

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 14 June 1988

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 3.30 pm, and read prayers.

PETITION

AIDS

The following petition bearing the signatures of 230 persons was presented by Hon P.G. Pandal -

To the Honourable the President and members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned electors and residents of the State of Western Australia respectfully sheweth that:

The use of advertising which features a bus-length inflated condom is offensive to many Western Australians;

Since the metropolitan bus service on which the advertisements will appear are owned and operated by the State Government, the Government could and should act to abandon the advertisements;

And that as all such advertising is part of the joint Commonwealth/State anti-AIDS campaign, your petitioners humbly pray:

That all members of Parliament seek to persuade both Governments to abandon the condom advertising on buses;

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper No 220.]

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - FIFTH DAY

Motion, as Amended

Debate resumed from 1 June.

HON W.N. STRETCH (Lower Central) [3.36 pm]: In speaking to the Address-in-Reply, like other speakers, I wish to congratulate the Governor and his lady for the continuing good work which they carry out on behalf of the people of this State. They have proven to be a very friendly and effective couple as they travel around the State. I am very grateful for their visits to my electorate because they are so well respected and perform their duties with such friendliness and dignity.

During the course of my short address I will concentrate mainly on the road funding debacle which is rapidly developing in this State. The last time I mentioned this matter, Hon Tom Stephens remarked that the Minister had been to Canberra and made representations on behalf of this State. Unfortunately, those representations were totally unsuccessful and we actually suffered a loss of \$50 million in road funding. This is not a party political matter; it is one of great concern to the State. As the Leader of the House was wont to remark, he was not prepared to see the roads continue to deteriorate at the present rate.

Hon Tom Stephens: The representations were very successful because until they were made the cuts were to be heavier.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: That is like winning but still losing. A loss of such magnitude is very serious from the State's point of view because we are so dependent on our road system.

Hon Tom Stephens: I agree.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The transport system in Western Australia is under great stress at the present time not only from rising costs in the industry but also because the road surface deterioration adds to costs. We should bear in mind that 70 per cent of all freight in Western Australia is transported by road. While many of us in this House would prefer to see more of the burden carried by the rail system, unfortunately it is not and it is unlikely to be. It is

evident that as Westrail becomes more competitive it will require full train load runs to perform effectively. That leaves the bulk of the State relying on road transport. We need to regard roads as a right of way similar to railway tracks, and obviously funding is vital to maintain the roads in suitable condition.

Unfortunately, fuel taxes have become the milch cow of Government, both State and Federal. While the Leader of the House says we should not talk about taxes, unfortunately everybody else in this State seems to do just that. We talk about tobacco tax and fuel tax and others, and it is pointed out we are not to use the word "tax", as the correct term is duty or levy. The fact remains that they are small taxes which are ultimately reflected in the prices paid by consumers. As I said, over 70 per cent of road freight costs are passed on to the consumers. They are a component of virtually every cost of what we drink and eat.

The question of the recovery of costs for road damage has been taken up by the Western Australian Road Transport Association and Westrail, which have looked at the matter from either side of the equation. However, the matter has to be resolved. We have to make sure that cost recovery is a relevant way of dealing with the matter, bearing in mind that all costs add to the final price of goods and services. Approximately \$7 billion is collected through the fuel tax of which only about \$1.2 billion is spent on roads. We should therefore wonder where the rest is going bearing in mind that so much of that money is raised through the actual road users and so little is spent on their road surfaces.

Several times in this House we have debated the rerouting of Government funds from the petrol levy to Westrail. We have received no satisfaction at all from the Government. It is significant that the Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr Barry MacKinnon, said that, when the Liberal Party returns to Government, the money raised from country road users will be spent on country roads. This will help to redress the imbalance and arrest the serious deterioration of country roads.

The Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia and the Country Shire Councils Association have combined forces and issued enlightening figures which indicate that, in 1982 - it seems far too long ago since the Liberal Party was in Government - 61 per cent of the amount collected from the fuel tax was spent on roads. Today, only 25 per cent of the amount collected is spent on roads. That is a very serious drop and it is time that this Government re-established its priorities otherwise we will lose our road network altogether.

I have spoken in the past in this House about the patterns of road wear and the fact that if expenditure on roads is deferred, the eventual cost of repair increases. If maintenance is not carried out when it is required, the final costs are far greater. Interesting figures related to the increased costs of running vehicles over bad roads have also been released. I cannot put my hand on them at this time, but they are significant and are another cost that the community has to bear if spending is deferred. I urge the Government to attend to this matter immediately. It affects everybody. We all realise there are not many votes in roads, because we regard roads as facts of life. However, they have to be maintained and will be a drain on any Government. The more that funding is deferred now the bigger the drain will eventually be. The day of reckoning is approaching very rapidly.

Hon J.M. Brown: I travel on country roads. I must live in the wrong area. I think that local government and the Main Roads Department do an excellent job.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Hon Jim Brown lives on a fairly good arterial road and in an area also served by rail. I am pleading for those people who live away from railway lines and on roads that are being increasingly used for the transport of freight.

Another matter causing great concern in my electorate is the livestock market reporting levy which is proposed to be placed on weighbills for the carting of stock. At the moment, country areas are coming out of what I think has been one of the worst times for rural industries. It is easy to forget what imposts have been placed on those industries. Even though the idea of imposing a levy on weighbills may sound good, it is another burden being placed on the shoulders of the producers of livestock on behalf of the whole community, because not only growers of livestock benefit from the marketing services; the costs eventually flow through to everybody. It has always been regarded as a community cost and is a far more justifiable social cost than the Perth to Fremantle railway which the Government seems happy to maintain as a social cost, albeit a heavy one.

I think the market reporting service is vital to the more isolated areas of this State and I hope the Government will think again about that levy. It is particularly unfair on people who move livestock from property to property rather than on those who move stock directly from property to the market. The argument is insupportable in either case, but is far less supportable when the stock is being moved around for agistment or grazing purposes. The Government has to consider the benefits from keeping the livestock and farming industries more viable.

As I said, things have improved for rural industries. Farmers are more worried at the moment about dams overflowing than filling them. However, that situation is only temporary. Wool prices are good now, but there is no permanency in any of the markets and anybody who believes there is is deluding himself and is heading for trouble.

A disturbing article in *The West Australian* and also in the Elders' weekly magazine reported the Minister for Agriculture, Hon Julian Grill, saying how well farmers had done out of the May mini-Budget. I believe that was a gross misrepresentation of the current situation. That is about as strong as I can put it. It is a most untypical statement of the Minister for Agriculture who usually takes such a reasonable approach to most things. That statement staggered me. The figures referred to applied to registered companies that benefited from a 10 per cent cut in company tax. I very much doubt whether the Minister saw the Press release before it was issued because I am sure he would have picked up the gross inaccuracies and anomalies in the statement. The best estimate we have is that less than 10 per cent - probably around six per cent - of farming and small business operations are actually registered companies that would be in a position to benefit from that tax relief.

I have consistently mentioned in the House the income equalisation deposit scheme. I am glad to see that it is on the agenda. However, it was said in the Press release that the scheme would benefit farmers. We will not see the dam thing until after the next two Budgets and we do not know specifically what the details will be. It was a gross distortion of the truth to try to convince the farmers that they had done well out of the May mini-Budget. People closer to the industry had no doubt about it. The WA Farmers Federation, in an article in *The West Australian* of 9 June, disputed the statement and said that less than 10 per cent of farmers were in companies. The federation found it very difficult to correlate the supposed advantages with what the Minister had said.

The fertiliser bounty has been abolished. For many years sectors of the agricultural industry said that they were prepared to forgo the fertiliser bounty in return for corresponding cuts in the tariffs of imported machinery and the like. However, in this case the benefits were taken away and no substitute benefit was given. Nevertheless, the Minister or his department told everybody that they were much better off. It would be laughable if it were not so serious. It is unbelievable that a Minister could carry on that with sort of statement and try to back it up through articles in the local and rural Press when the facts so clearly contradict the statement.

When I spoke earlier on the amendment to the Address-in-Reply moved by my colleague, Hon Phillip Pandal, Hon Sam Piantadosi challenged me to talk about water. I acknowledge his expertise in the field of distribution of metropolitan water supplies, and I would be quite happy to debate the subject with him. However, his expertise does not lie in the strategic planning of future water supplies for the metropolitan and rural areas and country towns.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: You forget one thing, Mr Stretch. For some eight years I serviced my membership in country water supply areas, not just the metropolitan area. That's why I made that statement. So if you care to debate it, I am quite happy to do so.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I am sure we could debate the subject very amicably. I am more concerned about initial supply provisions and dam sites and reticulation to country towns than I am about the actual country area water supply network. I accept that they are inter-related, but my concern is about the provision of adequate supplies of water for irrigation and farming industries as well as for towns and cities. For some time I have felt that Governments have been under financial stress with respect to the provision of large dams for rural areas. Consequently, we have worked towards a policy of allowing private individuals to build dams and to sell the water as a trading resource. If the customer happens to be the Government, so be it. It is worth noting that for the last few dry seasons, private individuals in the Manjimup district and in Donnybrook have sold water to the Government to supplement its supplies. This practice is likely to develop more in the future, simply because

individuals have the sites and the resources to build small dams. They can supplement the Government schemes in areas in which there are shortages.

As members know, it is very expensive to build a major dam. The Harris River Dam is an important dam for the Collie area, the great southern region and the comprehensive water scheme that services that area. The estimated cost of building that dam is \$30 million. That figure will probably rise a little. The Harris River Dam is not a large dam by modern standards, but its cost gives us some idea of the expenditure involved in constructing dams. The sort of funding needed for water supplies is not readily available.

My colleague, Hon Sandy Lewis, at the launch of the Harris River Dam scheme commented that it was the fifth time he had attended a launching of the dam and he hoped that this time it would come to fruition. It will come to fruition. The site has now been cleared and work is proceeding well. We expect to see water flowing through to the great southern by 1991 at the latest.

The role of the private sector in the scheme is limited by water legislation. Through the years the legislation has been an absolute minefield of civil law and parliamentary regulations and legislative licensing. The time has come to go back to basics: We need to start with the old English riparian rights law, which is the law of access by virtually any person to a supply of water for his own use from a public stream. We have to modernise that legislation, taking into account new techniques and the new or changing requirements for water in the community. The concept does not require funding from the Government, but it does require a certain amount of pump priming - an appropriate term in this case - in the form of taxation incentives or the extension of the guaranteed loans which are currently available for drought relief. I am happy to say that, having written to the Minister for Water Resources, the Minister for Agriculture and the Premier on these subjects, there is a certain amount of accord between us and the Government. I am hopeful that this spirit will be carried forward, because water supply will be a problem for any Government at any time.

Budgeting for the ever increasing water supply requirements will always be a headache, particularly in the south west area, the part of my electorate which has enormous advantages for horticultural industries. The new French fried potato processing plant recently opened in Manjimup will be a huge potential user of vegetables. Over the next four or five years, four times as much land will need to be used to grow potatoes alone. Much of that land will have to have access to water for irrigation. While most growers would try to work their crops around unexpected dry spells so that they would not have to use too much water, there will always need to be water available. If it is necessary to have a four year rotation of potato crops, 16 times the amount of land currently being used would be required. All that land would have to have access to water for irrigation. It may be that all the land would not require irrigation at the same time, but it is a fair bet that if potato crops have to be grown in rotation, other vegetables will be grown within that rotation and they will probably require water at some stage. So the growth in potatoes alone will pose serious problems for the water supply authorities.

When one adds to that the other vegetables that will be grown and the processes not only at Manjimup but also at other private packing works which are starting to develop throughout the south west, one can see the scope of the problem. That has not touched on population growth in the south west, where there will be an even greater requirement for domestic water. There is not much question that the south west will probably be the major growth area in Western Australia in the future or that it will require a fair amount of water in the short term.

The Government has that matter under scrutiny and its recent proposal for the North Dandalup dam was obviously aimed at overcoming that shortage. However, there are difficulties with that dam and my colleague in the other place, Hon Andrew Mensaros, has raised a serious question as to what will happen to the Murray River when that dam is constructed as it is estimated that it will cause that river to cease flowing. The effect of that happening on the Peel Inlet is a matter of great concern to me, and to many other people. While we must take for granted that Government departments have done their homework in relation to this matter, there is still a serious question mark as to what will be the overall effect on the environment.

Another interesting matter which has come to my notice recently and which bears on a

debate that took place in this House last year relates to the lice eradication scheme. Hon Graham Edwards was the Minister in charge of that Bill, and during the debate the question of transferability of lice between sheep and goats was raised. This may seem to be a rather mundane subject, but it was a matter that we debated at that time. The Minister checked with his department as to whether that was likely to be a problem and was able to assure me that it would not be.

Since then I have unfortunately come across some correspondence which was entered into between various veterinarians in the Eastern States and from which it appears there is a possibility of this happening and that there have been recorded instances of cross infection between sheep and goats. I will pass these papers to the Minister later so he can refer them to the relevant Minister in the other place, and ultimately to the Department of Agriculture for its comments. These parasites, which have the almost unpronounceable name *Damalinia caprae*, come from goats and can transfer and live for a considerable time. Rather than boring the House with details I give the Minister notice that I will have these documents copied and sent to him.

The general concept of lice eradication schemes has been reasonably accepted throughout the farming community. We are aware of the advantages of this concept if it can be made to work, but there will be a need for continual scrutiny by farmers and legislators, which is us, to ensure that schemes are working on the ground because the theory is well and good and has worked well in practice in some areas. However, in the south west there are areas, particularly those where large numbers of goats are run with sheep, where this problem is arising, so we must ensure that the scheme carries on and achieves its objective. If the objectives of this scheme are not achieved we must document that fact to ensure that it is either working or is thrown out. It is no good it being half of one and half of the other because like many human diseases one cannot go half way with a scheme.

