

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 17 June 1993

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Legislative Assembly met at 11.00 am.

PROCLAMATION

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr P.J. McHugh) read the proclamation of His Excellency the Governor (Sir Francis Burt, AC, KCMG, QC) summoning the first session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament.

OPENING PROCEEDINGS

Message from the Governor's Commissioner

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner (The Honourable Mr Justice Malcolm) requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber. Members accordingly proceeded to that Chamber; and, having heard the Commission to do all things necessary for the opening of Parliament, returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Swearing-in

The Honourable Mr Justice Rowland of the Supreme Court of Western Australia, having been commissioned by His Excellency the Governor, entered the Chamber to administer to members the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty, or the affirmation required by law, and was conducted to the Chair. The Commission to swear in members having been read, the Clerk produced the writs for the general election, held on 6 February 1993, showing the names of the members returned. These members took and subscribed the oath, or made and subscribed the affirmation required by law, and signed the Roll.

The Commissioner then retired from the Chamber.

SPEAKER - ELECTION

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [11.50 am]: The House being duly constituted I move -

That Mr James George Clarko do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [11.51 am]: I have pleasure in seconding the motion.

MR CLARKO (Marmion) [11.52 am]: I submit myself to the will of the House.

DR LAWRENCE (Glendalough - Leader of the Opposition) [11.53 am]: I move -

That Mr Michael Barnett do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.54 am]: I second the motion.

MR MICHAEL BARNETT (Rockingham) [11.55 am]: I submit myself to the will of the House.

[A ballot was taken with the member for Geraldton and the member for Northern Rivers acting as scrutineers. Mr Clarko was declared by the Clerk to have been elected by a majority of votes, and he was conducted to the Chair.]

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I thank honourable members for the signal honour they have bestowed upon me, and I now assume the Chair as Speaker of the House.

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [12.03 pm]: Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Government I congratulate you on your appointment to this position. You first entered Parliament in 1974 as the member for Karrinyup and since then you have had a very distinguished parliamentary career. We know that you will carry out your new role with great distinction and fairness, and we congratulate you.

DR LAWRENCE (Glendalough - Leader of the Opposition) [12.04 pm]: Mr Speaker, may I add my congratulations and those of the Opposition on your elevation to this very important office of the Parliament. In your hands rests the conduct of the Assembly and I know that we can rely on you to be impartial in the exercise of your duty now that you have been elevated to a position which, in a sense, is above the ruck. I offer my congratulations and best wishes and advise that our total cooperation will be extended to you.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [12.05 pm]: Mr Speaker, on behalf of the National Party members in the coalition I join with my Liberal colleagues, the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in extending congratulations to you. The conduct of a ballot for the position of Speaker has been a relatively recent event in this Parliament. It takes nothing away from the position of Speaker and adds to the fact that the House conveys its confidence in a certain person to act as its Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I wish you success in the task that you have taken upon yourself. I am quite sure that you will find some very spirited debate in this House. However, I am confident that, with your knowledge of debate and of the standing orders, it will be very fairly conducted.

DR CONSTABLE (Floreat) [12.06 pm]: As the only non-party member in this House - an Independent member - I, too, extend my congratulations to you, Mr Speaker. This morning I heard you speaking on the radio about the office of the Speaker and the impartiality of the Chair. I look forward to being in this Parliament with you in the Chair and I am sure that you will fulfil that role with great distinction.

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I am extremely proud to have gained the confidence of the majority of members in this House in my election as Speaker. I hope it always remains so. It is, of course, my intention to serve all members of the House equally. My observation of Speakers over 20 years is that it is extremely difficult always to be seen to be the quintessence of fairness; nevertheless, that is my objective. There must be a great deal of cooperation between the Speaker and members if the House is to work well. I am certain that every single member of this House would wish it to operate effectively.

Public interest in the daily operations of Parliament has increased dramatically since I entered this place and I am sure that it will increase, as recent calls for televising the operations of the House would confirm. It is in the interests of both the citizens of Western Australia and ourselves that we are more favourably portrayed in our community. Here I am not seeking an inaccurate portrayal of the work of a member of Parliament, but a completely true one, and one properly earned. I would sincerely like to thank the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Premier and the member for Floreat for the very generous and kind remarks they have made. I would like to conclude my remarks by referring to comments made in the seventeenth century by Benedict Spinoza, with some modification. Benedict Spinoza wrote that experience teaches us that men and women govern nothing with more difficulty than their tongues.

