

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 14 August 1980

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

## SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

### *Days and Hours*

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [2.18 p.m.]: I move—

That on and from Tuesday, 19 August unless otherwise ordered, the House shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays at 4.30 p.m., on Wednesdays at 2.15 p.m. and Thursdays at 11.00 a.m. and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

The motion will need some clarification in view of the fact that it breaks new ground. There are also some interpretive aspects of it which have been the subject of discussion between the Opposition and the Government.

During 1979 discussions were held between the then Deputy Premier (Sir Desmond O'Neill) and members of the Opposition on the basis of reviewing parliamentary sitting hours.

On 12 June this year, further discussions were held between the present Deputy Premier, the member for Welshpool and the member for Perth.

Recommendations were made regarding proposed sitting hours and, following these, further discussions were held to make certain adjustments to suggested times to fit in with requirements of members.

It is my understanding now that all parties have agreed to accept for a trial period new sitting hours as follows: On Tuesdays, sittings will commence at 4.30 p.m. until 6.15 p.m. The dinner adjournment will be from 6.15 p.m. until 7.30 p.m., and it is proposed that we will sit from 7.30 p.m. until approximately 11.00 p.m., although this time is not written into the sessional order for sitting times.

Questions on notice are to be handed in at 4.30 p.m., together with delay slips where answers are not available, and questions without notice are to be taken at approximately 7.30 p.m.

I have used the word "approximately" for a specific reason. It is possible a member's speech might overlap by a few minutes; therefore, we may not always be able to take questions without notice at exactly 7.30 p.m.; but that is the intention and we will make the time for the

hearing of questions without notice as close as is practicable to 7.30 p.m.

On Wednesdays, sittings will be from 2.15 p.m. until 6.15 p.m.—with the dinner adjournment from 6.15 p.m. until 7.30 p.m.—and then continue from 7.30 p.m. until approximately 11.00 p.m.

Again, the use of the word "approximately" is for an obvious reason. We often have members whose time has not expired and are unable to finish their speeches by the fixed adjournment time. With a little tolerance they should be able to finish.

Questions on notice are to be handed in at 2.15 p.m., together with delay slips where answers are not available, and questions without notice are to be taken at approximately 4.15 p.m.

Private members' business is to have priority between 2.15 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.

On Thursdays, Parliament will meet in the morning from 11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.; adjournment for lunch would apply from 1.00 p.m. until 2.15 p.m. It is intended that normally the session would continue from 2.15 p.m. until 4.30 p.m.—even though the sessional orders name 6.15 p.m. and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

On that day questions on notice are to be handed in at 2.15 p.m., together with delay slips where answers are not available, and questions without notice are to be taken at approximately 4.00 p.m.

Again, I emphasise the reference to the approximate adjournment time of 4.30 p.m. for Thursdays and the difference between that and the hours mentioned in the sessional orders. I think members will understand the practicalities of it.

It has also been suggested that we do not adjourn for afternoon tea as in the past, but that afternoon tea be available between 3.45 p.m. and 4.15 p.m. and members attend in smaller groups during that particular time by mutual arrangement to fit in with the business of the House.

I have not had practical experience of this but I understand that in some Parliaments the House does not adjourn even for lunch. For those who wish to partake of afternoon tea there will not be an actual suspension of the House for this purpose but it is anticipated that members will, by mutual arrangement, find something which is workable so that we do not have the problem of a quorum and the like. This cannot be spelt out in the motion

but it will depend on the practical experiences during the trial period.

This would allow the debate to be continuous through the afternoon without closing down for the 15-minute period.

It is also understood that, in connection with Bills and motions in the House, discussions will be held between the Government and Opposition Whips, following the introduction of legislation, in an endeavour to make arrangements for an agreed number of members to speak on the various Bills and motions.

The Bills could be classified in various categories, according to their importance or the amount of debate required on them.

This is not proposed in an effort to stifle debate on Bills but to place on trial a system whereby we can more sensibly complete the business of the House and enable members to get home at a reasonable time in the evening.

We may find some pitfalls on the way through, and if we do I would hope that sensible discussions could be had between representatives of the parties concerned to see if they can be overcome.

For example, representations have been made to the House Committee to see if ways can be devised to allow at least a certain number of members to have luncheon guests on Thursdays, even though the House will be sitting before and after lunch.

I understand a basis has been approved and members will be advised of the system to operate.

We have tried where possible—and when I say “We” I refer to the Opposition as well as the Government—to fit in with the general requirements of members, realising of course that it is almost impossible to get a system satisfactory to all concerned.

However, the Government is prepared to agree to implement this system on a trial basis—with a review of how things have worked out in practice up to the Royal Show recess.

It is suggested that that would be a good time to review the practical experiences under the sessional orders. In the light of the explanations that I have given I want to add my appreciation to those who, first of all, persevered to have the sessional orders for sitting times reviewed, and, secondly, for the work they have done with considerable patience. They did this in the face of considerable resistance to change, especially when people have experienced conditions for so long in one form or another.

This arrangement has been arrived at in goodwill and it is submitted on that basis, with the clear understanding that we will have a look at the matter when we break for the Royal Show week. We will then be able to ascertain how it has worked in those few weeks.

**MR DAVIES** (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [2.27 p.m.]: This is something of a red letter day for this Parliament. I thank the Premier for the co-operation he has extended and for first of all assigning the then Deputy Premier to a committee last year.

Mr Nanovich: It was our idea.

The **SPEAKER**: The member for Whitford will cease interjecting.

Mr Nanovich: My apologies, Mr Speaker.

Mr **DAVIES**: I was extending my thanks to the Premier for his co-operation in assigning the then Deputy Premier to a committee last year when we mentioned the matter several times. However, nothing evolved.

After the election he was quick to assign the new Deputy Premier to a committee and I am delighted to say we received almost immediate action. This shows what can be done when there is a spirit of co-operation.

We have overcome this innate conservatism which is inherent in all of us—perhaps throughout the community, but certainly more in members of Parliament where there is this resistance to change.

The Premier said that after having been here for many years and being used to the hours many members felt they were appropriate and there was no need for change. However, we should have moved many years ago to bring our sitting hours up to date.

The manner in which this has been presented to the House may confuse people who are listening to the debate. However, the changes are relatively simple. We must remember that on Tuesdays and Wednesdays we generally finish between 11.00 p.m. and midnight, but now we hope to finish by 11.00 p.m. at the latest.

I will summarise the hours. For Tuesdays there is no change whatsoever except we aim to finish by 11.00 p.m. On Wednesdays we will sit at 2.15 p.m.—two hours and 15 minutes earlier than we normally do—and we will probably finish at 11.00 p.m. On Thursdays we will sit two hours earlier but we will finish about 1½ hours earlier than we usually do. So all in all it means the House will be sitting something like three hours longer each week than it does at present. On top of those hours we should add the two 15-minute

breaks for afternoon tea on Wednesdays and Thursdays; so in the main we are sitting three to four hours longer than we normally sit.

I think we can cope with that additional work quite easily, but I understand there are other problems associated with *Hansard* and with the Clerks attending to the printing and the like. The Premier has mentioned a problem associated with our having people to lunch on Thursdays when all members are here and when there might not be much room in the dining room. But they are relatively simple problems to overcome and I think we can express our appreciation to the staff and to *Hansard* for the way they have co-operated in at least making the change for a trial period.

The first matter of concern to the Opposition relates to questions. It seems to have been resolved. I do not know whether the way we are doing it now is the best way, but I know you have been giving it some consideration, Mr Speaker. There may have been an easier way to have the questions handed in than to call them out. I thought we were playing bingo yesterday, the way the numbers were rolling out.

However, the whole point is that there has been a spirit of co-operation and a desire for change and we have made the first move towards that change. I am certain some of the procedures will yet cause some concern, but I am also certain that with the spirit of co-operation which has prevailed and will continue, we will be able to overcome any difficulties. Indeed, we may be able to extend the sitting hours further, if it is found necessary.

We know country members have problems in attending to matters in Perth and on Wednesdays and Thursdays they like to get down to the city. I believe that here again, by discussing the legislation and the programme for the day as the Premier has indicated, putting some priority on the Bills and listing the people we know will be required to speak, we can perhaps arrange for those country members to be paired for brief periods when they need to go down to the city.

Some people are shocked when they come into this House and sometimes do not find all members sitting here, perhaps like a class of school children, listening intently to everything that is said. Political life is just not like that. Even with the best will in the world, it is not possible to sit through all debates. Sometimes they are a bit hard to take; I am sure members on the other side of the House would agree. The fact remains we have to be in and out of the Chamber and it is not necessary for everyone to sit here throughout every debate. Members have a responsibility to know what is going on and to take part in debate

on legislation which will affect the areas they represent. But working within those parameters, that gives the guidelines we could expect. Indeed, when one might be gainfully employed in one's office or around the building, it could be a waste of time sitting here hour after hour listening to a debate in which one does not intend to take part, the background of which one knows, and the subject of which the Opposition does not intend to oppose, anyway.

We have made an effort to overcome that conservatism. The Opposition, through its Whip and deputy leader, will be quite prepared to talk to the Government at any time. It is important to say that no-one will be prevented from speaking if he wants to speak or has to speak. No guillotine will be applied by the Opposition. The only guillotine which could operate would be one applied by the Government, with its numbers, when it so desires.

We on this side of the House have already accepted for some weeks the proposals which have come forward. We are prepared to give them a try. We thank the Deputy Premier for his willingness to talk to our members and for putting forward a proposition; and I thank the Premier for his co-operation in allocating this difficult task to the Deputy Premier.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [2.34 p.m.]: I appreciate the support of the Leader of the Opposition. I feel I should deal briefly with one matter he touched on, although you, Mr Speaker, will deal with it in more detail at the appropriate time.

As has been stated, these new arrangements apply from 19 August. In relation to the handing in of answers to questions, the situation as we see it is very much as the Leader of the Opposition stated it. Between now and the Cabinet meeting on Monday we will be devising a system for the more orderly handing in of answers. I have already discussed with you, Mr Speaker, two problems which arose from that. One is that you, of course, are the only person who has the authority to make the questions and answers part of the proceedings of the House so as to protect members in connection with those matters. That is entirely in your hands, and no doubt you have devised the machinery to do it.

The other problem is that while it might be irksome, a certain amount of communication takes place in the reading of answers to questions. I have been around this place for a long time, and when one sits and listens to the debates and the questions and answers, even though they might be wearisome at times, over the years one

accumulates a certain amount of knowledge. I counsel the new members—it is not my province to preach to them or try to teach them, and they probably would not take any notice of me—that it is very much their responsibility now to read the proceedings so that they will know what questions were asked and what answers were given. They will not now hear them in the Chamber as they did in former days. I think it would be fair to say that while not everyone listens to every answer or reads every question, along the line one picks up some valuable information which becomes part of one's store of knowledge. It is now our responsibility to read all the questions and the answers given to them.

Question put and passed.

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Thompson): Members will be aware that with the changes to sitting hours proposed in the Premier's motion, there is also an intention to alter the system for handling questions seeking information. As it is the apparent desire of the House that the replies to questions on notice will be handed in, I now outline the procedure which should be followed.

Those written replies to questions on notice which are handed to the Clerk by 4.30 p.m. on Tuesdays and by 2.15 on Wednesdays and Thursdays, shall be part of that day's proceedings and shall be available for publication accordingly.

Questions without notice will be called for at a convenient time as close as possible to 7.30 p.m. on Tuesdays, 4.15 p.m. on Wednesdays, and 4.00 p.m. on Thursdays.

At the time when questions without notice are called for, I shall announce which of the questions on notice, if any, were not replied to and those questions, unless the House otherwise directs, shall be postponed until the next sitting day. At that stage I shall also announce the tabling of any papers connected with the replies to questions.

Questions for the next sitting day's notice paper will be received until 5.00 p.m. on Tuesdays, 12 noon on Wednesdays, and 4.00 p.m. on Thursdays. The change in respect of Wednesdays is necessary if the House is to have a printed notice paper available for the commencement of Thursday's sitting.

The House understands that this system is, in effect, on a trial basis. If Ministers or members feel that they are disaffected by the operation of the new arrangements, I would appreciate it if they discussed the matter with me.

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

*Precedence on Wednesdays*

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [2.39 p.m.]: I move—

That on and from Wednesday, 20 August, unless otherwise ordered, Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day after 9.00 p.m. on Wednesdays.

This consequential motion arises from the arrangements that have been made, and which have been fully explained, in relation to notice of motion No. 1. I do not think it needs to be amplified.

I should have mentioned one point when I was speaking to notice of motion No. 1. It flows over to this motion. There are some problems for *Hansard* in the changed sitting hours. The Deputy Premier has spoken to the Chief Hansard Reporter and arranged with him that if *Hansard* finds some of these problems becoming unmanageable, the Chief Hansard Reporter will immediately seek a consultation about it. I am quite certain that the problems which beset *Hansard* can in fact be overcome with a little understanding and tolerance, and perhaps some minor changes.

The position may be exacerbated when Select Committees are sitting and they want the services of *Hansard* at times when the House is sitting. This applies particularly where the Legislative Council is conducting a Select Committee. However, I am assured that the problems are understood and can be resolved.

**MR DAVIES** (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [2.41 p.m.]: The only problem I can foresee with this arrangement is in respect of cutting off the debate at 9.00 p.m. I presume that, in line with what the Premier has already mentioned in respect of adjourning the House, some discussion will take place and that sometimes the debate might be cut off just before nine and at other times it might be cut off just after nine. We realise that we are accepting a deadline and we have no comeback. If the Government should say, "It is 9.00 p.m. and Standing Orders provide that we now move on to Government business", we will just have to accept that.

However, I imagine the rule will not be all that hard and fast, and the debate could finish 15 minutes earlier or 15 minutes later than 9.00 p.m. By discussion between the parties I am sure we will be able to reach an arrangement which is acceptable to all members.

**SIR CHARLES COURT** (Nedlands—Premier) [2.42 p.m.]: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his comments. I remind members that we have

had this problem concerning the cut-off time for some years—ever since we amended the Standing Orders to enable private members' business to be dealt with up to a certain time on Wednesdays. This enabled private members' business to continue in the session for much longer than was the case in former times when the Government, almost as soon as it introduced the Budget, would cancel private members' day; and a private member was lucky if he was ever heard again.

The present practice was introduced during the days of the Tonkin Government, and we have managed to continue with private members' day for much longer by working to an agreed timetable. Under that arrangement, at an appropriate time before 6.15 p.m., the Speaker made it clear to the member on his feet discussing private business that if he wished to continue he should move to be heard at a later sitting. That procedure seems to have worked very well.

Again, there has been a lot of consultation between the two Whips, who usually advise their leaders about the speakers and can indicate whether they have a member who wants to speak only until, say, 6.15 p.m. and not use up his full time—in which case there is no problem—or will seek leave to speak at a later sitting. To the best of my knowledge co-operation has always been extended by the person on his feet and difficult situations have been avoided.

I am anticipating we will follow approximately the same procedure under the new times.

**MR T. J. BURKE** (Perth) [2.45 p.m.]: Mr Speaker—

The **SPEAKER**: Order! The Premier has closed the debate by replying to it. The member may not speak.

**MR T. J. BURKE**: I thought the Premier was simply answering a question raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR B. T. BURKE**: Gagging the member for Perth—and he doesn't often come in here!

The **SPEAKER**: Order! In view of the extenuating circumstances, I will allow the member to speak.

**MR T. J. BURKE**: Thank you, Sir. I would like—and I feel my colleague, the member for Welshpool also would like me to do this—to record the appreciation of the Opposition for the spirit of co-operation extended to its representatives, particularly from the Deputy Premier, and more recently from the member for Murray and the member for Karrinyup, in achieving so shortly after the opening of the Thirtieth Parliament something for which I know

the member for Welshpool has been fighting for the 30 years he has been here, and something I have wanted in the 12 or 13 years I have been here.

It is most gratifying that we have been able to achieve this spirit of co-operation, and I hope it will lead to permanent improvement in sitting hours and conditions for members of the Parliament of Western Australia.

I hope we will have feedback from members regarding how they are affected personally by the new hours. I express appreciation for the co-operation extended by Jim Cox and his team of *Hansard* reporters. Quite often they are overlooked.

**MR Speaker**, I thank you for your indulgence.

The **SPEAKER**: Before putting the question, might I point out that the practice which has been followed when private members' business is to end at a specific time will continue to be followed. That practice is recorded thus: "The Speaker will permit the member speaking to seek leave to continue his remarks at the next sitting. If leave is not granted the Speaker will either put the main question or accept an adjournment motion."

In Committee, the Chairman will accept a motion that progress be reported, or will interrupt the Committee and report progress himself. This is the practice that has been followed in the past. I believe if we continue with it we will experience no problems.

Question put and passed.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY: FIFTH DAY

### *Motion*

Debate resumed from 13 August.

**MR B. T. BURKE** (Balcatta) [2.48 p.m.]: I would like firstly to congratulate the three new Labor members who were elected to this Parliament at the last election. I am sure the Parliament will benefit from the contributions they will make and the ability they have. I note, too, that there is one new Liberal member in the House.

I wish to make one or two preliminary points concerning, firstly, the continuing duplicity of the Minister for Police and Traffic—a duplicity that is compounded by and supported by the Premier. I refer to what we have heard on numerous occasions when the Minister has boasted that he and his Government do not direct the Police Force, implying quite vividly that the laws of this State are to be enforced impartially by the guardians of the law, who do not act at the behest of the elected Government.

I do not think any member on the Government benches would disagree that that statement has been made time and time again by the Minister for Police and Traffic and by the Premier. It is quite obvious from their silence that is the case. They support the contention that the Government does not instruct the Police Force on how the law should be enforced.

While I might not always agree with their apparent lack of responsibility—as they see it they are alerting the Police Force to certain situations; and if that is what they do quite honestly, then let that stand beside what they do and what they say—we must look at the true situation. Let us look at last Tuesday when the Deputy Chief Executive of the Road Traffic Authority said publicly that information about people to whom special license plates had been issued would become available in due course. Yet the next day the Minister for Police and Traffic said the Government would not release information on truck drivers which would enable the bully boys of the union movement to harass them.

What is going on? Who is telling the truth and who is telling lies? The Minister says that the law is to be enforced impartially, and the Deputy Chief Executive of the Road Traffic Authority says that information will become available in the normal course of events according to the law and the regulations in operation. Then the Minister says that he is not going to allow the information to be released. If that is not instructing the guardians of the law as to how the law should be bent, if that is not instructing the guardians of the law about how the law is to be enforced and how it is to be dealt with in the public mind, then what is it?

Mr O'Connor: It is probably stopping illegal operations happening against the individuals who object to the law.

Mr B. T. BURKE: That may be true; but one cannot start to take action, anticipating and penalising people for things that have not happened. One cannot lock people up unless they have committed an offence and been sentenced. One may well be able to anticipate that certain people are likely to commit offences; but one cannot, on that anticipation, lock them up.

Mr O'Connor: Put it this way: if you have someone who has said he is going to commit an offence against an individual and you take no action to prevent it, you would be doing the wrong thing by the community in general.

Mr B. T. BURKE: If there is any definite knowledge on the part of the Government, or the

Minister, or the Opposition, that that will be the situation, then the obligation to which the Deputy Premier made reference certainly exists. However, what I am saying, and what the Deputy Premier has failed to answer, is that the Minister consistently says that the law shall be enforced by those guardians to whom its enforcement is accorded. In this case, we have seen the law bent, according to the Minister's political judgment. Whether that judgment is right or wrong is a matter on which I cannot comment. What I am saying is that the Minister says one thing and does another.

The Minister is quite wrong in misleading the House by saying that he or the Government does not tell the police or the guardians of the law how the law shall be enforced and then publicly saying what he said.

Sir Charles Court: You are stretching the long bow, you know. You are trying to relate that licence issue to the broad principle, which I thoroughly support, that we do not direct the police.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Now we have the added qualification. This is the way the Premier operates so often.

Sir Charles Court: There is no qualification.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Of course it is a qualification. We are now seeing the broad principle brought into play. In effect, what we are seeing is the qualification of the previous position to cover what the Minister is now doing.

Sir Charles Court: No, not at all. The Government policy is quite clear. In fact, it is the law.

Mr H. D. Evans: Did you direct them on this occasion?

Sir Charles Court: That is the law, and we adhere to that situation. We accept it.

Mr H. D. Evans: Did you direct them on this occasion?

Mr B. T. BURKE: I do not wish to delay too long, except to re-emphasise the point by saying that the Minister, supported by the Premier, has consistently said that the law shall be implemented, pursued, and guarded by those people appointed to its enforcement.

Sir Charles Court: That's right.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Deputy Chief Executive of the Road Traffic Authority has publicly said that the details of the licence plates shall become available in the normal course of events, according to the law in force.

