr B. T. Burke: Bump up their contribution to 80 per cent!

Mr WATT: The reason for my concern is that I see this as being a discriminatory levy, because it applies only to a section of the community, while the benefits and protection afforded by the fire brigades are enjoyed by the total community. This is a discriminatory tax or levy which, I believe, is made even more harsh because it penalises people who are prudent and are responsible enough to insure against the peril of fire.

The method of financing fire brigades in Western Australia is much the same as that adopted by the other States, an exception being the Australian Capital Territory where the total cost is met by the Federal Government which, of course, has plenty of money available. Perhaps that Government enjoys the benefits of inflation, rather than to suffer from it.

For the year 1969-70 the cost of running the fire brigades was just over \$2 million, and the declared premiums of the insurance companies totalled approximately \$6 million. That ratio, though fair, was just tolerable, and if the 75 per cent paid by the insurance companies were set on that basis it would approximate 25 per cent of the declared premiums.

In the 1973-74 year the contribution by the insurers rose to 38 per cent. The current Budget for 1974-75 shows the cost of maintaining the fire brigades to be slightly in excess of \$10 million, and the insurers will be required to pay over 60 per cent of their premium income in order to maintain them.

Mr Taylor: This was as a result of a Bill passed by both Houses of Parliament.

Mr WATT: Be that as it may, the declared premium refers to the actual fire insurance premiums, plus any levies that are made for direct fire services. The indirect nature of this levy has created a position where I believe very few of the people of the State realise that, in fact, the fire brigade is financed in this manner, and they assume that it is a State instrumentality financed by the Government.

The last increase, which was a very considerable one, commenced as from the 1st July; and the insurance companies have now decided to express their premiums as far as it is practical and actuarially possible to show the fire brigade component as a distinct and separate charge, so that the insuring public will be able to see where their premiums are going.

At present the only direct impost by insurance companies is a 15 per cent levy on fire and loss-of-profits premiums. The premium fund has absorbed the balance. The financial burden of the fire brigades falls on a very narrow section of the community; namely, as I mentioned before, those who are prudent enough to insure against the risk of fire.

Those who are not insured—and they include the Federal Government itself for the greater part, as the Minister stated last week—enjoy the security provided by a completely free service. I understand that something in the order of 80 per cent of calls made by the fire brigades—and I would stand correction on that figure—are to attend grass fires, with little or no involvement of insured property. These grass fires, if not quickly brought under control, are of course a danger to the whole community; and the cost should be borne by the whole community.

In every other country of the world, except Greece and New Zealand, the Government foots the bill. Even in these two countries the insurance contribution is less than 50 per cent of the total cost. Obviously, as fire brigade costs rise and progressively outstrip declared insurance premiums, an already inequitable burden will become even less tolerable, until the system breaks down because too few people are called on to carry too much of the cost.

In the long run the cost of running the fire brigades can only be funded out of Consolidated Revenue. Such a suggestion would probably give the Treasurer a few

more headaches, and I am under no illusions as to the difficulties and problems which this would create. However, as it is the general practice in most parts of the world, it is clearly the fairest and most practical approach.

I understand the Federal Government has indicated that it would be receptive to suggestions that grants be made to States where certain public services have been affected by inflation. With its high labour content, the cost of running the fire brigades certainly falls into this category, and this could perhaps form the basis for negotiation between the State and the Commonwealth.

I now wish to turn to another matter of concern to my electorate of Albany.

Mr B. T. Burke: The member for the insurance companies!

Mr WATT: The honourable member has been showing concern himself. This matter concerns not only the Albany electorate, but I would assume other country electorates as well. It relates to the problem of transporting fresh fruit and vegetables to the country. In Albany there is a wholesale fruit and vegetable market which buys and sells fruit and vegetables from and to Perth, as well as locally.

However, those engaged in the buying and selling of fruit and vegetables are not permitted to transport the produce by road to or from Perth. Whilst we must take a responsible attitude towards the maintenance of the State railway system, I do not believe any section of the community ought to be placed at a disadvantage.

When produce is purchased at the Metropolitan Markets it must be sent by rail to Albany; and this results in the produce being handled six times. If it were allowed to be transported by road, it would be handled twice. We can well understand that, because of the delicate and fragile nature of the produce, each time it is handled a little more becomes damaged.

Because of such damage the present method of rail transport results in approximately 10 per cent loss through the produce being bruised and damaged. As against that, produce which is transported by road suffers little or no damage. The particular company concerned spends about \$5 000 each week at the Metropolitan Markets on the purchase of fruit and vegetables; and a 10 per cent loss means that the housewives at Albany have to pay an extra \$500 a week to offset that loss.

The Albany market is also required to keep and to maintain two trucks—one in Perth to load produce onto rail, and the other in Albany to cart the produce from the railway depot. If road transport of this produce were permitted, one truck would be sufficient. The necessity to maintain two trucks imposes an extra cost on the housekeeping bill of the people of Albany.

The occasion frequently arises where there is an oversupply of some produce, such as lettuce, cabbage, and strawberries in the Albany district, but none of these can be transported by road, except by the grower himself. If the market at Albany is permitted to cart this produce to Perth, and to backload with other supplies to Albany, it will mean a considerable saving to the people of the district.

The wholesale market in Albany supplies a considerable region stretching from Walpole in the west to Esperance in the east, and northwards to Kojonup and Katanning. Perhaps the greatest difficulty is found in the fact that the people of Albany just do not get fresh fruit and vegetables. In many cases it takes three days or more for the produce to get onto the shelves in the shops. If the produce has to be sent to Esperance, it is conceivable that an extra day is required. By that time the fruit and vegetables can no longer be described as fresh. Even a saving of one day could be quite significant.

So, the problem is very real. Whereas the people of the metropolitan area can buy fruit and vegetables, displayed on the shelves of suburban stores, within a few hours of the produce being purchased from the market, the country dwellers not only receive an inferior product but must also pay far more for it. In this regard I intend to make a submission to the Minister for Transport so that some action can be taken to relieve this situation, and to remove an unfair discrimination against country dwellers.

Another area of concern on which I now wish to focus attention has caused a great deal of anxiety and, in many cases, a great deal of financial stress to certain people in Albany, and quite obviously to other country residents as well. I refer to the difficulties which are experienced and the disadvantages which are encountered by people, when a member of their family is required to receive specialist medical attention. Members of many families in the Albany district have to make regular, and often quite frequent trips to Perth for such treatment. These people have a basic human pride which prevents them from seeking any sort of assistance. Generally they exhaust what savings they have—which are often quite meagre—before they make an approach to the Department for Community Welfare for assistance.

The department has only very limited funds upon which to draw, and it generally assists when a fairly high degree of hardship is demonstrated. Usually these people are persuaded to apply for assistance from the department through pressure by their friends and relatives because of their financial desperation. Each specialist appointment involves, in most cases, the cost of travel to and from Perth; a second-class rail fare with sleeper which costs about \$25; accommodation in most cases for two persons or more for a few nights in Perth;

subsequent loss of time and wages; and sundry other expenses while they are away from home. All this additional expense must be added to the cost of the treatment itself.

I would like to quote three or four instances of the kind I am talking about. The first concerns a mother with a four-year-old child who was injured in a car accident. She has to take the child to Perth regularly—at least once a month—to receive special neurological attention, and also to visit the Pyrron Training Centre at Belmont.

Because of the nature of the injury, and the degree of retardation resulting from the injury, the mother has been obliged to purchase a car for herself to make the regular trips to Perth. Public transport would be too much of a trial for both the mother and other passengers. The length of stay in Perth, in this case, can be up to a week requiring accommodation for the mother and the child.

In another case a husband has to receive treatment from a psychiatrist at Hollywood. It is necessary for his wife to travel with him and the stay can last for several days. That involves travel and accommodation for two adults. That man is receiving regular treatment.

Another case concerns a young man in his early 20s who has to attend the spinal clinic at the Shenton Park Annexe of the Royal Perth Hospital. He suffers from a spinal injury and he has to be accompanied by an adult when he attends for treatment. His treatment is regular which necessitates overnight accommodation.

Another case concerns a young man with a neck injury. He is in a similar position to the person I have just mentioned because he requires regular treatment and overnight accommodation.

A more tragic case concerns a young child who requires regular and frequent trips to Princess Margaret Hospital for treatment of leukemia. The mother has to take the child to the hospital and accommodation sometimes extends over several days.

These are just some of the problems faced by many who live in the country. Those people are suffering as a result of the embarrassing financial drain on their resources. People who live in the city have only to catch a bus, a train, or a taxi in order to attend their place of treatment. The cost could be only a dollar or two whereas a country dweller would be doing extremely well to get out of a similar trip for treatment for an amount of \$100.

Because of the huge cost of providing specialised medical services in areas where there are small populations I accept as logical that it is not practicable or possible to locate specialised services in those areas. However, by the same token, it should be the responsibility of the Government to assist country families to ob-

tain the same facilities for health services as a right, and not be treated as mendicants.

The saving in costs by not having specialised medical services in country areas should outweigh the cost involved in providing assistance to families in need. As I mentioned previously, a fund exists from which limited financial assistance can be given which, of necessity, is determined on a needs basis. The Department for Community Welfare, at its discretion, may also provide a rail warrant but this is done only where extreme hardship can be demonstrated.

Aborigines are in the same position except that they can obtain accommodation at Bennett House, in Bennett Street. I understand this matter was aired on the ABC current affairs programme, "This Day Tonight", and although I did not see the programme according to reports it was very well presented. The programme focussed attention on a very real problem which exists for some people.

I suggest there are three areas in which assistance should be given. Firstly, a hostel should be provided somewhere within the city where people can stay at no cost—or at minimal cost—while they receive treatment. Of course, many people do not require accommodation because they stay with relations or friends in the city. However, where there is a genuine need—which could be verified by a doctor or the hospital administrator concerned—accommodation ought to be made available at little or no cost.

Secondly, more financial and practical assistance should be made available. For instance, facilities should be provided for persons who have physical disabilities and they should be reimbursed for legitimate costs involved in travelling to Perth.

Thirdly, an approach should be made to the Commonwealth Government for a tax concession to be allowable for bona fide expenses incurred in seeking medical attention, again, perhaps, to be verified by the doctor or hospital administrator. I have discussed this matter with the Minister for Community Welfare and he has assured me he is concerned about the matter, and it is under consideration. I hope some form of relief can be found, and I will keep in touch with the Government to ensure that the matter is not overlooked. There is evidence to suggest that in some cases necessary treatment is being withheld or curtailed because the cost involved has become an embarrassment to the family.

That is all I wish to say at this stage, except that I support the Bill.

MR CARR (Geraldton) [6.06 p.m.]: The Court Government has been in power for some 6½ months and I believe the time has come to commence a judgment of its performance. During my remarks I shall

refer to one aspect of the performance of this Government: its attitude in relation to country people. In my opinion the performance by the Government has been disappointing.

Prior to the election the Premier posed as a knight in shining armour, as has already been said by a number of speakers. He was the man who would wave the magic wand and put all things right and solve all problems. If the Premier could be classed as "the knight in shining armour" perhaps we could have described country people as "the damsel in distress".

It would be fair comment to say that many country dwellers are in distress and always have been in distress. The country people face a greater number of problems than do their counterparts in the city.

Some of the problems, I believe, are within the powers of various Governments to solve. I suggest that some solutions are not within the powers of any Government, at least in the short term. The first problem is that of isolation which is experienced by most country people. I refer to the farmer's wife who does not see any person other than her family for, perhaps, a week. Also, the wife of the railway worker or other country employee. The wives and children of isolated families face problems which are not faced by city dwellers, and I mention their distance from relations living in the city, and their distance from entertainment venues and major sporting events.

A second problem is that of limited facilities, and I refer to communications generally, the lack of bus services in many country towns—where many people are forced to reside some distance from the centres of the towns—and lack of medical facilities. One of the most important needs of towns in country areas is that of improved medical services.

I was very pleased to hear the previous speaker discussing the problems of those who require specialised medical services which are available in the city, and those children in country areas who require remedial education. Indeed, this is a problem which has been drawn to the attention of many people living in country areas.

On Wednesday, the 11th September last, I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare if he would detail all the allowances and concessions which were available to country people who had to travel to Perth for specialised or emergency medical treatment, or for remedial education. The Minister, in his long reply, said that some financial assistance was available for extremely needy cases, and people facing considerable financial hardship.

Whilst that assistance is most acceptable it still does not embrace the middle-income earner—and perhaps the tradesman—who works in a country town. Such a person

who requires specialised treatment must be much worse off than his city counterpart.

A further problem experienced by country people is the lack of opportunity for children when they leave school. There is a continual drain of people from country areas to the city. Those people are usually seeking specialised jobs or tertiary education.

Another problem associated with the country is the cost of travel to and from the city. Associated with transport costs is the related problem of additional freight. There needs to be an examination of the mark-up on freight. Of course, another problem, which is a Federal matter, is that of sales tax on freight.

Industries located in country areas also face problems. Firstly, workers receive an irregular income resulting from market fluctuations or seasonal variations. Of course, a major problem faced by industry in country areas is the cost-price squeeze where the rise in the cost of production is certainly faster than the increase in world prices for products.

A sixth major problem is that of alienation—the city versus the country. This is not a new problem although it has been aggravated in recent times. Various people have placed the blame in different directions. I suggest one of the main reasons for the alienation is that the leaders of the farming community, as distinct from the farming people generally—and the Liberal and Country Party political leaders—are deliberately creating a division between the city and country people. I believe they are doing it for a malicious reason.

Mr McPharlin: I would like the member to substantiate that statement.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McPharlin: To make a statement such as that the member should back it up with facts.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Geraldton.

Mr CARR: I would argue that there is an important division in the Australian society, separate from the city versus the country division about which we hear so much. I believe the policy of alienation is to overshadow and camouflage the real division which, on the one hand, is the force of wealth, power, and privilege versus, on the other hand, the great bulk of the Australian people. That includes a large number of people who live in country areas, and includes the ordinary decent farming community.

I would argue that the rich, the powerful, and the wealthy among the pastoralists and farming people are deliberately putting forward the alienation argument to sway the ordinary people living in country areas away from those living in the city.

Mr Rushton: One does not have to be rich or poor to be decent.

Mr CARR: This is the argument of the country versus the city. In case members think this is entirely my own idea, and entirely my own opinion coming from my own mind, I intend to quote a member of their own party who has similar views?

Mr Stephens: Could you find only one?

Mr CARR: I refer to the new Federal Liberal member for Canning (Mr Bungey) and the remarks he made during his maiden speech when he criticised the farmer leaders and organisations for their attitude to the economy.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr CARR: Before the tea suspension I was discussing the problems faced by the rural community, with particular emphasis on the problem of alienation between city and country people. I was about to quote from a speech by the new Liberal Party member for Canning in the Federal House (Mr Melville Bungey). He supports my claim that the division between city and country people has been largely aggravated by the farming and Country Party leaders. Under the heading "Attack on rural men by new MP" we find the following—

A WA Opposition backbencher has criticised farming leaders and organisations for their attitude to the economy.

A little further on the article states—

"Too often farmers rely on the views of 18th Century French philosophers and embryo economists known as the physiocrats," he said.

"The physiocrats saw land as the ultimate source of wealth, and agriculture as the only fruitful labour.

"Trade, commerce and industry were regarded as sterile, merely transforming the products of agriculture."

Mr Bungey said that by promoting such views Australian farm leaders were ignoring the interdependence of all sections necessary for the development of a strong, vital Australian economy.

"The resources of farmer organisations can be used much more effectively," he said.

In agreeing wholeheartedly with what Mr Bungey had to say, I would make only two comments. Firstly, he emphasised that he was not speaking about all farmers, but about farming leaders, and I would stress this distinction. Mr Bungey was making his maiden speech which indicates, of course, that he was not speaking off the top of his head, but that a considerable amount of thought and preparation had gone into what he had to say.

It does not really matter who has caused this division or alienation between the various sections of the community. What

is important is that it exists, and that there is a responsibility on all sections of the community to recognise this interdependence and to work in co-operation with all sectors of the Australian community.

Having outlined the problems faced by country people, I would like to make one point clear: I am not one who believes that country people have an inalienable right to something better or to have some special advantage over all the other sectors of the community, but surely they are entitled to have conditions as equitable as possible to those provided throughout the rest of the community.

Mr Watt: Hear, hear!

Mr CARR: I should say that no Government can solve overnight all the problems faced by country people.

In the remainder of my speech I want to examine the contributions made by the Western Australian Government and the Australian Government towards the welfare of country people. I would first refer to the performance of the State Government. We find that freight charges and fares have been put right up. We have heard the economics of this argued; that, in terms of cost, it was something that had to happen. I would argue that a Government which is concerned with the welfare of country people should be prepared to forgo the extra revenue to help close the difference in the cost of living in the city and country areas.

Sir Charles Court: Do you know what your Prime Minister told us today?

Mr H. D. Evans: We are not talking about him.

Mr Bryce: You are only making excuses.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir Charles Court: Have you heard what Mr Dunstan said in the last 24 hours?

Mr CARR: I would indicate that water rates and charges have also been put right up.

Mr H. D. Evans: And what this will do to irrigation is nobody's business.

Mr CARR: These water rates and charges are higher than those prevailing in the city. Irrespective of the costs involved, this is inexcusable. How can any Government that is concerned about country people, or claims to be; that is concerned about decentralisation, or claims to be; that is concerned about social justice, or claims to be, be prepared to allow these basic costs of essential commodities to differ so greatly between the country and city sectors of our community?