SPEAKER - PRESENTATION TO GOVERNOR

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [12.08 pm]: I desire to announce that His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to receive the Speaker and such members as desire to accompany him at 12.45 pm today.

Sitting suspended from 12.09 to 3.00 pm.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT - ELECTIONS

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [3.00 pm]: Consequent to the election held on 6 February 1993 I was sworn in as Premier together with all Ministers and Parliamentary

Secretaries, with effect from 16 February 1993. I table a list of the Ministry and office holders and a list of the administrative arrangements for representation of Ministers between the Houses. The member for Geraldton has been appointed Government Whip.

[See paper No 12.]

DR LAWRENCE (Glendalough - Leader of the Opposition) [3.02 pm]: Consequent to the election held on 6 February 1993 I was elected Leader of the Opposition. The member for Kalgoorlie was elected Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Northern Rivers was elected Opposition Whip.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL 1992

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

BILLS (33) - ASSENT

Messages from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills -

1. Port Kennedy Development Agreement Bill 1992
2. SGIO Privatisation Bill 1992
3. Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No 2) 1992
4. Reserves Bill 1992
5. Acts Amendment (Jurisdiction and Criminal Procedure) Bill 1992
6. Dardanup Pine Log Sawmill Agreement Bill 1992
7. Juries Amendment Bill 1992
8. Legal Practitioners Amendment (Disciplinary and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 1992
9. Onslow Solar Salt Agreement Bill 1992
10. Indian Ocean Territories (Administration of Laws) Bill 1992
11. Land Tax Relief Amendment Bill 1992
12. National Rail Corporation Agreement Bill 1992
13. Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 1992
14. Royal Commission (Custody of Records) Amendment Bill 1992
15. Salaries and Allowances Amendment Bill 1992
16. Loan Bill 1992
17. Appropriation (Consolidated Revenue Fund) Bill 1992
18. Appropriation (General Loan and Capital Works Fund) Bill 1992
19. Stock (Brands and Movement) Amendment Bill 1992
20. Credit Amendment Bill 1992
21. Pilbara Development Commission Bill 1992
22. Bush Fires Amendment Bill 1992
23. Morley Shopping Centre Redevelopment Agreement Bill 1992
24. Iron Ore (Hope Downs) Agreement Bill 1992
25. Alumina Refinery (Worsley) Agreement Amendment Bill 1992
26. Pay-Roll Tax Amendment Bill (No 3) 1992
27. Pay-Roll Tax Assessment Amendment Bill (No 2) 1992
28. Legal Aid Commission Amendment Bill 1992
29. Equal Opportunity Amendment Bill 1992

30. Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Bill (No 2) 1992
31. Freedom of Information Bill 1992
32. Electoral Amendment (Political Finance) Bill 1992
33. Disability Services Bill 1992

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Parliamentary Secretaries - Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I have received a letter from the Premier advising that His Excellency the Governor has appointed the member for Roleystone as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Employment and Training and the Minister assisting the Minister for Commerce and Trade and the member for Moore as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Water Resources and Local Government, both with effect from 16 February 1993. In accordance with section 44 of the Constitution Act the specified functions of each of the Parliamentary Secretaries are (a) to have the carriage of Government Bills; (b) to assist with the parliamentary business of the Minister and to assist with other parliamentary business as required by the Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly; (c) to assist with the performance of official duties as required by the Minister or the Premier; and (d) to do things that are incidental to these functions. I table these documents.

[See paper No 11.]

PETITION - BATAVIA RELICS

Return to Geraldton Request

MR BLOFFWITCH (Geraldton) [3.05 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned petition the Government that we would like the Government to return the *Batavia* relics to the city of Geraldton from whence they were taken in 1963.

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

The petition bears 18 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 1.]

PETITION - BICYCLE HELMETS LEGISLATION

Compulsory for Adults Opposition

MR KIERATH (Riverton - Minister for Labour Relations) [3.06 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, protest strongly against the recent introduction of compulsory helmets for adult bicycle riders. This law is an unjustified restriction of our freedom, has no clear statistical justification, and is a cheap substitute for real improvement in traffic conditions, for cyclists and motorists alike.

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

The petition bears 1 467 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 2.]

PETITION - NINGALOO MARINE PARK

Mining and Exploration Prevention Legislation

MR MCGINTY (Fremantle) [3.07 pm]: I present the following petition -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned request the Government of Western Australia to legislate preventing all present and future mining exploration and development, including seismic surveys and drilling, within the boundaries of the Ningaloo Marine Park.