The other disappointment in the May mini-Budget was the fact that the Federal Government failed to take note of our representations in relation to the deductibility of expenditure for water supplies. It was good news that tax deductions for soil conservation and degradation expenditure were kept in place. However, I was disappointed that the Government failed to see the correlation between water conservation, land conservation and degradation, salinity and soil conservation generally. All those matters are totally intertwined and it is unreasonable and unrealistic for the Federal Government to continue to ignore that fact. The sooner this legislation is put in place to include water as a 100 per cent deductible expenditure the better it will be for the State as a whole.

Like many members from this side of the House, over the years I have made representations to the Minister for Water Resources and the Minister for Agriculture about taking this matter to their Federal colleagues. It was always the policy of the Liberal Party when in Government that water supplies were the mainstay of Australia's civilisation and development. It is distressing that in such a dry continent that approach has disappeared and that the awareness of the importance of water is being ignored by the Federal Government. I urge Labor Party Ministers to make this point to their Federal colleagues at every opportunity, whether socially or otherwise, because this situation impacts more heavily on Western Australia than probably any other State except South Australia. It is absolutely essential that this be put forward to encourage people to go on with schemes, not only for water for their own livestock but also to encourage the sorts of schemes that I outlined earlier with regard to private dams, which could help overcome the shortages occurring because of a lack of Government funding for the provision of water supplies throughout the community.

The question of continuing attacks on rural industries by animal welfare and other lobby groups is one that has gone too far. Those lobby groups, and certain individuals, need to take account of the work being done by the industry to put its house in order. The shipping overseas of live sheep has always caused much concern for these lobby groups, but I do not think it is fair that they should go on with outmoded arguments and without looking at what has taken place in relation to better feed allotting and better provisions on ships. I know that this is an old chestnut that I have hammered consistently in this place, but the sheep export trade is absolutely vital to the sheep industry of Western Australia and underpins the profitability of sheep enterprises from one end of the State to the other.

Hon T.G. Butler: Will the member say that to Mr Mansell?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Mr Butler has mentioned his name, not me. It was my hope that he would travel on his Aboriginal passport only because that would have been a one way ticket. I think that he is doing a great disservice to this country.

Hon T.G. Butler: So do I.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: It is nonsense, anyway. It is clear that the majority of thinking Aborigines do not agree with him or what he is doing, so I am glad to see that Hon Tom Butler does not agree, either, as I do not agree.

Hon Tom Stephens: Do you know what happens? It is extremist sections of your party which create extremists like him.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I will accept part of the honourable member's statement, but I will not accept the part which talks about extremists in my party.

Hon Tom Stephens: You are not in touch with reality.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: What is an extremist?

Hon A.A. Lewis: Somebody like Hon Tom Stephens.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I do not think we should get on to extremists.

Hon D.K. Dans: You keep talking about sheep and Fremantle.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: They may not necessarily have to go out through Fremantle; there are other good ports. The fact is that now we are getting to an extreme point of view there. Shipping companies prefer, at this stage of the game, to use Fremantle for various reasons.

Hon D.K. Dans: Not the shipping companies, the sheep.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: While that happens we will continue to go along with it. The important thing is that the Mansells of this world are ignorant. We have enough difficulty with Libya anyway in maintaining a flow of sheep to that area, despite the fact that many well meaning and hard working young Australians have gone there to help the Libyans develop their own agricultural industries. At the same time we have had cutbacks from Libya, and we do not need people like Mansell trying to use this sort of trade as a political tool and a pressure vehicle when, in actual fact, he does not even have the support of his own - I hesitate to call it "race" because I do not believe it is his race; he is certainly not backed by any significant section of the Aboriginal people.

The situation of law and order in country towns throughout my electorate, has become rapidly worse in the last five years. It is a matter of great concern to me, and to many other country members of Parliament, that the general safety of persons and property throughout the State is becoming more and more under threat. This is in no way a reflection on the Police Force. I believe the police are doing the best they can with the resources they have, but I do not believe they are receiving proper backup from the Government. Morale is very low, probably the lowest I have ever known it. A lot of this stems from the lack of backup from the courts and the sentences handed down.

Hon J.M. Brown: Would you define "low morale in the Police Force"? I see them fairly regularly on the highway where I am sometimes apprehended.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Obviously low morale does not apply to their doing their job.

Hon D.K. Dans: The question of crime and punishment has exercised man since the beginning of time. If you can come up with the answer of one policeman to one resident, and solve the taxation problem, no worries! We should be looking at the penal system rather than problem of the courts, where 75 per cent of the people in gaol should not be there and the other 25 per cent should be guarded by warders with pick handles - they should be held in chains and never let out.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: That is a long statement; it is almost an Address-in-Reply speech. There is a lot of truth in what the honourable member says, but the words about pick handles and chains are his, not mine.

Hon D.K. Dans: That was a graphic illustration.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Morale in the Police Force is now suffering because police feel they are not getting the backup they deserve from the Government.

Hon J.M. Brown: With 11 weeks' holiday!

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Some of them are living in a very poor standard of housing at police stations and lockups. I have taken this matter up with the Minister on several occasions. The housing they are offered in some towns is a disgrace, and it is not giving the sort of support our officers deserve. It is very difficult for a policeman to do his job - it is a very tough job - when he is worried about his wife and family living in probably the most hazardous section of the town. I can take members to towns where this has happened.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Farmers are a dangerous lot!

Hon W.N. STRETCH: They are not farmers; we can handle them. These are people who have more than their due protection under the law, and this is the sort of backup the police lack. It disturbs me greatly that housing for many police officers is so bad.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: You are referring to Aborigines.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The member can make his own speech and leave me to put my own words in my mouth; we will get on a lot better. I have been helped along with pick handles, chains and Aborigines, and those are not the sorts of things I set out to say.

Hon A.A. Lewis: You are driving a wedge between Mr Brown and Mr Dans; they do not know what they want to say.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Who supplied those facilities?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The morale factor is a very serious one. We cannot expect the best from our Police Force when they suffer these pressures which are quite unnecessary and can be addressed fairly simply, not necessarily with a great deal of money, but a little more understanding from the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Your Liberal Government -

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I do not know what the honourable member keeps going on about.

Another factor which concerns us very greatly is the support for the timber industry in the south west of Western Australia. It is still under a great deal of pressure from the radical - I suppose Tom Stephens would say the reactionary - side of the conservation movement. Sooner or later we must decide whether we want jobs, or whether we want great expanses of national parks which no one is allowed to enjoy. We have also to look at who is going to maintain these parks, and where the finances will come from in the meantime. The question of balance must be addressed very soon; we must preserve a sensible balance between national parks and the timber industry.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Plant more trees.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: CALM is planting enormous numbers of trees.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: What about farmers?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The farmers are planting enormous numbers of trees. It is an eye-opener to go through the country areas and see the trees being planted on private properties. I think you, Mr Deputy President (Hon D.J. Wordsworth), in your capacity as Chairman of the Salinity Select Committee, would be in a position to see this. There is a great awareness in the farming communities of the need to re-establish vegetation throughout country areas and try to arrest the inroads of salinity and general soil degradation. That comment was fairly ignorant because a flight over that country will show the extent of the plantings which have taken place.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon D.J. Wordsworth): Order! Honourable members will not continue to conduct a debate at the back of the Chamber.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The point I am making is that a balance must be maintained between our forest industry and our forest enjoyment industry. The two go hand in hand. We must stop taking a blinkered attitude and saying that what is there must remain untouched for ever. I have made the point in this House before, and I will make it again and again: Forests must be regarded as living, dying, cycling entities in themselves. They have to be managed. Trees represent a crop which can be harvested to great advantage both to the community and to the forest itself. The simple fact about karri regeneration is that such regeneration does not occur unless it has an open habitat. A good stand of timber cannot grow in competition with other

species; a few isolated karri trees will grow but there will not be a stand. This is the sort of issue which needs to be taken up by the Government and studied so that the whole of the conservation issue and the timber industry can be put into context.

Members may have noticed that I have asked a series of questions on the future of the Grimwade settlement. Grimwade was virtually the pioneer area for the planting of softwoods - *pinus radiata* - in Western Australia; it is an attractive settlement which has carried on for close to 60 years. The Department of Conservation and Land Management has now decided to close Grimwade for business reasons. I have made several pleas on behalf of the people living there that they be allowed to continue to live there. Many of them are fire control people from CALM and a few of them work in the softwood mill in the township. They have expressed a wish to continue living in Grimwade in their homes there. It seems slightly churlish to me that the Government has not bitten the bullet earlier and said, "Okay, if you want to stay there you can. You can buy your homes and your small blocks of land or else lease them long term if CALM is absolutely insistent that the land will not be sold."

However the difficulty in a situation like this occurs when rumours start flying around. A fairly heavily substantiated rumour is that the Government is about to sell out the entire softwood industry to private enterprise. That may very well be a good thing, but for a community like Grimwade the difficulty is that they do not know what the heck their future will be. The same applies to the staff members of CALM who are engaged in pine planting. What will happen to them? When the Government starts floating these rumours around - and I am certain this must have been leaked from Government to have gained such credibility - more thought should be given to the people involved. The planters do not know whether they will have a job, for whom they will be working, or who, if anyone, is to continue planting softwoods.

I will not canvass the argument of whether that is good or bad. I think it is significant that many countries are planting eucalyptus while we are planting pines, but that is another argument in itself. If the Government is contemplating these moves, it should come out and say so. Everybody would then know where they stood. People out there have to make long term plans; they want to know roughly five years before what their future will be. If the softwood industry is to be sold out to private industry, those people are entitled to know whom to approach and how to start planning for their future if they wish to continue in that industry. I call on the Government to make a declaration as to whether that is so; if it is going to be so, the Government should stop pussyfooting around and should call for applications for an expression of interest in the industry. The Government should get on with it so that these people can at least start planning their future with some degree of certainty.

Those are the major considerations for the people of my electorate at this stage. The new electoral boundaries unfortunately will cause severe dislocation for many members of Parliament, and I am one of them. For five years, I have had the honour to represent the Narrogin-Dumbleyung-West Arthur-Kojonup side of the electorate. Now all that will be changed and I will be moved over toward the coast. I would like to express in *Hansard* the pleasure and honour I have felt in representing those hard working people out there. I am delighted that I will not be walking out on them as their representative leaving them in the state of drought and distress which existed when I came into the area. While I claim no credit for the breaking of the run of bad seasons, it was certainly a great pleasure to see that happen. That area of the great southern is a great wealth producer for Western Australia; it is a land of rugged individualists who know what they want and are not scared to stand up and tell one. As Hon Sandy Lewis and I have found, they are very fine people who are easy to represent. They do not come to one very often with their problems but when they do, they mean it. We have taken great pride in looking after their interests as best we can.

With those few remarks, I thank the House. I urge the Government to take notice of those questions, particularly in relation to the question of tax deductability for the provision of water supplies and the need for legislative overhaul for the transferability of water. Again, I express my thanks to the Governor for opening this session of Parliament and I wish him and his lady well.

HON T.G. BUTLER (North East Metropolitan) [4.26 pm]: I rise to express my support for the motion, which was moved by Hon Doug Wenn. Unfortunately Hon Doug Wenn is not with us again for this sitting. I understand he will not be here for the rest of this session. He

is out of hospital and is at home recuperating. I express my best wishes for a speedy recovery for him and I hope to see him in his place in this House very soon. I also wish to express my appreciation of the job performed by Professor Gordon Reid as the Governor of this State during his period in office. As Hon Sam Piantadosi said, Professor Reid is a fine example of how Western Australia can produce people who can hold down such significant and important jobs. I would recommend to all Governments irrespective of their colour that when appointing people to such high offices, they should look at Western Australians, and the talent which is in this State, and make such appointments accordingly.

I refer firstly to the speech given by the Leader of the Opposition in this place, Hon Gordon Masters. Had I closed my eyes during his speech I could easily have been taken back 12 months to a similar occasion last year when we heard the Leader of the Opposition castigating, in the same fashion, people here. He used the same comments - expressions of shock/horror - and referred to "the worst scandal of all time". He referred to the Brush-Martin affair and he embarked upon a scandalous attack on the integrity of Mr Len Brush in particular. In answer to interjections, he stated that if Mr Brush were found not guilty of any misdemeanour, he would be the first to apologise to him. I know this has been said by other speakers, but I wish once again to draw it to the attention of the House. During his speech, the Leader of the Opposition did not make one word of apology to Mr Brush.

Hon P.G. Pental: Which Leader of the Opposition do you mean?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: How many does the Opposition have?

Hon P.G. Pental: We have one here and one in the other place.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: How many presidents does the Liberal Party have?

I am referring of course to Hon Gordon Masters, who sits next to Hon Phillip Pental. Prior to the commencement of this session, he sat next to Hon Norman Moore.

Hon P.G. Pental: That is cutting.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I wanted to put Hon Phillip Pental beyond any doubt about whom we are talking. Obviously, he is confused and it was not my intention to confuse him. It is a simple matter. The person who sits next to him is the Leader of the Opposition and it is to him that I am referring. It is unfortunate that Hon Gordon Masters is not in his place, because I do not like speaking about people who are not present.

Hon W.N. Stretch: Write him a letter.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I am sure he will read *Hansard* if he is interested.

The fact is that there was no difference between the shock and horror he felt 12 months ago and the shock and horror he feels today or between the greatest scandal of that time and the great scandal today. I guess his moods change from year to year, but the events get a little cloudy.

Hon D.K. Dans: The same speeches with a change of nouns.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: That is right.

I am a little worried about Hon Gordon Masters' mind; it appears to be in a perpetual state of outrage, shock and horror. He should do what he said he would do if Len Brush was found to be not guilty - he should apologise.