It is also worth noting that the water rate concession of 6c in the dollar—which was introduced in 1972 by the Tonkin Labor Government as a concession to country people—has been removed and raised by this Government to 7.5c in the dollar.

In continuing to discuss water rates, I would indicate that in Geraldton a series of calculations have been made by the reporters of *The Geraldton Guardian* who have published a fairly extensive article in the local paper analysing the position and, having done so they have come up with the conclusion that a typical State Housing Commission home which uses 90 000 gallons of water—and this would be average—has had its combined rates and charges put up by 36 per cent. As members know, of course, if one used more than 90 000 gallons of water, the picture becomes even worse.

Mr McPharlin: What has caused all that?

Mr CARR: The matter which I will now mention affects all people—and I refer to the increase in motor vehicle licenses—but it particularly affects country people because of their great necessity to own a motor vehicle; this is a more important factor in the country than it is in the city. The country people have no handy bus service and many of them see the need for a second car. This requirement is greater in the country than it is in the city.

Mr Clarko: That is a good argument for a fuel subsidy.

Mr CARR: That decision has had very little effect in country towns and the honourable member knows it.

Mr Clarko: The average price of petrol in Australia today is \$1.10.

Mr CARR: I would argue that the proposed increases in license fees are particularly hard on country pensioners; those pensioners who live in the country areas and who need to get to the centre of the town for various reasons, and who, having no bus services, have a great need for a car—it is tremendously important that they should have a car.

Mr Clarko: Get the Federal Government to raise the pensions.

Mr CARR: The Federal Labor Government has done more for pensioners than has any other Government.

Mr B. T. Burke: And the Premier is going to abolish travel concessions for pensioners.

Sir Charles Court: That is not true and never has been true.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CARR: I turn now to the question of prices. Most country people regard the mark-up for prices as being excessive and I feel this is correct.

Mr Sodeman: Could you give us some examples?

Mr CARR: I quoted some examples in my speech on the Address-in-Reply debate.

Mr Sodeman: And I queried them at the time.

Mr CARR: I also used the avenue of asking questions to see what the Government proposed to do in this matter and I made suggestions as to what I thought the Government should do on the question of prices in the country. On the 11th September I asked the Minister for Consumer Affairs the following question—

Does the Consumer Protection Bureau or the Department of Consumer Affairs have the power to examine price differentials between metropolitan and country prices in order to determine whether the extent of markups for freight is justified?

The answer was fairly lengthy but the first sentence reads—

The Consumer Protection Bureau and/or the Consumer Affairs Council has no statutory power to examine prices.

I also asked—

If "No" to (1), will he introduce amendments to the necessary legislation to provide this power?

The Minister replied, "Not at this stage."

Most importantly I want to discuss again the question of an inquiry into country costs; a matter I raised in my maiden speech. This can be found in the paper-back copy of *Hansard* No. 3 at page 309. I will read the relevant portion of what I said. It is as follows—

Recently some of my political opponents were quoted as initiating an inquiry into costs to rural producers. I would like to quote from *The Geraldton Guardian* of the 4th July, 1974, which states—

A group of W.A. Government backbenchers will press for a full-scale inquiry into the costs of goods and services vital to primary producers.

The Chairman of the Parliamentary Country Party Mr R. C. Old said the party had asked Mr McPharlin, the Deputy Premier, and its Parliamentary Leader, to discuss the matter with the Premier, Sir Charles Court.

Country Party members want a select committee appointed to make the inquiry soon after the new session of State Parliament opens at the end of the month.

The month referred to was July. I have waited very patiently for this proposal to come forward, but I have now just about given up hope that it will. I would like to know where this idea got lost. Perhaps the member for Katanning may not have passed it on to his Country Party leader; though I would doubt that, because he is a new member for that country electorate and he would be keen and sincere to do all he could for his electors. Perhaps it was the Leader of the Country Party who failed to pass the matter on to the Premier;

though I would doubt that, because having newly come to power and being the party representative of the country people, I am sure he would be keen to see the country people provided with this inquiry. Perhaps—and this is possibly the most likely result—it reached the Premier and was knocked on the head at that point.

Sir Charles Court: Which one are you talking about?

Mr CARR: The suggestion of an inquiry into country costs which was made by a group of Government back-bench members. I should have thought that this white knight in shining armour would have set up the necessary committee to help the damsel in distress; in this case the country people. It is possible that the shining armour is, however, now a little tarnished or rusty.

Mr Nanovich: You are now indulging in muckraking.

Mr CARR: I would suggest the performance of this knight in shining armour does not come out too well so far as the country people are concerned. With apologies to the Peter and Gordon song I would say that the knight in rusty armour has rusted up inside and that he is a non-performer as far as the country people are concerned.

Sir Charles Court: We performed before you ever thought of entering Parliament.

Mr CARR: I would like to spend a little more time on this question of an inquiry into the costs in country areas. It will be recalled when I spoke previously on this matter that I suggested the inquiry should be widened to consider all country costs. I have had further thoughts on the matter and my impression now is that a wider concept should be implemented to enable us to examine all aspects of living in country areas; not merely prices and costs. I believe that a permanent advisory committee should be set up—perhaps as a regions commission—along the lines of the Australian Government's Cities Commission, or its Schools Commission, to examine all aspects of life in the country areas of this State.

I suggest this regions commission would have two main functions: First, it would examine all aspects of non-metropolitan living in general terms. This would deal with such problems as isolation and how it should be overcome; the problem of transport, travel costs, and all the related problems of costs, prices, mark-ups for freight, sales tax on freight, and travel for medical, remedial, and educational reasons.

Mr Sibson: What about a fuel subsidy?

Mr CARR: Why not? I do not for one moment say that any particular Government is more perfect than any other, because that would be quite wrong. The commission I have in mind would also examine the problem of alienation and how it should be overcome.

The second of the two functions of the regions commission would be to include regional subdivisions within the commission's inquiries, and to examine all problems relevant to the particular areas of this State.

These would include such problems as the shortage of medical facilities which may prevail in a particular area, the shortage of educational facilities in a particular area, and the problem of communications, such as bus services, in a particular area; and they would include problems in respect of welfare, the environment, and industry—whether it be primary or secondary—in particular areas.

I would make two brief comments in respect of this. I would argue that these regional subdivisions should be allowed to emerge as far as possible naturally from the community; and I would argue there should be as much co-operation as possible between the regional subdivisions set up by the regions commission, and that there should be as much co-operation and liaison as possible with the Australian Government Department of Urban and Regional Development.

Mr Nanovich: You are trying to prevent home ownership.

Mr CARR: The member for Toodyay is a long way from what I am talking about.

Mr Sibson: Go across and talk to the Prime Minister about this.

Mr CARR: A great deal is being said about the Federal Government, and I think it would be fair for me to make a few observations in this respect. The Australian Government has been blamed for everything which is wrong in this State. It is the perennial and complete excuse so far as the Government of this State is concerned. I would like to balance the picture a little by listing some of the benefits I see as having accrued to country people as a result of having the Whitlam ALP Government in Canberra.

Mr Nanovich: That would be nil.

Mr CARR: Firstly, with regard to pensioners someone said a while ago they had not received any increase in real terms. I can assure members that pensioners have received an increase in their pension of approximately 50 per cent since the election of the Whitlam Government. Further increases are to come. This is following the principle of the Australian Government that the pension be tied as soon as is practicably possible to the figure of 25 per cent of the average weekly earnings. The means test has been abolished in respect of people over the age of 75 years, it will be abolished next April for people over the age of 70, and there is a commitment that it will be abolished in respect of people over the age of 65.

Let us consider the question of grants for elderly people's homes. Prior to the 1973 Australian Budget the position was

that if a local committee provided \$1 the State Government and the Australian Government would each provide \$1 on a matching grants basis; that is, the local committee had to provide one-third of the capital cost of constructing the elderly persons' home.

In the 1973 Australian Budget this arrangement was increased to \$2 Australian Government per \$1 State Government per \$1 local committee, which meant that the local committee was then required to find one-quarter of the capital cost of the construction of the building. In this year's Australian Budget the arrangement was altered further so that the Australian Government now provides \$4 per \$1 State Government per \$1 local committee, meaning in fact that the proportion of the capital cost which must be provided by the local committee has been reduced from one-third to one-sixth.

Do these policies benefit country people; or do no pensioners live in country areas?

I turn now to education. Massive grants have been made by the Australian Government for new buildings to replace temporary structures. I recall going to the Geraldton High School in 1957 and being told that the prefabricated buildings were temporary. They are still there; the only difference is that now there are more of them. The Australian Government is providing funds for the replacement of such temporary buildings.

Library-resource centres are being provided with funds from the Australian Government. Members will recall the previous position in which only those schools which had a parents and citizens' association rich enough to provide a library-resource centre received one; but now we find large numbers of these facilities are being established in primary schools throughout the State.

I would make one criticism in this respect; it is not a criticism of the actions of the Australian Government but a criticism of the State Government in that a tremendous implication is being put across that these library-resource centres are being provided by the State Government.

Sir Charles Court: Whose money is it?

Mr CARR: The implication is that they are being provided by the State Government whereas in reality the Australian Government is providing the money. On the 11th September I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Education to detail where the funds for educational construction work in Geraldton were coming from, and I found the library-resource centre at the Bluff Point Primary School—the centre is valued at \$43 000—is being provided out of Commonwealth funds.

Sir Charles Court: Yes, but whose money is it?

Mr CARR: I also found that at the Rangeway Primary School a library-resource centre at a cost of \$42 447 is being provided out of Commonwealth funds.

Mr Nanovich: Where does the Commonwealth get the money from?

Mr Bryce: From the same place as you get yours.

Mr Nanovich: From the State.

Mr Bryce: They have as much right as you have to distribute it; the only difference is that they distribute it better.

Mr CARR: Let me continue with my remarks in respect of education. Last week a couple of members from the Government parties were not impressed when I mentioned the matter of isolated children's allowances. I can assure them that, although they were not impressed, the people in the Geraldton region do appreciate these allowances. Certainly those people who have to take their children to the Abrolhos Islands for part of each year appreciate the allowances.

Detailing the allowances briefly, we find \$350 is available free of means test, a further \$350 is available subject to a means test, and a further \$304 is available in special circumstances.

Mr Ridge: How many have applied for money beyond the first \$350? How many meet the requirements?

Sir Charles Court: You have to be a pauper to qualify.

The SPEAKER: One interjection at a time, please.

Mr CARR: I wish now to turn to pre-school education. In 1972 Western Australia trailed most of the Australian States in this field. Since then it has received some very large grants from the Australian Government, including \$4 million in the recent Budget. I would argue that pre-school education is a particularly important part of a child's upbringing. I was very pleased to hear the speech of the member for Karrinyup last week or the week before in another debate, in respect of which I will make a contribution later, and I agree largely with his comments. I am sure he would agree with me that pre-school education is tremendously important in that, as distinct from formal education, it is largely a socialising experience in which children from different backgrounds are brought together to participate and share with each other and to gain the experience of mixing with one another.

Mr Clarko: Hear, hear!

Mr CARR: I am sure the member for Karrinyup would also agree that children who live in country areas in most cases experience more isolation than children in city areas, and that pre-school education is of even greater importance to them. I

would conclude on this note: Do the policies of the Australian Government in respect of education benefit country people; or do no children live in country areas?

On the subject of health, the Australian Government has provided considerable funds for community health centres. Two such centres are presently under construction in Busselton and Mandurah, and three more are proposed for South Hedland, Geraldton, and a Perth suburb which, I understand, has yet to be decided upon.

This information was provided in answer to a question asked by the member for Victoria Park on the 18th September. The answer also advised that 75 per cent of the capital funds required for the construction of the centres is to be contributed by the Australian Government, and 25 per cent is to be contributed by the State Government.

In the matter of running costs of these community health centres, 90 per cent is to be provided by the Federal Government, and 10 per cent by the State Government. That information was provided in the Legislative Council on the 8th October in answer to a question asked by the Hon. J. C. Tozer. A couple of other interesting points came out on that day. We hear so much about money being provided by the Australian Government for expenditure in Western Australia, with the State having no say in how it is spent. We have in this Government some Ministers who give me the impression they would prefer to receive only a small amount of money, so long as it is in their megalomaniacal control, rather than receive large amounts of money which they are not able to control.

Mr Tozer asked a very long question in the Legislative Council on the 8th October, two parts of which I will quote because I think they are particularly important. The first part is as follows—

- (2) Who will be responsible for the conceptual planning and the preparation of plans and specifications?

The reply was—

- (2) Medical Department planning section and the principal architect.

The next part I wish to quote was—

- (9) Who will be responsible for the management of the centre?

To which the reply was—

- (9) The Medical Department.

Here we have the Australian Government providing three-quarters of the capital funds required and 90 per cent of the running costs, and allowing the State to administer the centres in toto. Yet we hear about this terrible power grab from Canberra.

I want to make one further point: In this particular case, while it may appear as if the State Government provided the initiative, in fact the decentralised attitude of the Australian Government advanced a step, because the original initiatives for this proposal came from a combination of the various local authorities in the Geraldton region and the secretary of the regional hospital. They combined to prepare a submission which led to the arrangement I have outlined.

I realise these centres are only a start. The backlog of shortages of medical facilities in country areas is still great, but I am sure the residents of the South Hedland, Geraldton, Mandurah, and Busselton regions are most appreciative.

Mr Shalders: You ask them in Mandurah. They are really appreciative!

Mr CARR: I would mention now the matter of income tax cuts announced in the recent Australian Budget. These tax cuts will help all people with a taxable income of under \$10 000. I would ask: Do these income tax cuts help country people, or do members opposite dare to tell me that there are no people in country areas who receive taxable incomes of less than \$10 000?

Mr Clarko: That is dishonest—

Mr CARR: It is not dishonest.

Mr Clarko: —because their wages will rise to such a figure that they will pay more income tax this year than they paid last year.

Mr CARR: That does not alter the fact that large cuts have been made. I turn now to the problem of communications—

Sir Charles Court: Don't you know that the taxation estimate of the Commonwealth is that it will receive an increase of 40 per cent?

Mr CARR: —and I would refer members to the radio coverage available to people in country areas. It has been announced that 28 new ABC radio stations will be established throughout Australia, and most of them will be established in country areas. Surely this will also help to improve the communications problems in country areas.

I would like now to make brief mention of the regional employment development scheme. Here the Australian Government has acted quickly to provide jobs in country areas which have been hit by unemployment.

Mr Rushton: Cut that out.

Mr CARR: In spite of some scandalous accusations made by the Minister for Local Government, full use will be made of these funds.

I would make a brief comment on probate duty reform. I think members on both sides of the House would be aware that in addition to the Tonkin Labor

Government making probate reforms during its term of office, further reforms were made in the last Federal Budget by increasing the value of property which can pass from one person to another without attracting probate.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the Australian Labor Government is not playing favourites, but is in fact trying to do all it can do to look after the ordinary, average Australian people, wherever they may live; and that includes very large numbers of people who live in the country areas of Western Australia.

Mr Rushton: Take your tongue out of your cheek.

MR YOUNG (Scarborough) [7.59 p.m.]: The debate at hand is in respect of the Budget brought down by the Treasurer—his first Budget presented to this Parliament. It never fails to amaze me how we in this place strut so much with our own probably undeserved self-importance. Any one who has ever been the Treasurer of this State—and that includes four members in this House—the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Kalgoorlie, the member for Greenough, and the present Premier—would agree that in the framing of a Budget he has been as hamstrung as any person could ever be in the presentation of any budget, whether it be a personal budget or one of great significance.

It never fails to amaze me that we attach so much self-importance to ourselves and enshroud ourselves with this mantle of importance; and yet we have never really in the history of the State since Federation had very much to do with the framing of our own Budgets.

I would like some of the members of the House to take their minds back to a speech that was made by the member for Boulder-Dundas—who, I am sorry to say, is not with us at the moment. It was his maiden speech made in 1971, and I will quote some of it, if I may. He said—

The nation does not consist of the Commonwealth Parliament, Commonwealth Government, Commonwealth politicians, and the Commonwealth bureaucracy. It consists of all the people who are born in the six States of Australia.

He went on to quote from a book written by the late Sir Walter Murdoch with whom I am sure every member of this Chamber is acquainted. The book was on the life of Alfred Deakin, in regard to whom Sir Walter said this—

As the power of the purse in Great Britain established by degrees the authority of the Commons, it will ultimately establish in Australia the authority of the Commonwealth. The rights of the States has been fondly supposed to be safeguarded by the Constitution. It left them legally free, but financially bound to be the chariot wheels of the central Government.

The member for Boulder-Dundas then went on to say—

"Bound to the chariot wheels"; Do members like to think of themselves running like prisoners of war behind a Roman chariot? I do not.

Mr T. D. Evans: This speech has only become quotable by you since the 2nd December, 1972. I have regard to your maiden speech, too.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Boulder-Dundas was on to quote from Sir Walter's book as follows—

Their need will be its opportunity. The less populous will first succumb. Those smitten by drought or similar misfortune will follow, and finally even the greatest and most prosperous will, however reluctantly, be brought to heel.

In his own words, the member for Boulder-Dundas then said—

"Brought to heel"! Like a dog! We are worse than that. Not only have we been brought to heel, but we are sitting on our haunches and begging as well. The Commonwealth has trained the dogs to beg. As an Australian, I am sick of begging and sick of seeing money squandered on the most idiotic ventures and military exercises whilst it is urgently needed for every real and necessary facility in a civilised community.

