

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 11 September 1990

THE SPEAKER (Mr Michael Barnett) took the Chair at 2.00 pm, and read prayers.

PETITION - CRANLEY, DR PATRICK

Medical Board of Western Australia - Guilty Judgment Opposition

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [2.04 pm]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in the West Australian Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned patients of Dr. Patrick Cranley and/or citizens of Western Australia, deplore the decision of the Medical Board of Western Australia which has found Dr. Patrick Cranley to be guilty of "Infamous and Improper Conduct" and has suspended him as a medical practitioner for a period of twelve months.

We maintain that:

1. the judgment of the Board is wrong and grossly unjust.
2. Dr Cranley is innocent of any immoral or illegal act.
3. Dr Cranley is a well known and respected General Practitioner whose suspension will be a devastating loss to hundreds of patients.
4. the extreme terminology of the alleged offence is malicious and unjust. (Note the Oxford Dictionary definition of infamous is: "Notoriously vile and abominable").
5. that we as patients demand the rights of our chosen Doctors to treat us within the law as they and we see fit.

We the undersigned request the Parliament to conduct an enquiry to assess the correctness and propriety of the Board's findings and deliberations.

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

The petition bears 200 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 103.]

Similar petitions were presented by Mr Ainsworth (211 signatures), and Dr Alexander (208 signatures).

[See petitions Nos 105 and 109.]

PETITION - MT LESUEUR

Coal Mining or Power Station - Opposition

MR KIERATH (Riverton) [2.05 pm]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

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

We, the undersigned, request that the Parliament, in recognition of the immense biological diversity and importance of the Mt Lesueur area:

- 1) create a National Park with boundaries as recommended by the Environmental Protection Authority,
- 2) no coal mining or power stations be permitted within the boundaries or adjacent to the Mt Lesueur National Park.

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

The petition bears 164 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 104.]

A similar petition was presented by Mr Carr (43 signatures).

[See petition No 108.]

PETITION - BLOOD ALCOHOL 0.08 LIMIT LEGISLATION

MR WIESE (Wagin) [2.07 pm]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

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

We, the undersigned, petition that the legal blood alcohol limit for Western Australian drivers should remain at 0.08%.

We believe that there would be a serious detrimental social and economic impact, particularly in country towns and districts, should the proposal to lower the legal blood alcohol limit become law.

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

The petition bears 125 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 106.]

PETITION - COMO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Gymnasium and Performing Arts Centre

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth) [2.08 pm]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

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

We, the undersigned Parents, Friends and Students of Como Senior High School, request that the Ministry of Education take immediate steps to provide the school with a modern Gymnasium facility and a modern Performing Arts Centre, so as to permit the full range of educational activities available at other State Secondary Schools.

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

The petition bears 292 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

[See petition No 107.]

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION - PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND EXPENDITURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Fifteenth Report on Computers - Tabling

MR RIPPER (Belmont) [2.06 pm]: I present the fifteenth report of the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee dealing with computers in Government. I also present for tabling the transcripts of evidence taken by the committee during the inquiry. I move -

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

The investigation carried out by the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee was into a significant topic, indeed one which has consumed a large amount of the committee's time. Unfortunately, the committee has not been able to devote its entire resources to the preparation of the report because simultaneously the committee has been involved in a number of other inquiries, some of which have been fairly controversial and have led to considerable debate during deliberations. The original terms of reference for the inquiry were adopted by the committee when under the chairmanship of the member for Mitchell, now the Minister for Community Services, Justice, and the South-West. Those terms of reference were adopted in November 1988. The committee continued its inquiry under the new chairmanship of the member for Victoria Park, the now Minister for Education, following the reconstruction of the committee after the February 1989 election.

Such was the scope of the inquiry that the committee resolved to adopt new and narrower terms of reference in July 1989. Most of the evidence taken by the committee during the conduct of the inquiry was taken while the committee was under the chairmanship of the member for Victoria Park, now the Minister for Education. It is fair to say that the final report of the committee owes much to the leadership which he gave during that time. Of course, he cannot be held responsible - and neither can the Minister for Community Services - for any misjudgments or errors in our final recommendations. The committee members acknowledge the work of my predecessors as chairmen in the conduct of the inquiry. We also acknowledge the work of our research officer, Michael Baker, who has made many valuable contributions to the report both in a drafting sense and in discussions with the members as individuals and as a group. His contribution is not to be underestimated.

In presenting the report, I thank the witnesses and the people who have prepared submissions. The committee received 49 submissions, which provided very valuable information; 36 people attended hearings to give evidence in person. Again, the committee appreciates the time spent and the information provided by those people. I also thank the other members in this House who served on the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee; that is, the deputy chairman, the member for Scarborough, the member for Balcatta, and the member for Morley.

Mr Trenorden: Don't I get a mention?

Mr RIPPER: I am sorry. I cannot bypass the contribution made by the member for Avon who, since he is last mentioned on the list, should receive a special mention for the vigour of his contribution.