Hon John Halden: That would be a suitable gesture.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes, it would be. I will give him Mr Len Brush's address if he wants to write him a letter. Len Brush was acquitted with no stigma attached to him. However, members of the Liberal Party in another place are continuing their attacks on him. I suppose they will continue until he fades away. Len Brush will eventually fade from the minds of members of the Liberal Party who will then pillory other people with whom they have a grievance.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Simpson is his name.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: They will be pilloried by innuendo and be convicted in people's minds despite Hon John Williams telling us the other day that British justice provides for people to be presumed innocent until they are found to be guilty. That belief is not widely held by

members of the Liberal Party in this place. I cannot include all of the Opposition because some members of the Opposition have the highest integrity and honesty.

Hon John Halden: They are laughing.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes; but those members have proven it time and time again. Members of the Liberal Party would be well advised to take lessons from members of the National Party on the way they should conduct themselves in this place and on how to vote according to their consciences.

Hon N.F. Moore: Members of the National Party also have the balance of power!

Hon H.W. Gayfer: I think we did it long before we had the balance of power.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: In an attempt to settle the dispute, I support Hon Mick Gayfer.

Hon N.F. Moore: I thought you would; you can count.

Hon P.G. Pental: Hon Mick Gayfer needs your support like a hole in the head.

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

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Mr Simpson could do very well without Mr Pental's friendship.

The attacks made on Mr Len Brush and others by the Liberal Party have been an attempt to attack the former Premier of this State, Hon Brian Burke. Len Brush and Kevin Edwards would not have been of any concern to the Liberal Party if they had not been associated with Mr Brian Burke.

Hon Barry House: They would not have had jobs, either.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: With the greatest respect, that is a most stupid thing for a member with Hon Barry House's education and background to say. They are people of high integrity and honesty and were extremely capable in the roles they filled over the years. I vouch for the integrity and honesty of both men.

Hon P.G. Pental: Why did Kevin Edwards creep out of the hearing with his face hiding from the cameras?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Who told the member that?

Hon P.G. Pental: He was identified in the other place by your people as having done that.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Hang on. I was present in the other place when that debate occurred. A photograph was presented by the Leader of the Opposition to the Premier who was asked if he could identify the face behind the briefcase. The photograph was of a briefcase and written on the bottom of the photograph in the handwriting of the Leader of the Opposition were words to the effect that it was a photograph of Kevin Edwards hiding behind a briefcase. I suggest the only thing identifiable in that photograph was where the briefcase was manufactured. For Mr Pental and his colleagues to suggest that someone is doing something untoward simply because he may or may not want his photograph taken is typical of them. They seem to enjoy indulging in character assassinations.

Hon P.G. Pental: This is devastating stuff.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: We do not expect Mr Masters to apologise.

The Liberal Party is facing some real problems, one of which is its inability to get its policies across to the electorate.

Hon P.G. Pental: Tell us about uranium. Where do you stand? Are you on the left, the right, or on the mudguard?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: At the moment it is under the ground and I am standing on top of it.

Hon P.G. Pental: What about privatisation and the graduate tax? You don't think you have any troubles!

Hon T.G. BUTLER: No, I do not think we have any problems because we have the right machinery to deal with these matters. Had the member read the newspaper articles of the last week or so referring to our national conference being held in Hobart, he would realise that those matters have been dealt with adequately.

Hon D.K. Dans: And publicly.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes. The Press was present at all times. We do not deal with our problems behind closed doors. The fact is that the Liberal Party does not have the ability to deal with those matters in that way. It would rather destroy itself publicly by stacking branches and ghosting members. Once its constitution was amended its membership fell by half.

Hon D.K. Dans: They misunderstood the president's name - it was Samson.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: A number of wild promises have been circulating about what will happen when and if there is a change in Government in this State. It is something that does not worry me greatly because I doubt whether there will be a change in Government during my term in Parliament.

The Liberal Party has put forward policies in respect of education, law and order, industrial relations and tax reform.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Be careful, Gordon Masters has just come into the Chamber.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Why should I be careful about that?

One of the problems the Liberal Party runs into when it makes statements on policy is that it forgets that it will never be able to form a Government unless it has the support of the National Party.

Hon P.G. Pental: Of course it will.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: The Liberal Party's inability to communicate with the National Party has been proven during this session of Parliament. The problem is that the Liberal Party does not know where it stands. It makes bland statements about what it will do, especially with regard to tax reform. I might add that the Liberal Party intends to implement tax reform by abolishing 95 per cent of the tax that is paid. However, it will replace the tax it abolishes by introducing other taxes, although such taxes have not been spelt out. The Liberal Party will have some difficulty in making the electorate understand that it will do away with certain taxes, but replace them with other taxes. It cannot communicate properly with its future coalition partners.

Hon P.G. Pental: Given the untruths that you made about taxation we will have no difficulty at all.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: The Liberal Party has a major difficulty. Only a couple of weeks ago members on this side of the House sat in this Chamber and, much to their amusement, listened to a gigantic slanging match between members of the Liberal Party and members of the National Party. It was a disgraceful performance on the part of the Liberal Party.

Hon Mark Nevill: Wouldn't you like a president like him?

Hon P.G. Pental: He would be devastating.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member should direct his comments to the Chair and cease having a conversation with another member.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Thank you Mr President. I agree with you and I will endeavour to do that, but I cannot be held responsible for the unruly performance by members opposite.

I will refer briefly to the Liberal Party's attitude to industrial relations. I do not want to go over the same ground covered by Hon John Halden, but I want to draw the attention of members to the Liberal Party's policy on industrial relations.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Who is the Opposition spokesman?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I am not quite sure.

Hon Tom Stephens: Copeman.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I think it is someone who works for Robe River.

In the unfortunate event of the Liberal Party being returned to Government we know what will happen to the rights of workers and the unions to organise.

Hon P.G. Pental: They will be represented by a Government that does not sell out their interests. They will not be like the Labor Party.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: We have all read Press releases about what the Liberal Government in New South Wales proposes in relation to industrial relations. It will break down years of consultation between the previous Government and the trade union movement which has been beneficial to the State of New South Wales - the working class and the employers. The recently elected members to the Treasury benches in New South Wales have shown their intention is to again develop a conflict State in regard to industrial relations. The same thing will occur here if a Liberal Government is elected because the same attitude is expressed by members of the Liberal Party in this House and in the other place. Their attitude indicates that New South Wales's policy is not for that State alone, but that it is a model for the rest of Australia.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: It is based on the Masters' policy of 1982.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I advise Hon Max Evans that in 1982, prior to the 1983 elections, wages were frozen in Western Australia as a result of legislation that was passed through this place and which was initiated by Hon Gordon Masters. That stroke of genius, together with other strokes of genius, resulted in the downfall of the then Liberal Government. There is no doubt that it was an error in judgment and a similar thing will occur if the Liberal Party tries to take this action.

Another matter that disturbs me is one that was mentioned by Hon John Halden and one which I have spoken about previously in this place; that is, voluntary contract. Hon John Halden covered this matter very well and there are real concerns about it. If any member in this House has teenagers who are embarking on careers in the work force they should think very carefully about what the Liberal Party means in terms of its voluntary contract.

Hon P.G. Pental: About 25 per cent of youth are unemployed under this Government. You are a champagne socialist.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: That is a classic statement by a stupid person.

Hon P.G. Pental: I am sick of listening to a champagne socialist like you.

Hon Tom Stephens: You could hardly call Hon Tom Butler a champagne socialist.

Hon P.G. Pental: That is exactly what he is.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: What does Hon Tom Stephens mean by that?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The House will come to order and Hon Tom Butler will please do what I asked him to do earlier; that is, direct his questions to the Chair and stop inciting members to interject.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I conclude that section of my address on this simple point: Youth employment under the Liberal Government was between 30 and 35 per cent.

Hon P.G. Pental: You are wrong.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: The other point I made is that any person in this House who has a teenager entering the work force must be concerned about the policy of the Liberal Party with regard to voluntary contracts. It simply means that teenagers will be deterred from joining unions, they will not have the support of the industrial arbitration courts and they will negotiate pay rates inferior to those in existing awards. Those rates will be negotiated on the basis of take it or leave it.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: In an interjection last week, Hon Phillip Pental said something about lifting their fingernails.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members should stop interjecting and certainly should not refer to interjections made last week. They are not allowed to refer to interjections made today, let alone those made last week.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: A couple of cases have been reported in recent days from the industrial court: One involved the Liquor and Allied Industries Employees Union and an underpayment by a restaurant to a boy who was not an apprentice chef, but was employed as a chef. The result of that hearing was an order for \$4 500 payment to be made to the boy concerned. Recently the Hospital Services and Miscellaneous Workers Union took a case to the industrial court, the underpayment was proved and an order made for a payment of approximately \$4 000. I do not know whether people understand how long it takes for a 16 year old junior

to earn \$4 000, or for how long he would have been robbed of that amount. That aspect worries me with regard to voluntary contracts.

I turn now to a report in tonight's newspaper indicating that the problems of the Liberal Party are now surfacing with some very strong attacks on the State President. I have a liking for Keith Simpson, I have known him for a number of years through the building industry.

Hon Tom Stephens: He is your counterpart.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes, he is. The renewed attacks on him are probably unwarranted inasmuch as he has been blamed by sections of the Liberal Party for its having the lowest membership of all time. That is probably because the Liberal Party has been cleaned up and branches can no longer be stacked, so the ghosts have disappeared. Morale seems to be the greatest problem of the Liberal Party at the moment, and sections of the party are saying that morale has never been as low as it is under Keith Simpson. I suppose that explains to some extent the way in which certain sections of the Liberal Party have been carrying on in an irrational way. The members of the Liberal Party in both Houses seem to be running around chasing their tails all the time; they make negative attacks on the Government without attempting to display any positive approach to the policies or the role of the Opposition. Rather they just adopt a negative approach and attack any snippet of information they pick up; they try to make mountains out of molehills and are doing so for the sole purpose of covering up the turmoil within the Liberal Party. This has resulted in a certain amount of sloppiness in the operation of the Liberal Party. I draw to members' attention a couple of news items which appeared in the community Press in my electorate.

Hon W.N. Stretch: Did you write them?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: The letter to which I refer was written by Barry J. MacKinnon, MLA, Leader of the Opposition, and it appeared in the *Midland-Kalamunda Reporter*.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Is that the one where they talked about you being undressed in the Chamber and said that your fly was undone? We will read it in a minute to remind you.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon G.E. Masters: It said that a group -

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is defying the Chair by interjecting immediately after I called for order.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: The letter which appeared on 7 June stated that it was most encouraging to know that High Wycombe's residents will have a new primary school in Edney Road by February 1989. Also, it was very pleasing that the set down and pick up difficulties of parents and students at Dawson Park Primary School in Forrestfield would be fixed. Both news items appeared in the *Midland-Kalamunda Reporter* on 29 May. It went on to say it was good news for the Helena electorate and that the Leader of the Opposition was trying to gain kudos for the Liberal endorsed candidate for Helena. However, there was one problem: Both items did not appear in the *Midland-Kalamunda Reporter*, but in the *Midland Echo*, which is a different paper and comes out on a different day. The Dawson Park Primary School was not the school referred to in the article, it was the Greenmount Primary School and there is some distance between High Wycombe and Greenmount.

Hon A.A. Lewis: Do you know where the Greenmount Primary School is?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes, I do know.

Hon A.A. Lewis: Where is it?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: What a stupid question to ask, it is in Greenmount. That is the sort of sloppy handling of simple news items which has occurred. The letter which he referred to as appearing in the *Midland-Kalamunda Reporter* did not appear in that newspaper, and they were unrelated to the subject matter of his letter.

A news item appeared in *The West Australian* on 9 June under the heading "Pledge by Libs to help writers" and it stated that the State Opposition has promised to boost literature in Western Australia if it wins the next election by setting up the first literature centre in WA to coincide with today's WA literary awards. Again, this is very poor piece of research by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Barry MacKinnon. The Minister for The Arts, Mrs Henderson,

said that the Liberal Party should have done its homework before making an announcement that it would build Australia's first literature centre in Western Australia, and that it was not up with the times. She also said that the Greenmount writers' centre, known as Katharine's Place, had been operating for three years since it started with State Government help. It operated from the historic home of novelist Katharine Susannah Prichard.

This sloppy attitude has crept into the operations of the Liberal Party because of the turmoil within the party and its bad handling of the position of president. I have some sympathy for Mr Keith Simpson. I have been fortunate enough to be President of the Western Australian branch of the Labor Party for nine years and I have only gone to poll once - in the first year of my election.

[Questions taken.]

Hon Max Evans interjected.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: That comment did not become Mr Evans. I do not see anything enjoyable in his height. I think that I am the correct height. Anybody taller than I am is out of proportion and overgrown. Even Hon Graham Edwards is taller than I am when I stand up.

I sympathise with the President of the Liberal Party, Mr Keith Simpson. I think that his position in not having the support of the WA Branch of the Liberal Party is untenable. I am in my ninth year as President of the WA Branch of the Australia Labor Party and on only one occasion during that time have I had to stand for election and that was when I contested the ballot for the first time. Unfortunately, the President of the Liberal Party seems to be in a fairly untenable position. People do not seem to last long in that position. The previous president, Mr Barry Payne, did not enjoy the support of either the parliamentary or the organisational wing of the Liberal Party. I remember Hon Phillip Pental openly criticising Barry Payne. He described in detail how he would attend the conference and cast his vote against Barry Payne.

Hon P.G. Pental: I did not get a vote, you log. Get your facts straight.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: My memory of this matter is correct. Mr Pental said he would vote against Mr Payne.

Hon P.G. Pental: That is not possible; I did not have a vote.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Anything seems to be possible in the Liberal Party. The member said he would vote against Barry Payne.

Hon P.G. Pental: I did not say that at all.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If Hon Tom Butler ceases directing his comments at individuals and directs them at me, I think he will get fewer interjections and we will get to the end of this debate much quicker.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Mr Simpson has discovered that he was not cut out for the position in the first place. He is quoted in this evening's Press as saying that the last two years have been the most unpleasant of his life and that, if he had known two years ago what he knew now, he would not have accepted the presidency of the party. He said -

The sort of background I have . . . did not prepare me for the political infighting and backstabbing and the innuendo and attitudes in the political arena.