Mr Skidmore: That is quite all right.

Mr YOUNG: It is; I could not agree more. Might I add that it applies to all Commonwealth Governments, of both political colours. As a reminder to the member for Kalgoorlie, as I said in my maiden speech—

We have been a Federation for 70 years, and for 60 of those years a series of Commonwealth Governments of both political colours have, by a number of different manoeuvres—many times validated in the High Court of Australia—gradually eroded the financial powers of the States to such an extent that State Treasuries are now merely pay offices of the Commonwealth Government.

We are, and we always have been.

Mr Skidmore: As a socialist, I see nothing wrong with that.

Mr YOUNG: In that case, I would think that obviously the member for Swan has a completely different philosophy from that of the member for Boulder-Dundas.

Mr Bertram: There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr YOUNG: No, I am not saying there is anything wrong with that. However, for the member for Swan to agree with the words used by the member for Boulder-Dundas, as he did a moment ago, is an admission by him that this is completely different from his philosophy.

Mr Skidmore: I do not change my philosophy that fast.

Mr YOUNG: I do not always despise all the things Opposition members have said in this House. I agree with some of the wise statements made by members on the other side of the Chamber. The only trouble is that they have been only too few. In regard to any Commonwealth Government, of any political colour, the extracts from that speech by the member for Boulder-Dundas were well worth quoting. I would like to think that the member for Boulder-Dundas and myself will always be in line in that regard.

Although we probably lost the right to determine our future in 1901, after five years of Federation a former great Premier of Western Australia—Sir John Forrest—in 1906, as I recall, in a newspaper article implored the people of Western Australia to vote for his candidates in the Federal election and made it abundantly clear that he saw the dangers of Federation. After five years of Federation his realisation of its dangers were much the same as we view them now.

Mr Bryce: He was about as parochial as you people are now.

Mr YOUNG: Yes, he was parochial. He believed implicitly in Western Australia and many of the members on this side of the House believe in Western Australia, too; there is no question about that. There is also no question that we on this side of the House are Australians. However we do not believe that all the power should be concentrated in one particular place.

Mr B. T. Burke: We have never said that.

Mr YOUNG: It is a rather strange thing—

Mr B. T. Burke: Where did we say that?

Mr YOUNG: Let me say this: The honourable member's leader says that in Canberra day after day after day. Also I can well recall the speech he made in Hobart—or wherever it was—about the fact that all politicians belonging to State Labor Governments should be working towards their own self-destruction. If that is not centralism, what is it? Was not that decided in Brisbane some years ago? If the honourable member does not believe that he had better tell Joe Chamberlain before he retires.

Mr B. T. Burke: That is not to say that all power shall be centralised in Canberra.

Mr YOUNG: It does mean that; all power shall be centralised in Canberra.

Mr B. T. Burke: You made two statements that are different.

Mr YOUNG: If I may, having laid the foundations and telegraphed my punches fairly obviously, I would now like to quote from a speech that perhaps is one of the most incredible that has been made by

anyone on the other side of the House in this debate. I am referring to the speech made by the member for Maylands, because he attempted—albeit very naively—to take the Budget to pieces bit by bit. As he spoke he made certain points, and I would now like to go back and make some comments on what he said. As I have said, it is an incredible speech because it had no credibility whatsoever. I am only sorry he is not present in the Chamber tonight. I understand he was to be here at 8.00 p.m. and I am hoping he will be present to hear at least some of what I am about to say. As I have said, he tried to make five points and I will quote some of the things I understood him to say. He said—

I will now list five items—the highlights—as follows—

New records were achieved in the primary sector with the net value of rural production amounting to almost double the record result of the previous year.

He was referring here to the statement on the economy that accompanied, or was attached to, the Budget presented in this session by the present Treasurer. He was, of course, referring back to the previous year during which a Commonwealth Labor Government and a Western Australian Labor Government were in office, and he was trying to make the point that the statement of the present Treasurer simply pointed out how grand those two Governments were. However, I will point out to the House how absurd his statements are.

The member for Maylands, in a smug, self-satisfied way, went on to say—

That is not bad for a Labor Government in Western Australia, with an Australian Labor Government.

I interjected by saying—

The Australian Government is able to make it rain, is it?

I said that because one would pre-suppose that that would be possible if anyone were to claim that the upsurge in rural production was due to the efforts of any Government, whether Liberal or Labor. That is so naive and absurd that it is almost unbelievable to think it was said by a member who was, in fact, a former Minister of the Crown. A similar type of statement perhaps could have been made by someone less experienced than the member for Maylands. However if we look at it in the light of the fact that it was made in respect of a Government that has done nothing to assist the rural community since it came into office in 1972, it becomes ludicrous.

When the former member for Merredin-Yilgarn (Mr Brown) praised the last Commonwealth Labor Government's Budget, I pointed out to him that his speech would

cost him his seat—and it did. To praise that Budget—which cost his constituents so dearly—was political suicide.

Quite clearly, in making a speech such as that, especially by a member representing an area that was perhaps the most highly geared farming community in Western Australia, and trying to justify what the Commonwealth Government had done to the rural sector, it was not surprising that he lost his seat.

Mr Bryce: He lost it because of the redistribution of boundaries, and you know it.

Mr YOUNG: The plain fact of the matter is that he lost his seat and lost it badly.

Mr Bertram: It was because of the redistribution of boundaries.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Maylands went on to quote—

The mining industry continued to grow strongly. The improved world market for metals and minerals, evident towards the close of the previous year, was sustained in 1973-74 leading to a rise of 12.5% in the value of minerals produced.

Then, in a smug and self-satisfied way, he went on to say, in his own words—

That is not bad for a State Labor Government with an Australian Labor Government.

Now let me quote from the corresponding Budget speech that was introduced by the member for Kalgoorlie when he was Treasurer of the State in the previous Labor Government: He said this—

Mr T. D. Evans: This will be good stuff.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Kalgoorlie, who was Treasurer at that time, said—

Minerals

The extraordinary growth in the value of minerals produced in Western Australia continued unabated last year. The value of minerals produced in 1970 amounted to \$579 million, an increase of 69 per cent over 1969.

If the member for Maylands claims that 12½ per cent is good under a State Labor Government and a Commonwealth Labor Government, possibly it would be at least competent for me to say that 69 per cent is at least five times better than that and therefore we should be entitled to start crowing about it. However, I will not, because we as the Government, in 1969, had laid the foundations many years before for that production, and the companies concerned were geared to certain production limits. However if the member for Maylands claims that 12½ per cent is a marvellous result, we could easily claim that 69 per cent is more than marvellous.

However, we are not that simplistic. The member for Kalgoorlie was referring to a Commonwealth Liberal Government and a

State Liberal Government. Therefore if 12½ per cent under a Labor Government is not bad, how would we describe a 69 per cent result under a Liberal Party Government?

In his speech, the member for Maylands went on to quote—

Civilian employment rose by 5.7% during the year, the largest increase for three years.

That is a very significant statement. That was the largest increase in the three years the State Labor Government was in office. If we now look at the speech made by the member for Kalgoorlie when he was Treasurer, and, in particular, when he was referring to the time the Liberal Government was in office, he said—

The rate of growth of employment remained high in the past year. Civilian employment in the State increased by 20 000 in 1970-71, an increase of 6.2 per cent which is fully comparable with growth rates achieved in earlier years.

In other words, 6.2 per cent was the norm when we were in Government, yet the member for Maylands crows over the fact that civilian employment rose by 5.7 per cent during the period Labor was in office in both the State and Commonwealth spheres. However, the words of the member for Maylands on that occasion were—

Again, that is not bad for a State Labor Government with an Australian Labor Government.

Mr T. D. Evans: You agree with the member for Maylands?

Mr YOUNG: One cannot do worse than be second best. The member for Maylands then went on to quote—

Retail sales in the first three-quarters of the year were up 17.4% on the corresponding period a year earlier.

If they were up 17.4 per cent in that year and the present rate of inflation is now running at 20 per cent, as I understand it, that does not say much for retail sales. Further, as Mr Crean, the Federal Treasurer, states, the position will get worse. In the present state of trade and business I would say that that would be a very fair assumption.

The member for Maylands then went on to talk about the building industry, and I quote some of his comments as follows—

The building industry showed a strong recovery after two years of depressed activity particularly in home building. In 1973-74, dwelling completions increased in number by 10.5% and in value by 22.9%.

I accept that statement and probably it was a good increase considering the depressed period in the previous two years, also under a State Labor Government. I do not knock it for that.

Mr Bertram: You knock it for everything else.

Mr YOUNG: I have not yet.

Mr Bertram: But your Government and party does—nonstop.

Mr YOUNG: I am not knocking the State Labor Government for anything. But if the honourable member claims that it was a good increase on the previous years and he wants to claim credit for it, he must take the blame for the two years before that.

The building industry in Australia is a very vexed and sore subject. If we try to decide whether or not State Governments are responsible for the situation in the building industry, we must also consider where the finance comes from for the building industry and what generates building finance. It would be reasonable to say that the Commonwealth Government has the complete power over the generation of building finance in Australia through its control of the interest situation and in respect of the general control of the economy. It is as clear as anything can possibly be that if companies in Western Australia are beginning to fold, and companies like Mainline and others in New South Wales are folding, the blame can hardly be placed at the feet of the State Labor Government or the State Liberal Government. It can be placed at the feet of no State Government.

Unfortunately, the member for Maylands believes that the credit or blame for everything can be placed at the feet of the State Government.

Mr Bertram: In the same way you place the blame for everything at the feet of the Australian Government. He has a good precedent, if that is what it is.

Mr YOUNG: It is interesting to hear the member for Mt. Hawthorn refer to the Australian Government, as he calls it—the Commonwealth Government, as I call it—because if we are honest we must accept the fact that the Commonwealth Government does generate the economy of the country—or degenerate it. I will again quote the member for Kalgoorlie who, in his corresponding Budget speech in 1971, said—

The Economy

The Commonwealth Government bears the primary responsibility for the general management of the economy and the Budgets of the States are not shaped with a view to exercising a major influence on economic trends. In any event, we lack the flexibility of revenue resources necessary for effective intervention on the economic scene.

They are not my words.

Mr Bertram: You rely wholly on what we say.

Mr YOUNG: They are the words of the Labor Treasurer of the day. I am not disagreeing with them.

Mr Bertram: I am not, either.

Mr YOUNG: They are quite factual; otherwise he would not have presented them to Parliament, would he? Now the member for Maylands says—

It seems passing strange—and I am sure it is no coincidence—

How absurd can this be? To continue—

—that when the Liberal Party came into office as from the 1st April, 1974, Western Australia's troubles began.

Mr B. T. Burke: That is when the co-operation ended.

Mr YOUNG: Does the member for Balga mean that because the present Government refuses to hand everything over to the Commonwealth Government, there is a lack of co-operation? He went on to say—

It is not fair for the Treasurer continually to criticise the Australian Labor Government—

I wonder to which Treasurer he was referring. Was he referring to the Premier of today, the Leader of the Opposition when he was the Treasurer, or the member for Kalgoorlie when he was Treasurer?

Sir Charles Court: He was referring to Frank Crean who was responsible for all the leaks out of the Budget so that he would know what was in it.

Mr O'Neill: There's a hole in the old oaken Budget!

Sir Charles Court: I'll say!

Mr YOUNG: It is so naive and simplistic for anyone on the other side of the House, including myself when I was in Opposition—I admit I did so, but I am learning while members on the other side who have had more experience than I have had are still continually at it—to say that it is the State Government's fault if anything unfavourable occurs, when it is as clear as the nose on anyone's face that we have no control whatever over the economy of the State.

Mr McIver: You have control over several of your policies which you are pursuing and are costing thousands to implement.

Mr YOUNG: We certainly have control over our policies although several members on the other side of the House would like us not to have control over our policies. We have a policy on education, but we are not allowed to have that.

Mr McIver: And what a shocker!

Mr YOUNG: Does the honourable member know why he says that? It is because the State School Teachers' Union was not consulted, so we are not allowed to form a policy. The union must tell us what we should do.

Mr McIver: You will not tell us what it will cost.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Avon should tell us why it is a shocker.

Mr McIver: Because the people do not want it, and because of the cost involved.

Mr YOUNG: Does the honourable member know how much is involved?

Mr McIver: We cannot find out.

Mr YOUNG: Would the honourable member like to tell me?

Mr McIver: You will not tell us.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Avon would like to tell me what is wrong with the education policy.

Mr McIver: When I speak in a moment I will tell you.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Avon had better do some research first.

Mr T. D. Evans: There is a motion on the notice paper which tells you.

Mr Bryce: Is the member for Scarborough admitting that his leader was wrong in 1972 in attacking the stand taken on unemployment?

Mr YOUNG: Unlike the members for Kalgoorlie and Maylands I do make time for interjections, and I will answer that.

Mr Bertram: That is good of you.

Mr YOUNG: I think so, too.

Mr Bertram: Uncharacteristic.

Mr YOUNG: The present Premier—the Leader of the Opposition as he was then—and all the members of this side who were on that side and criticised the Government for things which were beyond its control—I know I did this—were wrong. It is as simple as that.

Mr Bertram: Hear, hear!

Mr YOUNG: But do not let us become smug about it. As the member for Avon said, many matters were being determined by pure policy. For instance, I do not think anyone would agree that the attitude taken by the then Minister for Development and Decentralisation—the now Chairman of the Licensing Court—exactly encouraged people to come here and establish industry. His attitude did not help the State, and that is the area on which we centred our attacks.

Mr Bertram: You could not say the present Government is encouraging industry.

Mr YOUNG: It is doing everything within its power. It is all right to talk about lack of control over State and Commonwealth finance, but there was a time when we had control over the policy for bringing industry into the State. At least we had some control and we then had the ability to encourage people. People were not being shoved out of the country the minute they put their noses

into Western Australia. They did not have to deal with a gaggle of bureaucrats in Canberra who did not know what they were talking about. People could go to the Department of Industrial Development in Western Australia and obtain an answer to questions and then be on the job in a couple of months; but not any more.

Mr Bertram: Has the department closed down?

Mr YOUNG: If the Commonwealth Government had its way it would be closed tomorrow; there is no question about that. It is doing its best to make it as redundant as it possibly can do.

Mr T. D. Evans: You have no evidence.

Mr YOUNG: Can members opposite tell me one thing the State Government can do in regard to the creation of industry in this State which is not hounded, shackled, and hogtied by every bureaucrat on the other side of the black stump?

Mr Bryce: Why didn't you say that during your electioneering campaign?

A Government member: He did.

Mr Bryce: He did not. He had all the answers to put things right.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! One interjection at a time, please.

Mr Bryce: The Premier said he could solve inflation.

Sir Charles Court: We will, too.

Mr Bryce: Read the manifesto.

Several members interjected.

Mr YOUNG: Mr Speaker, may I proceed?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Scarborough.

Mr YOUNG: The things the member for Maylands claimed as being benefits given to this State by the previous Labor Government in conjunction with the Australian Government as he calls it—the Commonwealth Government as I call it—were quite absurd; and to substantiate that statement I would like to quote once again from the Budget speech of the member for Kalgoorlie.

Mr Skidmore: He is a popular member, is he not?

Mr YOUNG: Yes. It is a case of "be sure your sins will find you out". On page 3 of his speech, the member for Kalgoorlie said—

Nevertheless, it must be said that Government services are not immune from the consequences of large increases in the cost of providing those services.

Increases in costs, to the extent that they cannot be absorbed in the natural growth of revenue, must be offset by increased taxes and charges.

There can be no escape from this—the alternative can only be ultimate bankruptcy.

He also said—

We have come to accept that some long-term movement in costs and prices is inescapable in a growth economy. It is even argued that a small annual increase in the general level of prices is beneficial in that the burden of past debt becomes less significant.

However, too fast an escalation of costs and prices can only be harmful. It wipes out past gains in wages and salaries, increases costs of rural production in the face of falling incomes and erodes the competitive position of businesses which must compete with products from lower-cost countries.

I wonder if that rings a bell with members of the Opposition. To continue—

To the aged and others on fixed incomes it is an unmitigated evil.

Mr Bertram: What was that?

Mr YOUNG: Inflation—spiralling costs.

Mr Bryce: Your Premier promised to solve inflation.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Kalgoorlie was talking in terms of the situation the State was in in connection with the framing of the Budget, and control over it.

Mr B. T. Burke: That was before your Premier said he would solve it. Don't be silly.

Mr Bryce: You do not have confidence in your Premier's promises.

Several members interjected.

Mr YOUNG: Although there are some interjections, the Opposition is infinitely quieter than it usually is, so its members are probably not dinkum in what they are saying.

Mr O'Neil: Good comment.

Mr YOUNG: In his speech last week the member for Kalgoorlie said—

I am afraid it has become a charge of putting things right up—

We have heard that before. He was referring to putting things right. To continue—

—because in the few months this Government has been in power, even before the Budget was introduced, what did we find? Pay-roll tax was increased. . . .

We will stop right there and go to page 10 of the speech the member for Kalgoorlie made when he was Treasurer.

Mr T. D. Evans: If it were not for that speech you would be battling to make one of your own.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Kalgoorlie said—

Revenue Proposals

Pay-roll Tax

Members are already aware of the proposal to increase the rate of pay-roll tax from 2½ per cent. to 3½ per cent.—

That was only a 40 per cent increase!

Mr T. D. Evans: But we had not promised to put things right.