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

The petition bears 193 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 3.]

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Election of Speaker - Governor's Congratulations

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): Members, I desire to report that this afternoon, accompanied by the members for Dianella, Perth, Roe and Wanneroo, I presented myself to His Excellency the Governor, and on behalf of the House laid claim to its undoubted rights and privileges, and prayed that the most favourable construction be placed upon its proceedings. His Excellency has been pleased to express his satisfaction at the choice of the Assembly in the following terms -

Mr Speaker,

It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly to the high and honourable office of Speaker of the House.

I congratulate you upon your election and I recognise and I shall respect your understood rights and privileges and I have every confidence you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner.

Francis Burt,
Governor.

SPEAKER'S COMMISSION

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I also wish to report that I have received from His Excellency a Commission to swear in honourable members and this I hand to the Clerk to read to the House.

The Commission was read.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker and members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening speech (see Council report preceding), returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

HORTICULTURAL PRODUCE COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL

Leave to Introduce

MR COURT (Nedlands - Premier) [3.52 pm]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move -

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Horticultural Produce Commission Act 1988.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Court (Premier), and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH*Distribution of Copies*

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): Accompanied by the honourable members of this Chamber, I attended His Excellency the Governor (Sir Francis Burt, AC, KCMG, QC) in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to members of both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of greater accuracy, I have caused printed copies of the speech to be distributed among members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [3.54 pm]: I move -

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's speech be agreed to -

May it please Your Excellency -

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, in moving the Address-in-Reply and delivering my maiden speech to this Parliament, I first congratulate you on your election as Speaker. We can all look forward to receiving the benefit of guidance based on your long parliamentary experience. My confidence is further strengthened by the knowledge that you share with me a background in the education profession.

In standing here as a new member, I remind myself of a remark attributed to Billy Hughes when a new Minister was making a less than brilliant debut in the Federal Parliament. Mr Hughes said that the Minister, "reminds me of an artificially inseminated cow. He knows that something wonderful has happened to him but he does not know exactly what it is and what he has to do about it." New members need not be any different from new Ministers. I shall do my best not to live up to that perceptive, if inelegant, description.

I take this opportunity to record my deepest thanks to the tireless volunteers who made it possible for me to be here today: My campaign director, Vic Watson; the campaign committee; and the branch members of the Liberal Party who were unstinting in their efforts. Special thanks are due to my husband, Frans, for his total and constant support.

Like a great many others in our community, we are migrants to Australia. I was aged 13 years and Frans was aged 18 years when this country became home to our respective families. We were, fortunately, later naturalised together. We are the parents of two sons both serving in the Royal Australian Navy.

Having left school at 15, I started work as an office girl. I then attended evening classes until I was 21, learning typing, shorthand and bookkeeping. By the time I left work to have my first son - people had to leave work when they were pregnant in those days - I was in charge of the office. Twenty-six years ago we moved to Gidgegannup with our two small sons to realise a dream of owning an orchard, and have been strongly involved in our local community ever since. Later I worked as a teaching aide at the Middle Swan kindergarten and at 37 years of age took up the challenge, went back to college and became a teacher. This led to my 15 year career as a teacher within the Swan Hills electorate.

I stand here as the second member for Swan Hills, an electorate created at the 1989 election. It is, however, a district with a long electoral history. Much of its area, the Swan Valley and the eastern hills, was previously in the district of Mundaring between 1974 and 1989, and before that in the seat of Toodyay. This has been a politically volatile area ever since it ceased to be mainly agricultural 30 years ago. It has had four representatives since 1959: Hon Jim Craig, a Minister in the Brand Government who held Toodyay for the Country Party until he retired in 1971; Mr Jim Moiler, who was a Labor member, first for Toodyay and

then for Mundaring in 1977; Mr Tom Herzfeld who held the seat for the Liberal Party until 1983; and, finally, Hon Gavan Troy the Australian Labor Party member. His helpful courtesy to me as the new member is appreciated. These gentlemen were all well regarded as hardworking local members, and I am conscious of the standard of service they have set.

Swan Hills also includes a large section of Midland together with Midvale and Middle Swan that were taken from the old seat of Helena and prior to that were in the former district of Swan. As such, this area was represented by a long line of ALP members: Mr Brady, Mr Skidmore and, latterly, by the present member for Helena.