Those are not my words; those are the words of the President of the Liberal Party. He also said -

I have been swept along with personality clashes which existed long before I came on the scene.

Later, he continued -

Any fall in membership could be the result of the new constitution we have put in place.

Obviously, ghosting and branch stacking as occurred in Victoria Park and the Swan branches were widespread. The president was not able to come to grips with that. He will receive no rewards for his efforts because of the divisions that exist in the Liberal Party. He is finished and will be rolled at the next election.

All of that turmoil is reflected in the performance of the parliamentary Liberal Party. We saw a fine example of that and of how far the Liberal Party has slumped in question time this evening. The Attorney General had to answer the same question from the Leader of the Opposition six times before it finally sunk in.

Hon G.E. Masters: I gave up. He avoided the question.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: The Leader of the Opposition was unable to understand anything that was said to him.

Hon G.E. Masters: He avoided the question and you know it.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: We know why the Leader of the Opposition is leaving. Firstly, he does not want to spend another four years in Opposition and, secondly, he knows he will be defeated in an election for the leadership of the Opposition in this place.

I do not know how one is expected to carry on with this sort of unruly behaviour by those on the Opposition benches. I will therefore resume my seat.

HON E.J. CHARLTON (Central) [5.38 pm]: I congratulate the Governor on his speech. I also echo all of the comments made about him already. He is a great person and has the respect of all Western Australians. I hope his replacement enjoys the same respect and high esteem in which all Western Australians hold Professor Reid. I also hope that the Government thinks hard and long about that replacement. I will not say any more than that except that I am concerned that the person appointed is from a background beyond reproach.

A matter of grave concern to me is the pressure being placed on the Government for increases in wages and changes to work practices. Over the last few days, we have seen industrial action which is proving detrimental not only to individuals but more importantly to the future of this State. I wonder why, in those industrial disputes, we never hear the union movement calling for reduced taxation.

Governments and members of Parliament are always saying that they will review the taxation system. In Hobart at the National Conference of the ALP it was said that we will see a reduction in taxation. Speakers in the House today have spoken of reductions in tariffs and reductions in other things that will be beneficial to the economy of the nation. However, any such reductions are all two, three or four years away. The immediate future will be more economically difficult because of cost increases. I do not see how anyone could say that the Australian economy will improve as a result of Federal Government initiatives.

The union movement is pressing for wage rises. I wonder why it does not concentrate its activities on putting pressure on the Government to give its members more take home pay. We have all heard a thousand times that Australia is becoming a less competitive nation because of its inflation rate. We have all experienced the downturn in the Australian economy and the increase in our foreign debt. The improvement in the Australian economy in recent months has been the result solely of increased commodity prices.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: What about the contribution of the workers?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: In recent years the Federal Government seems to have totally disregarded export commodities. It has persecuted those industries engaged in producing the commodities. Everyone in the nation has benefited from the increase in those commodity prices. Our balance of trade figures have improved as a result of that increase. Mr Piantadosi made an interjection about the workers.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: Haven't they played any part over the years?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Yes. That is what I am saying now. I am agreeing with the member. But it would be better for the workers if they could take home more money each week and spend it in the way they want to. That could be achieved with lower taxation rates. They can decide to go without a few things.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: They have.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Of course, they have.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: More so than anybody else.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I know that. They are being persecuted. I cannot understand why they accept it. I do not understand why they do not put pressure on the Government to

reduce taxation. Everyone would be better off then. If their wages were increased, the Government would get a bigger slice of their pay packets.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: What does the farmers federation say about that?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Low to medium income people in the work force carry the burden of this nation. I cannot understand why the trade unions do not agitate for more take home pay.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: What does the farmers federation say with respect to taxation?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: That is what it says. It wants to improve the lot of the people who create the wealth in the nation so that it can employ people. Those who are employed can then have a better standard of living and more take home pay. Mr Piantadosi should not make those points because I am promoting more take home pay for people to spend in the way they want to rather than have the money go to Canberra to be filtered back. Only half of it gets back into the system.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: That's an impossibility and you know it.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It is not an impossibility. The member should be one of the leaders in promoting a better situation for those people through reductions in taxation. Lower income earners must be rewarded for their efforts in providing the wherewithal on which the whole economy works. They must have the incentive of being able to improve their position. I look forward to the day when the union movement and others in our society start to demand a better and fairer taxation system that will provide incentives to all involved.

I turn now to marketing of some of our leading export industries. We have an element within our society that wants to break down some of the successful organisations that have been involved with those industries. A moment ago I referred to the benefit to this nation of the increase in world commodity prices, particularly for wool and, to a lesser extent, grain. I was part of the delegation that went to the United States and Canada last year. I saw first-hand what was happening there with respect to the grain industry and those involved in it. The taxpayers of the United States make a large contribution to the handling, marketing and support arrangements of their grain industry. Since returning to Australia I have heard a proposal that the Australian Wheat Board be floated on the stock exchange to compete with others in the export of Australian wheat crops. That proposal leaves me cold. In the United States all but four per cent of the American wheat crop is subsidised by the taxpayers. Over the years their marketing situation has encouraged a reduction in world prices rather than the best possible return to the producers and the nation. The taxpayers of the United States have been encouraged to support in increasing proportions the wheat producers of that nation through their taxes. The American taxpayers are told that because they have a high standard of living and a cheap food commodity produced by the grain industry of America, it is in their interests to subsidise the industry so that they will be able to retain their position and the money can be put into assisting the export of the commodity.

Without going into too much detail, in the United States 27.5 per cent of wheat producing land had been taken out of production, but in recent times that figure has been reduced to 10 per cent, so 17.5 per cent more land will be cropped. This could be very detrimental, not only for the Australian wheat grower but also for our balance of trade figures and economic position, as I am sure others would agree.

I implore this Government to think hard when reviewing the grain industry before recommending or supporting any move that might result in a reduction or running down of the current capacity of the grain industry of this nation. Having had the privilege of being part of that delegation I now know that Australian farmers, and particularly Western Australian farmers, are the most efficient in the world. If anything is done to reduce the opportunity for them to perform at that level, we will have a lot to answer for. I am prepared to stand here, or go anywhere, to defend what this nation has put together in this regard.

I am not saying that I am against change. One of the things about which we can always be sure in this life is that nothing stays the same. For obvious reasons, we must make changes as we go along, provided those changes improve the situation and do not blow holes in it for the benefit of the greedy few who are always on hand to jump on the bandwagon or to take economic advantage of a situation for themselves and not for the industry. My comments are directed at that hard core minority of individuals who are hell bent on breaking down the marketing system of the Australian Wheat Board and a number of organisations that have a

long, distinguished and successful background and record in marketing the products of this nation.

I will conclude by referring to a Press cutting which refers to the findings of a Royal Commission into the grain industry and the comments of Sir Leslie Price, as follows -

On the Royal Commission findings, Sir Leslie said the Federal Government had used the commission to get the former NSW Labor government "off the hook" without being obviously critical.

"The Royal Commission is saying you (Bulk Grains Queensland) are a bunch of idiots, but it has taken us 30 years to catch you out," he said.

Sir Leslie said he would do things differently if he had his time on the grain handling authorities over again.

"I would have built the storage system as a grower co-op job like Western Australia and South Australia."

That is something all members of this place, whatever their party, should be aware of.

Hon J.M. Brown: Are you saying he is admitting failure?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Not at all. He is pointing out that at least two States of the nation have very good organisations; that is something the growers wanted, and got. That is not admitting failure; that is pointing out a constructive and positive analogy of a very difficult situation by many growers.

Hon H.W. Gayfer: By the growers in Queensland.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The growers of Queensland and other States. Whether they have had an opportunity or not, the fact is that Government run organisations and other activities have certainly demonstrated the inadequacies of those systems. As a consequence, some people are now trying to force the grain industry, particularly here in Western Australia, to accept something less and more expensive than we have simply because other areas of the nation have been dismal failures. This has not been the fault of growers but of Government instrumentalities responsible in the past for the organisation of these so called amenities.

I am concerned greatly that there are minority pressure groups in this nation that seem to be hell bent on breaking down our society. I refer particularly to people we see in the media repeatedly, and particularly on television, who claim to hold concern about the environment, forests, and the wellbeing of animals. We all accept that we should have an increased awareness and responsibility in relation to improving those aspects of our daily life; the problem is getting a balance between the minority hard core groups, who go in boots and all because of their claimed concern with regard to these matters, and other groups.

At the same time one sees an absolute breakdown in the wellbeing of the children of this nation. We see reports in the Press every day that children are homeless, have been sexually harassed, or have no means of moral or material support, and their numbers are increasing. At this time last year the Prime Minister said he would do away with child poverty in a short period. I said at that time that that was an absolute joke. Since then we have seen a deterioration of that position, one that will obviously continue to deteriorate. I wonder what the silent majority of people in our society think about this situation.

The media has a great deal to contribute in a positive manner in relation to this matter and it is time that it, and we, started demonstrating some of the ways to improve the lot of the great bulk of our society. At a time when we are seeing how big Government or organisations are having an unfair influence on the rights of individuals, we do not seem to be able to show what benefits would accrue if we gave a little more independence, incentive and reward that I referred to earlier in relation to taxation to encourage individuals in our nation. I am obviously referring to the family situation. For as long as I am in this place I will continue to say that nothing has been established or developed that will take the place of the family in relation to helping stabilise and develop individuals in this nation. Until we develop a stable environment to give people incentive to improve their position in society we will obviously continue taxing people, the workers of this nation, more and more in an attempt to fix the problems and heal the sores of society created by those problems.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 pm

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Continuing my comments regarding the plight of an increasing number of children in this country, I refer again to the minority pressure groups which are taking an increasing role in areas they consider important. I am disappointed and disturbed that these minority groups continue to highlight their concerns when the most important aspect in the future of Australia is our children. I am appalled at the increasing number of children without a secure base to develop both morally and economically. They have no real role in life and need positive encouragement to develop in the areas of employment, education and health. These aspects are essential for individuals to play a meaningful role in society, and for their own happiness and well-being.

The deterioration that has taken place in society over the last 10 years is very much the result of the perception that an individual's rights should be uninhibited; on the other hand the situation is perceived because of various economic aspects to be beyond our control. As a result, taxpayers carry the financial burden for the inadequacies within our society. The responsibility for the situation is not entirely one for Government but for society as a whole, together with those with the problems. The Government and members of this Parliament should lay the ground rules and establish the laws of the land to encourage people to overcome problems themselves. All the money in the world thrown at various groups in this country will achieve nothing except place pressure on the taxpayers. Families break up and the merry-go-round continues.

Prior to the dinner break I was handed an article in today's *Daily News* entitled "Nine filthy kids found living in squalor". I will not read the article, as it is there for everyone to see as an example of the sad and sorry plight of many children in our society. What chance do these children have as they grow older and reach the point where they can only survive, due to their backgrounds? What sort of people will they turn out to be? I mean no disrespect to them but they have no chance in hell of taking their rightful place and contributing not only to society but also to expect and receive a fair and acceptable living standard. In turn their children have no hope unless offered a real change of direction. As we head towards the end of this century the situation is appalling when we consider modern technology, and the assistance and finance that the Government crowds about, when in the end the facts of life are that we have an increasing number of people who have no chance in life and will become a burden on society and themselves.

Finally, I wish to refer to the Government's decision regarding the siting of the waste disposal plant in the goldfields of Western Australia. The situation has been a long running and deteriorating one and I am appalled at the Government's decision to place the plant in an unacceptable area. I regard an unacceptable area as one that is too close not only to the agricultural industry but also to the general community. If we are concerned as a nation about individuals carrying on export businesses, the siting of the plant should not be influenced by the costs of setting it up. The plant should be placed somewhere totally away from the general community and the agricultural industry. In a State as large as Western Australia why should the question be whether the plant should be placed at Koolyanobbing, just out from Southern Cross, adjoining the wheatbelt or a few more kilometres up the road? Along with other shires, the Yilgarn shire and communities within the vicinity have totally rejected the site of the waste disposal plant. Initially the plant was to handle PCBs; however, before a final decision on the siting of the plant we have now been told it will handle other waste material. The mode of transport of these materials has been changed also.

If the Government is serious about this siting, and does not want a repeat performance of the Barrack Mines silicon plant where the site for the plant was changed from Wundowie to Picton and then to Kemerton at taxpayers' expense - including a whole range of issues which were rejected for obvious reasons - it will place the plant in an area no less than 100 kilometres east of Koolyanobbing and no less than 100 kilometres from the highway. If the Government requires a waste disposal site of this nature in the State, access to the site should be restricted to those vehicles carrying that waste. I recommend that access to the site should be by rail and not by road. More importantly, once the vehicles transporting the waste leave the highway or the main rail link, the route travelled should be situated as far as possible away from any existing development. The cost of transporting this waste should not be the main consideration. I am not saying that if the Government accepts my proposition it will receive support from the public, but it will lessen the amount of opposition that will come from many concerned people.

Hon A.A. Lewis: Where exactly is the place?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: If there is not a better site somewhere else in the State -

Hon A.A. Lewis: You said there was one place.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The Government is committed to having a waste disposal site somewhere between Koolyanobbing and Coolgardie. The Government is looking at two sites, one at Koolyanobbing, which is further east than the site which was previously intended, and another north west of Coolgardie. The proposed site east of Koolyanobbing is too close to existing development and it should be situated either east or north of that site.

Hon A.A. Lewis: Is that on rail?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It will not be on rail.

Hon A.A. Lewis: So you build a railway line.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Yes, the site needs to be that far from existing development otherwise it would not be acceptable.