Mr YOUNG: To continue—

—from the date of transfer of this tax from the Commonwealth. All I need say on this occasion is that this step is a vital part of the Government's Budget strategy.

He then put it up another 40 per cent the following year, but in 1974—

Mr Bertram: What was the actual amount of money?

Mr YOUNG: —when he was not wearing the Treasurer's hat of 1971, he said—

. . . what did we find? Pay-roll tax was increased—

Shameful! Is that not awful? To continue—

—bus fares went up, rail freights and fares were up, electricity charges were increased, and drivers' licenses and registration fees were increased.

All the items he and his colleagues increased.

Mr T. D. Evans: But outside the climate of the Budget for which we were attacked by you people.

Mr YOUNG: That is ridiculous.

Mr B. T. Burke: That is a funny argument to justify your actions. Did you support his propositions at that time?

Mr YOUNG: By now the members of the Opposition have probably gathered that I am taking the attitude that it is about time we, as members of a State Parliament, stopped tearing each other to pieces in connection with State finance. I will be as decent as I can and admit that I have been guilty in the past, although it is probably one all as far as the Leader of the Opposition and I are concerned because he did it after 38 years' experience—

Mr Taylor: We will cut it out when we are on that side next.

Mr YOUNG: —and I did after three years' experience, so it is one set each.

Mr Bertram: No; I thought we were in front.

Mr YOUNG: Is it not about time that we in the State Parliament accepted some of the facts of life and started to realise that whatever Government is in power, unless it takes a realistic attitude to State-Commonwealth financial relations, this

State will always be—as I said in my maiden speech—a mere pay office for the Commonwealth Government? We can thrash around, yell, scratch, tear, and act like a pack of dogs on the street—we can do anything we like—but we will not obtain one single dollar from the Commonwealth Government of the day if it is determined we shall not get it.

Mr Bertram: Have you persuaded your own side on this?

Mr YOUNG: Yes, certainly we have. In fact, the member for Mt. Hawthorn knows very well that the Premier has stated as a matter of policy, and the Liberal Party has made it clear, that if the situation comes about some time within the next four or five months that we get back into power in Canberra there will be a complete restructuring of the Commonwealth-State financial situation.

Mr Bertram: We will await that.

Mr B. T. Burke: Have you persuaded your colleagues here to follow the same line in this House?

Mr YOUNG: There is no question about that. Would not the members of the Opposition like Western Australia to have a certain fixed percentage of the revenue of the Commonwealth as of right?

Mr Bertram: It has not worked up to date.

Mr YOUNG: I am not talking about what has or has not worked up to date. I am talking about Western Australia getting out of the 70-year rut, and something which will make it worth while to be a Western Australian. It is all very well to speak like that if one is a Victorian, but if one is from Western Australia, Tasmania, or Queensland, one might just as well not be in the House at all when one speaks like that. It is doing the State a disservice.

The situation in Australia at the moment in regard to the Commonwealth-State financial situation is infinitely worse than anything we have experienced in the last 30 or 40 years. In regard to the economic situation, we are quickly approaching the very bad days of the 1930s.

Mr Harman: You are a prophet of doom.

Mr B. T. Burke: I would like to know whether you have persuaded your colleagues on that side to treat State financial matters in the manner you have outlined. It is unrealistic to expect us to co-operate with that feeling, if you talk about inflation and use State finances as a point of contention between the two parties.

Mr YOUNG: If the member for Balga is asking whether members on this side of the House agree that Western Australia

should as of right be able to get a certain fixed amount of income—

Mr B. T. Burke: No. You said we should get out of the rut in which we failed to acknowledge that State finance should not be a point of contention about which we tear each other apart.

Mr YOUNG: I have not persuaded or dissuaded them. I am making my speech. I hope I am persuading them, but I do not know whether I am. The member for Balga does not persuade many members on his side of the House.

We have not faced times like these for many years. Although we have had Commonwealth-State financial problems with Governments of the same colour as my party, we have not before had the Father Christmas type of Commonwealth Government in Canberra which thinks it will solve all the ills of the world by pouring money here, there, and everywhere and being prepared to spend any amount of money on anything, and, as a result, accept any rate of inflation. It just cannot continue, as a Government, to channel hundreds of millions of dollars into certain areas—education, medicine, anything else—without accepting the fact that inflation will result.

In addition, it cannot expect to prop up the resultant unemployed without increasing the inflation. It cannot on the one hand say—as Bob Hawke would like to say, as President of the ACTU—“Whatever happens we will have no-one unemployed”; and on the other hand, as President of the ALP, support a Government which cannot get out of its inflationary spiral without doing things which will create unemployment. He cannot have it both ways, and in a couple of weeks there will be a monumental clash of the two heads of Bob Hawke. Which one will drop off, I do not know, but assuredly one of them will.

Mr Harman: That is not based on factual information.

Mr YOUNG: If it is not based on fact, then Bob Hawke is prepared to be the greatest hypocrite in Australia. He cannot keep on the way he is going, and the Commonwealth Government cannot keep on the way it is going with its present financial attitude, crippling business day after day, and slapping businessmen over the wrist every time they raise their heads.

Did members read this morning's paper? Finally, Gough Whitlam has got the message. The Prime Minister admits that wage increases are beginning to cripple the nation.

Mr Bertram: He was told that six months ago.

Mr YOUNG: He did not listen. He has now accepted the fact that we have a problem in this country, and that problem is inflation; and he has finally

accepted the fact that wages are causing it. What is his solution? He will tax companies which pay the ransom demands that are made on them. It is like having a whipping boy and saying, "Here is my son who just kicked me in the shins, but I am going to whip that little boy over there." It is like someone who has been robbed being hauled before a magistrate and being sent to gaol as a party to the crime.

Mr Bertram: Tell us now what the Premier is going to do.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Too many members are trying to talk at once. The member for Scarborough.

Mr YOUNG: I will answer the member for Mt. Hawthorn first.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has 6½ minutes more.

Mr YOUNG: The member for Mt. Hawthorn asked, "What is the Premier going to do about it?" Obviously the Premier cannot do anything about it. If the Commonwealth Government is hell bent on destroying the Australian economy, and it has the power and control and continues to keep it, what can the Premier of Western Australia do?

Mr Moller: Answer me now. What will be the Premier's attitude to an approach by the teachers of Western Australia for an increase in salary?

Mr YOUNG: The honourable member heard the Speaker tell me I had only six minutes. I cannot answer for the Premier.

Mr Moller: Here is a State issue the Premier can tackle.

Sir Charles Court: Put your question on the notice paper.

Mr YOUNG: Inflation is not caused only by—

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has five minutes.

Mr YOUNG: Obviously, the problem of inflation is not caused only by increasing wages. One of the greatest problems we are facing is that of being eaten away on the workshop floor by chaps like Carmichael, Munday, Clohessy, Cowles, Bob Hawke, and Halfpenny; and when Australians wake up to it they will at last begin to get something done in this country. Let us not talk about guns; any one of those fellows is capable of producing one, as much as anyone on the other side of the political fence. Those people are the real dangers in this country.

Mr Skidmore: Oh!

Mr YOUNG: The member for Balga asked me what caused inflation. It is caused by people not doing enough work and expecting too much for the work they

do not do. Dr Cairns himself said the only thing to do was to work our way out of it. Even "Hanol Jim" said that: "The only way you can do it is to work your way out of it."

When honest union men like the member for Collie talk about unions, they are not talking about the situation with which we are confronted today. They are talking about the unions of old, where the average fellow worked his way up from the shop floor, or from shovelling coal as the member for Collie no doubt did, and got to the top because he knew what it was all about. The member for Collie was not talking about a bunch of lazy parasites who have never done a good day's work and are putting half the population out of work. Yet we sit here and blame State Governments! We are not working ourselves out of the problem, and the average dinkum individual Australian has not yet woken up to the fact that no-one on earth but himself can do anything about it.

I would like to conclude by quoting a few words from the maiden speech of the newly-elected Senator for Western Australia (Mr Fred Chaney)—

But I say to my electors that what we have to retain and perhaps in some cases regain in Australia is a sense that the individual is responsible for his own life, its quality, its level of achievement and the sort of country he lives in. We have got to get away from the ridiculous fiction that social welfare and education are obtained at no cost to the individual. There is a cost for every government program. We have to learn to relate our payment of taxes or charges to the services we actually receive. There is a fiction abroad that government revenues expand mightily each year without taking anything from the people and that, of course, is nonsense. It is the central nonsense of a bad Budget.

The new senator for Western Australia has hit the nail on the head. It is the individual in this community who will pull Australia out of its problem; no-one else; not State Governments or Commonwealth Governments, but the individual man on the floor who has the courage to stand up and say, "I want to work"; the individual employer who is prepared to stand up to the small minority of thugs and standover merchants who beset him; the individual housewife and mother who will not stand by and watch her family being economically raped by these people; and the individual member of the Australian community who gives a damn about his country and who will stand up and make sure we do not continue to be sucked down as we have been over the last two years.

It appears from the results of the recent Canberra and Northern Territory elections that the Australian people are beginning

to wake up; and if it sounds the death knell of socialism in this country, it is not too soon.

MR. BERTRAM (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.43 p.m.]: We have been told from time to time that the debate on the Budget is the most important debate of the Parliament. Be that as it may, it is very interesting in that context to note that while the Premier roams all around the place in his financial statement, typically providing us with endless generalities, contradictions, accusations, and things of that kind, one thing he does not do is challenge or attack in any way the previous Premier or his Government. This is completely uncharacteristic. Why it should be so, heaven only knows, but it is worth while to record once and for all that when in this financial statement the Premier touches on what are alleged to be the most important matters which come before this Parliament, shortly after the expiration of three financial years under a State Labor Government, he utters not one word of condemnation of the State Labor Government.

Sir Charles Court: Would you like me to start?

Mr. BERTRAM: The Premier had his opportunity to do so when he was talking about putting love into politics, and all that nonsense. In this financial statement there is not one word of condemnation of the Labor Government.

Before I go on to another matter, I would like to say I think the time is well overdue for our revenue and expenditure accounts to be presented in a fashion which is readily understandable by every ordinary person.

The time is well overdue for a revenue and expenditure account, with appropriate notations, but with no political content at all—the financial statement presented to us on this occasion does contain political content. A true and understandable revenue and expenditure account should be published in the daily Press, and not simply tabled in this House, as has been the custom for many years. We talk about open government, and this would be the most important account—and perhaps the most important question—that we have before Parliament in any one year. We ought to take the public into our confidence and give them an account of our finances in the daily Press. To run these figures for one or two publications would not cost very much. Such a statement should not contain any political matter, but it should be a statement of account so that the people know the exact position. At the moment the public relies on the Press comments on the Budget. They read an article which says X items will go up so many dollars, and Y items will go down so many dollars. They do not understand the actual ac-

count. In fact, with respect, I say I doubt whether many people understand our Budget at all.

If members look at pages 8 and 9 of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure they will see that there is nothing very complex about that statement. Why should not that statement be published in the Press, rather than tabled in this House, to make a pile of papers that Cazaley could not jump over? If we are to have open government and to show some respect for the people who put us here, we ought to show them this particular account. I do not suggest we give them a whole conglomerate of things they cannot understand, but the statement on pages 8 and 9 is readily understandable. A few simple notations at the bottom would allow people to grasp its contents. A worker comes home with his \$100 pay packet, and at the end of the week he knows whether he has a deficit or surplus. That is precisely what we have in this statement. There are no accruals and no depreciations; it is simply money in and money out.

Whilst on the subject of the Estimates, I would like to make a comment about the method of accounting. The Premier seems to contradict himself about this question of accounting. He is always talking about centralism and its disadvantages, but unprecedented huge sums of money—millions of dollars—are pouring into our State from the Australian Government. These sums do not appear to me to be accounted for in this Budget, and this is very unsatisfactory. I am not speaking now as an expert, but as someone who has attempted to reconcile these figures. Some of this money comes directly to the State Government; some of it goes into the Consolidated Revenue Fund but some of it does not. Other grants coming to the State do not come to the Government, but go straight to the target, whatever it may be. However, all this money is flooding into the State. This is acknowledged by the Premier because, to use his own words, he said—

With the proliferation of these grants and their increasing significance to the budget, a changed accounting treatment is necessary.

It most certainly is. He is quick to say that he has no knowledge of many of these millions of dollars coming to the State.

Sir Charles Court: That is right.

Mr. BERTRAM: That is unsatisfactory.

Sir Charles Court: Tell us what sums are not accounted for.

Mr. BERTRAM: It is no good pointing the bone and acting in a childish way. These sums are not accounted for. Every additional million the Australian Government provides for this State needs to be

reflected in the State Budget, no matter which Government happens to be in power in Canberra.

Sir Charles Court: Suppose the Commonwealth Government refuses to tell you?

Mr BERTRAM: When the Australian Government refuses to pass on this information, the Premier throws his hands in the air in defeat and despair. It may be that the Premier does not want the amounts reflected in the accounts.

Sir Charles Court: What moneys are you talking about?

Mr BERTRAM: The accounts should reflect the true position, and I believe this objective is capable of attainment. It has not mattered greatly until now because the amounts were coming through in a conventional and fairly small way. However, we now have an avalanche—millions of dollars are coming into the State. It is foolish for us to talk about the money we have and the money we have spent without taking into account all the other moneys coming into the State. If we bring them into our accounting in the revenue and expenditure account, we may well find that instead of the entry on pages 8 and 9 as follows—

Commonwealth Grants—

As detailed on pages

17 and 18 ... \$298 138 000

we may have a figure of \$398 million, and that would make a big difference to the Estimates. This Budget must be considered on the basis of accounts for \$1.5 billion. Yet the Premier is putting on a performance, getting very upset, and complaining vociferously about how large our deficit is. What is our deficit? It is a deficit of \$8 million—less than one-half of 1 per cent of the \$1.5 billion, on my quick calculation.

Sir Charles Court: Aren't you worried about the deficit?

Mr BERTRAM: Well, certainly not on those figures.

Sir Charles Court: That is good to hear.

Mr BERTRAM: We have a deficit, but we must consider it in context. Let us say we were an organisation with a budget for \$1.5 billion, and a deficit of \$8 million—

Sir Charles Court: That is \$8 million worth of schools or hospitals you cannot build.

Mr Taylor: Or traffic authorities.

Mr T. D. Evans: Highway patrols.

Sir Charles Court: The traffic authority is costing less than your idea.

Mr Taylor: Are you sure on this one?

Sir Charles Court: Absolutely. Listen to the debate.

Mr O'Connor: It will be very interesting.

Mr Taylor: What about your referendum on daylight saving?

Mr BERTRAM: The Premier condemns us at every opportunity, and particularly when it comes to election time. I am not seeking to gain political advantage, but I think the time has come when we should look at these figures in conjunction with the Commonwealth Budget. The figures must be reconciled. I have attempted to do that, but I have had no success. It is all very well for Government members to criticise the Australian Government.

Mr Mensaros: Tell us about the \$1.5 billion.

Mr BERTRAM: The Premier told us he would put everything right, but he always criticised us when we tried to do something.

On page 18 of the Estimates we see the heading, "Commonwealth Specific Purpose Grants", and the grants total a little less than \$18 million. In answer to a question the Premier told us to look at the Federal Budget Paper No. 7. So I looked at table No. 153, appearing on page 254 of the Australian Government's Budget papers, and under the heading, "Specific Purpose Payments: Recurrent Purposes", we see a total by way of Estimates for 1974-75 of about \$98 million. However, accounted for in our Budget is the sum of \$18 million. As I said, I have had no luck in reconciling those figures but I was not very encouraged to try because of the huge gap between them. It is thoroughly unsatisfactory when someone accounting at one end gives a figure of \$18 million and someone at the other end gives a figure of \$98 million—a difference of \$80 million. This is what I am complaining about, and I feel something must be done about it.

The Auditor-General's report has been tabled, but I have not had a chance yet to read its contents. An attempt must be made to reconcile the two sums of money.

Let us look at one or two other items. The Australian Budget papers refer to "Pre-school and child care". I do not think there is any reference at all to that item in the specific purpose grants on page 18 of the Estimates. In the Federal Budget we see \$24 million is coming to this State for universities during the next year, and yet we do not see a reference to this on page 18 of the Estimates. If I am wrong in this, perhaps someone will be good enough to point out the reference to me. All these matters call for explanation.

As a slight digression I refer to table 153 in the Budget of the Australian Government. It is interesting to note that in 1973-74, \$6 million was paid to Western Australia for schools. The estimate for 1974-75 for Western Australia is not \$6 million, but \$16 million. The additional money to be paid under this heading is more than the amount of our deficit—the \$8 million in a total Budget of \$1.5 billion.

Another item in the Australian Government's Budget is headed "Sewerage". It is perfectly obvious that the Australian Government will grant many millions of dollars for sewerage in Western Australia during this year. However, there is no mention of sewerage in the special purpose grants in our Budget.

Mr Rushton: You do not seem to talk about all the millions going out of the State.

Mr BERTRAM: We see that in 1973-74 the State received \$2 million for Aboriginal advancement. This year it will receive over \$4 million.

Mr O'Neil: Sewerage allocations are loan funds, and grants are revenue.

Mr BERTRAM: These things have to be explained.

Mr O'Neil: We should not need to explain that to an accountant.

Mr BERTRAM: That may put me in a more advantageous position than a man with no accounting experience, but I repeat that I am having great difficulty in reconciling these figures.