Indeed, from 1924 until the last election the Midland area had 69 years of unbroken Labor representation. I am, therefore, proud to stand here as a pioneer Liberal member for an area too long taken for granted by one side of politics. I am equally proud to be the first woman to win the Legislative Assembly seat in the Midland and Hills area. Thankfully women are no longer regarded as a novelty in politics. I consider that we can bring new perspectives to representation and can be more sharply aware of the needs and concerns of people. It was my side of politics that gave Western Australia its first woman member of this House, or of any House of Parliament - Edith Cowan in 1921 - and its first and second women Cabinet Ministers, Florence Cardell-Oliver in 1949 and June Craig in 1977.

Representing a seat as diverse as Swan Hills brings a special challenge. Although most people will appreciate that the natural environment is a major aspect of the district, they may be less aware that it includes three separate water catchments and two distinct environments in the eastern hills and the wetlands of the Swan Valley. Different environments, of course, require careful individual management by decision makers in partnership with the people who have chosen to live there. So much of Swan Hills can be described as a green lung for Perth - a description that applies very much to the unique Swan Valley. The preservation of the Swan Valley from urbanisation matters greatly not only to its residents but also to Western Australians generally.

I have been elected not only as a representative with a deep personal commitment to maintain the environment of the Swan Valley but also as a member of a Liberal-National Party team with a firm policy of giving the valley special status in the metropolitan region scheme. We will ensure, through a Swan Valley preservation and protection Act, that the valley is preserved and that its boundaries are enshrined according to their definition so that, without reference to Parliament, there will not be again the threat of corridor development east of the railway line caused by self-serving redefinitions. Wetlands will be preserved and housing growth will take place in the kind of discontinuous villages we already know. This will complement the character of the Swan Valley instead of intruding upon it. Living space can be provided on properties for family members without wholesale subdivisions outside gazetted special rural zones. Rather than making pious statements about the desirability of encouraging continued viticulture and other rural activity, the Act will include "right to farm" principles to protect viticulture and the 150 table grape growers in the valley through zoning and by ensuring that no subdivision runs counter to that objective.

I also reaffirm my support for the Coalition's commitment to encourage and support the Shire of Swan in an investigation of changes to rating so that agricultural users of land are given a real incentive to maintain primary production. The Government has made this commitment, not because intense urbanisation of the Swan Valley will deprive the State of valuable tourist dollars, but chiefly because it will run counter to the deep wishes of a major local community. It is a key part of the Government's strategy for the Swan Valley that its development should proceed with the approval of the people who live there.

As the local member I attach special importance to the formation of a Swan Valley rural strategy group to represent the community in overseeing development. It means a break with past practices where residents, rightly, felt threatened by bureaucratic decisions. Our Minister for Planning has already begun this process and I commend him for his swift action. It is my firm intention as the member for Swan Hills to preserve and foster the rural character of not only the Swan Valley, but also all non-urban sections of the Swan and Mundaring Shires. Having lived on a rural property for 26 years, I fully appreciate the determination of many electors to maintain these holdings.

Very often they need to earn off-farm income to keep them going, but they represent a deep commitment in terms of effort. The situation in Swan Hills has a parallel in Europe where

for years smaller farms have been reliant on off-farm income. The big difference here in Australia is that we do not receive European Economic Community subsidies, but must stand on our own feet. Sensible development of these rural properties teaches conservation at the most effective and practical level. On our own property we made a decision to undertake only a parkland clearance, despite the extra work involved and the lower capacity for stock. We have collected and burnt only the deadwood. We have avoided energy-hungry electrical equipment where possible and we have grown our own vegetables. This has given my family a richer lifestyle. However, as the member for this seat it has also given me absolute empathy with those members of our community who consider themselves environmentalists and who have chosen to live in Swan Hills, as they see it in order to live in closer harmony with nature. They can all be assured that their concerns are my concerns.

In fact, many of these people do appreciate this. It was a gratifying recognition of this Government's environmental stance that it received 55 per cent of the final distribution of Green preferences in Swan Hills at the last election. I am also very conscious that the John Forrest and the Walyunga National Parks are within Swan Hills - the former being the oldest in the State and in the heart of the electorate. Whiteman Park, the result of more recent community effort, is on the western boundary, and half of the Mundaring Weir catchment lies on the southern boundary. In short, much natural heritage in the area is to be preserved for the sake of the entire Western Australian community. I intend to ensure that preservation with the full backing of a Government which believes absolutely, as I do, that sustainable development is the ally, not the foe, of conservation.