Sir Charles Court: You are getting your whole facts mixed up.

Mr B. T. BURKE: So it is not a matter of law enforcement?

Sir Charles Court: It is not a matter of law enforcement at all. It is an administrative issue.

Mr B. T. BURKE: If the selective release of the plates is not an action at the behest of this Government, what is it? Of course, the Minister has said that the information to be released on this occasion shall be different from the information that is normally released; that is, he has interfered with and directed the Road Traffic Authority.

Sir Charles Court: I would not accept that, anyhow.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Let us not dally there too long, because I want to mention also another implication of the deceit and duplicity of which this Government is guilty. Let us consider Richter Drilling, a subsidiary of CSR. What has occurred in relation to the unionists who say they will not man the drill? We have seen the Government in this place bring in an amendment that talks about "aiding and abetting the law"; but what the Premier is very careful not to mention is the fact that he knows Richter Drilling has told those workers they will be paid while they are on strike.

Sir Charles Court: I do not know that.

Mr Bryce: Everybody knows it.

Mr B. T. BURKE: CSR has told those drillers that they will be paid while they are on strike. The company made it quite clear it wants no part in the Government's bullying tactics in this matter.

Sir Charles Court: To the best of my knowledge, that is completely untrue. I do understand that Mr Bob Hawke said that the ACTU would pay them. That is what I understood—or the AWU.

Mr P. V. Jones: They are being paid for 12 hours a day by the union movement.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Let us be careful to have all this placed on record. The Premier says he has no knowledge of it; the Minister for Resources Development says he has no knowledge of it. I am not sure about the Minister for Cultural Affairs; but we would not have believed what he said anyway. The Minister for Police and Traffic is not here. If that is the case—

Sir Charles Court: I am telling you—

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Premier is always telling someone something. He wants to stop and listen for a moment. What I am telling him is that

if he does not know about those payments, that is clear evidence that his incompetence is compounded once more.

Sir Charles Court: Do not be ridiculous.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Let us move on to one or two matters to which the Opposition takes exception. The first of these is the question of the recent increases in water and sewerage charges. Let us look at what happened. The increases took place while the Premier was in the United Kingdom receiving his second knighthood. Let us learn what transpired when the Deputy Premier had the reins firmly in his hands.

Unless I am very much mistaken—and I was the first person to witness the television programme—I heard the Deputy Premier say that the increases in sewerage charges were much greater than had been foreshadowed to him. He said that he was disturbed by them, and he had ordered an urgent inquiry.

I saw the Deputy Premier on television, and I heard him say those things. Since then, how many times have we heard the Deputy Premier say, "No mistake was made"? How many times has the Minister for Water Resources said, "No mistake was made"?

Mr O'Connor: Can I qualify that?

Mr Mensaros: There was no mistake made.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Minister says it now. The Minister says, "There was no mistake made." After the Deputy Premier said the increases were far greater than those foreshadowed, we heard an urgent inquiry was being made.

Mr O'Connor: Can I qualify that?

Mr B. T. BURKE: If no mistake was made, what kind of financial wizardry was involved in deciding that there would simply be a ceiling of 50 per cent set on the increases in the valuation-based charge? Why was that necessary if no mistake was made?

Mr O'Connor: Can I qualify that?

Mr B. T. BURKE: Certainly.

Mr O'Connor: When I referred to that, I was referring to the percentages; and the percentages were much greater in most cases, or in many cases, than we believed was the case.

Mr Mensaros: Individual ones.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Well, there were mistakes made.

Mr Mensaros: There were no mistakes made.

Mr O'Connor: The percentages were higher.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Were the foreshadowed increases right or wrong?

Mr Mensaros: The foreshadowed increases were announced on an average.

Mr B. T. BURKE: So we are now putting things right?

Mr Mensaros: Nonsense.

Mr B. T. BURKE: If no mistake was made, why is it necessary to impose a maximum increase of 50 per cent on any valuation-based charge? If the matter had been thought out carefully and correctly why was that done subsequently?

Mr Mensaros: Because individual valuations went out of par. That did not alter the average. The average income to the board remained the same.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Is the Minister saying the increases were framed or announced without reference to what the individual impact might be?

Mr Mensaros: What every individual impact might be? Every year during your Government and every Government, it does not go to all the individual ones.

Mr B. T. BURKE: From the words out of the Minister's own mouth, it is quite obvious that a mistake was made. He has admitted today that the increases were announced and implemented without reference to the impact they were likely to cause.

Mr Mensaros: To every individual.

Mr B. T. BURKE: After the public outcry, when the severity of the increases dawned on this Government, some financial genius—

The SPEAKER: I ask that the member resume his seat. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the matter now being discussed by the member for Balcatta is the subject of a Bill which has been introduced into the House.

According to the practice with respect to anticipation of debate, I am afraid I must inform the member he is not permitted to raise in this debate a question that is obviously covered in a Bill to come before the House a little later on.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was just commenting upon the financial aspects of the Government's actions, and pointing out to the House that it took a financial genius to be able to pull from the air a maximum increase of 50 per cent on any valuation-based charge. I am not talking, in fact, about the increases. What I am talking about is the Government's financial incompetence to be able to stipulate 50 per cent without justification. Why was it not 75 per cent? Why was it not 40 per cent? How do we know that the figure plucked from the air in that manner was a fair figure for all the individuals

who were suffering as a result of the Government's actions—the people who had been ignored by the Government when the increases were framed?

I would like to pause to ask the Premier, who prides himself on his accounting expertise, whether he favours the plucking from the air of a figure of 50 per cent as the maximum increase.

Mr O'Connor: You are saying it should not have been done, are you?

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am saying that, in some cases, the maximum should have been only 30 per cent and in other cases it should have been 40 per cent.

Mr O'Connor: In what cases?

Mr B. T. BURKE: I do not know. I am not making the judgment about it. What I am saying is: a genius accountant has plucked the figure of 50 per cent out of the air and has then, without any justification, sought to impose that maximum.

Mr O'Connor: What should have been done?

Mr B. T. BURKE: The matter should have been subject to the closest scrutiny before the increases were announced, so that the Government was not made to look as foolish as it was, and so that the individuals who the Minister said he did not bother to think about, could be considered.

Mr O'Connor: You are now double dealing!

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am not going to tell the Government what it should do after it has made a mistake. I am trying to point out to the Government what it should do to avoid making such mistakes. The Government has shown complete financial incompetence. I am sure the Premier was about to say that he did not agree with plucking a figure of 50 per cent out of the air and applying it as a maximum without any justification.

Sir Charles Court: I was not about to say that. I was about to answer your question. You asked me a question and I was about to say that I thought the Government had taken a very realistic and practical approach, bearing in mind that we must have a ceiling on these things. The ceiling was fixed at 50 per cent which seemed to me, in all the circumstances, to be a very practical and sensible way of doing it.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I suppose the age of 50 seems a practical and sensible age and 50 metres seems a practical and sensible distance. I am blown if I know!



Sir Charles Court: I would just like to remind you that there is precedent for this type of action and it was taken by this Parliament last year.

Mr B. T. BURKE: There is precedent for murder. Does the Premier want to claim precedent for this sort of nonsense?

Sir Charles Court: It worked very well last year. It was supported by the Opposition.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I ask the Premier: what can we expect next year?

Sir Charles Court: It was supported by the Opposition last year.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I feel like putting a Ping-Pong ball into the Premier's mouth like the clowns at the show.

Sir Charles Court: Good for you!

Mr B. T. BURKE: Let us get down to the truth of the matter which is this: during last year, a pre-election year, the Government deliberately kept to a bare minimum—an unrealistic and inefficient minimum—the amount of the increase which should have been imposed. Then, following the election, which the Government won comfortably—

#### *Point of Order*

Mr BLAIE: My point of order relates to the matter which you, Sir, mentioned earlier which is that the member was referring to a subject which would be covered in a debate in the House at a later stage. My point of order is: is the member in fact invoking a subject which will be debated on another occasion?

The SPEAKER: Order! I believe that the Bill that is before the House is a more appropriate vehicle through which the member can raise the subjects he is now discussing in this debate.

I allowed the member to continue, because he indicated he was winding up his remarks on that particular matter. In view of the practice which is followed with respect to anticipation of material to be debated later, I ask the member to desist from discussing this matter.

#### *Debate Resumed*

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am aware of your position, Sir, and of your ruling. I will do what you have advised. At the same time, Sir, you cannot blame me for attempting to highlight that sort of action on the part of any Government. I am sure, if we were in Government, the Opposition would spare no pains to pursue us on a matter as silly as the one to which I have referred. It is ludicrous for the Premier to say that, in all the circumstances,

without any basis or justification, an increase of 50 per cent seemed fair enough.

Sir Charles Court: It was a ceiling of 50 per cent, not an increase.

Mr B. T. BURKE: A ceiling of 50 per cent seems reasonable, does it?

Sir Charles Court: Some people pay less.

Mr B. T. BURKE: As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said, "What sort of good housekeeping and good financial management is that?" Where is the pride in our Budget and the pride in our finances?

Another matter on which I wish to touch briefly, and it has been referred to by many other speakers on this side of the House, is this Government's policy of deliberately creating a pool of unemployed in the pursuit, as it sees it, of the control of inflation. Let us see what has happened since 1977 when this Government was returned at the election prior to the last one. At that time, in excess of 25 000 people were out of work; that is, a percentage of 4.62 unemployed. The ratio of job vacancies to those seeking work was 14 to one. We had an experience of good housekeeping here also! The Government certainly managed things well, because within three years the number of unemployed had increased to a figure in excess of 39 000—that is, a percentage of 6.79 unemployed—and the ratio of job vacancies to people seeking work was 40 to one. If that is good housekeeping and good budgeting, I fail to appreciate it.

The point I wish to make is that the Government continues to boast about the number of jobs it has created, but the situation does not bear this out. The Government says constantly that we have the best job creation record in the Commonwealth and yet we have seen an increase in unemployment in the three years I mentioned. The Government does not seem to regard that increase in unemployment as important, because it has been creating jobs, mainly in the Public Service, but they are still jobs. The Government seems to see the measure of success as being what is being done, not what it is possible to achieve with good government. Regardless of the number of jobs which have been created, the number of people unemployed has increased markedly in the last three years. However, the Government does not talk about that.

In fact, the Government appears to comfort itself and explain its performance by saying, "We have created more jobs than any other State Government in the country."

Sir Charles Court: Isn't that a good thing?

Mr B. T. BURKE: Of course it is a good thing, but is the increase in unemployment here a good thing also?

Sir Charles Court: Don't you know that, because of the employment we have created, people are coming here to enjoy the benefits of it?

Mr Young: If you want proof of that, look at the New South Wales position.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I will concede that; but what I will not concede is the Premier's right to sit there smugly and pretend there is no problem.

Mr Young: No-one has ever said that.

Mr B. T. BURKE: That has been said by implication. The Premier said that the Government has done so well, people are coming to this State.

Mr Young: Yes, they are coming here from New South Wales. It can quite easily be proved statistically. You only have to look at the fact that they are creating few jobs in New South Wales and unemployment is going down, so where are the people going? Don't laugh!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Minister for Health is amazing.

Mr Young: Check your statistics!

Mr B. T. BURKE: Let us follow the Minister's argument. It is very interesting. He said that unemployment is falling in New South Wales and jobs are not being created.

Mr Young: Job creation is falling dramatically.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Unemployment is not increasing there, so, he asks, "Where are the people going?" He claims they are going to Western Australia.

Mr Young: Exactly.

Mr B. T. BURKE: What about South Australia, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Europe?

Mr Young: We have the best job creation record.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. BURKE: What an amazing man!

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume his seat. After I call the House to order I expect order to be maintained at least until I

resume my seat. I did not even get the chance to be seated before members resumed interjecting. The member for Balclutha.

Mr B. T. BURKE: If the Minister's performance during the last few minutes is not proof of the smug attitude which threads its way through this Government, what is? The Minister is attempting to defend the situation when we have almost 7 per cent of the work force unemployed. He is attempting to say the unemployment problem should be set aside because we are creating jobs. If that is not ignorance of the present unemployment position, then I do not know what it amounts to.

The Premier's preoccupation with the defence of himself, and his Government, by reference to the number of jobs created is clouding the real problem, which is the pool of unemployment which now exists. If the Premier wants to say—and he ignored me on the last occasion I asked him—that he is not concerned about unemployment, then he can have that position. When I asked him whether he was concerned about unemployment he said the Government had created more jobs in this State than have been created in any other State.

Sir Charles Court: That is the best way to overcome unemployment.

Mr Williams: Why not look at your own unions and the unemployment they have caused? They are the cause of the trouble.

Mr Bryce: That is the best and longest speech the member for Clontarf has ever made.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balclutha will resume his seat. The House will come to order! The member for Balclutha.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I thank the member for Clontarf for contributing to the best part of my speech so far.

Mr T. H. Jones: He is making a fool of himself.

Mr B. T. BURKE: His remarks would be laughable except that this sort of mentality and confrontationist attitude, pygmy-like though it is, causes so much trouble. It is this sort of trouble that stops this Government from introducing any sort of harmony.

Mr Williams: Absolute rubbish! You do not know what you are talking about. The unions are the whole cause of unemployment.

Several members interjected.

Mr Bryce: That is the best speech the member for Clontarf has made in this place.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balcatta.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am interested in the comments of the member for Clontarf, unintelligible though they are. I am also interested in seeing whether the Premier, and the Deputy Premier, agree with the member's comment that the union movement is solely responsible for unemployment in this State.

Mr Bryce: They were laughing, like everybody else.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Is that what the Government thinks?

Mr O'Connor: Certainly, they go a long way towards contributing to unemployment.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The member for Clontarf said the unions were solely responsible, and the Deputy Premier says the unions contribute to unemployment. It is a change to know that Whitlam is not responsible any longer. As far as I am concerned no-one, not even the Government, can evade the responsibility.

Mr O'Connor: There is more employment in this State than in any other State, and well you know it. Deny that.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I will not deny that unemployment has increased.

Mr O'Connor: Deny what I said.

Mr Bryce: The facts speak for themselves.

Mr O'Connor: You must agree that the number of people coming to Western Australia from the Eastern States has increased.

Mr B. T. BURKE: What has been said illustrates that the Deputy Premier is wrong. Between 1977 and 1980 it appears many jobs have been created, and I agree with the Deputy Premier. I also say that between 1977, in June, and 1980, in June, the increase in unemployment has been from 4.6 per cent to 6.7 per cent. Would the Deputy Premier agree with me?

Mr O'Connor: Yes.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Well, what about doing something about it?

Mr O'Connor: May I say that if there are 100 000 people in an area, and an extra 50 000 jobs are created, and then an extra 100 000 people come into that area, what is the position? That is what is occurring, and well you know.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The situation was set out expertly by the Minister for Health.

Mr Young: You know I am right.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Now the Minister for Health is attempting to become the Deputy

Premier. I am saying from a public and parliamentary preoccupation that this sort of argument amounts to irresponsibility in the face of the unemployment problem.

Mr Young: You are wrong.

Mr B. T. BURKE: It does amount to irresponsibility.

Mr Young: You are saying that regardless of the number of people coming into an area for work, it is the responsibility of the Government to provide jobs for them?

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am saying it is the responsibility of the Government to manage the economic affairs of the country and to provide as much employment as possible. I am saying the Government has not done that.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is inappropriate, and against Standing Orders to interject. Some interjections do add colour to the debate, but when three or four members interject at the same time, that is disorderly. The member for Balcatta.

Mr T. H. Jones: The member for Clontarf is opposed to migration.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I wonder why members of the Government are so touchy on this matter.

Mr Young: We are not touchy.

Mr Williams: The member for Balcatta is terribly touchy. He thinks we should wave a wand and create jobs.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am not touchy; I am worried about the red face of the member for Clontarf.

Mr Williams: No matter what, we should wave a wand to create jobs.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. BURKE: May the jet draught of the member for Clontarf choke a Concorde!

Mr Bryce: He has never made such a good speech previously.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Premier is squirming in his seat because of the unintelligent nonsense.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. BURKE: Eject him, so that I can get on with my speech!

The SPEAKER: It is obviously Thursday afternoon. The member for Balcatta would assist me—and I am sure he would assist me if he were able to do so—by discontinuing to debate with the member for Clontarf. On the other hand, the

member for Clontarf would assist also if he listened to the debate and kept his remarks for an opportunity obviously available to him during the Address-in-Reply debate.

Mr Williams: I will take advantage of that opportunity.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I wonder whether it is Thursday afternoon, or Thursday full moon! If it had not been for the intemperance of the member for Clontarf, and the evasiveness of the Premier, I would have been talking about other matters.

Let us look at interest rates under the sure stewardship of this Government. There has been a marked increase in interest rates over the last three years, and that is true even if the Fraser Government's deliberate manipulation of Commonwealth and State funds is taken into account. Let us look at the starting point in March 1974, which was about the starting point of this Government. At that time the interest rate for savings bank home loans was 7.28 per cent to 8 per cent. In February 1977, at the time this Government was re-elected for its second term, 9 per cent to 10 per cent was the order of the day. In February 1978, the interest rate was 8.75 per cent to 10 per cent and, in March 1980, the rate was increased to range between 8.75 per cent and 10.5 per cent for savings bank home loans. What does the Premier intend to do about that?

Sir Charles Court: The interest rates are still very much lower than their comparable rates overseas. I remind the member that they went through the roof in America, Britain, and on the Continent. Australia's record in this regard is the best of all.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Premier is wrong in saying the latest United States rates have dropped to 10 per cent. Let us go back to the increase which took our rates well past those in the United States; before those rates went through the roof. What did the Premier say then? He said it was Whitlam's fault. We do not want a comparison of our situation with that of other countries; we want to know what this Government will do.

Mr Young: Would you repeat the bank rate for the United States?

Mr B. T. BURKE: Just a moment, first things first. What is this Government to do about interest rates which are rising so quickly, and which affect and cause so much hardship to the young people in this State?

Sir Charles Court: The No. 1 objective must be to overcome inflation. If you were to join with us in this attack on inflation that would be the best way and the quickest way not only to get interest rates down, but also to increase employment. All

the time you have these excessive wage demands, the interest rates and inflation rates will go higher.

Mr B. T. BURKE: My colleague, the member for Fremantle, will deal with wage rates and the real increases which are below the indexation guidelines the Premier first supported and now wants to abolish.

Let us just examine the Premier's statement a little more closely when he asks the Opposition to join in the fight on inflation. Let us see what it involves as far as the home building industry is concerned.

Sir Charles Court: I said that if you will join with us and help us to keep some of the wage demands down, you will find that will be one of the most effective ways to get on top of inflation and interest rates.

Mr B. T. BURKE: As I said, the question of wages with which we have now dealt, will be more ably dealt with by the member for Fremantle. However, we will just look at the sort of actions this Government supports. Let us look at the housing industry *vis-a-vis* inflation. We can see that over the past few years the specific purpose capital payments for welfare housing have been slashed. In 1975-76, we received \$34.8 million. The figure in 1976-77 was \$37.4 million, and by 1977-78, it had risen to \$38.1 million. But here is where the Government's fight against inflation begins; the specific purpose capital payment for welfare housing in 1978-79 was \$31.5 million—a decrease of almost \$7 million for welfare housing.

That is how we fight inflation—at the cost of the homes sought by young people. The payment for welfare housing in 1979-80 was \$26.1 million, and presumably the 1980-81 figure will be about the same.

Over the last five years Western Australia's specific purpose capital payments for housing have been cut by around \$37.5 million. I ask the Premier, through you, Mr Speaker: Does he support that sort of slashing?

Sir Charles Court: Of course we do not, and we have made our protest on it as we should. But that is not something over which we have control, any more than any other State Government has control over it.

Mr B. T. BURKE: And yet the Premier's criticism of the Whitlam Government over those years was far more vocal than it has ever been of his Federal counterparts.

Sir Charles Court: Because we had inflation during the Whitlam period getting up in the 17 per cent-plus category.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** The Premier says that inflation was running at 17 per cent during the Whitlam era. Let us look at how he is doing with inflation, through his colleagues.

**Sir Charles Court:** All that spending under Whitlam!

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** Let us see how inflation has progressed under our Premier. In 1978 the inflation rate was 7.9 per cent; in 1978-79 it was 7.8 per cent; and in 1979-80, it was 10.7 per cent.

**Mr O'Connor:** In Western Australia?

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** Inflation has been on the increase since 1977, and, since 1977-78, those specific purpose capital grants have been slashed in the manner I have demonstrated.

**Mr O'Connor:** Were they the Western Australian figures you quoted?

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** They are the established Australian figures.