I suggest to members opposite that they are going to have some trouble in this respect. To leave that point for one moment, it is interesting to note that in 1973-74 and back to 1962, not one penny was ever allocated to local government. This year, almost \$5 million will go to local government.

Mr B. T. Burke: The City of Stirling is getting some.

Mr BERTRAM: The City of Stirling, I am told, is to receive \$490 000, when heretofore it had not received one ha'penny.

Mr Rushton: We have not seen the colour of the money yet.

Mr BERTRAM: Members opposite do not want the State to receive the \$490 000.

Mr Rushton: We want to receive it under the right terms, not on a begging basis.

Mr BERTRAM: As far as I am aware, the City of Stirling has not done any begging; it is simply going to get this amount of money. Nearly \$5 million in one year has been allocated to local governments when heretofore they had not received a cent.

Mr Rushton: You should look at all the funds, not isolated instances.

Mr BERTRAM: That is my argument. I am very glad the Minister agrees with what I said, and I appreciate his contribution. Of course, some member opposite will stand and say, "If you do this and take away that" and he will do a few other gymnastics and some arithmetic and will then reconcile these figures. I am simply expressing a desire that the accounts of this State and the Australian Government should be reconciled so that

we may be satisfied that these figures have been incorporated and that the accounts have in fact been reconciled.

Mr Rushton: Can you tell me how much money goes from Western Australia to the central taxing body?

Mr BERTRAM: I was not going to raise the question of Federal taxes, but since the Minister has referred to this matter I will be happy to accommodate him. As I remember the position, some 30 years ago the States conceded to the Australian Government the right to raise uniform taxes. Of course, I am speaking very generally. Since that time, there have been occasions when all State Governments and Upper Houses in Australia were of persuasions sympathetic to one another. They have had the opportunity to turn back the clock, and have done nothing about it.

Never has Labor been in that position, but the parties of members opposite have and they have elected to do nothing about it. So, I agree that since 1901, centralism has been in force; and it has been aggravated and stimulated in more recent times by High Court decisions brought down by men substantially put there by Liberal-Country Party Governments. Labor appointees have not made these decisions because as far as I am aware, only two Labor appointees have been members of the High Court since the inception of that body.

So, when the Constitution is expanded by people sympathetic to members opposite and who are put there by members opposite, it is a matter of asking Australian Governments to use the Constitution lawfully and that is what the present Australian Government is doing. Liberal-Country Party Governments would do exactly the same thing, if not to the same degree. It was within the powers of members opposite to put a stop to this situation, but they elected not to do it.

We have heard talk about attracting business, income and all this type of thing to Western Australia. How are we to attract people to this State when we have legislation such as the Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act as amended which amendment no self-respecting Government would have introduced? No longer does legislation of that type remain within the interest and knowledge of a couple of States and a few people within Western Australia; people around the world read of this type of legislation, and these types of statements, "Financial problems 'deliberate'". Do members understand the significance of that statement? It was contained in *The West Australian* of the 15th October, 1972. I need hardly tell members whom I am quoting.

We heard the member for Scarborough advocating that we stop this particular debate. What he does not realise is that this is just the grist to the mill. The

Premier takes the view that he is winning support by continually attacking; it does not matter how extreme is the attack. The Premier is reported as saying—

The Federal Government had created Australia's present financial problems deliberately,—

Just mark that! I am sure members are impressed. The report continued—

—the Premier, Sir Charles Court, said yesterday.

I hardly needed to quote the author of these remarks. The report continued—

"If we fail to halt the centralist and socialist policies of Canberra, they can be expected to move in for the kill and destroy the States and private enterprise."

Move in for the kill! Note how constructive the Premier was; thoroughly emotive. What do members think people overseas would believe after reading that sort of extremism?

Mr Rushton: Read your own Prime Minister's statement! He thinks it is your duty to close down the States.

Mr BERTRAM: The article continued with generalities, which I will not mention. Then we come to another heading, "Rebellion may be the aim: Fraser". What do members think would occur to an ordinary citizen when he picked up the newspaper and read all this nonsense? These are the words of the Premier and of other prominent Liberals; this is what the people of the world are reading. Who may I ask would come to this place after reading such nonsense? How is this to stimulate interest and attract anybody here? As my leader said—I think he was being generous—the Premier's statements are alarmist. I think they can be described far more adequately by the use of other words. The article continued—

The Federal Government might be— Might be, not will be—

—deliberately paving the way for a revolution, a Victorian Liberal front-bench MHR, Mr Malcolm Fraser, said yesterday.

That was not sufficient. The article went on to say—

Copies of the speech containing the warning of a plot were issued in Canberra.

It is a magnificent plot when everybody knows everything about it! That is the sort of extremist nonsense that is no good for anybody. It is thoroughly defeatist, hopeless, and destructive and comes from people who come into this State Parliament telling us they are going to put things right.

Mr T. D. Evans: Prophets of gloom!

Mr BERTRAM: That is putting it mildly. They are incredible statements and the quicker we get rid of this type of thing, the better it will be for all concerned.

We hear talk about polarisation; somebody has seen fit to pick on one or two unions about it. Whose words carry the most weight in this community, and who is stirring up the whole affair? Who is causing the polarisation? It is statements of this kind which cause polarisation and they are obviously made intentionally because they are not occasional statements; they are repetitive and endless and are as stupid as the ones to which I have just referred.

The other day an honourable member opposite was contributing to some sort of chorus about muckraking, but of course declined to give an example of it. That is typical of members opposite.

Mr Nanovich: It is typical of the Opposition.

Mr BERTRAM: All they worry about is muckraking. I am not talking about whether polarisation is occurring; it is occurring and there are people on the other side who make it their business to make sure that it does occur. Yet, when it does occur, they are the first ones to say, "Look, there is polarisation in the community." It is happening all right, and they know it because they are the ones who are causing it.

Mr Clarko: There are two kinds of polarisation. The Labor Party is suffering from one kind. It received 32 per cent of the vote in the Northern Territory last weekend and at the next election will probably receive only 20 per cent.

Mr BERTRAM: I will return now to the State Electricity Commission. A few moments ago, the member for Scarborough encouraged us to take notice of statements made by Senator Chaney. How much notice could we take of him? I refer members to the document in my hand. It is designed to look like an electricity account and, printed on the back of the paper are the words "Compliments of Mr Tonkin". Any ordinary citizen would come to the conclusion that it was being delivered to him by Mr Tonkin.

Mr Clarko: They received a tremendous vote in Ascot, didn't they? He nearly won a blue ribbon Labor seat.

Mr BERTRAM: Many people received a lot of things they should not have received. What members opposite are trying to say is that this piece of nonsense was justified. When the Tonkin Government's Budget was introduced, there was not one word of attack on this matter by the present Premier. Members should have a look at it for themselves if they doubt what I say. The charges were increased at the time of the Ascot by-election, and now members opposite say they were

thoroughly justified because they are putting up the charges again. They are condoning our action and following suit whereas, before, they took the attitude that these charges were completely unjustified.

Mr Blaikie: What about being fair?

Mr BERTRAM: Of course, that was not the worst feature of it. The worst feature was that by a little bit of deception on the back of the document, members opposite encouraged people to believe that the paper emanated from Mr Tonkin. That is precisely the Nixonian practice which occurred in Florida only a few months ago and about which the people of Florida were up in arms, and that was the practice adopted here. This is one of the reasons for the number of votes received by the Liberal candidate in the Ascot by-election. I suggest that in future, when members opposite are propagating these things, they should accept the onus of responsibility and not do it on someone else.

Mr Blaikie: Mr Tonkin was going to equalise charges over Western Australia.

Mr BERTRAM: When Mr Tonkin did put up the charges, at least he did it conventionally.

Mr Blaikie: Conveniently.

Mr BERTRAM: I would have thought that the honourable member interjecting would have been right on side with a little bit of convention. What are members opposite doing this time? In a snide, back-door way, they are putting up electricity and other charges by imposing a sales tax of 3 per cent, not on the profit of those bodies but on the gross revenue. The people have not received these increases yet, but they will incur them shortly. The idea is that the Government will saddle the people with a 7.4 per cent increase now, and then, a few months later, it will impose another increase by this method.

Mr Clarko: The Federal Government increased taxes by 45 per cent by default in 1973-74, so 7 per cent is not much of an increase.

Mr BERTRAM: At the moment we are discussing the State finances, not Commonwealth taxing arrangements.

Mr Blaikie: Please do not tell us that we have never had it so good. Your boys like to say that.

Mr BERTRAM: I am not persuaded to take too much notice of the statements of Senator Chaney, when we see the use of this sort of cheap political trick. He well knew, if he knew anything—and, in fact, if members opposite knew anything—that if they came to power, they would have to do precisely the same thing and charges would have increased. I was always under the impression that this Government upheld that thing called private enterprise.

I have never had private enterprise clearly defined for me, because nobody seems to be really clear about what it is. However, we have some very vague notions about it. Now we find the same people, when things are getting a little rough, relying on other than private enterprise institutions in order to bolster up the economy. The Government is going to the State Electricity Commission to help itself in a snide, back-door manner which has never before been contemplated let alone exercised in this State. It has gone to the Metropolitan Water Board and imposed a 3 per cent sales tax on that body—not on net revenue, but on turnover. A sales tax is to be imposed on these bodies which will be passed on to everybody in Western Australia. They will not feel the impact immediately, but they will feel it shortly. This has been done to cushion the blow and to allow the Treasurer to say, "I am doing my bit to help inflation", when all the time he intends to hit the people again later. As I say, it is a snide, back-door method which was quite unnecessary. Why did not the Government just come out and say that charges are going up from \$X to \$Y? Why should it adopt this back-door method? Perhaps someone opposite will explain that to us. All that the Government is doing is increasing the charges to the people.

In one respect the Government departs from that principle, and this concerns the Rural and Industries Bank. The Government does not dare to impose a tax on withdrawals for cash transactions; but it proposes to take half the profits of the Rural and Industries Bank. I do not know what is meant by a socialist enterprise, but I would have thought that one such enterprise would be the Rural and Industries Bank. When things are good this Government would do anything to stop any sort of socialist enterprise. Now when the Government is in trouble it relies on a State instrumentality to prop it up. It seems to be a clear attack upon private enterprise, because people come to comprehend that by banking with the R. & I. Bank they will build up its profits. At the same time they realise that such increased profits will help to keep their taxes down. What the Government has done seems to be an attack on private enterprise.

If we are concerned about helping the State, what we should do is encourage the public to bank with the R. & I. Bank, because the increased profits will help to reduce taxes. This would appeal to Country Party members, because it is called co-operation. The belief is that if there is a co-operative and the people do business with it they will be saving money. The Opposition is perfectly happy to do that, in conjunction with the Government, at every opportunity and so increase the profits of the R. & I. Bank and get more money flowing into Consolidated Revenue.

Mr Nanovich: You are assuming the bank will not lose money.

Mr BERTRAM: If we are talking about banks, I would like the honourable member to recognise the fact that in these days it is impossible to run a bank at a loss. In the last century some people did run banks at a loss, but that cannot be done in this century.

Mr Clarko: Last month that was done in the United States of America.

Mr BERTRAM: Whilst we are not particularly thrilled about any back-door method of taxation, what the Government has done shows a lack of affection for private enterprise. It is placing the accent on co-operation; farmers know all about that, and they will support it. If the farmers follow the example to indicate confidence in the Budget they will transfer their accounts to the R. & I. Bank which has grown at a tremendous rate. I understand it was established by a Labor Government, and since that time its operations have grown like a bushfire. It has established many branches. For that reason the farmers should build up the business of that bank—"the bank that lives here". They should build up co-operative effort. Anything that can be done to bolster that concept will be supported by us on this side.

We should bear in mind that the State Budget is a \$1.5 billion Budget. Let us see whether we can find items in it to indicate where the Government has done something to reduce expenditure. Since we have heard a great deal about the great increases in wages and salaries, it is worth remembering that in the \$1.5 billion only \$250 million represents wages and salaries that were paid last year. That brings the wages and salaries into proper focus. From the words which have been spoken in this Chamber one would have thought that wages and salaries represented a much higher percentage of the total Budget. In fact, they do not.

It is worth noting that the previous Premier and Treasurer (Mr J. T. Tonkin) estimated that the salaries would total \$247.5 million, and the actual figure turned out to be \$251.9 million. What sort of a performance was that?

Mr B. T. Burke: An excellent one.

Mr BERTRAM: The honourable member can say that again. This Budget gave to the Treasurer a heaven-sent and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to practise what he preaches. He could have reduced Government expenditure, and be seen by the people to have reduced it. He could have said, "This is because the Australian Government has urged us to do that"; however, he did not elect to do that. What is the reason?

The Treasurer could have said, "I and my supporters have been telling you for years." As the member for Scarborough pointed out, there are in his opinion too

many loafers. The Treasurer should have said, "We will take away the socialist struts and props, and make the people work. Anything tainted with socialism we will prune and cut out." Would that not be the way to manifest one's views, if one is genuinely concerned about socialism, or are we to believe that the whole Budget contains no socialistic measure or anything that is tainted with socialism? All that we have heard about at the polls is socialism. One must presume that within the Budgets which were introduced from 1890 right up to 1974, there is a living certainty that a lot of money has been spent on socialistic-tainted operations; some of them are clear-cut socialistic.

Why does not the Treasurer do something now, when he has the opportunity of a lifetime, to cut back on these items and manifest his outlook?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member has five more minutes.

Mr BERTRAM: I thought I had more. The Treasurer has not grasped the nettle. One of the greatest weaknesses contained in the Budget is the problem of inflation. In the remaining time at my disposal I propose to draw attention to the state of the poll on that question.

Mr Nanovich: Why not talk of the good points of the Budget?

Mr BERTRAM: There are very few of them.

Mr Nanovich: There are plenty of good points.

Mr BERTRAM: In his speech the honourable member omitted to relate them, so I do not propose to do his job for him. If we turn to the financial statement of the Treasurer for 1974-75 we find on page 2 a heading, "The Present Climate". That has nothing to do with the weather! Since it deals with inflation I thought the appropriate heading would be, "Inflation". However the heading, "The Present Climate" has been used, because I presume it is regarded as a more dignified heading, and dignity is important in this respect.

I draw attention to the policy speech of the Liberal Party which contains proposals covering many pages to deal with this matter. One passage is—

Inflation can be beaten to a substantial degree, State by State.

Mr Nanovich: That is with the co-operation of the Commonwealth Government.

Mr BERTRAM: The honourable member should not burst out into laughter.

Mr Nanovich: I am not.

Mr BERTRAM: I am warning the honourable member in case he should lose concentration. The policy speech of the Liberal Party states further—

The simple answer and the only answer there has ever been is to beat the shortages that are driving up the prices.

That is the solution put forward by the Liberal Party.

Let me turn again to the financial statement of the Treasurer; and this is a statement made by the same person, the Treasurer, six months after his policy speech. The following appears on page 3—

We must find a way to check this inflationary spiral—

That is a simple solution in two lines. Whom does the reference to "We" include? I am sure it includes members of this House. Three or four lines further down the Treasurer, in contradiction of what the member for Scarborough has told us—I do not know what his leader will say to him shortly—had this to say—

The responsibility for economic leadership and management of the economy is vested in the Federal Government.

Yet the very same person, the Treasurer, told the people in a referendum six months ago that this was the responsibility of at least two bodies. One was the Australian Government. Members opposite have made sure that the Federal Labor Government is not given the power to do anything about this matter. Mr Snedden will have no holds barred, and he has offered prices control. We acknowledge that this is a responsibility which should rest with the Australian Government, and it should be clothed with the power to discharge that responsibility. Yet, the Liberal Party told the people at the referendum not to give the Australian Government that power. So, today we have the Australian Government without the real capacity to exercise any power in that regard.

At the same time we find that some States, including Western Australia, are telling the people that inflation transcends politics, and that they are prepared to offer the Federal Government power to exercise price control and other things. However, they are bargaining in agreeing to hand over that power. When the country is confronted with financial difficulty and is in agony we find the present State Government withholding power from the Australian Government, and advocating at the last referendum that the States as a whole should hold back that power.

Sir Charles Court: The people of Australia decided not to hand over any more power to the Commonwealth Government.

Mr BERTRAM: I shall quote what the distinguished Leader of the Liberal Party said in the Federal Parliament.

Mr Nanovich: That gentleman has proven himself.

Mr BERTRAM: Reports have appeared in the newspapers with such headlines as, "The Prime Minister Offers Prices Power" and "Liberals May Use the Wages Freeze".

"Wages freeze" is another term meaning the fixing of wages and prices. When the Australian Government, whatever be its political persuasion, is given those powers and abuses them the remedy is to remove it—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

MR CRANE (Moore) [9.27 p.m.]: Listening to the debate on the Budget it has become quite evident to me that one thing which a new member of Parliament must learn is that people who live in glass houses must not throw stones. Therefore, I have to be very careful of what I say. I preface my remarks by saying that there are many facets of the Budget about which the Treasurer did not feel very happy, but because of the economic climate that has prevailed over the whole of our society it was necessary for him to introduce such a Budget. I therefore congratulate him for displaying the courage in doing so.

Mention has been made in this House many times that certain parts of the Budget are distasteful. As a member who represents the rural people as well as the city dwellers I say some of the imposts have fallen quite heavily on the country people. I am sure the Treasurer was well aware of that, and as I pointed out earlier he was not in a position to do anything else. For that reason he introduced the Budget which is now before us and which will, no doubt, prove to be satisfactory for Western Australia in the ensuing 12 months and carry the State through what promises to be a fairly difficult period.