The communities along the Great Eastern Highway from Greenmount to Wooroloo, as do many of the farming areas further north, consist of little towns rather than suburbs. Each of them has its own distinct identity, and no fewer than 17 separate resident and ratepayer groups are within the Swan and Mundaring shires. This may involve more work for a parliamentarian, but it also means a strong sense of community exists throughout the electorate. It means that people have a greater awareness of their rights and of the possibilities for constructive action at local levels. The Government welcomes this kind of community input into decision making.

I have been an involved parent organising, working and raising funds for playgroup, school P & Cs, little athletics, cubs and scouts and moved, as the children matured, into involvement in many community and service groups. I know from experience and observation that local volunteers and volunteer groups are the fabric of society which form the chain that links our community together. Swan Hills is indeed fortunate to have so many committed people.

One district community within Swan Hills includes the Royal Australian Air Force personnel and its families at Bullsbrook who often need to find their feet in new surroundings. As the mother of two sons in the Royal Australian Navy, I have an immediate understanding of the concerns of families who are relocated. It is an understanding sharpened by the fact that I will soon have a daughter-in-law who will be a service wife and must face similar problems. New adjustments will be made by the Pearce RAAF and Bullsbrook community when the Republic of Singapore Air Force personnel and their families are stationed there. The benefits will be wider than the injection of more spending into local business. There will be enrichment of another kind as local children meet new classmates who come from a different culture and schools adjust accordingly. Our Minister for Education has been advised of the needs of the Bullsbrook District High School, and is taking steps to monitor the situation to make sure that all the children are not disadvantaged in any way.

As I mentioned earlier, I am the first Liberal to represent Midland in the Legislative Assembly since 1924. Together with Middle Swan, Swan View and Stratton, this urban area comprises 40 per cent of the electorate. It is a community made up of blue collar workers, small business people, white collar workers and age pensioners, as well as many people with special needs who are outside the work force. For all this, there is not a radical division between Midland and the remainder of Swan Hills. Midland is far more than just a suburban centre. People in Midland appreciate that the area retains something of the atmosphere of a big country town and remains a major rural service centre which attracts business from farming communities north and east of Swan Hills.

Midland has a strong future as a diversified regional centre with manufacturing and service industries soon to be joined by the Department of Land Administration head office. I am

proud to support the work of the Midland and Districts Chamber of Commerce and the Better Midland Council as much of this growth will result from local initiative rather than any kind of centralised planning.

A great many accusations have been made about the decision to close the Midland Workshops. Perhaps, more than anyone else, I am conscious that it was coalition policy to retain the workshops. I am very aware that this decision has caused concern and anxiety to the workers; however, I also know that the decision was not made lightly. I assure all members and you, Mr Speaker, that this event has most certainly made for a challenging start to my parliamentary career! In order to assist the people I represent - workers, their wives and children and sometimes their elderly parents - I am working with the Westrail special taskforce and with the Midland community to ensure that other positions can be found in the metropolitan area, many of them within Westrail where their colleagues are taking redundancy packages. It is also part of my role as a parliamentary representative to ensure that the land currently occupied by the workshops is put to constructive commercial use, providing direct and indirect employment for the Midland area. I am a member of the central Midland task force that has been formed by the Government and which has already held meetings and taken action to set the trend for the future of this land.

On a more positive note, I was delighted to be involved and able to report very soon after I was elected that the Government had resumed the Midland saleyards complex. This action of the Government has brought stability and permanency into the livestock selling industry as well as benefits to the local community and Midland businesses, including an increase in job prospects for the area.

As a former teacher with 15 years' experience, all of it within the Swan Hills electorate, and as member for the area, I am all too conscious of how useful the \$18m lost in the running of the Midland Workshops in the past 12 months would have been in upgrading the schools in Swan Hills. The staff and administration facilities at the Midvale and Swan View Primary Schools in particular are a disgrace, and it is not good enough. A tour of schools gives one a good illustration of the effects of financial mismanagement, where millions of taxpayers' dollars have been squandered, and who ends up paying the bill. Waste and incompetence have led to poorer facilities for dedicated, professional people and for the children of Western Australia. It is extremely important that schools are maintained on a regular basis and that the people's assets are kept in good condition. School maintenance has been neglected in the immediate past and the Minister for Education has been advised of the many educational needs of Swan Hills.

In my time at the Mt Helena Primary School, I knew at first-hand the problems of maintenance when only one faulty item in three could be repaired and my library filled up like a junkyard with unworkable equipment. In conjunction with the Minister and a Government committed to the importance of the education of our young people, I intend to ensure that, within the confines of the Budget, these schools receive the priority they deserve.