Hon A.A. Lewis: What would be the cost of the railway line?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I do not know, but that is secondary. The important thing is that it is not situated too close to those people who live in that area. I am making a very serious suggestion to the Government. While there may not be political repercussions from people in that area, should the Government not consider my suggestion they will be doing a disservice not only to the people of that area, but also to the people of the State. We have been told that there is no danger in transporting this product. If this is the case why does the Government want the site to be situated so far away from any built up area? If there is a problem the taxpayers should take the matter further and have the disposal site situated further away from the built up area than the Government proposes.

Finally, I refer to our water resources. I know Hon Bill Stretch raised this matter in his speech. Recently I had the opportunity to visit the Kimberley and I was very impressed with the -

Hon Tom Stephens: The quality of representation.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: - decision that was made by the Minister for Water Resources, Mr Bridge, to discuss with departmental officers at Kununurra the possibility of servicing the south of the State with water from the north. Obviously no final decision has been made on conducting a feasibility study, leave alone the expense and a host of other things. However, a positive attitude is being taken and we should not confine our interest and research into the availability of water from the south of the State.

If this nation is to grow - we all know it will - there will not be enough water in the metropolitan area from existing sources. We all know that Australia is the driest continent in the world and that Western Australia is a significant part of the continent. It is absolutely unacceptable to believe that some miracle will occur and that water will be provided from another source. It will come only from a desalination program or by piping water from an area where it is available.

I was impressed with the comments made by a regional development officer in Kununurra.

Hon Tom Stephens: Mr Munro.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: He was trained in Camarvon.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The information he gave me was first class and I compliment him on that. He spoke about the lack of water in other areas of the State such as Derby and Camarvon. He referred also to the options that are available to this State to bring water from a source in the north via the inland. Too many members of Parliament have restricted vision about the requirement of water in the metropolitan area. They lose sight of the improved performance and efficiency of production that could take place in the country areas of the State if sufficient water were available. As Hon Bill Stretch said there is any amount of water around at the moment, but in a couple of months there certainly will not be.

I conclude my remarks on the topic of water supplies because I consider we should give full support to any research program to ensure that water is readily available not only to one

section of the community, but also on a broad scale which will affect the goldfields, agricultural areas and other areas in the north of the State.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon A.A. Lewis.

TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan - Minister for Budget Management) [7.51 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill authorises the Treasurer to make withdrawals from the public bank account to provide advances for authorised purposes chargeable to the Treasurer's Advance Account within the monetary limit available for the financial year commencing 1 July 1988. In addition, the Bill seeks supplementation of the monetary limit available for the 1987-88 financial year.

The monetary limit specified within clause 4 of the Bill represents an authorisation for the Treasurer to withdraw up to \$200 million for the financing of advances in the 1988-89 financial year. The purposes for which advances may be made are set out within clause 5 of the Bill and remain unchanged from those authorised in previous years. Where payments are made in respect of a new item or for supplementation of an existing item of expenditure of Consolidated Revenue Fund or General Loan and Capital Works Fund, those payments will be chargeable against the appropriate fund pending parliamentary appropriation in the next financial year. Advances proposed for other purposes are repayable by the recipient.

The monetary limit of \$200 million for the 1988-89 financial year represents an increase of \$25 million over the 1987-88 authorisation specified in section 4 of the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Act 1987. The increase is necessary to accommodate the needs of a number of operating accounts operated through Treasurer's Advance arrangements. Members will be aware that a number of activities, such as the Building Management Authority's works and sales account and suspense stores for printing and supply services, are initially financed by way of Treasurer's Advance, which is subsequently recouped from the department or statutory authority on whose behalf the work or service was performed.

Clause 6 of the Bill seeks a \$35 million increase in the monetary limit available in the financial year ending 30 June 1988. The need to supplement the limit is a result of a \$35 million interest bearing advance to the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia to enable it to continue to meet the capital adequacy requirements established by the Reserve Bank, and other unavoidable commitments chargeable against the Consolidated Revenue Fund or General Loan and Capital Works Fund. Of course, these payments have been authorised in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act and they will be submitted to Parliament in the usual way via the appropriation Bills. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon Margaret McAleer.

MOTION

Aborigines - Select Committee

Debate resumed from 18 May.

HON KAY HALLAHAN (South East Metropolitan - Minister for Community Services) [7.55 pm]: I begin my comments on the appointment of the Select Committee by moving the following amendments. I understand they have been circulated in the Chamber.

Amendments to Motion

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I move -

- (a) To insert in clause 1 after "A Select Committee" the words "Of 4 members";
- (b) To add after clause 2 the following clause:
 - 3. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business at any meeting be 3 members.

The reason for moving these amendments is that the opinion on this side of the House is that we are the Government and indeed the largest party and, therefore, we should have at least equal numbers on such a committee. I hope that members will support that view, and for that reason I will not labour the point.

The Premier, Mr Dowding, has indicated that he strongly believes we should have very good coordination of services and funding and that we should strive at all times to overcome any of the problems which are features of overlaps, gaps and duplication. I guess we all agree with that and to that extent we agree with the underlying spirit of the motion moved by Hon Eric Charlton. However, I sound a note of caution to members because Aboriginal affairs comes under greater scrutiny than almost any other social aspect of life or funding by Governments. That can have a fairly debilitating and discouraging effect on Aboriginal communities and people who are striving to find a way in our culture which gives them some integration, but also some independence. They have a difficult task, and from the tenor of the speeches made, members agree with that statement. I have made that caveat and the Government has a caution about this overscrutiny which accrues to Aboriginal affairs and its funding. It is true that on a bipartisan approach, both at State and Federal levels, members can see the need for special funding for Aboriginal people, whose needs cannot always be met by mainstream services. We would like that to be the case, and it is developing in that way, but in many areas it is not yet the case. Until it is so, we have to look at special funding for Aboriginal affairs.

I am concerned a little that members may not have kept up with the very good structures in place with the coordination of funding. That coordination has been lacking in the past and people's concerns about it were justified. However, significant progress has been made in this regard and, although the tone of some of the previous speeches were somewhat disappointing and perhaps critical, there is evidence that progress has been made in the areas of Aboriginal housing, education, employment, enterprise initiatives and health. That does not mean that greater effort is not needed, even within those areas, with special responses for certain groups. Nevertheless we should acknowledge that progress, together with significant changes, has been made.

In Western Australia some very good and exciting initiatives are taking place. One of the most significant initiatives, attracting the major funding, is the setting up by the State Government in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government of the task force to fund the Aboriginal communities development program. That is a significant program. It is a commitment over five years, and it means that both Governments are funding and are represented on the task force that is seeking to promote a better physical and social environment for Aboriginal people within their communities. Social problems such as alcohol abuse, petrol sniffing and lawlessness are being tackled through this task force. There is in addition a statutory coordination committee on Aboriginal affairs, which sits under the AAPA Act, which comprises representatives from State and Federal Government departments and which is regionalised. So we are getting the types of structures that are leading and will lead to greater coordination. These structures may have been necessary in the past, but in any case they are now in existence and working well. Members may not have been aware of the existence and workings of those bodies.

A major thrust in recent times has been for State and Commonwealth Government funds to be directed towards Aboriginal individuals and communities being able to establish their own enterprises. We can all think of cases where in the past we believed Aboriginal projects had gobbled up funds which did not bring about the constructive results that were predicted. We have the benefit of some of these experiments and experiences, and we are now looking at a period where those enterprise opportunities are paying off and where Aboriginal families and communities are having the experience of managing something that is productive for them and their communities. We know that being on the welfare cycle is not a very good experience, and a dependency on the welfare sector is not an uplifting experience for people who are seeing their cultural heritage being eroded. So these programs are doubly important

because not only do they give people constructive and progressive things to do, they also do away with the debilitating features of the past.

This is taking place along with a strong commitment to self management, which as we know can be a very long and tortuous path. We are now at a time in history when there is greater success in this area. At such a time when progress is being made, scrutiny of Aboriginal people and their efforts can have a negative effect. I am speaking on the presumption that the motion to establish a Select Committee was moved for genuine reasons. Hon Eric Charlton said in his speech that he was not interested in witch-hunts. It is because of statements like that in his speech that the Government thought it would be useful to take part in this Select Committee. It would seem from some of the comments made by Hon Eric Charlton and Hon Norman Moore that there is a misunderstanding about the allocation of funding, and some of that could perhaps be dealt with in the course of the Select Committee's inquiries.

Hon Norman Moore referred to the conditions at Cundeelee. Hon Norman Moore, Hon Bill Stretch, Hon Tom Stephens and I were on a Select Committee inquiring into Aboriginal poverty, and we visited Cundeelee. Cundeelee was one of the most depressing sights I have seen. It is illustrative of the way things have changed that the community has now shifted to Coonana. We were told about that proposed move when we were at Cundeelee, and I have had the good fortune to meet a lot of the women and children from Coonana when they came to Perth to look for furniture for their new homes. The sad sight of Cundeelee is now a changed situation, and we have again the opportunity to reflect that good changes are coming about and we are not stuck back where we were a decade ago. We ought to be updating ourselves on the progress that is being made, rather than getting stuck in a groove. We are community leaders, and we should reflect accurately the good moves that are taking place.

I am aware that we can all come up with examples to illustrate what we have said, and we can mobilise a lot of people and community attitudes in support of our statements. However, we have a greater responsibility in that we ought to be balanced in our comments. I hope that the Select Committee will expose its members to up to date information, and that its members may feel reassured by the coordination that is in place and by the structures aimed at ensuring that coordination. I hope the committee's time will be well spent and that its work will not be perceived badly by Aboriginal people.

I ask members to support the amendments before the House.

HON G.E. MASTERS (West - Leader of the Opposition) [8.07 pm]: The Opposition is opposed to the amendments. Standing Order No 338 states that, unless otherwise ordered, all Select Committees shall consist of three members. It is obvious that the intention is and has been for a long time that three members be the normal number to serve on Select Committees of the Legislative Council. The Government seems to be obsessed with the thought that, because it is the party with the largest number of members in this House, it ought to have two, or half of the Select Committee members. When we were in power in the Legislative Council, we had 18 members; the National Party had three members; and the Labor Party had 11 members. To show how fair we always were, we supported an odd number of members in the Select Committee.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is not even a good try.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: We supported a membership of three. If we had followed the Labor Party's obsession, we would have had two members; the National Party would have had one member; and the Labor Party would have had one member.

Hon J.M. Berinson: The Government had two members.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I note that Hon Joe Berinson is having a bad day. He failed to answer properly any questions, and he is now trying deliberately to distort the debate. We are talking about three parties being represented in this Parliament. We are not a coalition. We do not object to the National Party.

Hon D.K. Dans interjected.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: So we were. On the Government's argument we would have had two members from the Liberal Party, one from the National Party and one from the Labor Party. I understand what the Labor Party is all about, but the intention of the Standing Orders and of

this House was to have three members; or if not three, an odd number, such as five. I know that while the Government will continue to go on with this policy for the short period it has left in office, it is quite wrong. The Liberal Party is opposed to the amendments. We will continue to support a membership of three on Legislative Council Select Committees, unless it is decided under special circumstances to have five members.

Hon Robert Hetherington interjected.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Hon Robert Hetherington can say what he likes. He understands exactly what I am talking about, and I am sure that behind the scenes he would agree with me. I simply raise the objection again on behalf of the Liberal Party and say the amendments are quite wrong. If we are to continue along those lines we ought to be talking about changing the Standing Orders. Let us debate it fully at that time. I oppose the amendments.

HON E.J. CHARLTON (Central) [8.11 pm]: I concur with the thoughts expressed by the Leader of the Opposition. I believed right from the outset that only three members were required to form this committee of inquiry. Obviously it is a subject that could be taken to be controversial on one hand, but I do not see it that way at all. I see the operations of this committee as very determinedly an exercise to give an opportunity to all those people, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to put forward their views, thoughts, and experiences. Whether the composition of the committee is three, four, five, or however many members, I believe that the operation of the committee will make it unique in many ways.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Firstly, there is far too much audible conversation. Secondly, the honourable member can speak only about whether the words "of 4 members" are to be inserted. He is not to talk about the merits of the rest of the proposition, and I ask him to confine his remarks to whether those words should be added.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Absolutely, Mr President. I thought that was what I was doing, but I take your point.

The PRESIDENT: You did not actually mention it.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I accept your comment, Mr President, and in conclusion say that I consider that whether the number be four - and I do think I did mention that - or three, or five, or six does not matter. While concurring with the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition, because of this inquiry, I personally see no problem in the number being four.

Amendments put and passed.

Motion - as Amended

HON E.J. CHARLTON (Central) [8.15 pm]: I thank members on both sides of the House for agreeing to the setting up of this Select Committee. I expect that the results will be of benefit to Aboriginal people. For too long people in the community have made all sorts of comments, both critical and complimentary, depending on the way they see the situation. However, I consider that the situation regarding Aboriginal people as a whole has deteriorated in recent times and that was the overriding factor which led me to move this motion. I hope that the people who come forward from the community will make constructive comments. Since I moved the motion the comments and correspondence that I have received, from people from all walks of life, have all been constructive. As a consequence I am confident that, with the personnel that will make up this committee, we will get a positive response and that in the final analysis the report will be positive. I trust that all concerned will be the better for it.

I look forward to the day when Aboriginal people take their rightful place and are respected as a community and as part of the wider Australian community, and when some of the events that have occurred, particularly in recent times and certainly in the past, will be something for the past only.

Question put and passed.

Appointment of Select Committee

On motion by Hon E.J. Charlton, resolved -

That the following members be appointed to serve on the Select Committee - Hon A.A. Lewis, Hon Tom Helm, Hon Tom Stephens, and Hon E.J. Charlton.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BURSWOOD MANAGEMENT LTD

Special Report

HON TOM McNEIL (Upper West) [8.18 pm]: I present a special report from the Select Committee on Burswood Management Ltd. The majority of the Select Committee has directed me to report the following statement to the House which I made to the committee this day. I also draw to the attention of the House the dissenting report of Hon Neil Oliver. I move -

That the reports do lie upon the Table and be printed.