**Mr O'Connor:** But not Western Australian.

**Mr Bryce:** Inflation in Western Australia is higher than the average.

**Mr O'Connor:** No it is not.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** During the period the Premier said he was satisfied with those cuts in the specific purpose capital grants, that is what happened to inflation. So if the Premier can explain to us how those things have contributed to the reduction in inflation, let us hear him, and let us not always hear the excuses, "We cannot do anything about the Fraser Government's cut-backs." The Premier was always prepared to try to do something about the Whitlam Government.

**Sir Charles Court:** We have done it to the Fraser Government.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** What has the Premier done about cut-backs in housing, except to maintain a list of incompetent Ministers who have squealed now and then about them.

**Mr Bryce:** A great protector!

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** What has he achieved?

**Sir Charles Court:** We have been part and parcel of an operation in Australia which has improved the Australian economy to a very marked degree in relation to the rest of the world.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** If that is true, what is the Premier's reaction to the increase in inflation over the last three financial years?

**Sir Charles Court:** It is still better than that of most of our trading partners.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** But it is still increasing. What is the Premier doing about the increases?

**Sir Charles Court:** I am telling you our figures are still better than those of most of our partners.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** It is possible to find some comparison—whether Uganda, Ethiopia, or the United States—to justify an argument.

**Sir Charles Court:** We are talking about the standing list of OECD countries.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** The facts are that in this country over the last few years the inflation rate has risen, and one of the prime determinants of that rise has been the Fraser Government's policy of parity pricing for oil. That is a policy the Premier has supported.

**Sir Charles Court:** So does any responsible citizen.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** Of course everyone does not support it. The Premier has supported it.

**Sir Charles Court:** You are going to finish that if your people get into power.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** It was announced, as part of the Hayden policy package, that there will be a 12-month moratorium on petrol prices. The Opposition in this State will stand right behind that policy. These increases have applied to old oil. We will not be party to giving windfall profits of millions of dollars in respect of oil discovered years ago.

**Mr Laurance:** There will not be a hole drilled.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** The Minister is only a "semi-Minister" at the moment. He is too busy beating the pensioners to know what is going on.

Let us get back to the point I made about old oil discovered years ago. The Opposition says quite clearly that parity pricing results in windfall profits about which it cannot be said with certainty they will be used for exploration. No attempts have been made to confirm or verify that those windfall profits have resulted in extra exploration. No case can be made out morally or intellectually for parity pricing for old oil discoveries.

**Sir Charles Court:** Don't you know how the oil levy works? Obviously not.

**Mr B. T. BURKE:** The Premier has supported the payment of 32c and 34c a litre for petrol.

Unfortunately I seem to have progressed through time, but not through those matters I wanted to raise, thanks to the member for Clontarf. However, I want to say one thing about the number of bankruptcies in the building and construction industry.

In this State we have a Government which says time and time again that it is the protector of private enterprise. There is no industry in which

private enterprise exists in a purer form than in the home building and construction industry where subcontractors can pick up their tools and go out to find work for themselves at rates they can negotiate. However, what has been the history of the home building industry during the period in office of this Government?

During the past four years, under this Government's stewardship, there have been 312 business bankruptcies in the building and construction industry; 312 business bankruptcies in the industry which is the bastion of private enterprise. Not only that, but also since November 1979, a large number of companies have got into financial trouble and have, for financial reasons, ceased operation. I would like to refer to the following companies—

Unibuild Pty. Ltd.—not a small company  
In Residence Pty. Ltd.  
Welcome Homes  
Savilla Homes  
Dominion Homes  
Realty Development Corporation  
Norm Carey & Associates  
Blandon Homes Pty. Ltd.  
P J Constructions (WA) Pty. Ltd.  
Brandon Nominees  
G & N Engineering (WA) Pty. Ltd.

Those are just a few of the companies which have ceased operation since November 1979. Is that a record to be proud of? What is to be done to stop the decline in the building industry?

Mr Laurance: Nationalise it—is that your answer?

Mr B. T. BURKE: I wish the "semi-Minister" would not be stupid! Let us look at just one of the reasons for the increasing number of building company bankruptcies. The inflation rate in the building industry over the past three years has almost doubled. Of all the States Western Australia has had the highest rate of increase in the price of building materials in the building and construction industry.

There has been an increase of 128 per cent in the Western Australian building and construction industry and of almost 80 per cent in the home building industry over that period. The cost of constructing a building which cost \$1 million in 1974 has increased to \$2.8 million today.

Mr Laurance: How many \$1 million homes are built?

Mr B. T. BURKE: We are talking about building and construction, not about housing alone.

Mr Laurance: You are talking about house building.

Mr Williams: Who is to blame? The unions have forced home building costs up by their excessive demands.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The "semi-Minister" wants me to talk about housing costs. The cost of constructing a house which in 1974 cost \$35 000 to build has increased to \$63 000 today. Does that answer his question? The Honorary Minister is like the rest of his masters.

Mr Williams: You are blaming the Government instead of blaming yourselves. It is the unions which are at fault.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Mr B. T. BURKE: Mr Speaker, I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

... but we regret to inform your Excellency that your Government has failed to develop and apply any positive policies to combat the effect of increasing inflation and interest rates on the building and construction industries.

Further, that your Government has co-operated with, and compounded, the Fraser Government's harsh policies which have removed home ownership from the reach of so many citizens and, in particular undermined the financial position of the State Housing Commission resulting in higher rents, inadequate maintenance programmes, fewer houses being constructed and longer waiting periods for SHC accommodation.

In moving my amendment, I remind the "semi-Minister" or the Treasurer or whoever might reply that the debate is not about the State Housing Commission alone. It is time this Government and its housing Ministers started to realise the breadth of their responsibilities. The debate is not confined only to the SHC; it covers the private home building industry, the construction industry, and all the other manufacturing industries associated with each of those sectors of the building industry.

Let us hear some answers about what is going to be this Government's policy in respect of the breadth of the argument the Opposition has attempted to develop.

MR HODGE (Melville) [3.32 p.m.]: I formally second the amendment. A number of Opposition speakers intend to speak to this amendment this

afternoon and cover all aspects of the subject. As I have two very large State Housing Commission areas in my electorate, I intend to concentrate my remarks on the lack of performance of the SHC.

The effects of the Fraser Government's cut-backs in welfare housing funds are really starting to hurt in Housing Commission areas. The Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Housing was quoted in *The West Australian* on 6 June, when announcing a 14 per cent increase in State Housing Commission rents, in the following terms—

Mr Laurance said that the Commonwealth had reduced the allocation of funds to housing authorities to a level which seriously impaired the SHC's ability to play its proper part in providing housing for people on lower incomes.

That sums up the situation in the Honorary Minister's own words; the amount of money being allocated to the State Housing Commission literally is insufficient to allow the commission to do its job; namely, to assist people on lower incomes to obtain housing. By his own words, the Honorary Minister has admitted that the Fraser Government—a Government of his own political colour—has provided insufficient funds to allow the State Housing Commission to do its job. It is one of the few statements the Minister has made with which I thoroughly agree.

It is true that the housing commissioners are not doing their job. However, I do not blame the State Housing Commission or the commissioners. I blame the Liberal Governments of Western Australia and Canberra. The funds provided for welfare housing have not even been able to keep up with inflation over the last three years, at a time when, supposedly, inflation was under control. We saw an increase in welfare housing funds this year of only 4 per cent, at a time when inflation was running at between 10 and 13 per cent. Therefore, in real terms, we have seen a 6 per cent reduction in welfare housing funds.

The fact that welfare housing funds have not kept up with inflation does not take into account the dramatic increase in demand for welfare housing by the large number of unemployed people in and about the metropolitan area, by people trying to live on pensions and by other people requiring assistance. The number of such people is rising all the time. It is staggering that in one municipality alone—the City of Melbourne—over 1 000 people are registered as unemployed.

I do not understand why the State Government does not subsidise the operations of the State

Housing Commission with State funds in order to allow the commission to carry out its basic responsibilities.

I have carried out a little research into this matter, and I should like to refer the House to a statement by the Premier, when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, during a debate on Tuesday, 5 October 1971. The then Deputy Leader of the Opposition was taking part in a Budget debate, and he is quoted at page 1825 of *Hansard* in the following terms—

Nevertheless I do not accept that there is no room in which to manoeuvre within this Budget which runs into a total of nearly \$400 000 000 in revenue; neither do I accept the fact that it is necessary to slug the public, particularly the householder, in the way this Government finds necessary.

There are always alternative methods of doing things, but the Government has elected in its first year of office to grasp the nettle and slug everyone as hard as it can. It hopes things will sort themselves out and the public will forget before the 1974 election.

These days, our State Budget is over \$1 billion. If the Premier was of the opinion then that it was always possible to rearrange the State's finances to avoid slugging people, it must be within his ability these days to subsidise the operations of the State Housing Commission to prevent the hardship which is occurring.

Because of a lack of funds, the State Housing Commission has been forced to adopt a number of methods to try to make up the shortfall. I am informed its first move was to sell off huge tracts of commission land reserved for future development. The resulting funds are enabling the commission to keep afloat on a day-to-day basis.

The second method adopted is to raise extra funds from the tenants themselves. The poorest people in our community, people who are living on or below the poverty line, are being hit with increased rents for Housing Commission accommodation to subsidise the operations of the commission.

The third method the commission is adopting in an effort to make ends meet is to reduce spending on maintenance and on the normal services it should be providing to Housing Commission tenants.

Instead of the Government doing things in the proper way, and providing funds in the State Budget to enable the State Housing Commission to operate as it was designed to operate; it has forced the commission to raise revenue by those three methods. The responsibility for the SHC

shortcomings does not rest with the commission officers or the commissioners themselves. It rests squarely with this Government and with its Liberal Party colleagues in Canberra.

At the beginning of last week we saw the Premier rushing into print criticising the Prime Minister and trying to distance himself from new federalism of which, of course, he was the co-author. A few days later we saw the Leader of the National Country Party having a go at the Treasurer (Mr Howard) regarding actions of the Taxation Department and the effect those actions were likely to have on farmers. We then saw the Minister for Cultural Affairs attacking the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the member for Stirling (Mr Viner). Towards the end of the week, we saw the Minister for Health publicly trying to dissociate himself from his Federal colleagues in Canberra by criticising Federal health policies in a letter to the newspaper.

So we had an incredible week last week. We had half a dozen Ministers of this Government publicly seeking to dissociate themselves from their Liberal Party colleagues in Canberra. It is not surprising that the only excuse we hear from the Honorary Minister for Housing for the terrible mess the Liberals have got this welfare housing scheme into is that it is all the fault of the Liberals in Canberra, the Federal Government.

While I am not blaming the commission and its officers for the lack of funds and the consequences flowing from that, I am not saying they are completely blameless and that there is no room for significant improvement. I have expressed great frustration in my dealings with the SHC. I have as many dealings with the commission on a day-to-day basis as any member of this House. I have noticed a significant improvement since the commission has had its new general manager. The administrative side of its work does seem to be moving more smoothly, and members of Parliament at least seem to be getting a better deal and greater co-operation. I do not know how the public is faring; but as far as I am concerned, the new general manager has been a step in the right direction and a significant improvement.

Mr Davies: We are not getting any more houses though.

Mr HODGE: It is not his responsibility if the funds are not made available; that is the Minister's responsibility.

The establishment of the Fremantle office of the SHC has been an improvement—there is no doubt about that. I had tremendous difficulties

when operating through the Perth office. I was told that I had lodged more complaints with the PLO than any other member of State Parliament. I do not know whether that is true or not, but I certainly stand by all the complaints I have lodged. None have been frivolous or unnecessary.

I shall give an example of the sort of frustrations my constituents encounter and the type of problem I have had. I recall one woman contacting my office some months ago and complaining that she had put her foot through the floorboards. Her house was infested with white ants and in her accident she had injured her back.

Mr O'Connor: What area is this?

Mr HODGE: In Willagee. I asked her why she had not reported the matter to the commission. She replied that she had done so four times but that nothing had been done. I then reported the incident and it took exactly one month from that day to the time someone turned up to do something about the problem.

I wrote a letter to the General Manager of the SHC about that matter and I did manage to get some action. I think it was Mr Rothwell and other officers who came from the commission and discussed this matter with me. They were fruitful and frank discussions and since then there has been an improvement. This is partly because of the establishment of the Fremantle office. Nowadays I deal largely with that office and I find I am getting some co-operation.

Another by-product of the cut-back in welfare housing funds was the decision by this Government to abandon the rebuilding programme for Willagee. As members know, Willagee is one of the oldest SHC areas in this State. It has been established for nearly 30 years and the first homes built there were of timber. Of course, they are very old now and they are not particularly well constructed. I understand they were semi-transportable houses imported from Europe.

For many years the commission had plans for the eventual bulldozing of the homes in order to rebuild proper brick and tile homes of a more acceptable standard. Unfortunately, those plans had to be abandoned. Instead, we have had an upgrading programme. Those 30-year-old, small timber houses have been renovated in the hope that the Government can squeeze another 25 or 30 years service out of them. I suppose we should be grateful for small mercies, because it is better to have the houses renovated than to have nothing done.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.03 p.m.*



Mr HODGE: The reduction in Commonwealth housing funds meant the abandonment of the rebuilding programme in the Willagee Housing Commission area. That area has now had several 30-year-old weatherboard homes renovated in varying degrees. The Government appears to hope that that now will tide Willagee over for the next 25 years.

I suppose we should be grateful for small mercies and grateful that the houses have at least been renovated. However, what should have happened is the area should have been bulldozed and houses of an acceptable standard—such as other homes—built. Brick and tile homes should have been constructed as was the original plan. However, the cut in taxes by the Fraser Government has caused the abandonment of that plan.

Another matter I wish to raise is the surcharge to be applied to pensioners. I made mention of this the other night in this House when I asked the Honorary Minister for Housing several questions. Of course, he evaded the questions and did not answer the crucial question which is exercising the minds of many pensioners occupying Housing Commission accommodation.

The crucial question was one which has been asked many many times by my constituents. The pensioners wish to know what will happen to them if they are not prepared to apply for a transfer to alternative accommodation and they are not able to pay the \$5 surcharge which is to be applied for married pensioner couples. That is the question which has been evaded and avoided by the Government.

Many of the pensioners who have contacted me on this matter have lived in Willagee for 25 to 30 years. There are large numbers of pensioners living in Housing Commission accommodation in Willagee, Hilton, and Palmyra.

Many of these pensioners moved into their homes after they were married. It was often their first home and they raised their families in very small and cramped houses. Even though they are three-bedroomed homes they are still very cramped and basic. These people made do with this accommodation through the years, whilst raising their families. They have also invested considerable amounts of money to improve their homes and make them comfortable for their retirement.

They have now been shattered by this decision which means they will have to pay a \$5 surcharge which they cannot afford. Most live on the poverty line. They must pay this surcharge or be prepared to put their names on a list to move out

of that area to one which is strange to them. Even if they agree to a transfer I do not know where the Government will put them.

I have had extreme difficulty in placing pensioners in Housing Commission accommodation in the Fremantle region. If there is a Minister of the Government who is interested, I will quote the example of a man, an invalid pensioner, who was recognised by the Housing Commission as being an emergency case. His name was placed on the emergency list and it languished there for eight months before Housing Commission accommodation was made available to him. Eight months on the list! He occupied the accommodation for two weeks and then became ill and was taken to hospital. I do not know whether he will ever come out. He could have passed his last eight months in much more comfortable circumstances than he was able to obtain.

I hope a member of the Government will answer my question: Where does the Government plan to place these people?

People are to be forced out of their homes if they cannot pay the \$5 surcharge. They will be forced to move into accommodation in another area. This forced removal will have some ill effects. Apart from the obvious effects when people move from familiar surroundings and leave behind homes which have had money spent on them, they will be leaving behind neighbours and friendships which they have made over the last 25 to 30 years. A move to a strange area will have a dramatic effect on pensioners.

One man who rang me on this matter had lived in his home for 27 years. He was very distressed to learn that he had to place his name on a list for a pensioner flat. This man has many acquaintances in the district. He is known by the local doctor, the local minister of religion, the local shopkeepers and many others. He has also cultivated his own vegetable garden to supplement his pension.

Mr MacKinnon: Was he known by the local publican?

Mr HODGE: Unfortunately there is not a hotel in Willagee, as the member is well aware. It is not the Willagee area; the owners just wanted to cash in on the very high name of the suburb.

This gentleman is very worried about moving out of a familiar area and away from a circle of friends.

I have spoken to a leading authority in the field of extended care for elderly people, a Dr Lefroy. He is known to most members of this House. I asked Dr Lefroy's opinion of the likely

effect the forced removal of pensioners from family homes to a strange area might have on these people. He said he was very concerned about the effect it would have on people's health. At my request he wrote me a letter setting out some of his views and several matters he had researched for me. The letter is signed by Dr Lefroy who is the Associate Professor and Physician of the Extended Care Department of Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. The letter reads as follows—

Miss Page and I have looked through the literature concerning the effect of re-housing of elderly people with the following result.

There are a number of accounts documenting ill effect (including an increase in mortality) when people have been moved from one *institution* to another, particularly when they have had some physical or mental illness.

There is less definite information concerning shift from one place *in the community* to another by elderly people who are well. However, the following conclusion is taken from the *Journal of Gerontology* 1977 (Richard Schulz and Gail Brennan):—

The literature on home-to-home relocation clearly illustrates the importance of choice as a determinant of relocation outcomes. Persons relocated involuntarily consistently suffer some form of setback in personal adjustment while those moving by choice maintain and even improve on some indications.

That is the advice of Dr Lefroy, an acknowledged expert on the treatment of elderly people.

Perhaps, instead of imposing a penalty on people who do not wish to move, the Government could have provided an incentive for people who may wish to move to do so. People could leave the area on a voluntary basis. That would be an ideal situation. However, this Government appears to have adopted the attitude that it must be tough and hard and wield the big stick as well as threaten a financial penalty for those who do not wish to move.

I suggest that instead of imposing a penalty the Government should provide an incentive—perhaps it can offer a reduced rental—for pensioners to move. It is rather ironical that another constituent who approached me, a widow with one child, was very anxious to move from her three-bedroomed home in Willagee. The Housing Commission refused her request. She is still in her home in Willagee and she is finding it difficult to cope with a large

house and grounds. The Housing Commission, for some obscure reason known only to itself, refused her a transfer.

As I mentioned earlier, I would very much like to know where the Government intends to rehouse these pensioners whom it either intimidates or forcibly evicts from family homes. Where will they be housed? The only accommodation in the general Fremantle area is at Coolbellup. There are hundreds of empty flats in Coolbellup and it occurs to me that is the only place the Government has in which to relocate the pensioners. There is nowhere else. I have had pensioners on the emergency list for eight months waiting for suitable pensioner accommodation. I hope to be given a reply by the Government today.

Mr MacKinnon: What is wrong with Coolbellup?

Mr HODGE: Nothing, except that, as the Honorary Minister well knows, the flats are unpopular with ordinary people, let alone with elderly people. I hope the Honorary Minister's interjection does not indicate I am correct in believing the Government will fill up those flats with pensioners.

The houses at Willagee and Hilton are very basic indeed. Most of them are either weatherboard or asbestos. There are very few brick homes in those areas of my electorate. As a result of the Government's cutbacks, so-called market rents have been applied to those homes in Willagee and Hilton and to homes in other parts of the metropolitan area.

I do not know that many members of this House have actually visited Willagee or Hilton and seen those very old weatherboard or asbestos homes, but I can assure them they are not exactly luxurious. To make the point, I will quote the example of a case that was brought to my attention in April this year.

A woman from Hilton rang me and said she had had a visit from my opponent during the State election campaign—the Liberal Party candidate for Melville—and she had raised with him a housing problem and been assured by him that he would take the matter up and get instant action for her from the Housing Commission. Several months later, when nothing had happened, she phoned my office and asked me to take the matter up, as the Liberal Party candidate had obviously given the game away.

I made some inquiries to find out the exact nature of her problem. The problem was that the house had no kitchen. I knew Housing Commission homes were fairly basic, but when

there is no kitchen in a house I think it is stretching the point about what is really required to make a home. It is no wonder my illustrious opponent was not successful. All he needed to get out of the Housing Commission was a kitchen. I mentioned this to the Housing Commission, and I will read the reply I received from the general manager—

I refer to your recent representation on behalf of the above requesting the installation of a kitchen.

Subject to the availability of funds a kitchen will be installed in this house and is anticipated that tenders will be called in approximately September.

That is good news for the lady at Hilton! If she holds on until September she will have the luxury of a kitchen.

Mr Blaikie: How do you manage to get preferred treatment for your constituents?

Mr HODGE: I know it is rather extravagant to ask for a kitchen. Anyway, if funds are available, in September she will get a kitchen. I suppose the Government would tell her she is lucky to have a roof over her head and that she should be eating out instead of worrying about cooking. It is a little like the business of eating cake when there is no bread.