We can provide for better services and more jobs only through the creation of wealth produced not by Governments but by private enterprise operating under firm but positive overall management of the State. Already I have taken the opportunity of visiting the Pilbara to see at first hand a major part of the mining industry that is so great a generator of wealth and employment for Western Australia. During that visit I came to understand fully that support for industry is essentially a matter of environmentally balanced and careful sustainable development. I was impressed to see in the Pilbara the successful efforts made by mining companies to restore the landscape. I am pleased to be able to report that this same principle is upheld by a major employer in Swan Hills, Pioneer Concrete (WA) Pty Ltd, whose adherence to environmental rehabilitation and balanced development has been recognised with that company's winning a Greening Australia Award for conservation efforts.

A major reason that the people of Swan Hills, and of Western Australia, voted heavily in favour of change on 6 February was the issue of crime, and juvenile crime in particular. Nothing can devalue more quickly our relaxed rural lifestyle than the fear of theft or assault. I am confident that the Government will fulfil its undertaking to the electors, a promise not of harsh punishment but of due process. It is a mockery of justice when the probation system effectively allows offenders to evade punishment and commit further offences. It is that

which Western Australians have demanded be stopped, and stopped it will be. However, this reform will be only one step in a long process that I know is essential for a just and healthy society, the restoration of a sense of right and wrong and of personal responsibility for our own actions. Social theorists who have taught that morality is relative and that society must simply balance competing human wants have helped create a situation where dishonest and wicked actions are explained away as the results of social conditioning. People know better and expect better.

The role of Government in restoring honesty goes a lot further and deeper than reform of criminal law and juvenile justice. It means tackling problems at source with such support for our young people as the recent Government grant of \$10 000 for drug rehabilitation in Midland, a project which, among others, I have supported strongly since my election. I am appreciative of the interest and understanding shown by the Minister for Community Development in developing social infrastructure that assists people to help themselves. We have a duty to be honest and open in our decisions, to meet face to face with workers who are suffering because of the mistakes of Government and to show children in our schools by example that dishonesty not only attracts retribution but also is wrong. I am not the only teacher who in recent years has observed children questioning and sometimes disregarding standards of honesty because they see that these standards are being flouted by their elders and by the leaders of our community. We, in Parliament, are the ultimate role models and some in the last decade have forgotten this to the detriment of not only the State's finances, but also community standards. I have sought election through a desire to play my part in restoring ethical standards and in giving real power back to the people I represent, and I am confident that I can pursue this task as part of a Government with that same guiding conviction.

[Applause.]

MR OSBORNE (Bunbury) [4.18 pm]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Leahy.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

On motion by Mr Court (Premier), resolved -

That the member for Scarborough (Mr Strickland) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko): I wish to advise members of the appointment of the following members as Deputy Chairmen of Committees: The member for Whitford (Mr Johnson), the member for Albany (Mr Prince), the member for Roe (Mr Ainsworth) and the member for Mitchell (Mr D.L. Smith).

[Questions without notice taken.]

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - SPECIAL

On motion by Mr C.J. Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved -

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 22 June at 2.00 pm.

House adjourned at 4.37 pm

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MIDLAND WORKSHOPS - GOVERNMENT'S PRE-ELECTION PROMISE, BETRAYAL OF

1. Dr LAWRENCE to the Premier:

- (1) Why did the Government make an explicit pre-election promise to the people of Midland that it would upgrade the Midland Workshops and then betray those people by breaking the promise immediately after the election?
- (2) After reneging on that promise and jeopardising the future of more than 1 000 workers and their families, why did the Government then threaten harsh action against workers who objected to the arrogant and cold-blooded manner in which the decision was made?
- (3) When will the Premier face the people of Midland to explain fully the reasons behind his Government's decision?
- (4) Given the Government's record of betrayal, what is the status of the Government's other pre-election promises?

Mr COURT replied:

(1)-(4)

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the questions. The coalition parties said before the election that the Westrail workshops would continue to operate. On winning Government, we were briefed by the management of Westrail. It was made very clear that that organisation faced considerable losses and it was recommended to the Minister who then recommended to Cabinet that a course of action be followed which involved not only the closure of the workshops but also a number of people being removed from the management level of Westrail.