As Chairman of the Select Committee on Burswood Management Ltd I feel obliged to express my serious concern at the committee's continued operation with its current membership. I refer in particular to the position of Hon Neil Oliver. Information has been drawn to my attention which indicates that, even since the committee's establishment, Mr Oliver has held discussions with individuals who have been associated with earlier complaints on related issues and who could be expected to appear or be called as witnesses before the committee. On the material available to me I believe that the nature of Mr Oliver's discussions must cast serious doubts on his impartiality. That, in turn, has serious implications for the conduct of the committee's inquiries and the acceptability of its conclusions. In these circumstances I record my objection to Mr Oliver's continued membership. I also place it on record that I have asked him to withdraw but that he has declined to do so. I have also approached Hon Gordon Masters, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, and made him aware of my concern and some of the material on which that is based. I regret he has not seen fit to take any action. In spite of my strong reservations about the committee's composition, I propose that our inquiries now continue, if only to avoid the prejudice to senior public servants and others which could well arise from further delay.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I seek leave of the House -

The PRESIDENT: Order! I understand there is a minority report which also must be read. If the majority report is read, the minority report has to be read; and normally this is done by the chairman making the report. It is competent for the member making the minority report to read it, but it is unusual. If Hon Neil Oliver wishes to read the report he can, but it would normally be part of the chairman's report.

HON NEIL OLIVER (West) [8.21 pm]: I would like to read the minority report and then table it. I must express my total amazement at the lengths to which certain individuals are prepared to go to frustrate the clearly expressed decision of this Chamber in my appointment to the Select Committee on Burswood Management Ltd. I am not aware in my reading of modern parliamentary history of a single instance which compares with the events of the last two days. What we have in this majority report is a totally unsubstantiated allegation. I do not know the substance of those allegations. I totally reject and dissociate myself from any evidence gathered by the committee which is the substance of the allegations. Whereas members of Parliament, and for all I know private citizens of whom I have never heard, have also been given access to that information, I, as the subject of those allegations, have not. Based on legal advice, I have not sought access to this information.

This whole episode is but the latest attempt over the last few weeks to ensure that I do not sit on this Select Committee. The allegations and smears that have been circulated through this latest attempt to denigrate my integrity and remove me from this committee are contemptible. They are also false and, further, they constitute a contempt not only for the established privileges of Parliament but for the parliamentary system itself. It has been suggested that in making inquiries about this matter and speaking to interested persons I have in some way committed myself to a particular view. I reject those allegations on legal advice. The true position is that it is my duty as a member of Parliament to act on the evidence before the Select Committee without fear or favour. I seek leave of the House to table the minority report.

The PRESIDENT: Order! A motion has already been moved by the Chairman of the Select Committee that the reports be laid on the table and be printed.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Because of the grave importance of this situation, I seek leave of the House to debate the matter forthwith.

The PRESIDENT: The member cannot do that. The question before the Chair is that the reports do lie upon the table and be printed. When that motion is dealt with, the Leader of the Opposition can ask me to do something else. In the meantime this is a non-debatable matter.

Question put and passed.

[See papers Nos 231A and 231B.]

Leader of the Opposition - Statement

HON G.E. MASTERS (West - Leader of the Opposition) [8.25 pm]: Because of the seriousness of the situation and the gravity of the affair I seek leave of the House to debate the matter forthwith.

The PRESIDENT: The Leader of the Opposition has sought leave to debate this matter forthwith. Is leave granted?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Mr President, I seek clarification. I do not understand the nature of the request. The honourable member is seeking leave to make some statement. If he is prepared to indicate some period of time which is reasonable, we would be a position to consider it. I frankly do not understand the nature of the request to debate the report.

The PRESIDENT: Standing Order No 366 says that upon presentation of a report no discussion shall take place but the report may be ordered to be printed - that has been done - with the document accompanying it or notice may be given for its consideration by the Committee as a whole. I take it that the Leader of the Opposition is seeking leave to countermand the requirements of Standing Order No 366 which indicates that no discussion can take place, but perhaps he is in a better position to tell me what he has in mind.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I am not prepared to place any time limit on this, although I have no intention to talk over a lengthy period. I wish to make some comments on the report and the whole episode of the Select Committee; it can be regarded as a statement. I will try to deliver it to that effect. I want to be in a position to make a statement before the House and to put forward my party's point of view.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Would the member seek leave to make a brief statement?

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Bearing in mind there will be no time limit, I wish to make the comments. I am quite happy to seek leave of the House to make a statement if that is what is needed to overcome the problem.

The PRESIDENT: I do not know what is needed. Standing Order No 366 suggests that at this stage no action can be taken. Under the normal state of affairs, tomorrow a member could give notice to move that notice be taken of these papers and subsequently debate would occur on the papers. I take it the Leader of the Opposition is seeking leave of the House to move the motion now that note be taken of the papers, which would open up debate. However, the member has now accepted the proposition of the Leader of the House to seek leave to make a statement on the paper - which is a different thing altogether. I think the House is entitled to know what the member is seeking leave to do.

[Leave granted.]

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The matter of Burswood Management Ltd and the setting up of the Select Committee is surrounded by scandal. It was commenced by the leaking of a report, the Government refusing to answer questions and table certain papers, and a raid on a newspaper office.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Before the honourable member proceeds too far, let us again inform ourselves as to what has occurred. The member sought leave to make a statement; that statement, by virtue of the fact that leave has been granted, is not to be a debate. Therefore it is to be free of controversial statements or comments, because if one makes a controversial statement one then establishes a debate, which is the course the member chose not to take. I am not suggesting the member has said anything controversial yet, but he sounded as though he might be going to.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: This is a very serious matter. I made those comments to lead into the statement I am trying to make which will by necessity be controversial because the whole

affair is controversial. I take the President's point and perhaps if I do go off the rails he will draw my attention to it.

It seems to me that from the beginning of the operation of the Select Committee, and from the minority and majority reports, there has been a desperate and repeated attempt to remove Hon Neil Oliver from the membership of that Select Committee. Hon Neil Oliver was selected by Liberal Party members in the party room and I support that selection. I know a great deal of pressure has been applied not only on me, but also on other members of the Liberal Party to change that selection. Finally, the selection was decided and the appointment of members to the committee was made by this House. The Select Committee is a committee of this House and members of that committee are appointed by the House and not by the Liberal Party, the National Party or the Labor Party.

The statement made by the Chairman of the Select Committee, Hon Tom McNeil, was on behalf of the majority of members of the committee - Hon Tom McNeil, Hon Mark Nevill and Hon Fred McKenzie, the latter two being Labor members of Parliament. It was replied to in a minority report by Hon Neil Oliver.

As I said earlier, a Select Committee is appointed by the Legislative Council, and a Select Committee of the Parliament is the most powerful committee of all committees set up for inquiries. They are more powerful than Royal Commissions or the courts. A Select Committee of this House has an enormous responsibility and it must not be frustrated, should not be interfered with and its work should not in any way be subverted. The matter under consideration by this Select Committee attracted the attention of many people in the State through radio, television and the Press. The objective of the Liberal Party was to set up a committee of inquiry with unlimited powers. The terms of reference of the committee enabled it to go about its job in that way and finally to report to the House on its findings. The Liberal Party will not accept any suggestion of any sort of whitewash in this matter.

Hon Neil Oliver has a proven record of performance, particularly when we recall his activities on the abattoir inquiry.

Hon Tom Stephens: It was a scandal in itself.

Hon P.G. Pendal: And it pinned your ears back, brother.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I am not supposed to make any controversial remarks, but his report was received by this House and it contained valuable information which was picked up by the media.

Hon D.K. Dans: It was a best seller.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I do not know about that, but it caused the Labor Party some problems.

Hon Tom McNeil raised some very important and serious issues in his statement. The integrity of Hon Neil Oliver is at stake. Hon Tom McNeil said in his report -

Information has been drawn to my attention which indicates that, ever since the Committee's establishment, Mr. Oliver has held discussions with individuals who have been associated with earlier complaints on related issues and who could be expected to appear or be called as witnesses before the Committee.

On the material available to me I believe that the nature of Mr. Oliver's discussions must cast serious doubts on his impartiality.

Has Hon Neil Oliver been provided with all the information and placed in a position where he can defend himself in the Select Committee? What information has been drawn to the attention of Hon Tom McNeil and his committee? In what form is that information? How was it provided? I repeat again what Hon Tom McNeil said in his report -

On the material available to me I believe that the nature of Mr. Oliver's discussions must cast serious doubts on his impartiality.

How can anyone find out the nature of a person's discussions? I do not understand that point.

Hon Fred McKenzie: It was stated in Hon Tom McNeil's report.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: At the very least that material should be made available to Hon Neil

Oliver in order that he can defend himself and I suggest it should be made available as soon as possible. If the Select Committee decides to present further information to Parliament it is entirely up to the committee to do so.

I make reference to another paragraph in Hon Tom McNeil's report where he said that he had approached me and made certain information available to me - he is quite correct. I have been allowed to view some of the material and in no way does it justify Hon Neil Oliver withdrawing from the committee. On the contrary, it raises issues of a serious nature which threaten the parliamentary system and make other issues I have seen in recent years pale into insignificance. I will not go any further because it is up to the chairman of the committee to come forward with information and confront the person involved.

There are no circumstances under which the Liberal Party will tolerate anyone inside or outside the Parliament dictating to it who will and who will not sit on a Select Committee. The Liberal Party has remained firm on this matter since the day the Select Committee was set up.

The acceptance of this by the Select Committee, as outlined by the Chairman, Hon Tom McNeil, means that the focus can now be returned to where it should be - on the unanswered questions which are the subject of the inquiry. There is no evidence that Hon Neil Oliver has acted in anything but an entirely proper manner. Legal opinion he has sought - he mentioned it tonight - unconditionally supports his right and duty to talk to whomever he pleases in order to get at the truth. Finally, I repeat that the Liberal Party will not submit to anyone or any type of pressure when its public duty is as clear as it is in this case.

I make this statement because of the serious nature of the statement that has been made and it is absolutely essential that the Select Committee carry out its duties and report to the House in a competent way. I deplore the events over the last few days and hope the matter can be cleared up, if not by the Select Committee, by this House.

Leader of the House - Statement

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [8.39 pm] - by leave: I will be brief and restrict myself to precisely the same matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

I refer firstly to the comment by the Leader of the Opposition that this Select Committee has been established on a matter surrounded by a scandal. It is established on a matter which is surrounded by nothing of the sort. It is surrounded only by unfounded allegations. Having said that, I can agree that it is desirable that those allegations be investigated, clarified, and then set to one side as I am confident they will be. Hon Gordon Masters also said that, from the beginning of the committee, there have been desperate and repeated attempts to remove Hon Neil Oliver from the committee. Speaking on behalf of the Government I can only say that no such attempt has been made by us. Indeed, it will not be straining Mr Masters' memory too far to ask him to recall that it was actually my motion which had the effect of placing Mr Oliver on the committee. That allegation, like many others on this matter, is simply unfounded. Similarly, Mr Masters was quite wrong in referring to the statement that has been put to the House as being a statement by a majority of the committee. Clearly, Hon Tom McNeil indicated that it was not a committee statement, but his statement. It was his statement presented to the committee and his statement became the subject of report to the House on that basis.

Hon G.E. Masters: It was a report of the majority of the committee.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The Leader of the Opposition is quite right. Of course, it was a report. But what was the report? The report was that the statement of the chairman of the committee be presented to the House. It was his statement from the start and it is still his statement. The committee's report went no further than to say that the chairman's statement should be presented to the House. That is the status of that statement.

I do not intend to canvass the content of Hon Tom McNeil's statement, but this much surely can be said: Mr McNeil's reputation is such that we can certainly rely on his not having made those comments either lightly or irresponsibly. I defy anyone on the other side of the House to say anything to the contrary. For myself, at this stage, I say no more.

Hon Tom McNeil, in presenting his statement to the committee and as has been drawn to our attention tonight, has made clear that despite his reservations he proposes that the committee should continue to deal with its main work expeditiously. That meets the wishes of the Government as well. Nothing could be more undesirable than that there should be further delay in this matter. The Leader of the Opposition does not have to get up on his soapbox to say that the Liberal Party will not accept any whitewash.

Hon P.G. Pandal: Neither we will.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No-one is looking for a whitewash. From start to finish no-one has sought to avoid the most thorough and complete investigation that the committee wishes to make for itself.

Hon G.E. Masters: Why didn't you table the papers then?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The Leader of the Opposition knows why I did not table the papers.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I again remind the House that the Government supported the establishment of this committee.

Hon P.G. Pandal: Only when you had no alternative.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: We supported it. Indeed, I personally moved the composition of the committee.

Hon G.E. Masters: You could have tabled the papers and got it over and done with. You know that.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have given the very clearest indication that so far as the Government and I are concerned, that committee will receive our full cooperation.

Having said that, and having covered every point raised by the Leader of the Opposition, I end by expressing the view that while Hon Tom McNeil's reservations demand respect given his standing in this Council, it is nonetheless our prime concern to ensure that the inquiry for which this Select Committee has been established be expedited and completed as quickly as possible.

President - Statement

The PRESIDENT: Order! Honourable members, after listening to what has been said tonight, I have very serious misgivings in regard to the propriety of the alleged evidence given to the chairman of the committee. In view of the quite unusual and serious nature of this matter and since as the President of the Legislative Council I undertook on your behalf to protect to the best of my ability the rights and privileges of this place, I believe that the question of whether there has been a breach of privilege must be further explored. I advise the House that it will be my intention to study very closely the content of these two reports on behalf of the House.