As far as I am concerned, the distasteful parts of the Budget are the increases in rail freights and fares, stamp duty on cheques, and water and electricity charges which some members have been very quick to mention. The Treasurer was well aware that these increases would have a disappointing effect on some people. Another distasteful increase was the levy on the Fremantle Port Authority. If one stops to think, one will find that most of these imposts fall on the people in the rural areas—including those I represent.

I suppose we must accept the fact that the increases had to be instituted and, therefore, I accept them on behalf of the rural people. Rural people or, in particular, the farmers, are not given much credit for the fact that as businessmen they buy all their goods on the retail market, but sell all their produce on the wholesale market. Also, they pay the freight both ways. The farmer never asks for charity; he never expects it and as far as I can recall he most certainly has never received it. He plays his part and, no doubt, he will accept—as the rest of us do—the Budget which the Treasurer introduced last week.

I do not wish to say a great deal tonight but there are some aspects of the Budget which I will mention as they are disappointing from the point of view of my

electors. Some of the matters associated with the present economic climate have made the position more difficult for many of us.

People in my electorate on the west coast have experienced trouble with regard to soil erosion and I would have liked to see something done to remedy that position. I hope the Government will not lose sight of the fact that some action is necessary.

Another cause for concern, and one with which we do not receive much help in this State, is the inadequate telephone service in country areas. People are quick to say that it is a Federal matter but I believe it is time we recognised the fact that anything which affects the lives of the people in Western Australia is a State matter.

Water supplies in country towns have been worrying us for a long time. Reticulated water is taken for granted in the metropolitan area but country members are repeatedly asked for assistance in this regard. I do not suppose it is necessary for me to remind the Treasurer that many coastal towns have inadequate water supply systems.

Another matter which has been exercising my mind for some time concerns the Wongan Hills school and a course which has been curtailed because of the lack of funds for teaching staff. I mention sex education. I understand that because of the lack of funds sex education has been completely eliminated from the curricula of country schools. To some extent sex education is still being taught in the metropolitan area. Perhaps it is thought that country children are in a better position to know more about the birds and the bees but they are entitled to have their equal share of the limited funds which are available and I hope it will not be long before sex education courses are resumed in country schools. I understand some teachers are undergoing a course so that they can help in this regard in country areas.

An interesting point is the emphasis placed on drug abuse. I would be the last person to say that drug abuse was not a serious problem but I do not believe—and I think statistics would bear me out—that drug abuse is as much a social issue as the increasing incidence of venereal disease. It is worrying, indeed, when we hear that the number of cases of congenital syphilitic sufferers is rising in our country. When we consider the result of this disease in England, a couple of hundred years ago, I think we ought to appreciate the seriousness of the problem.

Mr Taylor: Is the member aware that I spoke on that subject some four years ago? The figures are still going up.

Mr CRANE: I am very pleased to hear the member opposite say that he has raised this matter previously. I will not

retort and say that we were not in government. It is the responsibility of whichever party is in government and as we are in government at the present time, it is our responsibility to do something about this shocking state of affairs. I mention this matter because sex education is one way, perhaps, by which this disease can be attacked. The education of young people must help prevent the spread of the disease.

I am also concerned with the shortage of bed space in some country hospitals, particularly in my electorate. I will mention one small incident of which members are probably not aware. At the Moora Hospital the nurses conducted a cabaret and raised a sum of \$900 with which I think they intended to build additional garage space. However, because of the serious shortage of space in the children's ward at the Moora Hospital the nurses offered to donate the \$900 towards the construction of an additional children's ward. That action was quite commendable and I believe those nurses should be thanked for their offer. I hope the Government will be able to do something in this regard because an extension to the children's ward is most certainly needed in Moora.

Although the lack of law and order in our country is not reflected in the Budget, it is something which is very worrying. We observed in the Press last week that a prominent leader of one of our unions was completely defying the law by advertising that he was keeping an unsterilised Alsatian dog.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Does the member believe the Act should be amended or changed?

Mr CRANE: I am not here to talk about whether an Act should be changed. If it is a bad Act and needs to be changed perhaps we should amend it. The point I am making, and the point which I hope the member opposite will appreciate, is that laws ought to be obeyed by members of our society, particularly those in responsible positions. It is not good for the people who belong to the union concerned to see their leader behaving in such a way.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Does the member believe that all laws passed by Parliament should be obeyed?

Mr CRANE: I believe laws should be obeyed because if they are not anarchy will prevail. It is as simple as that.

Probably the greatest problem related to the Budget is that of the Commonwealth-State relationship. This is a subject which has been aired quite a lot lately, and during the last few years. It has to be admitted that the Commonwealth-State relationship is deteriorating.

When the Treasurer introduced the Budget he drew attention to the Commonwealth revenue grant and he reminded us

that State taxation was taken away from the States as a wartime emergency measure and the system of reimbursed grants to the States was introduced. Unfortunately, the system seems to have gone sour and this is where the Commonwealth-State relationship is falling down badly.

Mr T. D. Evans: It has been falling down for years.

Mr CRANE: Unless we can do something the situation will grow progressively worse. Local government is in a serious financial position because of the lack of funds. Also, industry is losing confidence and, as I mentioned in my maiden speech, I do not blame any particular Government for the centralised policies which have developed in Canberra. They have developed over a period of years.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Hear, hear.

Mr CRANE: That does not mean to say those policies are right. We can never start earlier than now to do something about rectifying the serious situation. There has been considerable talk over the last few years—because of the deterioration of Commonwealth-State relationships—about secession for Western Australia. Well, I would quickly say that I am not a secessionist but I think I should also say that I am, for the want of a better word, a "survivalist". If, as a member of the Western Australian Parliament, I was pushed so far into a corner that secession was the only answer I might, perhaps, become a secessionist. I hope that will never eventuate.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: The member said he believed in obeying the law.

Mr CRANE: Secession is not necessarily disobeying the law.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Of course it is; it is disobeying the Australian law.

Mr CRANE: One does not have to disobey the Australian law because there is provision for secession in some instances. I believe that provision should be investigated now in order to find out the pros and cons. As I said, I am not a secessionist but I am a "survivalist", and I believe that if it becomes necessary, and is the only way we can survive, that is what we should do.

I will not take up my full 45 minutes; I do not think it is necessary to do so. I have supported the Treasurer in bringing down this Budget. While most of us will admit it is not altogether what we would have liked to see, it is the only Budget he could have brought down under the circumstances. I therefore conclude by congratulating the Treasurer on his courage and by expressing the hope that we will all put our shoulders to the wheel to take this State through the difficult times which are ahead and get back to our Federal system which was provided for in the Federal Constitution but which is being sadly eroded.

One of the things which make us very disappointed is the time wasted by people who talk of such petty things as new flags and new anthems. I suppose it is almost analogous to Nero who was prepared to play the fiddle while Rome burnt.

Mr Taylor: Both the Liberal Party and the Labor Party wanted a change of anthem.

Mr CRANE: Whether or not they wanted to change it, there is one anthem I would never stand for; that is "Gough Save the Crean".

MR McIVER (Avon) [9.42 p.m.]: I am afraid I do not share the view of the member who has just resumed his seat, sincere though he may be. On the 30th March we had a change of Government and the people of Western Australia have waited anxiously for the Treasurer to introduce his first Budget. I have no hesitation in saying it can only be classed as a shocker.

Mr Rushton: Explain what is a shocker.

Mr McIVER: I am opposed to the Budget because of the policies which were announced by the Liberal Party before the election. I refer firstly to education. I feel very strongly that the Liberal Party machine got to work to counteract the ground gained by the Tonkin Government from 1971 to 1974 following 12 years of neglect by the coalition Government. The Tonkin Cabinet produced a winner by introducing free school books for primary school children. Something had to be done to counteract that and the wisdom boys of the Liberal Party got together and formulated an education policy. Nobody can tell me the Liberal Party was elected on the issues of education and independent traffic control. That is just not on.

Mr O'Connor: What was it, then?

Mr McIVER: I indicated that in my Address-in-Reply speech, and if the Minister would like to read it he will find the answer. At the moment I am speaking to the Appropriation Bill (Consolidated Revenue Fund).

The people who were most alarmed at the education policy were the officials of the Education Department. Surely they are the people who know the pros and cons of education. I am only a layman and I will admit that I am the last person to express an opinion on finance for education. But we have in our State people who are very competent in the field of education and surely we must take our lead from them.

I believe the Liberal Party's policy in relation to pre-school education is the prime reason for the increases in water rates, electricity charges, and the tax on cheques which was mentioned by the member for Moore. It is a policy which nobody wants. When I interjected while

the member for Scarborough was speaking, he asked, "What was the figure?" If my memory serves me correctly, in the period prior to the election our leader gave the figure as being \$315 million, and when speaking to the Budget he gave very sound reasons for his estimate. There is no need for me to reiterate them.

Our very capable Under-Treasurer (Mr Townsing) was lauded for his work on the Budget by those who sit opposite, but prior to the election he did not know what he was talking about, according to the Premier and his colleagues, and they said that if the Liberal Party came to office it would have a full inquiry made into the Treasury. The present Government has been in office for six months and no inquiry has been made. There has been a change of tack by the coalition Government and everything is fine.

Mr Bryce: Good stuff on the hustings but they did not mean it.

Mr McIVER: This education policy is absolutely ridiculous, and it is not too late to withdraw it. It is quite apparent that a head-on collision is coming between the Minister for Education, the Government, and the teachers. Laymen like myself and officers of the Education Department do not want a bar of this legislation; nor do the teachers, and I am referring to those who have had years of experience. But the lord and master has ruled that it will be implemented, and that is it.

The other issue to which I am strongly opposed is the introduction of an independent traffic authority which will be only a duplication of the Police Department. All it will do is please the Country Party and a few shires which, it is alleged, have shown a loss of thousands of dollars over the years.

Mr Nanovich: It will be a gain in dollars.

Mr McIVER: I will say no more about that matter because I will make my speech on that subject when the Bill is being debated in the House. Not all the blame for it can be placed on the Premier; we must be fair. It is a coalition Government, so the Country Party members must accept their share of the responsibility.

I now refer to the increased water charges. We have heard Country Party members speaking in this Chamber tonight about the impost on country people and how it will affect them financially.

We heard a very capable speech from the member for Geraldton. He told us how these increased charges will affect the people in his area. Most certainly they will affect the rural community in my area. Where was the opposition from the Country Party members to this impost? They were very concerned about putting pressure on the Government in relation to

the independent authority rather than letting the Police Force handle traffic, but they have expressed little opposition about increased water charges. The Country Party must shoulder some of the responsibility, and not place it all on the Premier. We are constantly informed that this is a coalition Government, and therefore the Country Party members must accept 50 per cent of the blame for increased charges.

Mr Rushton: Could you tell me the cost of the country water supplies in the way of losses for the service?

Mr McIVER: Not off the cuff, but I know there would be a loss.

Mr Rushton: Is it over \$20 million or something like that?

Mr McIVER: Obviously the Minister did not hear what I said before. I said that the Government's policies on education will cost over \$300 million and the traffic authority will cost well in excess of \$7 million irrespective of what the Minister told us the other night.

Mr O'Connor: That is the greatest inflation we have had in Australia this year.

Mr McIVER: I will get around to inflation in a minute; do not get excited. We do not need to proceed with these two policies, and if they were dropped the money could be channelled into the country water supplies, the State Electricity Commission would not have to defer the extension of the Muja power house at Collie, the member for Mundaring may see the establishment of the high school in his electorate, and I might even be able to get a load of gravel for the Beverley High School which I cannot get at the moment.

Mr Nanovich: The local authority should supply that.

Mr McIVER: Under this Government the local authorities have no money. Let us consider the town of York, the oldest town in Western Australia.

Mr Stephens: After Albany.

Mr McIVER: I do not have to emphasise how old the York Primary School is. It should have been renewed after the 1968 earthquake, but each year it is patch, patch, patch, and it will have to be patched again because the money is being channelled into the ridiculous policies this Government is pursuing. The people in that area have paid taxes for years, and I repeat that the oldest town in the State deserves a better deal.

Mr Stephens: Have you ever heard of Albany?

Mr McIVER: York was established long before Albany.

Mr Stephens: If the rest of your speech is as inaccurate as that statement, we are wasting our time listening to it.

Sir Charles Court: Remember 1826 and all that!

Mr McIVER: Irrespective of the facetious interjections, and evidently it is starting to hurt a little—

Mr Stephens: We just want to put you right on the year.

Mr McIVER: I will accept that. However, I repeat that a new primary school is required at York. If the Minister used a little tenacity in Cabinet instead of being a puppet on a string when the orchestra leader calls the tune, we might get somewhere. All he says is, "Yes, yes, yes."

Mr Stephens: Fantasies again!

Mr McPharlin: What did you do in your three years of government? You had the opportunity then.

Mr McIVER: First of all we spent two years clearing up the mess, and after that there was not much time.

Mr McPharlin: You had the opportunity in three years.

Mr McIVER: So we have the precedent created in this Budget where instrumentalities are being taxed. The State Electricity Commission must have money now although we know it was starved before under the previous Liberal-Country Party Government, and this was clearly indicated by the former Minister for Electricity. For years it did not have money and it looks as though it will be starved again.

Sir Charles Court: The greatest expansion of all time.

Mr McIVER: The extension of the Muja power station has been deferred for a further 12 months.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Shame!

Mr McIVER: In the Budget we see increased charges on port authorities, a 50 per cent profit tax on the Rural and Industries Bank, and 3 per cent of SEC charges are to be channelled directly to the Treasury to be spent on these ridiculous projects put forward by the Liberal-Country Party Government. We have heard many interjections tonight about the election in the Northern Territory and the latest Gallup polls. I wonder how members who sit on the Government side of the House would like to go to the people now on this Budget and on the fuel and energy legislation.

Mr O'Connor: Get the Commonwealth to go and we will join them.

Mr McIVER: If the State Government went to the electors on the independent traffic authority and its education policy, its members would be over here so quickly it would not be funny.

Mr Bateman: Have a go.

Sir Charles Court: We would be embarrassed by the number of seats we would win.

Mr Rushton: We would pick up Avon, too.

Mr McIVER: All members who have spoken to this Bill have mentioned inflation. However, we must consider the question sensibly and realise that this problem is apparent in Western Australia, all the other States of the Commonwealth, and indeed, right throughout the world. I believe that if the Government had any ideas to solve the problem it would implement them. Nobody wishes to see men out of work and families in difficulties irrespective of our political philosophies.

Mr O'Connor: That is right.

Mr McIVER: Every day we can read about the problems of inflation all over the world. Who would want to live in America at the present time? We read in the Press that some large factories in Germany are putting off not just 20 or 30 men, but hundreds of men. The same pattern is evident right throughout Europe. It would be ridiculous to think that Australia could escape this inflationary trend. To a large degree the Government can be blamed—

Mr Rushton: The Commonwealth Government.

Mr McIVER: —because at the time of the Commonwealth referendum to control prices, every night we saw the Premier or a prominent member of his party urging the people of Western Australia to vote "No" because of this terrible octopus in Canberra that would engulf us and take control of everything.

Mr Rushton: It is doing its best to do so.

Mr McIVER: What would be the situation now if the Australian Government held another referendum on prices? No doubt the television and radio campaign cost the Liberal Party thousands and thousands of dollars at the time, but their decision to reject the proposal is now costing the people of this State thousands and thousands of dollars.

Sir Charles Court: Don't be silly.

Mr McIVER: The manufacturers have a mandate to charge what they like, and that applies to farm implements as well as everything else.

Mr Mensaros: The highest cost-of-living increase was in South Australia which has price control.

Mr McIVER: If price control had been Australia-wide and not fragmented as it is now, I am sure it would have had a far greater effect. If we control prices, we automatically control wages.

Mr Rushton: What about the Prices Justification Tribunal?

Mr McIVER: Government members talk about trade unions, and about Munday and Carmichael, but that is so much rubbish.

If members study the statistics of the productivity of the work force in Western Australia, they will find it leads the Commonwealth in this respect.

Mr Watt: Frank Crean said yesterday he does not agree with that.

Mr McIVER: I am not interested in Frank Crean; I happen to be in the Parliament of Western Australia. What happens in Canberra is the responsibility of Federal members.

Mr Watt: It also affects us.

Mr McIVER: However, in answering the interjection of the member for Albany, I would say I am delighted that the Australian Labor Government is in office. Prior to the interjections, I made some mention of education. We find since the Australian Government has been in office—although it receives very little kudos for this—

Mr Rushton: You wouldn't want to, either.

Mr McIVER:—parents and citizens' associations in this State which were once the providers of teaching aids in the schools no longer have to run cake stalls and raffles and scratch and scrape for a few dollars because money is provided by the Australian Government. The role of the parents and citizens' associations now is that of putting the icing on the cake, and that is what their role should be.

Mr Clarko: And the Government will take \$200 a year off everyone in tax.

Mr Moiler: Rubbish!

Mr Clarko: That is what it will be.

Mr McIVER: I understand the member who interjected is also a member of a shire council which had to be examined in respect of garbage disposal.

Mr Clarko: You are wrong. That was a waste of thousands of dollars.

Mr B. T. Burke: Because they didn't get rid of you.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McIVER: The member for Moore spoke of soil erosion. No doubt what he said is correct, because this matter is of great concern in rural areas. We are told the Australian Government does nothing for country people, but consider the committee which has been specially formed in respect of soil erosion and the amount of money which will be channelled into this area. An amount of money far greater than ever before is to be spent in an endeavour to stop the shocking erosion of our precious soil in rural areas.