It also involved the introduction of the same work practices that were negotiated for the National Rail Corporation. The Leader of the Opposition has focused on one element; that is, Westrail's Midland Workshops. The considerable savings which will be made will ensure that Westrail can again become a competitive operator in the transport of bulk cargoes. Westrail has not been a competitive operator and, as a consequence, the road transport industry has taken over the handling of many of the bulk cargoes previously handled by the railway system. Employees involved in the changes are at this very moment cooperating with Westrail.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: The Opposition should not be proud of the behaviour of those union members who protested today.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: A relatively small number of people were making a lot of noise.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: I take this opportunity to thank all the teachers and Westrail employees who did go to work today. The majority of those union members sent a very clear message to their union bosses that they should get in touch again with their rank and file members.

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: I am only too willing to meet people at Midland or at any other venue in this State to discuss any issue they want to raise. The fourth part of the question escapes me.

Several members interjected.

Dr Lawrence: Is this the sort of treatment we can expect of all your pre-election promises? They are broken promises.

Mr COURT: Far from breaking promises, the Government is implementing its policies and the Opposition does not like it.

KALGOORLIE - CENTENARY OF PADDY HANNAN

2. Mr McNEE to the Premier:

Is the Premier aware that today marks the centenary of Paddy Hannan registering his gold find in Coolgardie and so establishing the foundations for the development of the Kalgoorlie-Boulder region as one of the great gold centres of the world?

Mr Taylor: I should have asked that Dorothy Dixier.

Mr COURT replied:

I was going to ask the member for Kalgoorlie to ask this question but he did not attend the opening of the centenary celebrations last week. Last Friday I opened the week of the centenary celebrations for the goldfields and I did accept an apology from the member for Kalgoorlie, but the Federal member for Kalgoorlie, Graeme Campbell, and the member for Eyre, Julian Grill, were in attendance. It was a great opening to a week of celebrations.

A century ago the goldfields saved Western Australia from the then recession and today the goldfields region is again helping Western Australia to emerge from the recession which is affecting this country. The Government is committed to trying to establish a gas pipeline from the Pilbara to the goldfields and I am pleased to report that it has received a tremendous expression of interest.

Dr Lawrence: You are not twisting BHP's arm?

Mr COURT: We will be encouraging a lot of people to become involved in this project. If a gas pipeline from the Pilbara to the goldfields is established it will ensure that the next century for the goldfields will also be a good one.

GOVERNMENT MEDIA OFFICE - DIRECTOR, SACKING OF

3. Mr TAYLOR to the Premier:

I thank the Premier for his comments concerning my electorate. Not wanting to spoil the occasion, my question relates to his remarks about people going to work in his region to a previous question.

- (1) Why did the Premier last night sack the Director of the Government Media Office?
- (2) Was the Director of the Government Media Office made a scapegoat for the poor performance and inept decision making processes of the Premier and his Ministers?
- (3) Is it true that the Director of the Government Media Office was sacked for refusing the Premier's direction that the Government Media Office undertake political activities in contravention of the Public Service Code of Conduct 1988?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The Director of the Government Media Office was on six months' probation and it was mutually agreed, after he had worked for two months -

Mr Taylor: He was not sacked? He agreed to go?

Mr COURT: After a mutual agreement he left this morning.

Mr Taylor: Was he sacked?

Mr COURT: In case the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has forgotten, the Government employs approximately 100 000 people and occasionally some of them decide to leave the Government's employ and move on.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows only too well that some people are employed on a contract basis and either party to the contract can agree to its termination at a week's notice. That is how his Government employed these people.

(2) No.

(3) No.

REDUNDANCY PACKAGES - FACTS

4. Mr STRICKLAND to the Minister for Labour Relations:

Today the Trades and Labor Council orchestrated a campaign of industrial action based on its concerns over Government redundancies. Will the Minister advise the House on the facts about redundancies over the past 11 years?

Mr KIERATH replied:

I thank the member for Scarborough for his question and before I answer it I place on record my sincere thanks and congratulations to those people who went to work today to ensure that the Government's services continued to operate. It is pleasing that approximately 75 per cent of the teaching fraternity fronted for work today.

It is interesting to note that the coalition Government has had to clean up the mess left it by the previous Government, the now Opposition. Members opposite are starting to squirm. The Government has made some tough decisions and as a result of those decisions not one person has lost his or her job. The Government has offered public sector employees far more generous redundancy packages than those offered by the previous Government. If an employee does not want to take up the offer of a redundancy package he or she is guaranteed a transfer to another job in the public sector. It is quite a different story from those being told by Opposition members. It appears that some members opposite have suffered a memory lapse.

So far the Government has offered about 1 300 redundancies.

Several members interjected.