House adjourned at 8.45 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HOSPITALS

Bodding Hospital - Medical Equipment

82. Hon A.A. LEWIS, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) With the greatly increased population in the Boddington area is it the intention of the Government to upgrade the medical equipment at the Boddington Hospital?
- (2) If not, why not?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The 19 bed Boddington District Hospital currently has an average occupancy of seven patients. The facility, currently undergoing an extensive repairs and maintenance program, is adequate for a larger population.

Medical equipment supplied to the hospital relates to the appropriate level of care for a small district hospital; i.e. general medicine and paediatrics, minor surgical procedures, and nursing home type patient services.

Higher level services, which require additional staffing and skills and back up support - blood bank, laboratory, resident medical specialists - are available within the region and nearby metropolitan area.

PRIVATISATION

Government Policy

103. Hon N.F. MOORE, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Does the State Government support the privatisation of -
 - (a) Qantas;
 - (b) Commonwealth Bank; and
 - (c) Australian Airlines?
- (2) If not, why not?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) The Government supports that deployment of resources in these particular services and throughout the economy which leads to their most efficient and productive use and which also leads to socially responsive and responsible pricing mechanisms. As the Thatcher Government has discovered, private monopolies can be less efficient than public monopolies as well as being socially unaccountable.
- (2) Privatisation per se is not a solution for anything. Quality management, industrial relations and production efficiency are solutions to this nation's problems; the correct use of public and private funding and equity are all part of this, and need to be determined on a case by case analysis. The Government has not undertaken this analysis for the services listed.

TRANSPORT SUBSIDIES

112. Hon BARRY HOUSE, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will the Minister provide figures showing the various subsidies provided in the 1987-88 Budget for passenger services operating -
 - (a) in the metropolitan area; and
 - (b) outside the metropolitan area?

- (2) Will the Minister provide figures showing the various subsidies provided in the 1987-88 Budget for freight services operating -
- in the metropolitan area; and
 - outside the metropolitan area?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) Passenger services -

- metropolitan area - nil;
- outside metropolitan area -

Eastern Goldfields Transport Board	\$405 000
Bunbury City Transit	\$830 000
Murchison Air Service	\$34 000
West Kimberley Air Service	\$80 000
Karratha-Onslow Air Service	\$13 000
Port Hedland-Telfer Air Service	\$100 000
Bunbury Air Service	\$5 000
Wyndham Bus Service	\$3 500

- (2) Freight services -

- metropolitan - nil;
- outside metropolitan area -

Mount Magnet-Sandstone Regular Service	\$35 000
Boyup Brook-Tone River Regular Service	\$15 000
Geraldton-Yalgoo Regular Service	\$17 000
Esperance-Norseman Regular Service	\$40 000

OFFICIAL CARS

127. Hon H.W. GAYFER, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

Which members, and for what reasons, had Government cars on issue as at -

- May 1986; and
- May 1988?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The member would be aware that the Government maintains a vehicle fleet for use by members, parliamentary office holders, official guests of the State, the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet and for other approved purposes which arise from time to time. If the member has a query about the use of a particular vehicle he should put it in writing and I will have it investigated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pecuniary Interests - Lake Kununurra Foreshore Study

128. Hon N.F. MOORE, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for Local Government:

- Has the Minister or the Local Government Department received a pecuniary interest complaint relating to the Lake Kununurra foreshore study?
- If so, when was the complaint first received and what decision has the Minister made with respect to the complaint?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- Yes.
- The complaint was received in December 1988. No decision has yet been made by the Minister. The Secretary for Local Government has received a report by a Government inspector of municipalities and is awaiting further advice on the report, prior to submitting it to the Minister.

COMMUNITY SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF
Donnybrook - Child Care

129. Hon BARRY HOUSE, to the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of approaches made since 1983 by the Donnybrook community through her department and the South West Development Authority for child care facilities in the town?
- (2) What is the magnitude of need in the community before the department will provide child care facilities?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Department for Community Services does not provide child care directly. In determining the allocation of child care facilities funded through the Commonwealth children's services program, the local community's needs are assessed on a number of social indicators and priorities for establishing a service determined.

COMPUTERS
Bunbury Computing Centre

130. Hon BARRY HOUSE, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) What is the purpose of the computer facility to be built in Bunbury?
- (2) Why will the Bunbury Computing Centre duplicate facilities being built at Joondalup?
- (3) What will be the cost of these two facilities?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) To provide a disaster backup development facility to serve the Western Australian public sector.
- (2) The proposed Bunbury Computing Centre will not duplicate facilities proposed for Joondalup.
- (3) Final costs have not yet been determined; however, initial planning for the facilities has estimated costs to be in the vicinity of \$21 million.

ABORIGINES
Pastoral Leases

133. Hon MAX EVANS, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

With respect to the financial affairs of the various Aboriginal organisations leasing pastoral properties: Would the Minister provide the name of the Aboriginal organisations and the name of the corporate body within which it operates for each organisation?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

The member should refer questions concerning the operations of privately incorporated organisations to the organisations concerned.

ADOPTION
Government Policy

134. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Is it correct that the Minister has approved a new policy allowing departmental staff to contact adoptive families, when requested to do so by birth families?
- (2) If so, what has prompted the formation of this new policy?

- (3) Has the Adoption Contact Register, established so that people can register their wishes regarding their adoptive situation, prior to departmental contact, been advertised?
- (4) If so, how many times has it been advertised?
- (5) Is it correct that a review of the current adoption legislation is to be conducted in July this year?
- (6) If yes, on what aspects of the legislation will the review concentrate?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Many relinquishing parents are desperate to have information concerning the birth child who was placed for adoption and may go to extreme lengths to find them. Feedback from adoptive parents indicates that the majority would prefer any initial contact to come from the organisation or agency which arranged the adoption.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Approximately 15 times.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) The review will commence in July and will be carried out in three stages. These are -
 - (a) access to information for birth parents;
 - (b) issues relating to the rights of birth parents;
 - (c) examination of minor amendments.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING *Cockburn Shire - Residential Planning Codes*

136. Hon NEIL OLIVER, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) When will approval be granted for the new residential planning codes in the Shire of Cockburn?
- (2) Is the Minister aware of any increased costs associated with the delay in granting approval?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) The residential planning codes are contained within the City of Cockburn's proposed town planning scheme No 2. That scheme is presently with the State Planning Commission which is currently considering public submissions prior to meeting and recommending to the Minister for Planning for final approval. It is anticipated that such approval will be forthcoming in eight to 10 weeks.
- (2) The residential development provision of the existing district scheme applies and no indication has been given of increased costs as a result of the processing of the new scheme.

BRIDGES *Burswood Bridge - Planning*

139. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the Government's present planning for the location of the Burswood Bridge?
- (2) When is it intended that the bridge be constructed?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) A study team is presently working on the project. It is expected that a new alignment will be defined towards the end of the year.
- (2) In December last year, the Government approved the proposal to relocate Burswood Bridge. Advice at the time indicated that it could be about six years before the start of construction. This position remains unchanged.

SILICON SMELTERS

Picton - Financial Aspects

143. Hon BARRY HOUSE, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for The South West:

- (1) Who in the Government was responsible for the original selection of the Picton site for the silicon smelter?
- (2) Is the Government budgeting \$9.6 million for compensation as a result of the decision to move the silicon smelter from Picton to Kemerton?
- (3) Who on behalf of the Government made the valuation of the compensation payment in respect of the decision to move the silicon smelter from Picton to Kemerton?
- (4) Why is the Government liable for any compensation, as the project had not received EPA approval or other approvals necessary for its commencement?
- (5) Has the Government, by its decision to pay compensation, established the principle to compensate all developers whose projects are thwarted because they do not receive the necessary approval?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) The South West Development Authority, based on the Bunbury region plan.
- (2) The amount to be spent will be dependent on the period of construction.
- (3) The Department of Resources Development in consultation with other relevant departments including CALM, Water Authority, Westrail, etc.
- (4) The question is erroneous as the EPA did advise that the project may proceed at Picton and the land was identified as appropriate in the Bunbury region plan.
- (5) Not relevant.

EDUCATION ACT

School Based Decision Making Groups

144. Hon N.F. MOORE, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Education:

Does the Government propose to amend section 27 of the Education Act before school based decision making groups are established?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

Yes. As indicated in response to question 69 on 24 May, legislation will be introduced in this session to encourage more meaningful community involvement in schools.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Expenditure

145. Hon N.F. MOORE, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Education:

Further to my question 64 of 1988, will the Minister advise of the sum spent on maintenance in each of the following education sectors -

- (a) pre-primary;
- (b) primary;

(c) secondary; and

(d) TAFE

in each of the financial years from 1980-81 to 1987-88, inclusive?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN replied:

Records are not kept in the format requested by the member. To extract the information required would require a massive commitment of the resources of both the BMA and the Ministry of Education. I am not convinced that the expenditure of these resources is justified by the member's question.

MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT

Northam Region Promotion Association - Tourist Office Sign

146. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of a letter sent to the Main Roads Department at Northam by the Northam Region Promotion Association complaining, among other things, about the position of the tourist office sign off Fitzgerald Street?
- (2) Will the department consider altering the position?
- (3) Will the department also reconsider its attitude to other propositions canvassed in that letter?
- (4) If not, why?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

(1)-(4)

Yes, Mr Johnson was kind enough to send a copy of his letter to me which I received on 27 May.

The suggestions are already under investigation and I will be replying to the association shortly.

WA TOURISM COMMISSION

Regional Manager - Midlands

147. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs representing the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Does the WA Tourism Commission intend to appoint a regional manager to the Midlands region?
- (2) If so, when will this occur?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Provision has been made in the 1988-89 Budget for the creation of this position.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Lip Reading - Legacy Club

148. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister assisting the Minister for Education with TAFE:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that by letter to me dated 3 May, he assured me that lip reading classes at the Legacy Club, in South Perth, are not funded by the Office of Technical and Further Education?
- (2) Does he recall this followed similar advice to me in Parliament last December from Mr Pearce, then Minister for Education?
- (3) Is he aware that Legacy still insists that fee increases for lip reading were the result of a decision made by the Government?
- (4) Is he also aware that at least one participant in the course has a TAFE official receipt dated 23 March 1988 that would strongly suggest the courses are organised and funded by TAFE?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The Minister assisting the Minister for Education with TAFE has advised me that -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.
- (4) Course participants at Legacy House receive a TAFE receipt as required by regulation acknowledging a \$2 service charge to cover administration and photocopying of course notes.

BICENTENNIAL MEDALLIONS

Pre-school Children

149. Hon N.F. MOORE, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Is it the intention of the State Government to provide bicentennial medallions to pre-primary students?
- (2) If not, why not?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

As already stated publicly on 3 May 1988, due to the enormous success and popularity of the bicentennial medallions, it has been decided to present medallions to all pre-primary and pre-school children.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Midland College - Curriculum Relocations

150. Hon NEIL OLIVER, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Employment and Training:

I refer to my previous question 126 of 1988, in regard to the Midland College of TAFE - old college site -

- (1) What courses will be relocated at the old Midland College of TAFE?
- (2) When will these relocations take place?
- (3) What cost will be associated with these relocations?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

All classes temporarily located at the old Midland TAFE College will be relocated to the new college on completion of stage 3 of the new TAFE complex and should be available for the beginning of the 1989 school year.

- (3) The costs of transferring the remaining courses to the new college are not available at this stage.

BUSINESS EDUCATION

Midland Business Enterprise Centre - Proposals

151. Hon NEIL OLIVER, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) When is it proposed to open a further business enterprise centre in Midland, in addition to that already existing at Guildford, and where will it be located?
- (2) Do any vacancies still exist at the Guildford Business Enterprise Centre?
- (3) If no to (2), would facilities allow expansion of the Guildford Business Enterprise Centre?
- (4) How many students are currently enrolled at Guildford and in what categories?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) To my knowledge, there is no existing "business enterprise" centre located in Midland, nor is there such a centre in Guildford. A Work Option Centre is located in Guildford.
- (2)-(4) Until it is clear what centre the member is referring to, answers to these questions will simply add to the confusion already created by the member's questions.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Ministerial Council - Meetings

48. Hon G.E. MASTERS, to the Attorney General:

How often does the National Companies and Securities Commission report to the appropriate Ministerial Council?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The commission reports regularly to Ministers at each Ministerial Council. There is a statutory requirement that there be four such meetings in a year.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

State Minister - Ministerial Council

49. Hon G.E. MASTERS, to the Attorney General:

- (1) Does the NCSC ever report directly to a State Minister, such as the Attorney General, without making reports to the Ministerial Council? In other words, does the NCSC in specific and special cases report to the Minister, as a State Minister, on matters that concern the State and him in particular?
- (2) Was such the case with the NCSC report on the Bell Group Limited agreement, which has been talked about frequently?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

In addition to its reports to the Ministerial Council, the commission is periodically in touch with the members of the Ministerial Council. On the matter to which the member is referring, for example, there was a report provided to me, but it was in the nature of a media release. I was made aware of the commission's intention to institute the inquiry, and I did have some fragmentary contact thereafter, but there was nothing in the nature of a report other than the document I have with me, which is a media release.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Press Release - Report

50. Hon G.E. MASTERS, to the Attorney General:

I thank the Attorney General for his previous answer, which draws the attention of the House to his receiving a media release, to which I assume was attached a report from the NCSC.

- (1) Did the Attorney General receive an early draft of the Press release, and particularly the report that was attached?
- (2) If so, were any changes made as a result of his discussions with the Chairman of the NCSC before the document became public?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

This question requires some comment on the general nature of the NCSC's interest in the Bell Group purchase. The general facts are well known. There

was in the first place a sale by Mr Holmes a Court of most of his holding in Bell Group, which took the form of two separate sales to Bond Corporation and the SGIC. Following that, the NCSC took an interest in the transaction and instituted an investigation. The NCSC has reported that after some period of investigation, but before it arrived at any conclusion in the matter, it entered into negotiations with Bond Corporation for the purpose of achieving a commercial settlement - to use its terms - and in particular a settlement which safeguarded the interests of all minority shareholders.