In addition to the shortage of basic facilities in some homes, there is a distinct lack of maintenance. This is probably the most frequent complaint made to my office, now that the so-called upgrading programme is finished. I was inundated with complaints about the standard of the upgrading work but that is now finished and I will not canvass all those matters. I suppose the most frequent complaint is from constituents, particularly pensioners, who are stunned to find they cannot get basic jobs done such as internal painting. One invalid pensioner was told, "There is nothing wrong with the paint. It has only been there for 20-odd years. All it needs is a good wash." The invalid pensioner was expected to get up on a ladder and wash the walls down. The commission could not run to a coat of paint on the inside of the house.

That is not an isolated case. I have had dozens of cases of people being knocked back when they have asked for internal painting to be done—not extravagantly but on homes which have been up for 20 or 30 years and have never been painted inside. They have expected the Housing Commission, the landlord, to behave in a reasonable manner and, every 20 years or so, give the house a coat of paint; but that is not possible because no funds are available.

Fences are another problem. I wrote to the Minister some time ago pointing out that the Housing Commission's policy was far too inflexible in regard to fences. Many representations are made to me about fences, and the commission has adopted a hard approach, again because of lack of funds. I advised the Minister of a particular case concerning a woman with young children. She occupied a home in Stock Road, Melville. Members will have heard something about Stock Road and the volume of traffic, including trucks, on that road. It is one of the most dangerous and busy roads in the metropolitan area.

Mr Bertram: And noisy.

Mr HODGE: Yes; and noisy. This woman, rather reasonably, as she was living on the poverty line on the pension, asked the commission to install wing fences to keep the young children in the back yard of the property and away from Stock Road. The Housing Commission wiped her off completely. The Minister wrote a marvellous letter to me and I think I should read an extract from it to the House. He said—

I have asked the General Manager of the State Housing Commission for a full report on the situation and I advise that the Commission is flexible in some aspects of its fencing policy insofar that front fences will not be removed where a tenant establishes certain safety needs and agrees to maintain them.

That is a big step in the right direction. If one has a front fence the Housing Commission will not pull it down, it will leave it there. This particular constituent did not have a front fence, so she missed out on the great concession. He went on to say—

Also, where no fence is in existence and a wing fence will provide necessary safety, the Commission is prepared in extreme circumstances to erect a wing fence.

I do not know how much more extreme the circumstances have to be.

Mr Laurance: Are you going to read the rest of the letter?

Mr HODGE: I will do that. The Minister continued—

With regard to 272 Stock Road, Melville, I have asked for a further examination of this proposal and a Commission Officer will be calling on the occupants in the very near future.

I trust that this action is satisfactory, however, I must emphasise that the

Commission has extremely limited funds for this type of work.

That is the rest of the letter which the Honorary Minister was so anxious that I read.

Mr Laurance: You have had a letter subsequent to that.

Mr HODGE: I have not.

Mr Laurance: Well, it is on its way to you. I will give you the answer.

Mr HODGE: I passed that house this morning on the way here and it still does not have a wing fence.

Mr Laurance: What does the tenant do?

Mr HODGE: I do not know what he does.

Mr Laurance: He is a waterside worker. Do you know what his income is? It is \$300 a week.

Mr HODGE: Then how are they eligible for Housing Commission accommodation?

Mr Laurance: How much priority would you give a person earning that income?

Mr HODGE: How are they eligible for Housing Commission accommodation?

Mr O'Connor: Was he getting that money at the time?

Mr Laurance: Shall we deny others and build him a fence?

Mr HODGE: The man would not have got into Housing Commission accommodation if he had been receiving anywhere near that income.

Mr O'Connor: Absolute nonsense!

Mr Laurance: His present income is \$300 a week and you want us to ignore everybody else and build him a wing fence.

Several members interjected.

Mr HODGE: There are other cases but my time is running out and I will not mention them.

The next point I wish to make relates to the lack of crossovers in Willagee and Hilton. These suburbs have existed for over a quarter of a century and it is unreasonable that the tenants should still be asking when the Housing Commission, the owner of the property, will be putting in some form of crossover or driveway onto their premises. Most of them have a sandy, rutted track which in the winter time turns into a quagmire. In my opinion, it is not unreasonable for the residents in those areas to be getting rather agitated, as they are now paying market value rental and might expect the normal facilities. I am sure that as part of the normal facilities most homes have some sort of crossover. I wrote to the General Manager of the Housing

Commission about that particular problem, and I will quote from his letter—

In 1979/80 a total of eighty (80) Willagee properties had crossovers installed. This represents approximately, one third of the total allocation for the Commission's Fremantle Region. As in previous years, every effort was made to concentrate on those crossovers which were in the worst condition.

I do not know how they made the selection. To continue—

There are still a further 700 properties requiring crossovers in the Fremantle Region. Though the Commission is making every endeavour to install them as soon as possible it is expected that only 400 will be installed STATEWIDE this financial year because of the reduction in available funds.

The allocation of funds for individual areas has not yet been determined but will be once again decided upon according to the condition of the present driveways.

So again, the excuse for not installing this basic facility to the homes in those areas is lack of funds. The commission has enough funds to install only 400 in the State, and it admits 700 are needed in the Fremantle area alone. From personal observations I know they are badly needed. There is great erosion from the rain in the winter time; the soil is washed away and the edge of the road is broken and washed away because there are no proper crossovers.

I think I have given to the House a reasonable outline of some of the results of Liberal Party policy on welfare housing. The effects of the cutback are being felt now in Housing Commission areas. I have quoted the two areas I know best, which are in my electorate. I am sure other members could recount similar problems in their electorates. The examples I have given are quite typical and I have dozens of similar cases which, if I had time, I could quote to the House.

I believe it is time that the State Government stepped in and subsidised the operations of the Housing Commission, instead of trying to extract the money from the people who live in the Housing Commission homes—the poorest people in the community—and make up the shortfall by jacking up their rents, cutting back on maintenance, and treating them in a shabby way. The money should not be raised by selling off land which has been put aside for future development. That is not the way to tackle the problem. The way to tackle it is for those who

claim to be the managers of the economy to make the funds available.

I read a quotation from the present Premier when he was Deputy Leader of the Opposition in 1971, saying how easy it is for competent managers always to find ways and means to stop slugging the public. In 1971 he said that in a budget there were always ways and means of avoiding increasing charges in a dramatic form. I challenge the Government to show us what a good manager of the economy it is by making extra funds available to allow the Housing Commission to carry out its functions to a reasonable and satisfactory standard.

**MR LAURANCE** (Gascoyne—Honorary Minister for Housing) [4.30 p.m.]: I rise to oppose the amendment; and I thank the Opposition for giving me the opportunity to speak, because the Government has a very proud record in the housing field during its term of office. By raising the matter here the Opposition has given me the opportunity to outline what a wonderful programme has been embarked on and carried out in recent years.

I pay great credit to the State Housing Commission which has gone about its task with efficiency and ability, and with a sensitivity towards the people with whom it is dealing. I believe that has been acknowledged out of the mouths of members opposite who have spoken. Therefore, there is little logic in the amendment. In fact, it is really an apology for an amendment, and it is termed in a pathetic manner. The lead speaker for the Opposition who moved the amendment did not even mention a number of items contained in it. He moved it only a few minutes before he reached the end of his address, and managed to dredge up a few matters.

He tried to censure the Government by casting around far and wide to find nitpicking things to use in his speech. Finally he came up with items like higher rents and inadequate maintenance programmes. The amendment contains some matters on which he did not even touch. Probably the member was too embarrassed to do so; that is the only explanation I can give. Nevertheless, even though he did not cover all the matters, he included them in the amendment and for that reason I would like to reply to them.

The Government has maintained an adequate housing programme in this State. It has been able to contain waiting lists to what I believe to be acceptable standards.

**Mr B. T. Burke**: Straight on to the Housing Commission! I made a point of asking you to accept that your responsibility is not only for the

commission. Try to be reasonable about it; this concerns not only the Housing Commission, but also the Minister for Housing.

**Mr LAURANCE**: Exactly.

**Mr B. T. Burke**: Well, you have got straight on to the Housing Commission.

**Mr LAURANCE**: I am saying the policies adopted by the Government have worked well and will continue to work well.

Let me cover some of the points raised by the member for Balcatta. First of all he talked about interest rates and tried to censure the Government over the matter of increases in rates. In fact, to quote his words, he said there has been a marked increase in recent months.

Let us consider the truth of the matter. In recent months housing interest rates in this State have risen by 0.5 per cent. In fact, that increase simply regained ground that was lost over 12 months ago when the Government went to the building societies of Western Australia and requested a reduction in housing interest rates. The rates were reduced by 0.5 per cent, against the world trend at that time. Housing interest rates were then held for over 12 months, and it is only in the last two or three months that they have regained the ground that was lost as a result of the actions of this Government some 12 months ago.

We find our performance is more than comparable with the other States. Western Australia is better off than other States in respect of housing interest rates. Of course, our rates are much lower than overseas housing interest rates. In fact, some western countries have had increases of up to 3 per cent in their rates, while ours have increased by only 0.5 per cent in recent months.

Therefore, I congratulate the building societies on the job they have done in suppressing interest rates during a time of rapid increases. They decreased rates at the request of the Government some time ago and were able to hold them down for a lengthy period. That is a performance of which the Government is proud, and for which we commend the building societies.

During our period of stable housing interest rates, the prime lending rate in other countries rocketed to some 19 and 20 per cent in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Of course, interest rates in those countries have peaked and reduced substantially since then. Australia did not follow the trend of the major western countries in this respect, and I believe this is a result of the responsible economic

management of both the Federal and State Governments.

Mr Bryce: That makes you a junior Charlie.

Mr LAURANCE: Thank you; I acknowledge that.

Let me talk about the failures in the home building industry to which the member referred. This is a completely open industry. Any member of this House and any person in Australia can form a building company tomorrow; and long may it be thus. That is the sort of philosophy that we on this side of the House stand for.

Mr Parker: What about protection for consumers?

Mr LAURANCE: The consumers are afforded adequate protection. We want everyone to have the opportunity to enter the building industry if a person so desires. That is the existing situation and I repeat: long may it be thus.

Mr Parker: What about extending the activities of the Builders' Registration Board to cover your electorate?

Mr LAURANCE: There is a responsibility upon those who enter the industry to try to assess market trends. It is quite true that some over-supply has occurred in the home building industry in Western Australia in recent years, and a number of difficulties have arisen in respect of market assessment. One of these difficulties concerns the energy crisis facing this country and all other countries in the world. The energy crisis has brought about changes in the home building market. People now do not want to travel so far; they have changed their preferences.

Instead of building, some people have decided to renovate existing homes, while others are buying flats and changing their lifestyle. I do not blame the home building industry in this respect because it is very difficult to assess market trends, particularly when the trends are world wide and occur so quickly as is the case with the tremendous increases in fuel prices. So we have had some over-capacity, which has led to some failures of building companies in recent times.

However, the industry is not complaining. In fact a number of releases have been made by the industry expressing confidence in its future. A recent report released by the Indicative Planning Council in this country indicated, particularly in this State, there is every reason to be confident that the market is strengthening. There is reason to believe there will be a return to former levels of activity, and that the industry is in good shape and is in a position to cope with the forecast increases. It means there will be some shaking out

in the industry; and in a private enterprise system where people have free access to an industry, there will be some people who will enter the industry while others leave it. That is what has been happening in recent months.

In one area the Opposition speaker gave the reverse of what is actually the case when he talked about increases in the cost of housing. In fact in recent months home building costs have been contained. This is due to extreme competition in the industry which has prevented builders from passing on increased costs. They have had to contain costs and in some cases they have had to leave the industry as a result of that. The industry is finding it extremely difficult to pass on increases in costs, most of which have been brought about by the rising prices of materials and the increase in the cost of the biggest component which, of course, is labour.

Mr B. T. Burke: When have there been increases in the cost of labour?

Mr LAURANCE: The cost of materials has increased, forcing builders to reduce their profit margins; and the increase in material costs has been brought about by an increase in labour costs.

Several members interjected.

Mr B. T. Burke: I think the former Minister wrote your speech. It is the same as his.

Mr LAURANCE: It is absolutely correct, and it is going along well.

Mr B. T. Burke: Yes, no-one is even listening.

Mr LAURANCE: The Master Builders Association and the Housing Industry Association have expressed confidence in the industry. The industry is not complaining about the situation; it is only the Opposition which is doing that.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Housing Industry Association put out four warnings.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order! The member for Balcatta has interjected several times from a seat which is not his correct seat. I think he knows the Standing Orders.

Mr B. T. Burke: I was just having asides with the member for Avon.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have difficulty accepting that.

Mr LAURANCE: Inflation in this country has been held better than in any other western nation, and better than in the case of any of our trading partners. Interest rates in this State have been contained better than anywhere else, and we are in a very favourable position in a world of increasing interest rates.

The member for Balcatta went on to say that the harsh policies of the Fraser Government have removed home ownership from the reach of so many citizens. Let us consider that. Only last week an additional sum of \$10 million was released to terminating building societies for low-income earners. That is a wonderful scheme which is working well. So, far from putting home ownership out of the reach of low-income earners, the Government is going a long way towards putting it within their reach; and it is doing it extremely well.

The member talked about fewer houses, inadequate maintenance, and longer waiting lists. When we look at the situation we find there was no increase in rentals for a period of two years. Only recently were they increased. I ask members opposite if they can think of any other areas in which no increase occurred in a period of two years.

Mr B. T. Burke: This is an election year; that is the reason for that.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LAURANCE: Even then, rentals increased by only 14 per cent, which is about the same as the increase in the cost of living over that period. Therefore, rents for SHC accommodation have been kept down.

We had a lot of squealing and belly-aching from the member for Melville.

Mr Pearce: You have a good grasp of what goes on in this place.

Mr LAURANCE: I had to ask my colleague where he was from, because I thought he was the member for Willagee—that is how it seemed from the way he spoke.

Mr B. T. Burke: Get on to the Housing Commission now. That is all you know about.

Mr LAURANCE: At least the member for Melville made some logic in his speech, and members will excuse me for passing quickly on to his comments because at least he gave us something to refute.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Minister for the Housing Commission—the *quasi* Minister.

Mr LAURANCE: The situation with regard to rentals is that while it is true that rentals are becoming more and more market related—not only in this State but right across Australia—it is also true that rentals are related to income right across the Housing Commission tenancies and those people who cannot afford to pay the standard rental are given a rebate. I would like to inform the House that at the moment 52 per cent

of all SHC tenancies are on a rebated rental according to the income of the tenants.

Mr Hodge: That is a reflection on your mismanagement of the economy.

Mr O'Connor: Most of those people are single women and that sort of tenant, as you would well know if you are involved in it.

Mr LAURANCE: He is out of touch.

Mr B. T. Burke: I support the Government actions in respect of rebates. There is no problem with those.

Mr LAURANCE: In the 1979 calendar year, 73 per cent of all ingoing tenancies were immediately eligible for a rebate. So, 52 per cent of the commission's overall tenancies are eligible for a rebate, and according to the latest figures available to us—the 1979 calendar year—73 per cent of ingoing tenants are eligible for an immediate rebate. There are a number of factors in this about which all of us must be concerned, and not only the State Housing Commission.

Longer waiting periods were mentioned, and a fallacious argument was used. Those people who require accommodation in the Perth metropolitan area can have it tonight. Vacant State Housing Commission accommodation is available.

Mr Wilson: For aged pensioners?

Mr LAURANCE: No.

A member: Where are the homes?

Mr LAURANCE: There is a lot of vacant accommodation in the metropolitan area.

Mr Wilson: For aged pensioners?

Mr LAURANCE: No, for families. We can put pensioners into bigger accommodation if they will accept it.

Mr Wilson: You are wrong.

Mr LAURANCE: I am talking about accommodation, not ages. We have heard criticism from members opposite about the fact that vacant accommodation is available.

Mr McIver: We are saying, "Where?"

Mr LAURANCE: In several areas of the city.

Mr E. T. Evans: What about the country areas?

Mr LAURANCE: It is two and three-bedroomed accommodation of good standard—

Mr Hodge: Multi-storey blocks of flats no-one wants to live in.

Mr LAURANCE: By any standard, the best in the world. It is very acceptable accommodation.

Mr Hodge: But no-one wants to live in it. That is how acceptable it is.

Mr LAURANCE: Public housing authorities around the world would be proud to say they had that sort of accommodation available.

Mr B. T. Burke: You have millions of dollars tied up in capital.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Balcatta mentioned waiting lists—

Mr B. T. Burke: I did not. I tried to get through your thick skull that you are not just the Minister for the Housing Commission.

Mr LAURANCE: The amendment deals with long waiting periods.

Mr B. T. Burke: Yes, that is in the amendment.

Mr LAURANCE: Can I ask the Clerk to give the member for Balcatta a copy of his own amendment, because it refers to "long waiting periods"?

Mr B. T. Burke: Long waiting periods, yes. If you want to consider each specific classification, what about pensioners?

Mr LAURANCE: No, the member for Balcatta did not mention pensioners.

Mr B. T. Burke: I am talking now about accommodation for aged pensioners. I am explaining the amendment.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Balcatta had 45 minutes to say what he should have said.

Mr B. T. Burke: Are you denying that the aged pensioners have to wait longer?

Mr LAURANCE: Longer waiting periods for applicants—that is quite untrue. The commission has vacant accommodation waiting for people to take it up.

Mr Hodge: But no-one wants to live in it.

Mr LAURANCE: Maintenance is mentioned also.

Mr E. T. Evans: What about the country areas?

Mr LAURANCE: I will come to that in a minute. It is not mentioned specifically in the amendment.

Mr Wilson: There are big gaps in your answer.

Mr LAURANCE: I will take the opportunity now to make a comment about maintenance. The State Housing Commission has 25 000 units in Western Australia. Regular maintenance is carried out to the extent of the funds available.

Mr B. T. Burke: That means nothing.

Mr LAURANCE: If the member for Melville wants the people in Willagee to have all the funds spent on maintenance so that other families have to wait longer, let him say so.

Mr Hodge: That is not what I said at all.

Mr LAURANCE: That is the alternative. If that is what he wants, and the people in the houses want internal painting and fences, he should say so. There was the case of a man on \$300 a week wanting a wing fence at the front of his house. That is a cosmetic request. Obviously that would prevent families who are eligible from obtaining accommodation. The member is being very selfish indeed.

Mr B. T. Burke: But you cannot even get enough money from the Federal Government.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order!

Mr LAURANCE: The policy is that we will continue to construct 1 000 units per year. We are giving our highest priority to two sectors, pensioners and Aborigines. The major thrust of our policy is to try to overcome those problems; and giant strides have been made in recent times. We will continue in that way.

The member for Melville was condemned by his own argument. He said that we were being heartless in shifting the people, and then he said later—

Mr B. T. Burke: Back on to the Housing Commission.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Melville cannot have it both ways. There is no logic in his argument at all.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Housing Commission will send us the details, so you spend the whole time on the Housing Commission!

Mr LAURANCE: Regarding the matter of Commonwealth funding for welfare housing—

Mr B. T. Burke: We are off the Housing Commission!

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Melville raised this point. We have joined with the Labor States in complaining to the Commonwealth about the cut back in funding.

Mr B. T. Burke: The silence has been deafening. You are pretty successful.

Opposition members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order!

Mr LAURANCE: I want to make this point quite clear: there has been an increase in requests for expenditure in recent years. The Federal Government has had the major responsibility of cutting back inflation in this country. It brought inflation back from 19 per cent, under the profligate Whitlam Government, to 9 per cent. That is the most significant economic change in this country in many decades.



Mr Parker: It was never 19 per cent. Even the Premier said it was 17 per cent.

Mr LAURANCE: The Federal Government has indicated to the States that since the second World War \$4.5 billion has been put into State housing. The States have built up a considerable stock of houses in that time. In this State we have 25 000 houses; and we are now in a situation where we have vacant accommodation waiting for tenants.

Mr B. T. Burke: For aged people?

Mr LAURANCE: The State funds have been built up to a point where there are assets held in land, and we have a number of units available. If the Federal Government is to meet its commitments in a number of other areas obviously the speakers opposite will keep making these requests for funds for welfare areas.

The Federal Government has said the State might have to look at its own resources which it has built up over a long period of time. In relation to Commonwealth funding, in some way we have to support on that philosophy—

Mr Wilson: You are apologising.

Mr LAURANCE: No. I am being realistic.

Mr B. T. Burke: You are a fine Minister for Housing! You make out a good case for expenditure in other areas.

Mr LAURANCE: We have to take hold of the problem of welfare housing. The Commonwealth Government has said we have to be more innovative, and we are doing this. We are going to private enterprise seeking funds from the private sector. We have gone to charitable organisations for joint venture operations to our mutual benefit.