Mr McPharlin: Do you know the amount of money?

Mr McIVER: I am afraid the figure has gone out of my mind, although I knew it on Sunday. I can get it for the Minister if he wishes. I know it is a huge sum, and much more than was ever allocated under a Liberal-Country Party Government.

Mr Clarko: They are playing Monopoly.

Mr McIVER: In addition, the Australian Government is establishing a large beef research centre at Geelong, Victoria; and it is establishing other centres we never hear about from members opposite. We hear from them only how the Australian Government will crush the farmers.

Mr Clarko: You are hearing a bit of beef now.

Mr McPharlin: I do not think the amount of money is as great as you have indicated.

Mr McIVER: The Minister will be surprised, because it is a huge sum. However, irrespective of that, something positive is being done by Canberra; and that is where the money comes from, no matter what political points we try to take.

Mr Rushton: It comes from Western Australia.

Mr McIVER: The time has arrived when this State should be using the ALP's slogan and not "Put things right". "It's time" the Premier changed his attitude towards Canberra and tried the use of a little co-operation, because while he is rubbishing Canberra the other States are receiving the money.

Mr Rushton: Don't kid yourself.

Mr McIVER: The Premier of New South Wales (Sir Robert Askin)—a Liberal—is not criticising the Australian Government; he has his hands out for the money.

Sir Charles Court: Oh! Last Friday he threatened to put off 4 000 road workers.

Mr McIVER: Can the Premier tell me when in the last month the Premier of New South Wales has criticised the Australian Government?

Sir Charles Court: He threatened to put off 4 000 road workers, and the Commonwealth had to pay up.

Mr McIVER: I understand the Government of Western Australia will not accept funds—

Mr Rushton: Which funds will we not accept?

Mr McIVER:—to purchase and service land and place it on the market. However, the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria are receiving those funds with both hands.

Mr Rushton: You should get up to date.

Mr McIVER: As a consequence, this State is being retarded. It is time we co-operated. Members opposite, like their Liberal colleagues in Canberra, just cannot accept the fact that a Labor Government is in office in Canberra.

Mr Rushton: How could we avoid knowing it?

Mr McIVER: I said during my speech on the Address-in-Reply that the Liberal and Country Parties have had two opportunities to be returned to office in Canberra, the first in 1972 and then again when the double dissolution occurred. I repeat again that on the second occasion the combined total of the Labor vote was 700 000 in excess of the combined totals of the vote of our political opponents.

Mr Clarko: What about the vote in Melbourne and Sydney?

Mr McIVER: Does not this fellow ever get tired? We heard when the Treasurer introduced his Budget that an investigation would take place into the Premier's Department and that the number of public servants would be reduced. I feel perhaps an inquiry should be held into the Premier's Department, because we cannot receive answers to our correspondence.

Mr B. T. Burke: All his servants have resigned.

Mr Bryce: Morale is low.

Mr McIVER: I would like to put forward a proposal in relation to the question of unemployment. I agree that a small number of those receiving unemployment benefits could make a better effort than they are making at the moment in regard to finding work.

Mr Blaikie: They could make a much bigger effort.

Mr McIVER: What I am about to put forward is aimed at rural shires, but it could apply also to metropolitan shires. I suggest that before a person is eligible to receive unemployment benefits he should work at least three days a week for a shire council.

My concept is that he should report to the local shire office—and naturally he would be paid for the work he does—and I can think of no better project on which to employ such people than clearing our highways of litter.

Mr Rushton: The Commonwealth does not recognise that country local authorities have unemployment.

Mr McIVER: That is the Minister's opinion, and he will have an opportunity to substantiate it when he speaks. I am presenting a suggestion which I would like to see implemented.

Mr Rushton: Very good.

Mr McIVER: Mr Speaker, you would be aware of that section of the highway between Clackline and Northam where a 12-mile stretch of road was constructed at a cost of over \$1.4 million, because at the time you were the Minister for Works. The project was followed up by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he took office as the Minister. The point I make is that this wonderful section of highway is unique inasmuch as the Main Roads

Department retained every tree and bush possible to enable the environment of the area to be preserved. I recommend to members that they read a booklet prepared by the Main Roads Department which highlights this feature. The booklet also refers to the early days when drays used to stop at certain wells along the highway, and it refers to the Aboriginal tribal and ritual grounds and watering places.

Nothing saddens me more than to see heaps of cans, bottles, and litter along this highway. Certainly it is not as attractive as it should be. I do not know the answer to this problem, or how we can educate people not to litter. Receptacles are provided for rubbish, but in this age no-one seems to use them. I do not blame anyone in particular for this, but I feel this is one area in which unemployed men could be put to work so that at least they would not be loitering around. Irrespective of what the member for Scarborough thinks, there are people who want to work; and nothing is more soul-destroying than being out of work. It has been proved over a period of time that in such circumstances some people take to drink.

I would very much like the Government to examine this situation and endeavour to achieve real co-operation with the Commonwealth authorities to see whether we cannot achieve some positive and constructive action. I have used the three-day instance merely as a simple example. The voucher could be signed by the town clerk or the shire clerk and forwarded to the employment office as an indication that the man had completed his three day's work and was entitled to unemployment benefits. The Federal Treasurer says that things will deteriorate; I am not one to argue that point with him.

The next point I wish to raise is the question of meat inspection services provided in country areas. This matter has been a thorn in the side of the Northam Shire for a long period. Just before going out of office, the Tonkin Government increased meat inspection fees. This was to be the salvation of the Northam Shire because, at the moment, it more or less subsidises the entire metropolitan area through the services it provides to the huge abattoir of Mr Williams, at Linley Valley. If further financial assistance is not to be provided by the State Government to the shire for its meat inspection service, it will have no alternative but to withdraw its meat inspectors from the abattoirs, thus further downgrading a decentralised industry which is just getting back on its feet after a recession. The abattoir at Linley Valley plays an important part in providing casual and skilled labour for many in the area. I certainly do not want to see men out of work because of the obstinacy of the State Government in not providing the Northam Shire with a further grant in respect of these inspection services.

I would also like to know why the concession given by the previous Government was removed; it has been to the great detriment of the Northam Shire. I intend to write directly to the Premier, supplying him with all the specific details and history of the matter. I do not think it is fair to make these statements off the cuff, without the Premier having the background knowledge. I trust that when the Premier receives this information, he will examine the matter and endeavour to provide further grants to the Northam Shire.

The meat inspectors service both local and export abattoirs on a rotating basis. I am sure the member for Mundaring could elaborate on this point to far better effect than could I.

Mr Moiler: It does not say much for the decentralisation policies of the Government, does it?

Mr McIVER: No, the policies of the Government are retarding a very important industry. If the Government is as sincere in promoting decentralisation as it claims to be, this is an ideal opportunity. Time is the essence of the contract; this decision must be made quickly.

I believe a town like Northam is entitled to far better government offices than it has at the moment. I know that to place all government instrumentalities in Northam in one huge building would be far beyond the present finances of the Government. However, I have written to the Under-Secretary for Works drawing his attention to plans drawn up by a private developer. The proposal put to the Government is a very sound and reasonable one and, irrespective of the inflationary trend that exists today, I believe it could be implemented. That is why I am very sour on the policy of this Government in relation to education and its independent traffic authority. In my opinion—I am supported by many others in this—millions of dollars will be wasted which could be spent to the benefit of many other people.

I move now to discuss the Public Health Department. For some time, we have been endeavouring to extend the permanent care annexe of the Northam Regional Hospital. The men's ward of the old hospital was converted into an annexe of the permanent care unit, and caters for aged people who need constant nursing; however, it is insufficient for present needs. It is understaffed and is not doing the job it was planned to do and I am sure we could do much better. I have written to the State Minister for Health who, in turn, has appealed to Canberra for funds; I only hope he will pursue this matter and endeavour to enlarge the permanent care unit because it is becoming an increasing problem for the relatives of these aged people. The old people are being forced to leave the town in which they have spent all their lives to travel to Perth to

endeavour to get into "C"-class hospitals and to obtain the medical attention they deserve. However, this is proving extremely difficult. I do not bring this matter forward for any political reason, but rather in a sincere appeal to the Government to provide funds to enable the extension of this permanent care unit.

I commend the Government for its work in this field to date. I noticed in the paper recently that extensions are to be carried out to the Wagin Hospital. I believe this was instituted when Labor was in government, but it is very pleasing to see that this work is to be carried out.

With those remarks, I am afraid I cannot join with speakers from the other side in supporting this Budget. I think it is a shocking Budget which could have been greatly improved. The people of Western Australia have been given a raw deal, and I trust that next year's Budget will be a far better Budget than the one we are now discussing.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [10.18 p.m.]: In discussing and considering the Budget before the House, a consideration exercising the minds of members is to endeavour in a responsible manner to resolve those differences of opinion which arise between what exists in the Budget and what we as an Opposition feel should be contained in the Budget. One would readily concede that the drawing up of a Budget at this time of economic crisis facing Australia due to inflation, which is running rampant throughout not only Australia but also the rest of the world, it is very difficult for Governments to achieve an equitable solution to disbursing the funds available to them.

In listening to this debate and to various other debates, I have heard much about the horrible business of centralism and the centralist policies of the Australian Government. I am a person who is dedicated to the concept of a social Government—a Government that can control the attitudes, social thinking, finances and economy of the country so that we will not be faced with this terrible struggle that takes place each year, when each individual State determines in its own time to bring down its Budget and attempts to get on the merry-go-round of fighting for Commonwealth finances, or whatever other funds may be available to it.

That is a situation with which we are faced year after year after year, and yet with a centralist system we would have a system whereby we could approach the Federal Government for the purpose of obtaining from it support and finance which the State Government needs to cover its various commitments.

Government members have complained most bitterly that, first of all, it is the responsibility of the Australian Government to control inflation. Of course, that statement, in itself, would stand up. One

would assume that it is the Australian Government's responsibility to control inflation, and I believe it has endeavoured to do just that.

Mr Clarko: Not very well.

Mr SKIDMORE: That may be so, but I suggest it is making an attempt to control inflation in Australia, but it is certainly not receiving much help from State Governments of a different political colour.

Mr Clarko: Name the areas in which it is making an attempt.

Mr SKIDMORE: All the pundits on the other side of the House have all the economic answers to all the economic ills that exist in Australia. I simply say that when we are faced with a state of inflation throughout the world, the Australian Government is not doing so badly. In the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* of the 19th August, 1974, it is mentioned that the inflation rate is as follows in various countries—

	Per cent
France	13.5
Canada	11
United States	10.7
South Africa	9.7
New Zealand	10.3
West Germany	7.2

At that time, the rate of inflation in Australia was 14.4 per cent.

Mr Blaikie: Are you proud of that?

Mr SKIDMORE: Who could be proud of that? That is an inane interjection by a member who calls himself an Australian. I am obliged to answer that interjection by saying that I am not proud of that, any more than the honourable member, as a member of the Liberal Party, would be proud to have that rate of inflation in Australia. All that members on the other side of the House are intent on doing is endeavouring to denigrate the Australian Government for its failure to arrest the inflation rate. I am pointing out that the whole question revolves around many other countries which have a much higher rate of inflation than Australia, and some of them are our trading partners. We have to deal with some of them on the international money market. The inflation rate in other countries of the world is as follows—

	Per cent
Britain	17.1
Finland	19.2
Italy	16.1
Japan	24.9
Indonesia	47.2
Turkey	19
Greece	15.5
Peru	16.2
Portugal	26.6

One could not assume that the rate of 14.4 per cent in Australia is good, but in the present position in which we are placed we are able to control our economy within the international market that is available to us. Therefore, if we continue to do this we will be able to keep our heads above water, but we will need everybody's assistance to achieve our objective.

The sniping that takes place against the so-called centralist Government does nothing whatsoever to overcome the problem. I want to try to throw some light on a socialist country which has a socialist attitude and a central Government and which has operated in this world very successfully. I know it is very hard to find such a country because there are very few of them that have adopted that type of Government.

Mr Clarko: Russia is one.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is the very country I have in mind. It should be borne in mind that when we speak of Russia—that is, the USSR—we are speaking of a trading partner of this country of ours.

Mr Nanovich: A Communist country.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not deny that, and the member for Toodyay does not want to get upset about it. In the *Western Farmer and Grazier*, of the 17th October, 1974—which is a fairly recent publication—the following article appears—

SPOTLIGHT ON GRAIN

News that a proposed Russian grain deal with the US has fallen through has raised speculation that Russia may show renewed interest in Australian wheat later this year.

The Russians were said to be interested in buying nearly one million tonnes from the US—a mere drop in the bucket compared with the giant grain deals of 1972 when she bought nearly 12 million tonnes of wheat, five million of feedgrains and one million of soybeans.

So this socialist country is a very rich purchaser of grain which it used to feed its people. This article continues—

The board revealed, however, it is expecting a visit from a Russian delegation later in the year.

So, according to the member for Toodyay, that makes the people of Russia some strange sorts of persons who are not in any way responsible and who are not reasonable human beings merely because he happens to be a Liberal and I happen to be a Labor supporter. What is the difference in our outlook when we look back at what has been the backbone and the guts of the people over the years? It is all very well for members opposite to speak of the people in Russia in the terms

that they do, but I have been there and have seen how they live. The article I have been quoting continues as follows—

Russia's quest for further grain supplies raises questions about its livestock sector.

So the article goes on to indicate that there are many openings in a market that is available to us and in a country where there is a central Government. We, in turn, could become a powerful nation just like Russia, and yet we continue to denigrate it. It is a shocking state of affairs, also, that we continue to slight an Australian Government that is attempting to overcome the problem of inflation, because the whole problem is brought about by the fact that we live under a capitalistic system. Members cannot deny that, because it is that very system that is responsible for an inflation rate of 14.4 per cent.

If members do not agree with my statement, let all the economists come forward and give me the answer to the problem. I would now like to refer to a document which sets out some of the conditions and rights that have been won by the workers in the USSR. I am making this comparison deliberately because I want to return to reflect on the attitude of the present State Government towards the workers in Western Australia under the system it seeks to impose. Let us look at what rights are enjoyed by workers in the USSR. I quote from the booklet as follows—

Trade-Union Rights in the Sphere of Labour. Labour is an important sphere of trade-union activity.

The trade unions of the USSR take part in regulating labour relations, control the observance of labour legislation and consider labour grievances.

In order to take part in regulating labour relations, the trade unions are vested with powers to establish working conditions and apply labour legislation. Powers to establish working conditions are vested in various trade-union agencies.

Let us stop and consider that very simple statement. When we do we realise that in regard to the workers in Western Australia we have a complete parallel.

Mr Blaikie: The only reason—

Mr SKIDMORE: I know what the honourable member is going to say.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr SKIDMORE: The honourable member is going to say that there is no such thing as a trade union in the USSR. He would be the most ignorant person in the world, because nearly 97.3 per cent of the people in the USSR are trade unionists.

Mr Clarko: And there are no strikes.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is a lot of rubbish, because whilst I was there there was a strike among the tramway workers. There was also a strike in the fishing industry whilst I was there.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr SKIDMORE: If members opposite will be patient I shall show them how horrible the USSR is supposed to be! To continue with the quotes from *Rights of Trade Unions in the USSR*, the following appears on page 28—

Industrial and office workers may be dismissed on management's initiative only with the preliminary agreement of the trade union committee.

That is no different from the situation which exists in respect of industrial relations in Australia. When management determines that a worker should be dismissed but the union says he should not be, negotiations take place. The case finishes up with the arbitrator determining the issue. Where is the difference between our system and the USSR system? Why is there this woolly thinking on the part of some people? Where is the bogey that is supposed to exist in a country which seeks to give the worker the better things of life, compared with the system under which we operate?

Because so many comments have been made by members opposite on the quotations I am presenting, I have to omit some of them. The following which appears on page 29 is of particular interest—

State supervision over the observance of labour protection legislation is mainly exercised by trade-union technical and law inspectors. Trade-union technical inspectors have the right of unhampered access at any time of the day to inspect the enterprises they control; to demand that management make available documents, vouchers, and other material and explanations on matters connected with labour protection; to give instructions which are binding on members of management and individual officials concerning the elimination of breaches of labour protection legislation and to control fulfilment of these instructions, etc.

That is a departure from the situation which exists in Australia, and from the control that is exercised by our unions in respect of industrial safety. When we hear about the downtrodden workers of the USSR we should bear in mind that the big difference is that in that country the workers have the opportunity to control their own destiny. So we find in that country the situation where disputation arises over industrial safety rarely raises its ugly head, because the matter is taken care of before it develops.

What do we find in Australia? We find a different appreciation of industrial safety, particularly in Western Australia where an industrial foundation for accident prevention has been set up. This foundation runs two schools for the workers, but at both learning skills are taught to enable the workers to do better jobs. They have nothing to do with industrial safety at all. This is the great theme in Western Australia in respect of industrial safety!

Another passage appears on page 30 of the booklet as follows—

Trade-union technical inspectors work in close contact with the trade-union committees, for they are the chief agents of trade-union control over the observance of labour legislation directly at the enterprises.

Trade-union committees carry on their labour protection activity through their labour protection commissions and social inspectors. Labour protection commissions are set up from among workers, engineers, technicians and office workers who are members of the trade unions Members of the management may not be chairmen of labour protection commissions.