A settlement was reached, with the cooperation of the SGIC, which ensured that all shareholders, other than Bond Corporation, but including the SGIC, should have the benefit of the same \$2.70 per share which Bond had paid to Mr Holmes a Court.

Point of Order

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I asked the Attorney General a direct question. I have the history which he is recounting in the form of the report I made reference to, and I have no doubt most members have as well. I would like the Minister to answer my question.

The PRESIDENT: What is the point of order?

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The Minister is making a speech; he is not answering my question.

The PRESIDENT: I take it the Attorney is going to get around to answering the question?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The fact is that without an introduction it is not possible to satisfactorily answer the question.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Hon J.M. BERINSON: As a result of the settlement reached between the NCSC and Bond Corporation, a satisfactory conclusion was reached for all other shareholders, including the SGIC, which, on behalf of the taxpayers of this State, stands to gain a profit of between \$12 million and \$13 million.

Hon P.G. Pandal: That is rubbish. After you pay your holding charges you will be left with nothing.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I know that may upset Mr Pandal, but it is the fact, and he has to bear it.

The settlement reached by the NCSC with Bond Corporation supersedes any previous investigations or negotiations between them. It would be inappropriate to proceed - after a settlement which established a final resolution of this problem - into discussions as to what else might have transpired in the course of reaching that settlement. The NCSC is not engaging in that sort of discussion, and I certainly would not either.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Press Release - Report

51. Hon G.E. MASTERS, to the Attorney General:

I make reference to the Press release referred to by the Attorney General and to the report which he has quoted from at length, in the way of a speech.

- (1) Did the Attorney General receive an early copy of this report, and did he have any discussions with the Chairman of the NCSC which may have resulted in any changes to the final draft of the report which was made public?
- (2) For what reason did the Attorney General have extensive discussions with the NCSC on the weekend of 4 and 5 June in relation to the report that was to be published by the NCSC on the purchases by the SGIC and Bond Corporation of Bell Group shares?

- (3) As the Attorney General is in the mood to make lengthy speeches, I ask him to answer the question why did he pressure the NCSC to ensure that no political names were mentioned in the report - was he concerned that the Premier's name might be used?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(3)

I will answer one question directly. I did not have discussions with the NCSC -

Hon G.E. Masters: The chairman.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: - directed to changing the terminology of any statements it made. I did have discussions with the chairman in the course of the NCSC's late negotiations on this matter, but none of those put me in a position other than the one I have described, namely one which gave me some fragmentary overview of what was happening.

I stress again, as I did in response to the earlier questions, that even had I been in a position to be aware in detail of the investigations of the NCSC over the couple of weeks that it proceeded, and of the details of the negotiations in which the NCSC was involved, and even if I had all that detailed knowledge - which I certainly never had - I would not regard it as appropriate to raise matters of that kind for discussion, given that all those events were overtaken by the settlement entered into between the NCSC and Bond Corporation.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Press Release - Report

52. Hon G.E. MASTERS, to the Attorney General:

Referring to the report that he and I mentioned -

- (1) In examining the report, as he undoubtedly did, did he notice the deletion of clause 22? In other words, the report goes from clause 20 to clause 21, which lays down all the things which the SGIC and Bond Corporation were involved in leading up to the transaction, and that refutes the statement made by the SGIC that there was no contact between the SGIC and Bell Corporation. Clearly there was a great deal of contact. Having noted that is the subject of clause 21 of the report, has he noticed that clause 22 has been deleted.
- (2) Does he know the reason for that deletion.
- (3) If so, is it because the Government is mentioned in one way or the other - if not Ministers of the Government, their advisers?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(3)

I have noticed that number missing. As to the rest of the question, Mr Masters is falling back into one of his old habits of asking the same question in different ways. The fact that he does that does not produce any different answers.

I am not in a position to say whether the absence of clause 22 is for any reason other than that in the redrafting of the document, which presumably took place in the course of negotiations, the renumbering was not attended to. I would not know that because I was not involved, but let me return to my previous answer. If Mr Masters wants to ask the same question in a different way, I will repeat it again. Whatever happened between the NCSC and Bond in the course of negotiations was overtaken by the eventual settlement. That settlement, which is very favourable to the shareholders, including the SGIC -

Hon P.G. Pendal: Not as a result of any help of yours!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That settlement is set out in the document released by the NCSC. That is a proper basis for any further discussion that Mr Masters might be interested in initiating, but that is the only document which is a proper basis for any further discussion he might want to initiate. As I have said now three or four times, the earlier discussions were overtaken by events leading to the settlement, which was a good settlement, and we ought to be satisfied with it.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION
Press Release - Report

53. Hon G.E. MASTERS, to the Attorney General :

- (1) In his examination of the first report he received, the one we are discussing now, did he see that it contained clause 22?
- (2) If so, is he aware of the contents of clause 22?
- (3) Does he know why it was deleted from the report, because it obviously was?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

- (1)-(3) Mr Masters has now done what I expected he would do, and has asked for the fifth time the question he has already asked four times.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Which you have not answered.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I give him the same answer, and that is that it would not be proper, in view of the settlement reached after negotiations -

Hon G.E. Masters: Did you see the report with clause 22 in it?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: - to attempt to go into further discussions on matters which have been overtaken by the settlement.

Hon G.E. Masters: You took it out; you interfered with the report.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon J.M. BERINSON: If Mr Masters wants to ask that question for the sixth time, I will answer him a sixth time. Here is the settlement. It overtakes and overrides whatever else happened in the fortnight before.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Did you get it taken out?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Had I been aware of the details of the investigations and negotiations which took place over the previous fortnight, I would not regard it as proper to enter into a discussion on that. The fact remains, as I have also previously indicated, that I was not aware of all the details, and neither, in the ordinary course of events, would I expect to be.

ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICE
State Government Assistance

54. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Attorney General:

I refer to Attorney General's attendance at a public meeting at Wannamal on Tuesday night, 7 June, at which, in the presence of other members of Parliament, Reverend Cedric Jacobs said that the Aboriginal Legal Service should be abolished.

- (1) Does he support this step?
- (2) Will he discuss it with his colleague, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs?
- (3) What funds, if any, does the State contribute to this service?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(3)

This is not a matter within my ministerial authority. As Hon Phillip Pendal has indicated, the Aboriginal Legal Service is a service provided by the Commonwealth Government and not the State Government.

Hon P.G. Pendal: It has nothing to do with the State?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: To the best of my knowledge, there is no State funding contribution to the Aboriginal Legal Service. That is subject to correction, but if there is any such funding, it is not through my department.

PRISONERS

Costs

55. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Attorney General:

I refer to the same meeting on 7 June.

- (1) Does he recall saying, in response to a question from the floor, that it costs an average of \$105 a week to keep a person in a Western Australian prison, and that this computes out to a daily figure of \$15?
- (2) Does he stand by that figure?
- (3) How does he explain the estimate of \$700 a week previously given to Parliament last year?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) Yes, I do remember it.
- (2) No, I do not stand by it.
- (3) I made a mistake. In the heat of the moment, being excited by the presence of Mr Pendal, for example, I slipped into the error of expressing as a weekly figure what I should have expressed as a daily figure.

AGENT GENERAL

London - Costs

56. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Budget Management:

I remind the Minister that in fact there was no heat of the moment.

Hon J.M. Berinson: It was very cold. In fact that could explain that brief lapse.

Hon E.J. Charlton: His mind froze.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I draw his attention to the article in *The Bulletin* of 14 June in which the costs of maintaining the States' Agents General in London were compared.

- (1) Is he aware that on a per capita employee basis the Western Australian Agent General's office costs \$100 000 a year to run?
- (2) Is he aware that the New South Wales office costs only three quarters of this amount, and that the Victorian office costs one half of the amount it costs to maintain the Western Australian office?
- (3) Will he investigate this huge discrepancy to see whether any cost savings can be introduced into the Western Australian Government's London office?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(3)

The answer to all 15 questions asked by Hon P.G. Pendal is no. No, I did not read the *Bulletin* article. No, I was not aware of its estimate of \$100 000 per capita cost in the West Australian office. No, I was not aware of costs of other State offices. And no, I will not institute an inquiry of that kind.

Mr President, I hope you will excuse me for having taken this rather long route toward making the point that I am not responsible for the Agent General.

Hon P.G. Pental: You are the Minister for Budget Management.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: So I am, but the responsibility for the Agent General's office is with the Premier.

Hon P.G. Pental: You are as evasive on this as you are on the SGIO.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That is where the question should be directed. Otherwise -

Hon P.G. Pental: Why don't you tell the truth for once? You will have to be truthful in the end.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon J.M. BERINSON: If I were to accept responsibility for answering a question like this because I am the Minister for Budget Management, I would similarly be in the position of answering questions about the cost of every single service provided by the State, whether in our hospitals, schools, police, roads, agricultural services, marine and harbours, and all the rest.

Hon P.G. Pental: What do you actually do as the Minister for Budget Management?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Given Hon Phillip Pental's earlier interjection, I might even be asked questions about the funding of the SGIO. I cannot be expected to answer questions like that, because I am not responsible for those areas. If Hon Phillip Pental cares to take the course which our Standing Orders contemplate and puts that question on notice for the consideration of the Premier, I am sure he will get a detailed response.

FOOTBALL

Newspaper Article - Future Inquiry

57. Hon E.J. CHARLTON, to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

My question is related to a Press statement I saw some days ago where it was stated that Minister would be intervening in an inquiry into the future of football in Western Australia. Was that report correct and has the Minister made that inquiry?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

The member is referring to the an article in the *Daily News* which appeared some weeks ago. No, that report was not correct. I cannot recall exactly what it said, but I do recall reading it at the time. It was not correct in essence.

We do not have any means of intervening in a decision that the Victorian Football League may take in relation to the draft in Western Australia. Despite the fact that we do not have that mechanism, we do have the ability to talk to both the Western Australian Football League and representatives of IPL, who are dealing with the VFL. I have conveyed to them my concern about this issue and indeed I have offered them any support I can give to resolve the situation favourably. That does not and should not be interpreted as intervention.

SPORTS CENTRES

Stadium - Report

58. Hon MAX EVANS, to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

(1) Has a report been prepared on the completion of the new stadium which we have heard about in the Press and which will cost \$50 million?

(2) If so, who did that report?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

(1)-(2)

I commissioned a report to look at major stadiums in this State. That report is

a very preliminary one which has been completed as far as it goes. Four or five people served on that committee; there was a representative from WASI, and a representative from the Western Australian Institute of Sport. It was under the chairmanship of Mr Terry Connor. I think it also included David Hatt and a person from my office by the name of Brian Rourke.

SPORTS CENTRES

Stadium - Report

59. Hon MAX EVANS, to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Has that report gone to Cabinet or is it still a preliminary report?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

No, it has not gone to Cabinet. It is still very much a preliminary report which seeks to put before me certain information. The future of that report is dependent upon the future development of sport in this State.

SPORTS CENTRES

Stadium - Report

60. Hon MAX EVANS, to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Does the Minister propose to make that report a public document in the near future?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

It is not a public document. It is something which I commissioned to give me as the Minister for Sport and Recreation some information to which I could refer.

The reason I commissioned that report was that it seems to me that if we do not compel ourselves to look to the future, then in that future we will make similar mistakes to those we made in the past in terms of the development of major stadiums. Certainly, I do not want to fall into that trap. By the same token, it should be recognised that we are talking about the period between now and the turn of the century. I think it is appropriate that we start to look that far ahead.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Investment - Short-Term Money

61. Hon A.A. LEWIS, to the Minister for Budget Management:

This is a genuine inquiry. I am worried about the definitions of Minister for Budget Management and Treasurer. Is the Minister in charge of the investment of short-term moneys from the Treasury?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

No.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Powers

62. Hon A.A. LEWIS, to the Attorney General:

In his answers tonight, the Attorney General referred to settlements between the National Companies and Securities Commission and Mr Bond.

- (1) Is the NCSC some sort of lovey-dovey bureau which brings people together and solves problems, or is it a regulatory body that tells Mr Bond - I am using Mr Bond's name as an example; it could be BHP, or Mr Elliott or anybody else - that he will do this because previously he had not complied with what the NCSC thought the Companies Code was? Surely the NCSC is a regulatory body which points out to companies where they go?
- (2) Is the NCSC a regulatory body or is it in the business of doing deals so that a settlement is reached?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

The NCSC is a regulatory body, but as its practice has indicated this does not preclude it from encouraging commercial settlements. For example, to the best of my knowledge the NCSC would not have had the power to direct Bond to make the takeover offer which it did. It was, however, in a position to discuss that with Bond and, again to use the NCSC's own terminology, to enter into a commercial settlement of the inquiries it had initiated.

Perhaps the starting point of all this should not be whether it is a regulatory body, but that to the extent that it is a regulatory body, for what purpose does it have its regulating powers. Its purpose, broadly stated, would be to ensure that the market operates properly and that investors are reasonably protected in their investments. If, as is the situation here, a very satisfactory solution to a question emerges from its negotiations with the commercial body, that certainly is within the ambit of its function.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Powers

63. Hon A.A. LEWIS, to the Attorney General:

If Mr Bond had refused to go along with the NCSC, surely it would have told him that he could not deal with Bells. Does it have that power? If it does not have that power, this State has wasted a heap of money in setting up the Companies Code.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That question is out of order. I do not know whether the Attorney General intends answering it.

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

The question is speculative, which is the point I think you were making, Mr President.

NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION

Powers

64. Hon MAX EVANS, to the Attorney General:

If the NCSC had found that the two companies had worked in collusion, could it have forfeited -

The PRESIDENT: Order! That question is out of order for the same reason as the previous question was out of order. Members cannot ask Ministers questions that call for opinions and that is exactly what the member was doing.