Mr B. T. Burke: Next you will be getting money from the Lotteries Commission.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Melville mentioned also his frustration at dealing with the State Housing Commission. I did not think for a moment he would raise the case he did; but when he started I was glad I was aware of that case. I was hoping he would raise it; and my prayers were answered. He raised the question of a wing fence at the front of a house, requested by a commission tenant at Willagee. In my latest letter to the member, I have explained to him that we went out and checked on this; and we found the tenant is a waterside worker who is earning \$300 per week.

Mr Hodge: I haven't got your letter.

Mr LAURANCE: In this way, the member for Melville wants to divert funds from families awaiting housing, in order to put a wing fence in

front of a Willagee house for a waterside worker earning \$300 a week.

Government members: Shame!

Mr McIver: How did he get the house in the first place?

Mr B. T. Burke: This is so much nonsense—these individual cases that you are going on about. Why don't you answer the big question?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order! The House will come to order!

Mr LAURANCE: When the member raised the question, I knew he would like me to have more personal knowledge of it. I am pleased he raised it.

Mr B. T. Burke: It would be better if you had more personal ability.

Mr LAURANCE: I thank the member for Melville for his comments about the General Manager of the State Housing Commission. The general manager sets the standard for the commission; and I think we have a commission of which we can be very proud. One of the things I have appreciated in the short time I have had some responsibility for the portfolio is that the commission and the general manager are only too eager to go and speak to the 25 000 tenants. The member for Melville admitted that where there had been problems somebody from the commission visited the tenant.

I support and endorse that sort of approach. While I have any responsibility for the State Housing Commission, I will make sure it continues with that approach. Members of the commission are in constant communication with the tenants. This is a marvellous way for a public housing authority to do business.

The member for Melville said that he is dealing a great deal more now with the Fremantle office. I must say the Fremantle office is an office of which the commission can be proud. It was completed only 12 months ago; and it is a marvellous office. It complements the building programme of the Fremantle City Council. The council asked us to give the office an historical flavour. I compliment the architects who designed the building. It is modern in that it provides up-to-date working conditions for the staff, and yet it complements the Fremantle area.

I want to indicate to the member for Melville and other members of the House that these things are the results of a conscious policy the Government has followed. The Government has attempted to regionalise its operations. It has done this in the country; and it has now shown it

is doing it in the metropolitan area. Regional offices of the State Housing Commission have been established at Fremantle, East Victoria Park, and Mirrabooka. We have scaled down the operations of the head office at Plain Street, East Perth. The policy is working. As the member said himself, it is far easier to deal with a regional office. The regional housing manager is much closer to the estate in the area. This is one way in which the commission is meeting the requirements of its tenants.

These things the commission has done have not been cheap. There has been a cost in carrying out this regionalisation of operations. However, it is bringing the commission and its senior officers much closer to the tenants. This is a desirable programme.

I would like to say to the member for Melville when he raises a number of individual cases, when we are dealing with 25 000 tenants—for instance, he mentioned the lady with the kitchen—that we will pursue the problems relentlessly. The member mentioned some problems on which action has been taken. Officers have been to inspect the problem; and I have inspected some of the problems myself. There are cases in which we will do everything possible to solve them. If the member keeps raising them, we will keep fixing them up.

I would like to refer also to the redevelopment question the member mentioned. This is another area in which the commission can be very proud of its actions. Three redevelopment projects have been carried out. I am sorry that the programme did not extend to Willagee; but there had to be priorities, and the priorities have been established in a certain way. At Midland there was a major redevelopment programme—

Mr Skidmore: After about seven years.

Mr LAURANCE: That programme has been completed; and the member must be happy with the result. At Queens Park—the old Maniana estate—the programme will be completed in just a few months. The complete area has been redeveloped. The houses are now brick. They were built very rapidly after the war—

Mr Hodge: Why not Willagee?

Mr LAURANCE: Because the houses at Queens Park were of a lower standard.

In addition to that, the whole fabric of the community has been changed. I have been to the area, and I have spoken to the tenants who have been rehoused. I could take members to one place, and it would do their hearts good. One elderly couple—they may be a pensioner couple—have been rehoused next door to the mother of one of

them. She is in her own pensioner unit. Those people speak glowingly of the way they were rehoused during the redevelopment and then taken back into the area.

The commission went to the local authority and said, "Look, we have upgraded the houses. What about you upgrading the rest of that suburb?" The local authority said, "Only too happy to do so. We'll widen the streets; we'll put in crossovers; we'll join the Housing Commission in putting a community recreation centre in the middle of the subdivision." It is a wonderful concept that has been carried out there.

Davis Park in Fremantle is another one where redevelopment has been put into effect. Of course, it is not possible to redevelop every area, so there was a conscious decision to renovate the houses in Willagee and update them. It was the older houses in these other areas that have been redeveloped.

I hope the member will understand that this is the programme that has been adopted.

I would like to turn now to the matter of the pensioner differential. The member has spoken on this. It has been a matter of charging a small differential to those pensioners who express a desire to remain in family accommodation.

We believe there are some 1 500 family housing units in Western Australia, most of them in the metropolitan area, which are occupied by single pensioners or pensioner couples. We think there may be many of those who, given the opportunity, might want to change from that family accommodation into suitable, well located pensioner accommodation. That would free the houses for the waiting families.

If the members opposite want to lock up those 1 500 houses and not allow the families—the eligible families waiting for housing—to go into them, they should say so. They are not prepared to help those families.

Mr Hodge: You will throw out one disadvantaged group to put in another disadvantaged group.

Mr LAURANCE: I thought it was an essential part of Labor Party policy that these families would be housed. The members opposite are saying they do not want to see the families housed. They are refusing the houses—

Mr Skidmore: Rubbish!

Mr LAURANCE: Let us see how this policy is to work. The objective of introducing a small differential—and I will return to that in a moment—for pensioners was to make available more accommodation.

Mr Bryce: It may be a "small differential" if one is on a ministerial salary.

Mr MacKinnon: He is not on a ministerial salary.

Mr Rushton: The member for Ascot is not even in his nominated seat.

Mr LAURANCE: The first priority will remain the satisfactory rehousing of pensioners. There will be no additional charge where a pensioner or pensioner couple allow their names to be entered on waiting lists for suitable pensioner housing.

I take the point made by the member for Melville that pensioners build up a community of interest. We want them to stay in that community; but we say to them, "If you would like to go into new pensioner housing, you may do so." As members are aware there is a great deal of excellent pensioner housing available. Pensioners enjoy living in this type of accommodation. It is ideal for pensioners whose circumstances have changed over the years. They were helped 20 or 30 years ago when they had a family and no doubt they would now like to help families in a similar position today. We say to them, "If you would like to move to adequate pensioner housing in a suitable location, all you have to do is put your name on a list. When we can, we will give you a suitable pensioner unit in your own locality. Until we can do that, you may stay in your family accommodation and you do not need to pay the differential."

Mr Hodge: You are not giving them the choice.

Mr LAURANCE: It is only pensioners who say, "My family comes to visit", or, "I have pets which cannot be accommodated in a group of pensioner units", or who for some other reason choose to stay in family accommodation, who pay the differential.

In other words, if, for a particular reason, a pensioner or pensioner couple prefers to stay in family accommodation we will say to them, "We want you to pay that differential, because there are other people on the waiting list for family accommodation."

Further, to ensure there is no emotional build-up about this, we have written to every pensioner involved and we will visit each of them individually to explain exactly what I have outlined to the House.

Mr Hodge: They are complaining that you are putting them under great pressure. They cannot afford \$5 more.

Mr Sibson: It is optional.

Mr Hodge: It is not optional.

Mr LAURANCE: It is optional. The SHC goes even further in its endeavours to make the situation as straightforward as possible for the pensioners and it assists with moving costs. Reasonable removal costs will be paid and the cost of transferring a telephone will be met. It is a delicate matter and it is being handled sensitively by the commission. It will make further family accommodation available for waiting families and, at the same time, it will provide satisfactory housing—probably more suitable housing than pensioners have had previously as there will be less responsibility in regard to maintaining a garden and that sort of thing—for pensioners. In that way we believe we are able to help two groups of people, not just one.

Let us look at the costs involved. Currently, under the new charges, single pensioner rental is \$11.50 and the rental for a pensioner couple is \$17.50. If the standard differential rent were applied the rental would be \$14 a week for a single pensioner—that is, \$2.50 a week more for a pensioner to stay in family accommodation—and \$22.50 a week for a pensioner couple. It must be taken into account also that the Commonwealth provides a \$5 rental housing subsidy; therefore, the actual amount which must be paid by the pensioner out of his pension is \$5 less than the figures I have quoted. In the case of a single pensioner the rental would amount to \$9 a week for family accommodation when one takes into account the Commonwealth subsidy of \$5. The figure for a couple would be \$17.50, if they decided to remain in family accommodation.

Mr McIver: Perhaps to expedite the matter, it should be recognised that the Opposition has no quarrel with the concept. It is commendable; but the member for Melville and other speakers want to see action on maintenance of existing houses and further development. These are the main issues raised in the motion.

Mr LAURANCE: I appreciate the point made by the member for Avon.

Mr McIver: Get on with it!

Mr LAURANCE: I am responding to the points made by the member for Melville who raised this question. I thank the member for commending the Government's action in regard to housing.

Mr McIver: You will hear more from me in a minute if you sit down and shut up!

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Melville mentioned Dr Lefroy who had written a letter saying that this situation would place tremendous strain on people. Dr Lefroy has not expressed that

opinion to me. He has not written to me as Honorary Minister for Housing.

Mr McIver: He probably doesn't know you are the Minister.

Mr LAURANCE: Dr Lefroy is a member of the medical profession and he is a responsible person. He must know that the SHC has always given and will always give full credence to medical advice. If he has medical advice in regard to particular people he has only to give it to the SHC and it will act upon it.

Mr Hodge: He was commenting on the traumatic effects of forcing people to move against their will.

Mr Sibson: The member for Avon said you had no quarrel with this matter.

Mr LAURANCE: Another point made by the member for Melville concerned crossovers at Willagee. The SHC is in the business of providing houses. If the member wants crossovers to be built instead of houses—if he wants crossovers built at Willagee instead of more houses in the country, as mentioned by the member for Kalgoorlie—let him say so. We will stop building houses and we will build crossovers instead; but they do not represent a roof over people's heads.

Mr Hodge: They are basic facilities.

Mr LAURANCE: We build 400 crossovers a year, but we will not build crossovers to the detriment of our housing programme.

I am sorry we have not yet had the opportunity to listen to a speech from the member for Dianella, because he has raised another matter by means of questions in this House concerning the current practice of the SHC to hand over the mechanics of SEC accounting to the SEC. Previously the SHC handled this matter, because frequently there was one mass meter for a group of tenants.

In recent years the SHC has handed over the responsibility for SEC accounting to the appropriate authority; that is, the SEC which supplies the power. Yesterday in this House the member for Dianella asked me, "When did this policy start and what are you doing about overcoming the hardships of people having to pay an establishment fee?"

I was pleased to answer the member that this policy which he regards as heartless and about which he has tried to criticise the Government, resulted from a decision of Cabinet on 18 October 1971.

Mr Jamieson: With no establishment fee.

Mr LAURANCE: SEC accounting was handed over to the SEC.

Mr Jamieson: I was Minister at the time and I know there was no establishment fee.

Mr LAURANCE: That matter has been administered progressively ever since. The member can thank the Tonkin Labor Government for handing over this responsibility from the SHC to the SEC.

Mr Skidmore: Do you admit there was no establishment fee at the time, or are you going to conveniently forget it?

Mr LAURANCE: I thank the House for its indulgence and the Opposition for moving this weak amendment to the Address-in-Reply. It has given me the opportunity to tell the people of Western Australia what a wonderful record this Government has in respect of housing.

We reject the amendment completely.

MR McIVER (Avon) [5.10 p.m.]: We have just heard a discourse from the Honorary Minister who was endeavouring to prop up the Government in regard to its failure to provide adequate housing in Western Australia. Even allowing for the Honorary Minister's inexperience—

Mr Bryce: Which is considerable.

Mr McIVER: —if we took him to a meeting in a country area and allowed him to deliver a similar speech to housing tenants, we would have to sneak him out the back door. He would be torn to pieces if he left by the front door. The Honorary Minister's speech was full of jargon and utter rubbish. Government Ministers frequently use jargon when they talk to ordinary people.

Firstly, I should like to clear up a couple of points made by the Honorary Minister. He referred to the fact that there are empty houses everywhere.

Mr Laurance: That is not right.

Mr McIVER: If the Honorary Minister took me to visit some of these houses I am sure I would find in every case that outstanding maintenance was required. The houses would have blocked drains or other problems which precluded people from living in them.

People in country areas tell me that a particular house is empty. In defence of the SHC I say, "Yes, but you can't live in it, because it has been waiting to have maintenance work done on it for many months." That is not the fault of the commission; it is the fault of the Government. It would not cost a great deal to attend to this maintenance. It is an administrative problem. I should like to point out also that there has been a quick turnover of Ministers who have held the portfolio of Housing. How many different Ministers for Housing have we seen in the last

few years? Government members have changed their Ministers as many times as they have changed their socks. I am sympathetic towards the senior officers of the SHC, because they have to adjust to working with a new Minister. I am not casting aspersions on anyone in particular; but senior officers become accustomed to working with a particular Minister and overnight they must adapt to a new Minister with different policies.

There is an obvious reason that there is little money available for housing in this State at the present time and we have only to look at the election tactics adopted by the Government for it to be made clear. A great deal of money was spent on housing in the Pilbara and the Kimberley prior to the election. The Government only just managed to salvage the seat of Pilbara; but despite its efforts in regard to housing and the vast sums of money it spent in the Kimberley, it was not successful in retaining that seat. If members look at the regional centres of Western Australia, if they look at Kalgoorlie, the electorate of Avon, or the electorate of Collie, they will see that not one house has been built for many years.

Mr T. H. Jones: Quite right. Not one house has been built.

Mr McIVER: The Honorary Minister is a young lad in a new job—he is the new boy—therefore, he appears to believe ample housing has been made available by this Government and that it has a tremendous record in this regard.

I will not touch on the aspect of maintenance, because it has been covered adequately by my colleagues. We all know the reason for the problems being experienced in the area of housing. This Government has mismanaged the finances of the State not only in regard to housing, but also in the areas of health, transport, and everything else. Members should have regard for the question I asked the other night—

Mr Rushton: You will upset the railways.

Mr McIVER: I asked when the land-backed wharf was completed, what was its total cost, how many ships had utilised it since its construction, the rate of interest charged per annum and how much the Government had paid in interest to 30 June 1980.

The reply was remarkable. Firstly, the wharf was opened in February 1980. I appeal to members opposite to listen to the cost: \$3 690 000. In answer to my question with regard to the number of ships which had utilised it since its construction, the answer was, "One".

I noticed there was no reference to the wharf at Bunbury because no ships have utilised it. Is it any wonder we are looking for funds. If I were the Federal Treasurer and I knew the State Government was conducting its financial affairs in this way, I would not provide any money until the State Government had put its own house in order.

The Federal Government is no better. Only recently the Army centre at Northam was closed. A sum of \$82 000 has been spent on that centre since it was closed. I will refer to that again during the Address-in-Reply debate. Built-in wardrobes have been installed in empty homes while the member for Melville, and others, are trying to get maintenance carried out on existing houses. Is it any wonder, with money being mismanaged in that manner, that there is not enough available for State Housing Commission maintenance? I feel very sorry indeed for the General Manager of the SHC and his senior administrators. I feel sorry for those who have to face the wrath of the public, and I refer to the people who work in country centres and who come up for abuse every day of the week.

Several years ago a regional office was situated in Merredin. That office should have been established at Northam. It was a political decision. Did I hear the Minister for Agriculture interject?

Mr Old: I said, "Yes, naturally". Everything is supposed to go to Northam!

Mr McIVER: That is right, and particularly the animal breeding institute which has been allocated \$750 000 to prop up the Country Party in Katanning. The Minister will hear more from me about that.

Mr Old: I will be very pleased to hear more.

Mr McIVER: I will have a little more to say. I ask the Minister to speak up so I can hear him interject.

Mr Old: I did speak up.

Mr McIVER: It was a murmur.

Mr Old: You seemed to answer my interjection.

Mr McIVER: The Government is prepared to spend \$750 000 on that type of project, but deny money for housing to the people of Western Australia. The Government claims it does not have sufficient finance.

I condemn the Government strongly for its action in the Avon electorate with regard to paraplegic people. The handicapped people need assistance. The Housing Commission does a wonderful job in this field. It is genuine and sincere and cannot do enough for handicapped

people. Assistance is provided sometimes from extended care services, which also are doing a tremendous job in that field.

Getting back to the Northam regional office of the SHC, the allocation for 1980-81 is \$1 500. It has to be kept in mind that the region extends from Merredin to the coast, and from Moora to Esperance. That is the sum of money made available. It is scandalous when a sum of \$3 million is spent in an area such as Bunbury, on a facility which is not utilised. Does the Government believe that people are not justified in complaining?

Recently I made a submission on behalf of a family at Wundowie. The man in the house has bone cancer, and the shower recess has to be altered at a cost of \$1 100. The officer from Northam pointed out that it was impossible for him to spend \$1 100 out of an allocation of \$1 500. To be fair, I could not disagree with him.

Something else which seems to be Government policy is that the officer at Northam has been provided with a Gemini motorcar in which he has to travel from Merredin to Esperance.

Mr Sibson: That would mean a saving in fuel.

Mr McIVER: Would the member for Bunbury like to travel those distances in temperatures well over 40°C?

Mr Sibson: I have done it on a Ford tractor.

Mr McIVER: What does that prove? The officers are washed out by the time they reach their destinations. The Government is throwing money down the drain.

Mr Sibson: Do you support the energy-saving programme?

Mr McIVER: The member for Bunbury should concentrate on his own area and salvage some of the families there. He should get stuck into the Transport Commission for not having more produce sent through the Port of Fremantle. He should not interfere in something he knows nothing about.

Mr Sibson: I know a lot about Bunbury.

Mr McIVER: When replying to the member for Balcatta, the Minister harped on pensioner-flat accommodation. Of course, it is commendable that the Government should want to move some people, but those people should not be bulldozed. The Minister can very well shake his head, but a person who has lived in a home for 45 years, and reared a family there, does not want to move. If people have to be moved, it should be done with some diplomacy. The situation should be pointed out to them that where they have a four-

bedroomed home they can be relocated in a modern home with modern conveniences. I do not refer to the monstrosities built in my area where the front door opens into a bed-sitting room. I refer to the type of residences which have a bedroom and a private bathroom. These people are human beings and they should be treated with some dignity.

That is the situation. Courtesy costs nothing. The people who have to be moved should be told that they will go into a new home at a reduced rental, and with reduced overall costs. That is the way to approach them; not an approach by an official bullying and bulldozing. There is no way people will agree to anything under those circumstances.

The Government is not coming to grips with the real type of pensioner accommodation that is required. This problem exists in other areas also. It is the responsibility of the Government; not the responsibility of the Opposition. When the Government is to spend \$3 million on a facility which is not being used, there must be plenty of money available. I point out to the Minister that the Achilles Heel of this Government is housing.

I do not condemn the present Minister personally; I hope he will accept my remarks in the context I have made them.

I am a little embarrassed at bringing up the next point which concerns such a trivial matter, but it has to be aired in relation to this motion. Why should old people be forced to change from using wood stoves to using gas or electric stoves? Many old people are frightened of gas and electricity. They do not want the modern trend of using electrical appliances. They want to use their old wood stoves on which to cook their favourite recipes. Gas appliances are installed, and a gas bottle costs \$28.50 and lasts seven weeks. The pensioners do not have that kind of money so they are going cold. They do not want to be cold, but they cannot afford to pay for the gas.

It does not cost money to analyse the situation and I can tell the Minister that if he is to succeed in his portfolio he should take notice of what has been said today and put the suggestions into practice.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

	Ayes 18
Mr Bertram	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bridge	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bryce	Mr McIver
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Parker
Mr Carr	Mr Pearce
Mr Davies	Mr Skidmore
Mr E. T. Evans	Mr Taylor
Mr Harman	Mr Wilson
Mr Hodge	Mr Bateman

	Noes 25
Mr Clarko	Mr Nanovich
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Connor
Mr Cowan	Mr Old
Mr Coyne	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Dr Dadour	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Trethowan
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Young
Mr McPharlin	Mr Shalders
Mr Mensaros	

(Teller)

(Teller)

Ayes	Pairs	Noes
Mr Grill	Mr Hassell	
Mr Tonkin	Mrs Craig	
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Blaikie	
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Grewar	
Mr Barnett	Mr Watt	

Amendment thus negatived.

*Debate (on motion) Resumed*

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bateman.

### QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

*House adjourned at 5.54 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### HOUSING: STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

#### *Balga Property: Offer to Scout Association*

222. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) With respect to the State Housing Commission's offer of lot 162 cnr. Fernhurst Crescent and Bepton Way, Balga, to the Scout Association at a price of \$12 000 termed as "community value", what are the implications of this term "community value"?
- (2) In view of the fact that a small group of local voluntary workers will have to bear the main burden of funding a scout hall on the land, what special consideration was given to a further easing of the additional burden imposed by insisting on a purchase price for the land of \$12 000?
- (3) What return would the commission have received on the land if it had been used as originally proposed, for a water tower?
- (4) Did the Honorary Minister give any personal attention to this situation in response to my personal representation, or has he been content to allow the bureaucratic procedures of the State Housing Commission to take their normal course?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) "Community value" is a substantial concessional price adopted by the commission and approved by Government to assist the development of non-profit community projects, where the commission considers the project is advantageous to the community.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) The land was identified as a possible site for a water tower but the Metropolitan Water Board did not proceed further.
- (4) The member's attention is drawn to my letter to him of 5 August 1980.

## ANIMALS: DOGS

### *Attacks on Children*

223. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is she aware of concern by some metropolitan local authorities about the increasing incidence of vicious attacks by dogs, especially on children?
- (2) Has she received any approaches for changes to the Dog Act to deal with this problem or other problems with the present Act?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), from whom have these approaches been received?
- (4) What is the attitude of the Government towards the compulsory sterilisation of all dogs apart from those of licensed breeders, as a means of controlling the problem of unwanted dogs in the community?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) I understand some concern has been expressed. However, only one municipal council has formally raised the subject with me. In addition, I have received letters from several citizens expressing concern.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Municipal councils, the Local Government Association, Country Shire Councils' Association and several members of the public.
- (4) A proposal for the compulsory sterilisation of dogs was carefully studied when the present Dog Act was being formulated. It was considered that the costs involved in having a dog sterilised and the difficulties that would be experienced in the enforcement of such a requirement would severely limit its effectiveness.

224. *This question was postponed.*

## EDUCATION: PRE-PRIMARY

### *Centres: Dianella Electorate*

225. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the Government's policy with regard to applications from pre-school committees to transfer to the department in cases where pre-primary already exist on school sites?



(2) What are the current session enrolments at the following pre-primary centres:

- (a) Westminster-Balga;
- (b) Balga;
- (c) North Balga;
- (d) Montrose;
- (e) Girrawheen;
- (f) Koondoola; and
- (g) Waddington?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(1) The policy is to accept all applications for transfer where there are five-year-olds attending the pre-school centre.

(2) Enrolments as at 1 July 1980, were—

- (a) Westminster junior primary (on site) 39 five-year-olds; and Balga (Edale) 42 five-year-olds and 39 four-year-olds.
- (b) 41 five-year-olds
- (c) 50 five-year-olds
- (d) 82 five-year-olds
- (e) 95 five-year-olds
- (f) 72 five-year-olds
- (g) 50 five-year-olds.

## EDUCATION: PRE-PRIMARY

### *Four-year-olds.*

226. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) At how many pre-primary centres on school sites in—
  - (a) metropolitan; and
  - (b) country areas,
 are four-year-olds enrolled?
- (2) What are the locations of these centres?
- (3) What is the Government's policy on the enrolment of four-year-olds in pre-primary centres on school sites?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) Three metropolitan special language centres set up under the priority schools programme at the Beaconsfield, Highgate and South Terrace primary schools.

Nine, transferred pre-school, special Aboriginal centres at Cunderlee, Gogo, Jigalong, Lombardina, Mt Margaret, One Arm Point, Tardun, Wiluna and Yandeyarra.

Thirteen transferred centres in country centres where unsatisfactory buildings have been replaced with a centre at the

school. There is a continuing obligation to parent committees to continue previous enrolment policies. They are at Brookton, Cascades, Darkan, Grass Patch, Kalbarri, Mingenew, Mullewa, Narembeen, Salmon Gums, Tambellup, Williams, Wyndham and Yuna.

There are pilot centres at Balingup and Greenbushes with a limited number of younger children enrolled on a pilot basis.

- (3) Children younger than one year below school age are generally not to be admitted to pre-primary centres on school sites other than in the above special cases.

227. *This question was postponed.*

## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

### *North-West Shelf Gas Project: Skilled Migrants*

228. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) How many skilled migrant workers will be brought to Western Australia to work on the north-west gas project?
- (2) What different skills are migrants planned to perform?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The north-west shelf gas project is likely to require at its peak over 5 000 workers in its construction stage including skilled trades where a particular shortage will exist, viz: boilermaking, welding, fitting/turning/machining, electrical fitting, electrical installing.

A special trade training scheme is being conducted in Western Australia at present to train up to 1 000 skilled workers in these trades for this and other projects. At this stage it is uncertain how many skilled migrants will be required from overseas but the availability of such skilled workers in Australia will probably require a sizeable number to be recruited overseas to meet the time factor for the north-west shelf and other projects.

## FUEL AND ENERGY

### *Oil and Gas: Drilling Rigs*

229. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many drilling rigs are currently engaged in drilling for oil and/or gas in Western Australia both on shore and off shore?
- (2) What are the approximate locations of each and who owns the leases on which such drilling is occurring?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Five offshore. However, I am advised that in addition three onshore rigs are being prepared for drilling.

(2)

Location	Permittees
WA90P Exmouth Plateau	Woodside Petroleum Development Pty. Ltd. Woodside Oil Limited Mid-Eastern Oil Limited BP Petroleum Development Australia Pty. Ltd. California Asiatic Oil Co. Shell Company of Australia Hematite Petroleum Pty. Ltd. Esso Exploration & Production Australia Inc.
WA96P Exmouth Plateau	Hematite Petroleum Pty. Ltd.
WA35P Browse Basin	Woodside Petroleum Development Pty. Ltd. Woodside Oil Limited Mid-Eastern Oil Limited North-West Shelf Development Pty. Ltd. Australian Aquitaine Petroleum Pty. Ltd.
WA18P Bonaparte Gulf Basin	Australian Aquitaine Petroleum Pty. Ltd.
Barrow Island	West Australian Petroleum Pty. Ltd.

## GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

### *Energy Audits*

230. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Have energy audits been conducted by his department in respect of buildings occupied by Government departments?
- (2) If so, will he indicate what steps have, as a consequence, been taken to reduce the energy requirements for—
  - (a) lighting;
  - (b) heating;
  - (c) cooling;
  - (d) lift operation,
 in such buildings?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) A pilot study is currently being undertaken in Dumas House (Public Works Department Head Office building) and after evaluation it is proposed to conduct similar audits in other Government buildings.

- (2) (a) (i) Levels of lighting in buildings are designed so as to comply with the minimum requirements of the relevant Standards' Association of Australia codes.

Also, lighting design is now ensuring that switching of lighting groups adjacent to outside windows is capable of being independently controlled.

Lighting design is also concentrating on task lighting rather than overall lighting.

- (ii) The department is currently evaluating commercially available automatic light sensing and control devices.

- (b) and (c) Heating and cooling are currently being monitored and the selective operation of plant and reduction in operating hours are among the interim steps taken.

- (d) (i) In building installations involving large lifts or lift groups, the lift equipment is provided with automatic shutdown equipment when the lift or lift groups are not in use.

- (ii) A policy has been enunciated for Dumas House with respect to traffic control. Officers have been instructed to walk down two flights of stairs and up one flight rather than using lifts.

## FUEL AND ENERGY

### *Ocean Wave Energy*

231. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has research into ocean wave energy been conducted by the State Energy Commission or any agency on its behalf?
- (2) If so, can he indicate whether any satisfactory results have been achieved?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) No direct research is being conducted into the prospects by the State Energy Commission, as the wave energy available in this part of the globe is limited. However, the State Energy Commission is keeping generally abreast of world developments and can advise the Government on the prospects as required.

### APPRENTICES

#### *Applicants: Successful*

232. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

How many approved applicants for apprenticeships in each trade were unable to undertake training at the commencement of 1980?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Persons seeking apprenticeships in Western Australia do not require the prior approval of the Division of Industrial Training. The division is notified by the employer once the person seeking apprenticeship has been engaged as an apprentice on probation.

### RECREATION

#### *Allocation of Funds*

233. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs and Recreation:

- (1) What major recreation projects received funding in each of the years 1977, 1978 and 1979?
- (2) What criteria are used to determine these allocations?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Approximately 180 recreation projects received funding in the years 1977, 1978 and 1979. A list of the projects is tabled.
- (2) The criteria used are contained in the guidelines for the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund, a copy of which is tabled.

*The papers were tabled (see papers Nos. 183 and 184).*

### PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT

#### *Officers: Number*

234. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Excluding the office of Deputy Premier, Rural Industries Council and the State Information Centre, what has been the total number of employees in the Premier's Department for each year since 1972?
- (2) What new positions have been created, or upgraded in the Premier's Department in the past six years?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) The information requested by the member is being collated and a considered reply will be provided in due course.

### PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT

#### *Officers: Titles and Motor Vehicles*

235. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he list the titles of all officers employed in the Premier's Department?
- (2) Which of these officers have been allocated a Government vehicle?
- (3) Has there been an increase in the number of Government vehicles allocated to personnel in the Premier's Department in the last two years?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) This information is available to the member in the Public Service List, which is printed each year.

The 1980 Public Service List is currently with the Government Printer for printing.

- (2) Senior officers who attend official after hours and weekend functions and are on 24-hour call are permitted to take a departmental vehicle home. The officers are—

Under Secretary  
Assistant Under Secretary  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Director, Public Relations.

- (3) Yes—one.

# PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT

## *Public Relations Director*

236. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

In the light of the Premier's frequent references to severe budgetary problems and the possibility of staff retrenchments within the Public Service, how does he justify the appointment of a Director of Public Relations at a salary in excess of \$30 000 per annum?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

As I have previously stated on several occasions, the appointment of a Director of Public Relations is a necessary step forward in the development of an essential communications service which has grown in response to public demand for information.

The appointment will enable this important work to be more formally directed by a person qualified and experienced in this field, and will ensure more economic and productive use of personnel and facilities available.

Members will note that the number of press secretaries has not been increased even though the Cabinet has been enlarged by two additional Ministers.

MITCHELL, MR W.W.

## *Payments by Government*

237. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) What annual salary is paid to W. W. Mitchell in respect of his current contract of employment with the State Government?
- (2) What payments, additional to those provided for in his contract of employment, have been paid by the State Government to W. W. Mitchell in each of the past five years?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Under his current contract of employment with the State Government, W. W. Mitchell is paid \$17 280 annually. His current contract reflects national wage increases.

- (2) In addition to his regular work, W. W. Mitchell is called in from time to time on special assignments involving research and for which his long experience in journalism and extensive knowledge of the State, and his experience in serving the interests of the State, have been utilised. Records show that the following payments additional to those provided in his contract of employment, have been paid to W. W. Mitchell in the relevant calendar years as follows—

1976 —	\$2 240
1977 —	\$3 632
1978 —	\$6 593
1979 —	\$2 261
1980 —	\$6 350

# PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT

## *Public Relations Director*

238. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) (a) Is the total salary (including allowances) to be paid to the Director of Public Relations likely to exceed \$34 000 per year;
- (b) if so, what other payments are planned?
- (2) (a) Is the Director of Public Relations to be issued with a Government car;
- (b) if so, is this concession included in the total of \$34 000 salary and allowances?
- (3) On whose recommendation did the Premier decide to proceed with the appointment of a Director of Public Relations?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) (a) The salary of the Director of Public Relations is equivalent to the rate prescribed from time to time in respect of State Public Service classification A.1.6, as contained in the State Public Service Administrative Division Salaries Agreement No. 18 of 1974, plus a fixed allowance in lieu of overtime and unusual hours of work.
- (b) Apart from any adjustments relevant from time to time in terms of the above Salary Agreement No. 18, no other payments are planned.
- (2) (a) No, but he has access to a departmental vehicle, as required.
- (b) Not applicable.

- (3) Following examination of the applications received from 31 individuals seeking the position, the Under Secretary, Premier's Department, after discussion with a departmental committee, recommended the appointment of Mr John Leggoe.

## LIQUOR

### *Sporting Clubs: Letting of Function Rooms*

239. Mr JAMIESON, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is it a fact that the turf club, trotting association and greyhound clubs are able to let function rooms on their licensed premises when they are not being used for club purposes?
- (2) If "Yes", why is it not possible for a sporting club or country club to use their premises in a similar way?
- (3) As many of the community service clubs in the country seem to be denied access to suitable premises for their proper functioning, is it the intention of the Government to amend the Licensing Act to permit such activities?
- (4) Have there been representations made to the Government on this matter?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The clubs mentioned are not licensed clubs nor are their premises licensed premises. Liquor is sold at these venues per the medium of permits.
- (2) Licensed clubs are not permitted to let their premises which are for the use of members and their guests.
- (3) The Liquor Act makes provision for community service clubs to use the premises of licensed clubs under a voluntary associations permit where there are no suitable hotel premises in the area.
- (4) Yes.

## FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

### *Kalgoorlie and Boulder*

240. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is it a fact that the State Energy Commission has indicated that it is prepared to accept Kalgoorlie and

Boulder into the country towns assistance scheme, only on condition that the consumers pay an interim tariff for electricity up until 1 January 1982 which is substantially in excess of the current tariff applying in every other part of the State?

- (2) (a) What is that interim tariff; and  
(b) how does it compare with the current rates applying to all other State Energy Commission customers in the rest of the State?

- (3) On what basis is this interim rate calculated?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) On the basis of a recommendation from the State Energy Commission, the Government has decided that Kalgoorlie and Boulder should be accepted into the Country Towns' Assistance Scheme and that an interim tariff should apply up to 1 January 1982.

I am providing the member with copies of my press release and letters to the Town of Kalgoorlie and the Shire of Boulder.

The interim tariff will be set mid-way between the current Town of Kalgoorlie tariffs and the State Energy Commission's standard tariffs.

## JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

### *Kambalda*

241. Mr GRILL, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) How many justices of the peace are there presently resident in Kambalda?
- (2) What are the names of those justices?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Kambalda—three.  
Kambalda West—two.
- (2) Kambalda:

Frank HODGE,  
Charles Maxwell McPHERSON,  
Herbert Alfred Stawell MILLER.

Kambalda West:

Brian Malcolm KYLE,  
Corinne Patricia MANNING.

The member will recall that on 31 July 1980 I invited him to nominate another person for appointment to the commission of the peace.

## HOUSING

### *Salmon Gums*

242. Mr GRILL, to the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many residential units does the State Housing Commission have in Salmon Gums?
- (2) (a) What demand is there for State Housing Commission housing in Salmon Gums; and  
(b) how many persons are on the waiting list for residential accommodation?
- (3) Does the State Housing Commission have any plans for constructing further houses in the area?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) Two.
- (2) (a) and (b) One application is held.
- (3) No.

## TRAFFIC: ROAD TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

### *Patrolman Stephen Clifford Jones*

243. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Is it a fact that road traffic patrolman Stephen Clifford Jones recently resigned from the Road Traffic Authority after a period of duty in Merredin?
- (2) Is it a fact that there is a charge or charges outstanding against the said patrolman for illegally dealing in motor vehicles contrary to section 30 of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act?
- (3) (a) Is it a fact that the patrolman at times carried out repairs on the vehicles in which he was dealing at the police yard at Merredin;  
(b) is there a reliable witness who is prepared to swear to this effect?
- (4) If this is fact, how could such work be carried out without the knowledge and/or consent of his superiors?

- (5) Is it also fact that Sergeant Thorpe, the Sergeant in charge of the Road Traffic Authority in Merredin, was reported in the *Merredin Advertiser* of Wednesday, 23 July 1980, to the effect that patrolman Jones had been promised reinstatement by the Road Traffic Authority if he reapplied for such employment within 12 months?
- (6) How could such a promise be made whilst the aforementioned charges were pending against patrolman Jones?
- (7) What investigations or enquiries have been made or undertaken by the Police, the Road Traffic Authority or the Bureau of Consumer Affairs into the activity of patrolman Jones in Merredin during the period of his employment in Merredin concerning his dealings in motor vehicles or other matters relating to his duties?
- (8) What were the results or findings of such inquiries or investigations?
- (9) Is it a fact that patrolman Jones has been promised reinstatement by the Road Traffic Authority?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) (a) and (b) The facts appertaining to the alleged dealing in motor vehicles are *sub judice*
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Such a promise could not be made. Patrolman Jones resigned from the Police Force. He may, if he chooses, apply for entry into the Police Force at some future time.
- (7) (a) Inquiries were conducted by Commissioned Police Officers attached to Traffic Patrol after advice from Consumer Affairs suggested the officer may have breached Police disciplinary regulations.  
(b) Inquiries were conducted independently by Consumer Affairs in respect of the allegations, presently subject of Court action.
- (8) (a) Police inquiries revealed no evidence available to enable action under disciplinary provisions of Police regulations at that time.  
(b) Consumer Affairs issued summons to Jones alleging breach of Section 30(1) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act.

(9) No.

Note: Ex-Constable Jones departed Western Australia by air on 23 July 1980, en route to Ireland.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Transport of Drilling Rig: State Emergency Service*

244. Mr DAVIES, to the Deputy Premier:

What is the total cost of the State Emergency Service's involvement in the Noonkanbah convoy, including time spent by the State Emergency Service officers planning the operation and assisting the convoy, as well as the costs of any materials supplied by the State Emergency Service?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Most of the costs would be normal committed costs of operating the State Emergency Service and not peculiar to this operation. A full assessment of any additional costs has not yet been made.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Police Escort Cost*

245. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What was the cost of the police and other public servants escorting the convoys to Noonkanbah, including normal and overtime costs for policemen and others, travelling and meal allowances, accommodation, petrol and repairs to police and other vehicles, and any other costs associated with the visit?
- (2) Did Amax contribute to these expenses?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Not known, nor would it be normal to separate such costs in view of the fact that the police and associated services respond to a need as it arises.
- (2) No.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Cost of Tow Trucks, Graders, and Bulldozers*

246. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What were the costs involved in the use of tow trucks, graders and bulldozers to remove vehicles from the Noonkanbah convoy's path?
- (2) Were they hired in each case?
- (3) If so, from whom?
- (4) Who paid the costs?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) to (4) Main Roads Department shifted the vehicles from the road on Noonkanbah Station.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Cost of Trucks*

247. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What was the cost of hiring trucks to go to Noonkanbah including payments to drivers and fuel and other costs for trucks?
- (2) Who paid these expenses?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) As is usual with transportation of private drilling rigs, these transport costs will be borne by the company involved.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Mobile Canteen*

248. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What were the costs of providing a mobile canteen and food supplies for the convoy to Noonkanbah?
- (2) Was the canteen used by the police and the drivers?
- (3) Who paid for the canteen costs?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Not known at present.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Not known at present.

### NOONKANBAH STATION

#### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Truck Licence Plates*

249. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What was the cost of obtaining new plates for trucks involved in the Noonkanbah convoy?
- (2) Who is paying these expenses?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The cost of vehicle plates is \$3 per set.
- (2) The owners of the vehicles who use the plates through the Commissioner of Transport to the Road Traffic Authority.

### NOONKANBAH STATION

#### *Drill Site: Police Guard*

250. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What is the cost of police involved in—
  - (a) establishing a police guard at the Noonkanbah drill site, including travelling, fuel and other expenses incurred in going to Noonkanbah;
  - (b) maintaining a guard at the site, including costs such as overtime, accommodation, meals and other expenses?
- (2) Who is paying these expenses?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) There is no guard at Noonkanbah.
- (2) Not applicable.

### NOONKANBAH STATION

#### *Drill Site: Fences and Camp Site*

251. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Who paid for the erection of the fence and camp site at Noonkanbah?
- (2) What was the cost involved?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Amax Iron Ore Corporation.
- (2) Not known.

### NOONKANBAH STATION

#### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Police Escort Costs*

252. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What costs were incurred by north-west based policemen involved in—
  - (a) escorting the convoy to Noonkanbah;
  - (b) maintaining a guard at the camp site?
- (2) How many policemen not based in the north-west have—
  - (a) assisted the convoy;
  - (b) been stationed at Noonkanbah?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) (a) Not known at present.
- (b) There is no guard.
- (2) (a) A total of 28 have been involved at one time or another.
- (b) None.

### NOONKANBAH STATION

#### *Police: North-west Officers*

253. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) How many north-west policemen are on call to go to Noonkanbah Station?
- (2) Are they paid for being on call?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) None to my knowledge.
- (2) Answered by (1).

### NOONKANBAH STATION

#### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Police Numbers*

254. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

How many police—

- (a) assisted the convoy to Noonkanbah through all stages of its visit;
- (b) are based at the Noonkanbah rig site?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (a) 14 vehicles containing 2 policemen in each vehicle accompanied the convoy.
- (b) There are none based at the rig site.