Mr KIERATH: It appears that members opposite do not want to hear the facts, which are that out of 1 300 redundancies offered 131 employees have accepted the package, have said thank you and have left the Government's employ. The interest in redundancy packages is extremely high. Approximately 1 050 redundancy packages have been offered to Westrail employees. Do members opposite know how many applications have been received? It is a total of 1 183, which means that there have been more applications for redundancy packages than have been offered. Is that not interesting? Let us look at the previous Government's record in this area. In the last year it was in government it offered 2 300 redundancy packages. After six months in office the coalition Government has offered only half that number and the worst thing members opposite can say is that this Government will match its performance. Is that not interesting?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KIERATH: A total of 2 300 redundancies last year - the Opposition should be ashamed of itself. I went further because I thought last year might have been a tough year and that I should go through the records. What else did I find? Apart from that 2 300 another 3 600 redundancies were offered by the former Government. In case members opposite cannot count - we know they have difficulties with figures - that amounts to almost 6 000 redundancies.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. Members who ask the questions have the opportunity to do so in virtual silence. There is no

problem with interjections being made from time to time but there is a problem with rolling interjections, a mass of interjections, and interjections being repeated when order has been called. We cannot operate effectively in that way. It is day one but I ask members for their cooperation.

Mr Catania: The biggest -

The SPEAKER: Order! I urge the member for Balcatta not to interject following my little lecture on the subject.

Mr KIERATH: He did not have the decency to comply with Mr Speaker's request.

The SPEAKER: Order! I believe the Minister is bringing his answer to a conclusion.

Mr KIERATH: Almost. The former Government had something like seven different redundancy packages in Westrail involving 1 000 jobs. That was its record when in government. The teachers were on strike today, and I went through some records and found some interesting information. The first strike by teachers in 69 years took place when the Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Education, and at the time the Minister made some interesting comments that I feel the need to share with this Chamber today. She accused the then secretary of releasing confidential Government documents; she pleaded with teachers and the ministry to do in a striker; she accused the union of being hell-bent on industrial action; and she then threatened deregistration proceedings and began those proceedings against the State School Teachers Union. The then Minister also blamed Victoria, and the Premier of that State at the time was Joan Kirner. Poor Victoria gets the blame every time. She was trying to distance herself from Joan Kirner then. Members should wait because it gets better: The member for Fremantle, Mr McGinty, sitting behind the Leader of the Opposition, said at the time that her threat for deregistration was a joke.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to conclude his answer.

Mr KIERATH: The then Minister for Education said, and I support her in this statement -

The SPEAKER: I ask the Minister to conclude.

Mr KIERATH: I have two more sentences. The former Minister made an impassioned appeal for teachers to leave the children out of it. I agree that the children should be left out of it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The behaviour from various quarters in the Chamber is not good, but answers should be of an appropriate length. Therefore, when I ask the Minister to draw his answer to a conclusion I expect him to do so.

ENVIRONMENT - URBAN BUSHLAND PROTECTION POLICY

5. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to the coalition's environment policy which pledged as a matter of urgency to develop an urban bushland protection policy. I ask -

- (1) Has the urban bushland protection policy been developed?
- (2) If so, when will the policy be released for public discussion?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Will the Minister undertake, as a matter of urgency, a moratorium on the development of urban bushland until the policy is finalised?

Mr MINSON replied:

(1)-(3)

I am pleased to announce to the House and to the member that the urban bushland policy is well under way. It is being formulated in two ways: Firstly, through the Department of Planning and Urban Development, and I

understand the Minister already has a draft for his consideration and, secondly, through the Department of Conservation and Land Management where we have been developing the urban bushland policy as a matter of urgency. I hope to have final drafts of that policy available within five or six weeks, but we want to consult the conservation movement about that policy and a committee will shortly be formed to allow the voluntary conservation movement to make appropriate input.

- (4) With respect to a moratorium on urban bushland development, I cannot and will not guarantee such a move. However, I can assure the member that any land appropriately zoned in the System 6 report will not be touched and that, where appropriate evidence is provided for urban bushland protection of land not included in System 6, I as the Minister for the Environment will take steps to ensure that the bushland is protected until such time as the urban bushland policy is put in place. That evidence must be technical and sensible scientific evidence which indicates the conservation value -

Mr Taylor: There goes another election promise.

Mr MINSON: Not at all, it is totally in line with our election promise. The evidence must indicate the strict conservation value or true heritage value of the land. As Minister I will take the appropriate steps to protect that bushland.