This is an aspect which has been thrown up when socialist countries are dealt with. I have visited many socialist countries, but not all of them. There is not a great deal one could quarrel with when one looks at the affairs of the trade unions under socialist Governments. I say it is wrong for the people and the Government of Western Australia to denigrate the Australian Government because it has socialistic tendencies, a socialist platform, and a socialistic ideal, when they have no proof or cannot adduce any positive statement to indicate that a socialistic system does not work. They do that simply because the capitalistic system does not want the socialistic system to work; in no part of the world does the capitalistic system want a socialistic system to work.

Mr Clarko: Where has a socialistic system worked?

Mr SKIDMORE: All that the capitalistic system can do is what the Government members are doing at present; that is, to say the socialistic system will not work. When I visited the USSR I did so with a very open mind.

Mr Blaikie: Why did you leave?

Mr SKIDMORE: I shall answer that interjection, and no doubt it will appear in *Hansard*. I was asked the question as to why I left. The answer is that I am Australian, and I am proud to be an Australian. I wished to return to this country to endeavour to show the people what I had seen and what I believed to be a very good socialistic system for all people. Members opposite have asked me to tell them something about the working conditions of the USSR. I shall talk about the working

conditions in one particular factory, but I could talk about those in several other factories.

Mr Stephens: Tell us about the ones in Hungary and Yugoslavia.

Mr SKIDMORE: If members opposite do not want my answer I could go on to deal with something else. Taking the Klementi clothing factory as an example in a country which is run as a socialist State, that industry is self-contained. The factory contains some 450 machines. It has a very good designing centre, and each of the girls working at the factory sits in an air-conditioned workroom. A lot of working space is available. The buildings are well lit, and the working conditions are absolutely wonderful.

They are far above the working conditions that prevail in the rag trade in Western Australia. In this State one can go into a clothing factory and find the workers confined in a building where the temperature in the summer reaches 110 to 115 degrees Fahrenheit. It is a complete sweat shop. Four red lights are installed outside the toilets, and they are switched on to make sure that the workers do not remain in the toilets for too long. That is the type of system under which the workers in Western Australia are working.

Mr McPharlin: What sort of wages do the workers receive in the USSR?

Mr SKIDMORE: The sort of wages they receive—

Mr Clarko: Are they free to travel overseas?

Mr SKIDMORE: They are as free as the workers in Australia. They are under the same restrictions as we are under. To answer the question posed by the Minister, the wages of the workers in the USSR in Australian dollars would be about \$120 a month, as close as I can assess it. We should bear in mind that the maximum amount which a worker on a wage of \$120 a month would pay in rental for his home is \$16 a month. Converting that to a weekly rate, on a wage of \$30 a week a worker pays \$4 a week in rental. Besides the rental all that a worker has to find is the cost of food and clothing.

Mr McPharlin: Do the workers pay the rent to the State?

Mr SKIDMORE: To the State. All the housing is owned by the State. In referring to the question of housing I would like to deal with a peculiar position which exists at the Kirov fishery, to show how a supposedly terrible socialistic country gets on with its workers! These workers are on piece rates, and that surprised me. I asked myself what was going on, but I found the workers were on piece rates for good reason.

Mr Clarko: Are they destroying the workers?

Mr SKIDMORE: The honourable member should remain quiet. He would be the most idiotic member who has ever blessed the blue carpets of this Chamber. I went through the Kirov fishery very quickly. I found everything was provided. The workers are picked up each morning by bus and of course mum and dad both work in that country because there is a job for everyone.

Mr Blaikie: What about the kids?

Mr SKIDMORE: If the children are under school age they are placed in kindergartens or pre-school centres within the factory. Mum and dad go to work and during the breaks for morning and afternoon tea and lunch they are allowed to visit their children for a total of about one hour each day.

Sir Charles Court: What a lovely life!

Mr SKIDMORE: I know some nasty-minded people say they are controlled in some way and are made to do this. They do not have to do that at all. Each worker at the fishery has at least 2.5 hectares of land upon which he can and does build a cottage and that is where most of the children spend the day with their mothers.

The workers at the fishery did not receive a small bonus last year. They received as a bonus two years' wages. The reason was that by piecework the workers were able to look after the glut market. Under our capitalist system when we have sufficient of the goods we need, the employer cannot successfully market the remainder and it is used for cray bait; but not over there. All the catch is processed by pieceworkers who do not leave one piece of fish uncanned. The whole lot is used and is sold to the people for food.

I simply want to say that when all those who are opposed to Labor policies speak of the terrible socialistic system, they seem to bring up these red herrings because—

Mr Nanovich: It is a terrible system and it is not a red herring.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SKIDMORE: It is a great country and it is rather peculiar that all other countries except it and one other socialist country have inflation problems. It has a very strong economy which allows it to come here and buy our wheat.

Mr Clarko: And it has a very poor standard of living. How many cars per thousand are there over there?

Mr Bryce: For God's sake, who judges a standard of living by that?

Mr SKIDMORE: It has a standard equivalent to ours and I have documentary proof of that statement. The price of butter in Leningrad, Moscow, and Tallinn

—the three cities I visited there—was within 2c of the price of butter in Western Australia.

Mr O'Neil: But they get only \$40 a week.

Mr Blaikie: What was the price of margarine?

Mr SKIDMORE: Margarine was not procurable there.

Mr Blaikie: No because they are not allowed to produce it.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not know what that is supposed to mean, but to me it is just one of those stupid remarks we get from people on the other side. What has margarine to do with the subject?

Mr Blaikie: It means they have no freedom of choice.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SKIDMORE: They have the ability to enjoy themselves and their social life. I always thought that when I visited the country I would walk down the street and see some rather peculiar sort of person with drab clothing and a scowl. I thought that the people would be regimented and controlled so that they did not have any joy in life. However, I found myself, I am glad to say, very disillusioned in that regard because the people were very pleasant and well dressed. The girls were in mini-skirts and were just as attractive as our girls. Nothing about them was any different from the girls in Hay Street and St. George's Terrace.

Several members interjected.

Mr SKIDMORE: Their standard of living is good. Mum can retire from a State farm at 55 years of age and dad can retire at 60.

Mr P. V. Jones: Did you make inquiries as to the productivity of those farms?

Mr SKIDMORE: Let me get this point out of the way first. The workers retire on full wages—both mum and dad. I made the comment that this would mean that many people would become capitalists.

Mr O'Neil: On \$40 a week?

Mr SKIDMORE: I was told not to worry because those in authority in that country believed that a person who is prepared to work to assist socialism, is entitled to receive the same wage for the rest of his life because he has given to the country during the whole of his working life and therefore he is rewarded for the contribution he has made to the country.

What happens with regard to his house? He does not lose his house on the farm. He is able to retain it. It could be that after 12 months he decides he would like to take up some more work again and he is able to do that on the basis that unless at any time there is a shortage of labour—and goodness only knows there are more

jobs than workers in Russia; there is no doubt about that—he can do so. This is the situation in that terrible, downtrodden country. Is his pension reduced? No; he retains his total pension and also the wages for the work he does.

Reference was made to the standard of living in Russia, but apparently members opposite are not prepared to accept the truth when it is revealed to them, and accept that socialistic control of people and their lives is not the same sort of control exercised under fascism and the Nazi regime. It is completely different. It involves a control of the resources of the country for the betterment of the people. That is what it is all about. There is no question about a profit being made. It certainly is, but each and every one of the workers receives a share of the fruits of victory from the profits.

Mr Sibson: You have not answered the question.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: He doesn't have to. Why don't you shut up for a while?

Mr SKIDMORE: What question is the member for Bunbury worried about?

Mr Sibson: How do they get on about probate?

Mr SKIDMORE: That is a very good question.

Mr Clarko: They do not possess anything on which they can pay probate.

Mr SKIDMORE: Workers on retirement receive full pay and so accumulate a fair amount of money. When it comes to the end of the road and, say, dad dies, half the monetary value of the estate is returned to the State. Supposing the amount involved was 10 000 roubles—

A member: What is that in dollars?

Mr SKIDMORE: The value of the rouble is very close to that of a dollar. I think there is about 4c or 5c difference. Half of the amount is returned to the State on the basis that the money was paid to the worker to provide him with a living and the good things in life up to the time of his death. What does anyone want out of life other than the right to enjoy a rich and full life?

Mr Clarko: You do not get that in Russia.

Mr SKIDMORE: The honourable member would be surprised. I will tell members about these downtrodden workers. At the invitation of the Minister for Arts and Crafts and Cultural Activities I accompanied him to a concert involving a Ukrainian ensemble of 180 people. The acts were absolutely wonderful, so wonderful it is impossible to describe them.

Mr Blaikie: They are professionals. They play for the State.

Mr SKIDMORE: I understand that under our system we can have some professional entertainers! The stage in

the auditorium I attended catered for 160 entertainers at the one time, all doing something. It was a tremendous spectacle. I stood up and cheered because I could not help it.

Mr Blaikie: I can understand that.

Mr SKIDMORE: And I can understand why the member for Vasse is still in the idiot class.

Mr Blaikie: It takes one to recognise one.

Mr SKIDMORE: I looked behind me and observed that in the dim distance there were thousands of workers sitting and watching the concert. When I asked the Minister how many were there he said between 7 500 and 10 000. When I asked him what the cost was—believing it to be colossal—he said that the concert was free and that the workers paid nothing to watch it. So there is a concept of the standard of living which those people enjoy. I would be happy to take the question up privately with any member who would be interested in discussing it with me.

I merely wanted to draw a parallel with the so-called bogey of a socialist Government which is supposed to take things away from the pockets of the few, and to the detriment of the few, for the good of the workers. That is what it is all about. It is pertinent to mention probate, because one cannot take money with one. When the money is returned to the country it enables somebody else to enjoy a fuller life.

Mr Sibson: What happens to the other 5 000 roubles?

Mr SKIDMORE: They remain with the wife. When she dies that which she leaves is returned to the State. Private chattels, and odds and ends, go to the family—quite rightly. They have some most valuable heirlooms and they regard their heritage better than we do. So do not let us kid ourselves that the system is all bad.

I would now like to get away from that comparison because I realise that in making it I was trying to highlight some of the things we hear about the poor standard of living of those workers in that country which is socialistic. We are continually told of the bogey of a socialised State. The Government of the day—and its members—has always denigrated the Australian Government because of its apparent lack of effort in trying to control the economic disaster which it feels is overtaking the country. However, it is not a disaster but I would certainly be most un-Australian if I did not realise the tremendous importance of controlling inflation. It has been said, categorically, that wages are the main cause of inflation in Australia but that certainly is not the opinion of the people who sit on the Commonwealth Industrial Arbitration Court. Many of those people, over the years, have been placed in the invidious position of virtually asserting—or pseudo asserting—their findings on the policy of the Liberal

Government—and continued by the Labor Government because the capitalist system had taken over the functions of the Treasury—with the Liberal Government suggesting to the court that it should not grant a basic wage increase because it would cause inflation and upset the economic factors it wanted to control.

Mr Nanovich: Gough said exactly that today.

Mr SKIDMORE: All right, Gough said exactly that today. I am not always convinced that Bob Hawke has all the answers, and that he knows all the rights and wrongs of the economic laws of this country, any more than I am convinced members opposite have the answers to the problem. If we did have the answers—and I believe we have a responsible Government—somebody would be doing something about it. It could not be said that we are not conscious of our responsibility.

I will refer to what Chief Justice Kirby had to say with regard to the 1965 national wage case. He said that during the years of the annual review system which succeeded the automatic adjustment system the thinking became gradually more pre-occupied with the problem of price movements. He was interested not only in his role of presiding over cases, but also in his role of president concerned with all the workings of the commission.

Chief Justice Kirby said that in 1964—the time of his remarks—there had arisen the contest as he saw it in simplified form between the dominance of the objective of the preservation of the purchasing power of the basic wage, on the one hand, and the dominance of price stability for the community at large on the other hand. He said he was strongly on the former side of the contest. So we had a justice of the court then saying he believed that was the attitude he should take.

I would like to reflect on some of the figures which are available at present. I am using as my reference *Wage Indexation for Australia?* It is a discussion paper and I suggest members of the Government, and my fellow colleagues, should undertake a study of it in order to be better informed. I will refer to the 1966 figure for the consumer price index which is set at 100, and I will go through the years and inform members of the increases in the index.

In 1973, over a period of eight years, the figure had increased by 36.9 per cent. Referring now to the bogey—the wages, which have forced prices up—starting in 1966 with a figure of 100, the real average weekly wage rate had increased by 30.7 per cent in 1973. This is supposed to be the only controlling factor, but the actual percentage increase—and the source of this statistical information is the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics—was 30.7. The consumer price index went up by 36.9 per cent and the average weekly

wage rate went up by 30.7 per cent, a difference of 6.2 per cent over a period of eight years.

Surely that gives the lie to the attitude of the dog chasing its tail so far as wages are concerned.

The SPEAKER: The member has five minutes.

Mr SKIDMORE: I am not stupid enough to say that wages are not a determining factor in the economic problems facing Australia but they are not the whole of the problem. Restraints will have to be applied, but they will have to be applied to the whole of the community. The trade unions are saying that when the brake is applied, they, too, will apply the brake.

A classic example is that of the Postal Workers' Union, the secretary of which today said that when that union is able to get on the bandwagon or the merry-go-round and catch up to everybody else it will stop the merry-go-round. In other words, during the past six months that union's wage claims failed to keep up with inflation but when it catches up it will stop the merry-go-round. Unfortunately, other workers are in the same position and they also want wage increases. So where is wage restraint finally applied?

Mr Nanovich: Crean runs the merry-go-round; what the member has said is completely right.

Mr SKIDMORE: It seems Mr Crean is causing all this. He is the man who is directing what will happen to company profits. He is the man who is determining company policy, and attempting to turn out a different type of motorcar. He is the man who says we will sell certain goods, and he is the man who is supposed to be continually attacking the farmers and the farming community! The only things in the minds of the farmers are the profit motives on the capital they have invested. That is the fundamental difference.

Mr Clarko: You support profit. You just said so in regard to the Kirov factory in Russia.

Mr SKIDMORE: The member for Karringup is a slow learner. I will have to return to it. In regard to the profit motive in Russia I said I believed in it because the profit was earned by the workers and returned to the workers. The profit here does not return to the worker unless he goes to the court and seeks wage increases so that he can keep up with the inflationary trend. Nobody can tell me that all the problems associated with that are attributable to the workers. If that is the philosophy on which it is sought to solve the problems, we are doomed to failure.

Mr Clarko: It is the fault of the system.

Mr SKIDMORE: Of course it is a fault in our system, and apparently it is a fault, in the eyes of some people, that workers

should live and breathe air. There is complete indifference to the conditions of workers who want to live in a reasonable way.

I say in conclusion that much has been said about the bogey of the centralist Government and the bogey of the philosophy of the Australian Labor Party, but it is a policy which I am proud to represent, and I am proud to say I am a socialist because socialism is the only way in which this country's wealth can be equitably distributed to enable the worker to take his place in what should be a good and wonderful nation.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bateman.

House adjourned at 11.02 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 23rd October, 1974

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

BILLS (2): ASSENT

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Acts Amendment (Judicial Salaries and Pensions) Bill.
2. Dongara-Eneabba Railway Bill.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

1. HOMOSEXUALITY

Report of Honorary Royal Commission: Printing

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Justice:

In view of the interest expressed by several bodies, both interstate and intrastate, would he make representations to the Premier for the printing of the report of the Honorary Royal Commission into Homosexuality, which was tabled this afternoon?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

I am grateful to the honourable member for giving some advance notice of his intention to ask the question. I am agreeable to conveying his request to the Premier.

PARK AT REABOLD HILL

Inspection by Members

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.38 p.m.]: I would like to seek leave to make a short statement concerning a visit by members to the Reabold Hill area.

The PRESIDENT: Leave is granted.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: It is proposed that in conjunction with the Perth City Council, a visit by members of Parliament be arranged to the Reabold Hill area. Members may have some prior notice of this visit, which will take place on Thursday, the 31st October. Arrangements have been made to provide transport to depart from Parliament House at 1.45 p.m. on that day.

The arrangements are of such a nature as will enable members of both Houses to become a little better acquainted with the area, and for this purpose it is understood the visit will take some time and will probably conclude at about 4.00 p.m. on that day. I repeat that arrangements are being made to provide buses and members will receive notification of final details tomorrow morning.

As I have said, the visit will take place on a Thursday when the House normally sits at 2.30 p.m. Therefore, it will be necessary to make some arrangement—and I would like an opportunity to discuss the arrangement with you, Mr President—for the House to reassemble between 4.00 and 4.30 p.m. on that day. However, the final details will be made known to members tomorrow morning.

When members have received notification of the final details it would be as well if they acquainted their party secretaries of their intention to take part in the visit to enable matters to be finalised. I repeat, the visit will take place on Thursday, the 31st October, and the party will leave from Parliament House at 1.45 p.m.

QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE

1. DEFENCE BASES

North-West

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Justice:

Further to my question on the 19th September, 1974, concerning the establishment of Army, Navy or Air Force bases in the North:

- (1) Has the Western Australian Government been advised of such planning by the Federal Government, and if so, when was the advice received?
- (2) Has the State Government been advised—
 - (a) that a permanent Air Force base will be established at Derby for strategic and other reasons within a decade;
 - (b) that the aerodrome at Derby is about to be increased in length to 8 000 feet plus the construction of an aircraft apron and camp area to military specification as laid down