# NOONKANBAH STATION

## *Transport of Drilling Rig: Insurance*

255. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Mines:

Who paid the cost of—

- (a) insuring the rig whilst it travelled to Noonkanbah;
- (b) insuring the rig at the drill site?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) and (b) The owners of the drilling rig.

# NOONKANBAH STATION

## *Government Employees other than Police*

256. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many State Government employees not being policemen are based in the north-west or are stationed at Noonkanbah?
- (2) Who are they and what is the purpose of them being in the north?
- (3) What costs have they incurred to date?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) The disposition of Government employees throughout the State is the responsibility of each employing authority. Numbers allocated to particular localities are determined in the light of perceived needs from time to time, and in accordance with overall Government policy.

The geographic allocation of Government employees and associated costs are not centrally recorded, but are maintained by each department and Government instrumentality.

# FUEL AND ENERGY

## *Synthesised Hydrocarbon Compounds*

257. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Are any studies being carried out by his department on indigenous or introduced plants that synthesise hydrocarbon compounds?
- (2) Is there a list of these species compiled with reference to their—
  - (a) location;
  - (b) climate, soil requirements, etc.;
  - (c) yield of hydrocarbon compounds;
  - (d) nature of hydrocarbons?

- (3) Is any work being done or being planned to study in detail the culture of these plants to ascertain if commercial production is possible?
- (4) If work has been done could he supply details?
- (5) Is the department aware of or liaising with research workers in overseas countries or Australia who are studying the potential of these plants to produce crude oil type liquids?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) to (4) No.
- (5) Yes. Although a number of hydrocarbon containing species occur in Western Australia my department believes that the basic research presently being carried out into the usefulness of these plants, particularly in the United States, should be continued before any scarce resources are diverted from other areas in attempting to domesticate these species for commercial production.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## *Rates: Interim*

258. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Did she announce in *The West Australian* on 3 March 1980 that the views of all local authorities were to be sought with respect to interim rating?
- (2) Were those views indeed sought?
- (3) Have replies been received?
- (4) Will she release the results of the surveys made?
- (5) Does the Government intend to legislate to restore to local government the power to raise interim rates?
- (6) If not, what action does the Government propose on the matter?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (3) Yes.
- (4) The replies are being reviewed and the result of the survey has not been finally determined.
- (5) and (6) No decision has yet been made.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*Rates: Differential*

259. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Did she announce on or about 8 February 1980 that her department would be investigating all problems associated with rating and in particular differential rating?
- (2) Did she announce that this inquiry was to report by June of 1980?
- (3) Has a report been received?
- (4) If so, will she release it?
- (5) If a report has not been received what is the reason for the delay?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I said that the study was expected to be completed by June.
- (3) A comprehensive written report has not yet been submitted to me.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) The study was completed about the end of June. It was carried out by a departmental officer who has also been required to attend to other duties. I understand that his report will be completed by mid-September.

## TOWN PLANNING

*Bunbury: Resin Works*

260. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) In respect of proposals to establish a resin works by Borden Chemicals in Bunbury, has a special zoning been created for the proposed plant siting?
- (2) What type of industries can be established in the Bunbury Port Authority area under current zoning arrangements?
- (3) Is it a fact that when proposals to rezone the site for the plant were placed before her, the period for objections was reduced from the usual 60 days to 28 days?
- (4) How many residents/owners were notified of the proposed re-zoning?
- (5) When did the 28-day period expire?
- (6) How many objections were received?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) A special zoning is the subject of a current amendment to the Bunbury Town Planning Scheme.
- (2) Fuel depots, transport depots, warehousing, port installations and general industries at the council's discretion.
- (3) Yes; in the case of minor amendments, the Minister may reduce the period during which submissions may be lodged to a period of not less than 21 days.
- (4) All surrounding owners were required to be notified and a sign was placed on site notifying people of the amendment.
- (5) On 18 July 1980.
- (6) 18.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Resin Works: Bunbury*

261. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce:

- (1) In respect of proposals to establish a resin works by Borden Chemicals in Bunbury, what amount of capital is involved in each stage?
- (2) Is there any degree of Australian equity in the project?
- (3) If so, will he provide details?
- (4) What raw materials will be used in the plant?
- (5) What will be the source of the new materials?
- (6) What is the approximate quantity of raw materials to be used once the plant is in full operation?
- (7) What products will be produced by the plant?
- (8) What will be the anticipated volume of production?
- (9) Is it intended to export any proportion of the finished product?
- (10) (a) Who owns the land on which it is proposed to establish the plant;  
(b) if the land is owned by a Government instrumentality, what annual rent is involved?
- (11) Why has the site for the new plant been selected on the north shore water front?
- (12) (a) Was consideration given to establishing the plant near the Westply factory or in an area more suited to toxic industries;

- (b) if so, were these alternative sites rejected?
- (13) Has the project been the subject of an environmental assessment; if so—
  - (a) when was the assessment completed;
  - (b) will he table the report?
- (14) Is he aware that two public meetings of concerned East Bunbury residents held recently resolved overwhelmingly to—
  - (a) support the establishment of the plant in the Bunbury region;
  - (b) oppose the establishment of the plant on the north shore?
- (15) Will he give an undertaking to consider thoroughly the environmental implications of siting the plant on the north shore before granting approval of the site?

Mr MacKINNON replied:

- (1) I am advised that Borden Australia Pty. Ltd. will invest at least—
  - \$300 000 in stage 1
  - \$750 000 in stage 2
  - \$2 500 000 in stage 3
  - a total of at least \$3 550 000 in the project.
- (2) No. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Borden Inc. of the U.S.A., operating branches or offices in all mainland States of Australia.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) In its final configuration, the main raw materials will be liquid methanol and urea.
- (5) As neither of these raw materials are produced in this State at the current time, supplies will be imported through Bunbury.
- (6) Liquid methanol      7 500 tonnes p.a.  
Urea                      6 600 tonnes p.a.
- (7) Urea formaldehyde resin.
- (8) As I am advised, the plant will be an integrated one with an annual capacity of an extended 3 shift basis of 27 000 tonnes.
- (9) Yes.
- (10) (a) Bunbury Port Authority.  
(b) A lease agreement is yet to be drawn up.
- (11) The proposed site on the south side of the inner harbour was chosen because of its proximity to a deep water berth, and the operational economies it offers.
- (12) (a) Yes; however economic factors dictated against this and other alternate sites. I would point out that whilst the input materials are themselves toxic, the product produced by the plant will not be toxic.  
(b) Yes.
- (13) (a) The company's environmental assessment has been completed and is presently under review by the Environmental Protection Authority.  
(b) Yes.
- (14) (a) and (b) I am aware that there have been recent meetings at which the concern of East Bunbury ratepayers has been expressed. I have endeavoured to allay their fears by presenting the facts of the case through the Bunbury City Council and the local media.
- (15) It is apparent from the above answers the environmental implications have been and are being thoroughly assessed. In addition, the Bunbury City Council which has taken rezoning action to accommodate this industry, has had the advice of councillors who have inspected similar plants in the Eastern States capital cities; and will shortly have the recommendations of the Environmental Protection Authority to guide its final decision. I have no statutory responsibility in respect of approving the site.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

### *Resin Works: Bunbury*

262. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Borden Chemical Company proposes to pump liquid waste into the Public Works Department sewerage system?
- (2) If so—
  - (a) has the approval of the Public Works Department been given;
  - (b) what conditions apply to the approval;
  - (c) what are the constituent parts of the liquid waste to be disposed of by the company;

- (d) what volume of waste will be disposed of in this manner;
  - (e) what will be the cost to the company of using the sewerage system to dispose of the liquid waste?
- (3) (a) Has any financial assistance or other incentive been offered by the Western Australian Government to assist the company in establishing the plant;
- (b) if so, will he provide details?
- Mr MacKINNON replied:
- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) to (c) No, but it is understood to be imminent.  
The conditions have not been conveyed to the company as yet. The liquid waste will be required to be treated sufficient to meet Public Works Department requirements.
- (d) 58.5 kilolitres of treated effluent per day.
- (e) Not available.
- (3) (a) No.
- (b) The company has not requested such assistance.

### STOCK

#### *Animal Welfare Trends*

263. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Who are the members of the committee to advise on animal welfare trends?
- (2) What are the committee's terms of reference?
- (3) How many times has it met?
- (4) Do its members receive payment?
- (5) If so, on what basis?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Messrs J. Craig, J. S. Samson, J. B. Newman and V. McFarlane.
- (2) To monitor and advise on current production patterns with a view to recommending improvements where deficiencies are identifiable.
- (3) Once
- (4) No.
- (5) Not applicable.

### LIBERAL PARTY AND NATIONAL COUNTRY PARTY

#### *Ex-members of Parliament*

264. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) How many ex Liberal or National Country Party members of Parliament are now employed by the Government, either by appointment to committees or employment in other capacities?
- (2) Will he list the members concerned and the nature of their employment?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) The information requested by the Leader of the Opposition is being collated and a considered reply will be provided in due course.

### GOVERNMENT BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

#### *Investigator*

265. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) With reference to his comments in the *Sunday Independent* of 17 February 1980, that Ministers had been advised as soon as the election was over that somebody would be put in who would be going right through the bodies under their control in co-operation with the Public Service Board, will he advise whether that person has been appointed and how many of the State's boards, commissions and committees have been studied so far by the "outside" investigator?
- (2) Who is the investigator?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The inquiry into the State's boards, commissions and committees to justify their existence is proceeding.

As stated in the press article appearing in the *Sunday Independent* on 17 February 1980 no time limit was placed on the Ministers to respond.

- (2) No specific investigator has been appointed, nor is one proposed until we are able to make a preliminary assessment from work being done.

The need for a specific appointment may be partly reduced if the Legislative Council proceeds with the Select

Committee proposal listed as Motion No. 2 on its notice paper for today.

## FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

### *Fuel Oil: Cost*

266. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Will he advise the cost per tonne of fuel oil being used by the State Energy Commission for power generation?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

No. The cost paid by the State Energy Commission for fuel oil is a commercial matter confidential to the commission.

## CYCLES

### *Footpaths: Access*

267. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Has the Road Traffic Code been amended to allow the dual use by cyclists and pedestrians of designated footpaths?
- (2) If "No", when will it be amended?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Draft amendments have been prepared and are still under review by parties concerned.

## FUEL AND ENERGY

### *Ethanol*

268. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the feasibility study into the prospects for an ethanol production industry for the Ord River been completed yet?
- (2) If "No", when will it be completed?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) I am advised that while some basic studies have been completed, further detailed work is still being undertaken.

There have been at least two expressions of interest in production of alcohol at the Ord, but no firm proposal for

establishment of such an industry has as yet been made.

The implications arising from industries at the Ord based on sugar cane are being addressed by the Department of Agriculture and other Government Departments.

## POLICE

### *Vandalism: Coolbellup*

269. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

What action has been taken in respect of the problems of vandalism in the Coolbellup area?

Mr HASSELL replied:

Mobile patrols consisting of Criminal Investigation Branch, plain clothes and uniformed police, in both marked and unmarked vehicles, have been increased and are being maintained.

## EDUCATION: COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS

### *Fees*

270. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) In view of the escalating costs of wages, fuel, etc., being experienced by country high school hostels and in view of the recommendation of the hostels authority that hostel boards increase fees, is the Government aware of the added financial burden this will place on country parents who have to board their children away from home in order to gain their education?
- (2) Will the Government raise the level of assistance to parents placed in this position of having to board children away from home?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes, and as a result the level of Government assistance was increased by \$100 per annum earlier this year.

**LAND: BUILDING BLOCKS***Pemberton and Walpole*

271. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has a date been set for auction of building blocks at—
  - (a) Pemberton;
  - (b) Walpole?
- (2) If "Yes", what is the auction date in each case?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) No. It is anticipated that four Pemberton lots and 16 Walpole lots will be offered for sale at auction late in September or early October.

**AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD***Expenditure*

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

- (1) What was the total amount expended by the Agriculture Protection Board in each of the past three financial years in each of the Goldfields, Murchison and Gascoyne pastoral areas?
- (2) From what sources were these funds derived, and how much from each source?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Direct expenditure has been—

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80
	\$	\$	\$
Goldfields .....	392 900	436 500	353 937
Gascoyne-Murchison .....	362 000	393 100	388 123

I am informed that separate accounts are not kept for each of these regions.

- (2) Sources of funds are Consolidated Revenue Fund and a rate levied on pastoralists under the Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act. No breakdown of rates collected from individual areas is available but based on overall expenditure in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Gascoyne/Murchison, this would be in the proportion of \$11 CRF to \$1 pastoral rate.

**WOOL***Production*

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

What amount of wool was produced in each of the Goldfields, Murchison and Gascoyne pastoral areas in each of the past three financial years?

Mr OLD replied:

According to ABS statistics, wool production for the 1976-77, 1977-78 and 1978-79 seasons was as follows in millions of kilograms on a greasy basis.

	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79
Goldfields .....	1.738	1.404	1.437
Gascoyne .....	4.178	3.306	2.927
Murchison .....	4.477	2.823	2.834
Murchison Shire only .....	1.277	.847	.965

1979-80 wool production shire statistics will not be available until later this year

274. *This question was postponed.*

**WATER RESOURCES***Reservoir: Melville*

275. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

When is work expected to commence on roofing the Melville reservoir?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

Commencement of construction is scheduled for 1980-81 dependent upon availability of funds.

**HEALTH: MENTAL HEALTH ACT***Amendments*

276. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When will amendments to the Mental Health Act be introduced?
- (2) Will organisations be invited to comment on the rewritten Mental Health Act before it is introduced?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) It is hoped that amendments to the Mental Health Act will be introduced during the present Session of Parliament.

- (2) Comments have already been received from interested organisations. These organisations and others can obtain copies of the draft Bill at an appropriate time and are at liberty to offer comment if they so desire.

## HEALTH

### *Child Health Clinics and Dental Therapy Centres*

277. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Where are the 11 new child health clinics, mentioned in the Premier's election policy speech, planned to be located?
- (2) Where will the 20 new dental therapy centres to be built this year be located?
- (3) Which seven country and northern centres will service schools with new dental therapy units?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Karawara—(Lady Gowrie)  
Kulin  
High Wycombe  
Heathridge  
North Morley  
Burrendah  
Bluff Point  
Beckenham  
Ravensthorpe  
Huntingdale  
Hillman
- (2) This year's programme proposes to establish 2 fixed and 14 mobile centres at:
  - (a) fixed  
Subiaco primary school  
Mount Lawley primary school
  - (b) mobile  
Ongerup and surrounding areas  
Bullsbrook and surrounding areas  
Corrigin and surrounding areas  
Bencubbin and surrounding areas  
Roleystone and surrounding areas  
Wongan Hills and surrounding areas  
Moora and surrounding areas  
Mount Hawthorn—Leederville  
Tom Price—Paraburdoo  
Wundowie and surrounding areas  
Broome  
Derby  
Wyndham  
Beverley and surrounding areas

The location of further centres is yet to be determined.

- (3) Bullsbrook and surrounding areas  
Corrigin and surrounding areas  
Bencubbin and surrounding areas  
Wongan Hills and surrounding areas  
Moora and surrounding areas  
Wundowie and surrounding areas  
Tom Price—Paraburdoo

## HEALTH AND HOSPITAL SERVICES

### *Involvement of Private Enterprise*

278. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

Has a special study yet been held on how the present involvement of private enterprise in the provision of health and hospital services can be increased?

Mr YOUNG replied:

This is an ongoing matter which is being continuously kept under review.

## HEALTH

### *Noise Abatement Act*

279. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When will the Noise Abatement Act be strengthened?
- (2) How is it proposed to strengthen the Act?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) It is proposed for this session of Parliament.
- (2) I regret I cannot anticipate the contents of the Bill and the member will have to wait its presentation to Parliament.

## TIMBER

### *Exports*

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

What is the volume of timber exported—

- (a) interstate;
- (b) overseas,

in the financial year 1979-80?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

Figures for the year 1979-80 are not yet available. The latest figures which are for 1978-79 are—

- (a) 31 035 cubic metres.
- (b) 35 385 cubic metres.

### WOOD CHIPPING

#### *Bark*

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

What was the quantity of bark disposed of by WA Chip and Pulp Pty. Ltd. in the financial year 1979-80:

- (a) as garden mulch;
- (b) as other products?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (a) 822 tonnes.
- (b) Nil.

### WOOD CHIPPING

#### *Production*

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

- (1) What was the total quantity of woodchips produced by the WA Chip and Pulp Company Pty. Ltd. in the financial year 1979-80.
- (2) What quantity of the woodchips produced was derived from—
  - (a) karri logs;
  - (b) karri sawmill residue;
  - (c) marri logs;
  - (d) marri sawmill residue;
  - (e) jarrah logs;
  - (f) jarrah sawmill residue?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) 623 000 tonnes.
- (2) (a) 107 534 tonnes
- (b) 91 885 tonnes
- (c) 391 464 tonnes
- (d) 7 543 tonnes
- (e) 1 261 tonnes
- (f) 23 313 tonnes.

### TIMBER

#### *Karri and Jarrah: Volume*

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

- (1) What was the volume of saw logs cut in the financial year 1979-80 in—
  - (a) karri;
  - (b) jarrah?
- (2) What was the volume of sawn timber cut in the financial year 1979-80 in—
  - (a) karri;
  - (b) jarrah?
- (3) What was the estimated increment of wood in the financial year 1979-80 in—
  - (a) karri;
  - (b) jarrah?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) The information is not yet available for the year 1979/80. The latest figures are for 1978/79 and are as follows:—
  - (a) 330 214 cubic metres.
  - (b) 612 349 cubic metres.
- (2) The information for the year 1979/80 is not available. The latest figures are for 1978/79 and are as follows:—
  - (a) 126 911 cubic metres.
  - (b) 199 147 cubic metres.
- (3) On present estimates annual increments of wood through natural growth in State forests only (including sawlog and regrowth sizes) are:—
  - (a) karri 207 000 m<sup>3</sup>
  - (b) jarrah 355 000 m<sup>3</sup>.

### MINING: MINES DEPARTMENT

#### *Staff*

284. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

- (1) What staff ceiling levels have been imposed upon the Mines Department—
  - (a) for 1978;
  - (b) for 1979;
  - (c) for 1980?
- (2) What staff ceiling levels have been imposed upon the former Department of Industrial Development—
  - (a) for 1978;
  - (b) for 1979?



- (3) What staff ceiling levels have been imposed upon the new Department of Industrial Development and Commerce?
- (4) What staff ceiling levels have been imposed upon the new Department of Resources Development?
- (5) In regard to (1), (3) and (4) above, what are the present staff establishment levels?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) Staff ceilings are based on the financial year ending 30 June each year.

Year Ended 30 June	Staff Ceiling
1977-78	719
1978-79	736
1979-80	754

- (2) (a) and (b)

Year Ended 30 June	Staff Ceiling
1977-78	110
1978-79	113
1979-80	119

- (3) 78.

- (4) 47.

- (5) Staff employed as at 30 June 1980 (latest available figures) are as follows

Department of Mines.....	723
Department of Industrial Development & Commerce.....	81
Department of Resources Development.....	48

## LOTTERIES COMMISSION

### *Raffles: Eligible Organisations*

285. Mr BERTRAM, to the Chief Secretary:

Which of the following organisations are eligible to be granted permits by the Lotteries Commission to conduct raffles:

- churches;
- bowling clubs;
- football clubs;
- cricket clubs;
- political parties;
- branches of political parties;
- racing clubs;
- parents and citizens' associations;
- parents and friends associations;
- returned servicemen's organisations;
- charitable organisations?

Mr HASSELL replied:

(a) to (d) Yes.

(e) to (g) No.

(h) to (k) Yes.

## FUEL AND ENERGY

### *State Energy Commission Staff Travelling Expenses*

286. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- Is it a fact that the State Energy Commission refuses to provide evidence to all or some of its employees to establish the fact that their gross earnings include a sum for travelling expenses?
- If "Yes", then bearing in mind the Premier's concern or apparent concern that taxable incomes should be fairly assessed, will he reverse this refusal?
- If "No", why?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- No. Where non-assessable amounts relating to travelling expenses have been included in gross earnings appropriate letters to the Taxation Department are provided to the employee concerned.
- and (3) Not applicable.

## FUEL AND ENERGY

### *Commonwealth Fuel Levy Policy*

287. Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

- In the year ended 30 June 1980, what was the amount of the increase in expenditure through the—
  - Consolidated Revenue Fund;
  - Loan Fund,
 brought about as a result of the Fraser Government's fuel levy policy as distinct from the ordinary price increase from inflation?
- What is the estimate of the comparable figures for the year ended 30 June 1981?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) (a) Based on estimated usage of petroleum products—approximately \$4.1 million.
- (b) Because of the nature of expenditure charged to Loan funds it is not possible to assess the additional cost.
- (2) The full year effect of 1979-80 movements in prices of petroleum products on transactions of the Consolidated Revenue Fund is estimated at \$6.9 million. It is not possible to forecast 1980-81 movements in prices of petroleum products.

### FUEL AND ENERGY

#### *Electricity and Gas Accounts: Fixed Charges*

288. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) If a household is connected to both an electricity supply and a gas supply, are fixed charges shown separately on the quarterly householder's account from the State Energy Commission for each of these two commodities?
- (2) If the electricity and gas meters are read by a meter reader from the State Energy Commission on the same visit to a premises, why is it necessary to show two fixed charges, as mentioned in (1) above?
- (3) Is there some concession on the fixed charges charged if a household is connected to both electricity and gas?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Fixed charges do not relate to meter reading. They are intended to cover, in part, costs relating to the use of capital equipment, generating plant, poles, power lines, gas mains, etc., used in the manufacture and transmission of energy.
- (3) No.

### EDUCATION: TECHNICAL COLLEGE

#### *Midland*

289. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) (a) Are classes being discontinued at the Midland Technical College; and

(b) if so, how many classes have been affected?

- (2) How much warning was given to students that the classes were to cease?
- (3) Are other classes available at the Midland Technical College to accommodate the displaced students at times suitable to them and in line with their daily commitments of jobs, etc.?
- (4) If other classes are available, in what categories are they and at what times?
- (5) Will any teachers be displaced or not employed because of this possibly unwarranted closure of classes?
- (6) Does he equate the closure of the classes at Midland Technical College as being in the best interests of people's educational needs?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) (a) Yes. Classes with very low student numbers.
- (b) Ten closed. Three advised of action pending.
- (2) One week minimum, but more in most cases.
- (3) In most cases, yes.
- (4) Four classes amalgamated with other classes—same day and time.  
Four classes amalgamated with other classes—two same time, two different times, all different days.  
Two classes transferred to other colleges.
- (5) One teacher on secondment from TES—displaced.  
One part-time teacher—hours reduced.
- (6) Classes are closed only when very low numbers make this necessary. Every effort is made to accommodate displaced students elsewhere.

### HOUSING: STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

#### *Busselton Property*

290. Mr BLAIE, to the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has a valuation been decided on the commission's land adjacent to the Busselton medical centre?
- (2) If "No", what method of valuation will be used, and when will this be completed?

- (3) Can he advise what arrangements are being made to meet the Shire of Busselton and when is it hoped this will take place?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) A current valuation by the Valuer General has been requested.  
 (2) Answered by (1).  
 (3) Arrangements have been made for the Honorary Minister for Housing, the Chairman of Commissioners and the General Manager, State Housing Commission to meet the Busselton Shire Council on site on 3 September to negotiate a sale of the commission land to the shire. The shire will then be in a position to negotiate for the desired development of an aged persons complex.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

*Transport of Drilling Rig: Mr Dean Hill*

291. Mr DAVIES, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Was a former Special Air Services major, Dean Hill, engaged in the planning of the Noonkanbah convoy as a private individual or as head of the State Emergency Service?  
 (2) What was the precise nature of his role in planning and organising the convoy?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Mr Hill's involvement was in his capacity as Chief Operations Officer, State Emergency Service.  
 (2) Supervising logistic support.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

*Transport of Drilling Rig: State Emergency Service*

292. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Deputy Premier:

On whose authority was the State Emergency Service involved in the Noonkanbah convoy and why did he, as the Minister responsible for the service, permit this use of the organisation and its resources?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The Government, because it was understood that normal services would be denied.

The State Emergency Service has the capacity to provide special assistance in times of emergency, natural disasters or on occasions where normal services are unavailable and it is deemed necessary in the public interest to give assistance.

#### HOUSING: LAND

*Dianella*

293. Mr WILSON, to the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has he yet received a report on alternative subdivisional proposals for the land between Yirrigan Drive and Morley Drive, Dianella, in connection with former proposals by the State Housing Commission for the development of the proposed Northwood Drive?  
 (2) If "Yes", what recommendations are proposed in the report?  
 (3) If "No", when is the report now expected to be available?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) No.  
 (2) Answered by (1).  
 (3) I am advised the report will be available to me by the end of August.

#### LAND: NATIONAL PARKS

*Expenditure*

294. Mr BARNETT, to the Treasurer:

- (1) In the Treasurer's report on Public Accounts for 1978-79 it is recorded that only \$17 584.51 was spent from the \$50 000 Parliament voted for the purchase of land for national parks and nature reserves. Why was not a larger amount of the allocation expended?  
 (2) What happened to the unexpended balance of \$32 415.49 after 30 June 1979?  
 (3) What amount of money was allocated for this purpose in 1979-80?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The main CRF allocation for the purchase of land for national parks and nature reserves for 1978-79 was provided under the division for Public Works.

The allocation of \$50 000 under the Division for Lands and Surveys was provided to allow that department to finalise commitments entered into during 1977-78 and which had carried over beyond 30 June 1978.

- (2) It lapsed in accordance with normal procedures relating to the Consolidated Revenue Fund allocations.
- (3) The 1979-80 allocation was \$150 000—refer to page 113 of the 1979-80 Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure presented to the Legislative Assembly on 13-9-79.

#### KINGS PARK BOARD, NATIONAL PARKS AUTHORITY, AND ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS COMMITTEE

##### *Audited Accounts*

295. Mr BARNETT, to the Treasurer:

Is it indicated in the Auditor General's Report for the financial year ended 30 June 1979 that there are statutory directions to the following controlling authorities:

- (a) by regulation, the Kings Park Board to submit audited accounts to the Treasurer—would he please specify the particular regulation;
- (b) by regulation, the National Parks authority to submit audited accounts to the Treasurer—would he please specify the particular regulation;
- (c) by regulation, the Zoological Gardens Committee to submit audited accounts to the Treasurer—would he please specify the particular regulation;
- (d) by request, the Kings Park Board to submit audited accounts to the Treasurer—would he please specify who made the request and the reasons for the request?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (a) and (d) Following a request by the Treasurer in 1918, the Auditor General audits the board's statements of account which are submitted in accordance with the provisions of section 12 of the Parks and Reserves Act 1895-1955.

- (b) The National Parks Act 1976, section 38 (7) and section 39, requires accounts to be audited by the Auditor General and the audited statement of the financial position to be submitted to the Minister. This statement is included in the annual report which is laid before each House of Parliament.
- (c) Section 13 of the Zoological Gardens Act No. 12 of 1972.

#### KINGS PARK BOARD AND ROTTNEST ISLAND BOARD

##### *Constitution*

296. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

Are the following boards constituted under the Parks and Reserves Act:

- (a) the Rottneest Island Board;
- (b) the Kings Park Board?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (a) and (b) Yes.

#### ROTTNEST ISLAND BOARD

##### *Audited Accounts*

297. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

- (1) Since 1974, has the Auditor General audited and reported to Parliament on the income and expenditure of the Rottneest Island Board?
- (2) Are there any regulations directing the Rottneest Island Board to submit audited accounts to—
  - (a) the Treasurer;
  - (b) the responsible Minister; or
  - (c) any other authority?
- (3) (a) Since 1974, has there been any audit of the Rottneest Island Board income and expenditure requested;
  - (b) if so, by whom;
  - (c) who carried out the audit;
  - (d) to whom were the audited accounts submitted?
- (4) Who is presently the Chairman or President of the Rottneest Island Board?
- (5) For each of the past three financial years what has been the board's total income and expenditure?
- (6) Since 1974, what loan funds have been made available to the board?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) Yes—Section 12 of the Parks and Reserves Act.  
(b) and (c) The Commissioner for Public Health under Section 38 of the Health Act.
- (3) (a) and (b) Not applicable.  
(c) Touche Ross & Co., AMP Building, St. George's Terrace, Perth.  
(d) Answered by (2).
- (4) The president is Hon. D. J. Wordsworth, MLC.
- (5)

	Income	Expenditure
1976-77	\$ 881 110	\$ 876 453
1977-78	1 222 525	1 215 725
1978-79	1 354 222	1 345 084
1979-80	Awaiting Audit.	
- (6) No General Loan Funds have been involved but \$4 700 000 has been borrowed by the board as a body corporate.

## MINING

### *National Parks and Nature Reserves*

298. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Mines:

Under the 1904 Mining Act, is there a statutory obligation for him or his department to inform:

- (a) the Minister for Conservation and the Environment;
- (b) the reserve management authority, of applications received for mining tenements in national parks and nature reserves?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) and (b) No.

## MINING

### *National Parks and Nature Reserves*

299. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Mines:

Under the Environmental Protection Act, is there a requirement that he or his department inform the Environmental Protection Authority of applications received for mining tenements in national parks and nature reserves?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

No. However, under section 57 of the Environmental Protection Act, a Minister of the Crown is required where it comes to his notice that a proposed development project, industry or other thing, may have a detrimental effect on the environment, to so advise the Environmental Protection Authority.

## MINING

### *National Parks and Nature Reserves*

300. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Mines:

Under the 1978 Mining Act, which has yet to be proclaimed, is there a statutory obligation for him or his department to inform:

- (a) the Minister for Conservation and the Environment;
- (b) the council(s) of the municipality(ies);
- (c) the reserve management authority, of applications received for mining tenements in national parks and nature reserves?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) to (c) I refer the member to sections 23, 24 and 25 of the Mining Act, 1978.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### *NOONKANBAH STATION*

#### *Amax Exploration: Meeting with Police*

64. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Resources Development:

- (1) Is he aware that on the television programme "Nationwide" last night, Mr Peter Cross, a former principal private secretary to Malcolm Fraser, alleged that on at least one occasion, representatives of Amax held a meeting with the Police Special Branch about the Noonkanbah dispute?
- (2) Can he confirm whether such a meeting took place, and if so, was it held with his knowledge and consent?
- (3) What was the purpose and outcome of the meeting?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) I am aware of the programme; indeed, I have a transcript of it here. I do not propose to answer the question any further because I understand the police are taking some action in regard to the matter.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Drilling Crew*

65. Mr NANOVIK, to the Minister for Resources Development:

In view of the statement made earlier today by the member for Balcatta that CSR and/or its subsidiary company, Richter Drilling, would be paying the wages of the drilling crew which is being prevented from working because of AWU bans, will the Minister immediately take steps to ascertain whether—

- (1) The statement is true or false.
- (2) In view of the indication that the promise made by the President of the ACTU (Mr Hawke), that the men would be paid by the union movement on the basis of a 12-hour working day, would it now appear that this promise is about to be broken?
- (3) Are Mr Hawke and the ACTU now seeking to pass the cost of their promise on to the two companies involved?

Mr B. T. Burke: The company does not have to accept the promise.

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) This matter was raised yesterday. I checked it then, and I was told that it was totally untrue. However, as the matter was raised again today, I have been in touch with both CSR in Sydney and Richter Drilling. I am assured that the allegation is completely false. I understand that the company will make an announcement to deny the suggestion, although I believe Mr Hawke held a discussion with company representatives this afternoon in an attempt to pressure acceptance. So I think it can be suggested that the company is being asked to pay the price of the union's promise.

Mr B. T. Burke: Perhaps you are not being told.

#### NOONKANBAH STATION

##### *Sacred Sites: Statement by Mr John Stanton*

66. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

Did the Minister for Cultural Affairs see the statement by the President of the Anthropological Society of Western Australia (Mr John Stanton) in which Mr Stanton said that the Minister was trying to scare the public by saying that Noonkanbah was no more significant than Aboriginal sites in Western Australia already developed and, if so, what is his reaction to the statement?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

The inconsistency of statements by some anthropologists during the current dispute is appalling and reprehensible. The statement by Mr Stanton, President of the Anthropological Society of Western Australia, that I am trying to scare people into believing that everything around us may be built on an Aboriginal sacred site is childlike in its emotiveness and inaccuracy.

That statement was concocted out of my claim that Noonkanbah was of no more or less significance than a huge number of sites, many of which were now cities, towns, dams, and farms.

The estimates of the number of sacred sites in Western Australia that Mr Stanton is criticising were supplied to me in two letters by the Museum which, under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, is responsible for Aboriginal sites. I ask permission to table these.

Mr Davies: What are they?

Mr GRAYDEN: The Leader of the Opposition will see that when he reads them.

*The letters were tabled (see paper No. 185).*

Mr GRAYDEN: The fact that many sites are now cities, towns, dams, and farms is incontrovertible and yet has been denied by Mr Stanton.

He said that my statement was a massive over-statement which was not factual.

Mr Bryce: It sounds like W. W. Mitchell.

Mr GRAYDEN: The Lake Argyle dam is a case in point. In the letters which I have laid on the Table of the House I asked the Museum how many sites were submerged by the waters of the Ord River Dam. The answer in a letter dated 11 April 1980, was 10.

Mr Davies: Water does not desecrate a site.

Mr GRAYDEN: Two days later I received another letter which emphasised that the figure given was only a minimum; the actual number inundated could be several times more but, on present information, it was not possible to say by exactly how much.

That is one instance. Similar evidence could be produced throughout Western Australia, yet Mr Stanton has denied it. Noonkanbah itself is an area of influence which now contains a wool shed, homestead, outbuildings, airstrips, roads, and fences.

The statement by Mr Stanton as reported is so inaccurate and false that I can only assume that Mr Stanton is allowing his political opinion to obscure his professional judgment.

- (6) In view of the heavy financial burden being placed on consumers, would he reconsider the interim tariff?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) To lessen the financial impact on the finances of the Energy Commission and to allow time for the commission to achieve economies in the operation of the undertaking.
- (2) Entry to the Country Towns' Assistance Scheme has always been conditional upon a satisfactory financial arrangement and interim tariffs have almost always been applied.
- (3) No.
- (4) to (6) The details of the interim tariff arrangements are being worked out at the moment and the issues raised by the member will be considered in the determination. I have arranged for an officer of the Energy Commission to visit Kalgoorlie and discuss tariff arrangements with the local authority next week.

It has been arranged today.

## FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

### *Kalgoorlie and Boulder*

67. Mr E. T. EVANS, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Why is an interim tariff being charged to Kalgoorlie/Boulder consumers when they come under the responsibility of the SEC?
- (2) Is there a precedent for this interim tariff?
- (3) Is any other country town in Western Australia being charged an interim tariff at present?
- (4) Is the Minister aware that when the fixed charge has been added to the interim tariff many domestic consumers would be no better off than they are today and small consumers will be worse off?
- (5) Would he advise Parliament of the reasons for the decision?

## DAIRYING

### *Flavoured Milk*

68. Mr Clarko (for Mr BLAIE), to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of reports that the Federal Government is considering imposing a tax on flavoured milk?
- (2) Would the Premier ensure that the Prime Minister is advised in the strongest possible terms that the Federal Government should not proceed with imposing a sales tax on flavoured milk, as action of this nature could be expected to disadvantage the Western Australian dairy industry?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I have read the controversy that is waging currently about this matter. There is conjecture that such a tax will

be included in the Federal Budget to be released Tuesday next. Naturally, the Commonwealth Government and the Minister concerned have been reluctant to respond because even to say it is not so would mean talking about the Budget and could cause some embarrassment. The exact details are somewhat obscure. I have some information which indicates that the proposition may be related to the current law and that Western Australia would not be affected adversely. Be that as it may, I intend to let it be known that we would take a very serious view if such a sales tax were applied in Western Australia or, for that matter, in any other State of Australia where flavoured milk conforming with the specifications is being marketed.

I cannot go beyond that, but I remember that at one stage a problem arose about the question of sales tax on aerated water in this State where apple juice was being used as a sweetener rather than sugar. The sales tax exemption was used as an inducement for the company to use apple juice.

Mr B. T. Burke: An "injuicement"!

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is the smartest thing the honourable member has said all day.

The Department of Industrial Development, as it was in those days, and the producers of aerated waters, had to watch very closely the balance between the economics of using sugar and paying sales tax or using apple juice and not paying sales tax. Eventually the margin decreased to the stage where it was not practical to continue manufacturing the aerated water using apple juice. I have a feeling that something similar is developing in the Eastern States, but being good honest traders in Western Australia, I am sure we would not dream of doing it with flavoured milk!

## ELECTORAL

### *Offences: Mr Stephen Hawke*

69. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that on the television programme "Nationwide" last night the same Mr Peter Cross whom I mentioned earlier alleged that a member of the

Police Force told him that Mr Stephen Hawke was to be arrested for alleged offences under the Electoral Act about three weeks before the arrests actually took place?

- (2) Can he explain how there could be such a long period between the police deciding to make an arrest and an arrest actually taking place when the whereabouts of the person concerned were well known?
- (3) Does this not suggest that it had been decided that Mr Hawke was to be arrested even before investigations were completed?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) I know nothing of the programme to which the Leader of the Opposition refers, so I could not express a view. I think it would be quite dangerous for me to make any conjecture on what is a conjecture by the Leader of the Opposition. I think the best attitude to take is that one has a look at the programme, and leaves it at that.

## NOONKANBAH STATION

### *Transport of Drilling Rig: Aboriginal Demonstrations*

70. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

Would the Minister advise whether either the Yandeyarra or Jigalong Aboriginal communities participated in the demonstration carried out by the Strelley community when the convoy of trucks transporting drilling equipment to Noonkanbah passed through the Port Hedland Shire on 10 August 1980.

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr HASSELL) replied:

The Minister for Community Welfare has provided the following answer for the member of Pilbara—

As far as can be ascertained, I am not aware of any involvement of the Yandeyarra community and I am unable to ascertain with any certainty as to the involvement with regard to the Jigalong community.



## ABORIGINES

### *Warburton Range Community*

71. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

- (1) Is he aware that Magistrate T. Sydall of Broome currently is on a visit to the Warburton Range Aboriginal community?
- (2) At whose request is the visit being made?
- (3) Is the visit in connection with allegations made against the community by the Minister for Cultural Affairs and if so, how?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) to (3) I am not aware of the report, and there is certainly no connection between the two happenings.

## NOONKANBAH STATION

### *Ministerial Press Secretary*

72. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Resources Development:

I refer to his answer to my question yesterday about the presence at Noonkanbah Station of the Government ministerial Press secretary (Mr Hugh Ryan) and the Minister's claim that Mr Ryan's tasks were to co-ordinate media activity and provide information to the media.

Were these Mr Ryan's only tasks at Noonkanbah Station?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I also mentioned in my answer yesterday that Mr Ryan had performed similar tasks on his previous visit. On that occasion, I gave some further and more fulsome details. To the best of my knowledge he was there to assist and be of general assistance to the media. I understand he fulfilled his tasks and returned to Perth.

## HOSPITAL

### *Karratha*

73. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

What progress has been made in regard to the calling of tenders for the proposed Karratha Hospital?

Mr YOUNG replied:

Tenders as such will not be called for the construction of the hospital. Consortia have been invited to register as applicants to design and construct the hospital on a fixed price basis from a specific brief prepared by the Department of Health and allied services as an innovative approach and an attempt to adopt a new line for the construction of hospitals, particularly those situated outside the metropolitan area and in distant parts.

From these registrants, four will be selected to prepare conceptual data and sketch plans and from these submissions, two registrants will be commissioned to prepare detailed drawings and give a firm quote. The unsuccessful finalist will have his costs reimbursed. I have extended the registration period, which now is due to end on 22 August.

## NOONKANBAH STATION

### *Ministerial Press Secretary*

74. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Resources Development:

- (1) During his two visits to Noonkanbah Station, did Mr Hugh Ryan furnish any reports, either written or verbal, to the Government on the situation there?
- (2) If "Yes", what did the reports concern themselves with and what was the substance of them?
- (3) Did any of the reports concern the activities of news media representatives at the station?
- (4) Is he aware that Mr Hugh Ryan reportedly had very little contact with news media representatives during his two visits to Noonkanbah Station and that during last Sunday's events at the station he remained in the locked water drilling rig compound taking notes and physically separated from news media representatives?

- (5) How does the Minister reconcile these facts with his claims in this House that Mr Ryan's duties were to co-ordinate media activity and provide information to the media?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (5) In view of the detail the honourable member obviously seeks, and in view of the additional information he seems to have in his possession which is not available to me, it may be better if he placed his question on notice to enable me to give him a more detailed answer.

Certainly, I stand by the information I have already given to the House. The only information which has come to me from Mr Ryan himself relating to his own movements has been quite minimal and purely factual.

## EDUCATION

### *Technical College: Fremantle*

75. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the Minister advise me whether it is a fact that the students attending the human biology course on Tuesdays and Fridays at the Fremantle Technical Collège have been advised that the course will be terminated as from tomorrow?
- (2) If the course is to be terminated, will the Minister give the reason for this action?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of his question, the answer to which is as follows—

- (1) Students attending small classes in human biology have been advised that these classes will be amalgamated with other human biology classes at the college.
- (2) The course is still available at Fremantle Technical College and through the Technical Extension Service.