The discussions within the committee have been conducted in a genuinely non-partisan spirit. All members have made a substantial contribution to the final outcome of the report. In my view, it represents the proper working of public accounts committees in Westminster Parliaments.

I turn now to the issues considered by the committee and will highlight some of our conclusions. The report is an important one and I urge all members of Parliament, and interested members of the public, to examine the report because it deals with an important administrative issue and with an area where the State Government has recently been spending a significant amount of money. For example, the total State expenditure in 1988-89 on information technology was \$215 million. The State Government's share of the local information technology market is estimated to range from 30 per cent to 60 per cent. Both in terms of the level of expenditure and the effect of the expenditure on the local information technology industry, members will be aware that the issue is an important one. The issue merits consideration by all members of Parliament, but particularly by those who will have responsibility for considering whether the recommendations in the report should be implemented.

As to a summary of our findings, the committee was concerned about the excessive central control of information technology purchasing and the lack of formal requirements in the employment of contractors and consultants. The committee was concerned about an apparent lack of a whole-of-Government direction in information technology planning and the inflexibility of public sector employment conditions which make it difficult to retain qualified staff.

Naturally, in its investigations the committee was required to examine intensely the former Department of Computing and Information Technology, and the committee considered in detail the functions it performed. The department had a planning and control function, an advisory function and also provided a bureau service to Government agencies which did not have their own computing systems. Members would be aware that the Government has announced a decision to abolish the separate existence of DOCIT and to transfer its personnel to the Department of Services under the name of the State Information Technology Division. The committee's findings broadly support that Government decision because the committee was concerned about the excessive central control of the acquisition of computing technology, and the unnecessary existence of an additional bureaucratic layer with these controls. The committee has recommended that control over agencies' IT acquisitions and decision making be devolved to the agencies themselves - that is one of its most important recommendations. This recommendation does not say that the agencies can do whatever they like because it is backed up by other recommendations. These are: A call for a much stronger emphasis on post-implementation reviews of decisions to acquire IT technology; a call for a strengthened schedule of outcomes system for assessing whether information technology decisions have been good ones; and a suggestion that the Auditor General be given more resources and more expertise to review whether agencies have achieved what they said they would achieve when seeking funding for information technology. The committee recommends that the decisions be devolved to the agencies by letting the managers manage, but it also recommends the implementation of a strong system of follow-up and review of the outcomes of the decisions made by the agencies.

Regarding DOCIT's planning function, one of the disappointments to the committee was the evidence which indicated that the proper development of a State information technology plan had not occurred, despite that being one of DOCIT's original functions. The committee recommended that any unit established to fulfil this function, which previously applied to DOCIT, should make the formulation and the publication of a State IT plan its first priority. The committee recommended that the Government establish a small and specialised planning and policy unit with representation from a broad cross-section of Government departments, possibly on a seconded basis. A policy and planning unit should be established which is not a large bureaucracy and does not have a control function and, also, it should have representation from agencies largely involved in computing. It should have two functions: Firstly, to prepare a State IT plan and, secondly, to provide planning and policy advice to the Government on information technology.

Regarding the advisory service function provided by DOCIT, the committee has recommended that this function be replaced by an expanded information centre, but that some advisory services be provided for those smaller agencies which are not resourced to maintain their own information technology expertise. The last function of the department was to provide bureau services for other Government agencies, and the committee recommended that those services be separated from the advisory, the planning and the policy making functions. The committee did not regard it as appropriate for one agency to be providing the advice and consulting services to the departments, to be planning Government policy, and at the same time to be providing to departments services which may be used in preference to buying their own computer systems. The committee has recommended that Government agencies be charged on a user pays basis in the use of bureau services and it has recommended that the Government consider passing the bureau services to a facilities manager such as the Western Australian Regional Computing Centre.

It might be thought that the committee has been overly harsh on DOCIT in its recommendations and findings, but I state on the record that the committee regarded some of its activities favourably. The report states -

The Committee commends the former department on its work in the human resources area.

Also, a witness gave evidence which stated that, "DOCIT has a role in identifying skills and has done an excellent job in this which is recognised Australia-wide." It is important that we recognise that while some failings have occurred in the way in which DOCIT has carried out its task, and while it may have outlived its usefulness, it has done some things of great value. In summary, and I quote from the report, "The committee agrees with the Premier that DOCIT has made a significant contribution in helping to focus the public sector on IT

matters; it helped to make IT issues central to the operation and management of Government agencies."

The other issues the committee dealt with broadly relate to staffing matters, and the committee recognised that the most important issues with IT decision making are management issues as opposed to technical issues; that is, the manner in which information technology is integrated into the overall structure and operations of the agencies concerned. We were concerned that sufficient training and awareness should occur, especially in senior policy making and management positions. In fact, we have recommended that it be compulsory for aspirants for appointment to the Senior Executive Service to undertake an IT awareness course. The committee has also recommended that training opportunities for IT professionals in the public sector be expanded. One of the great problems for the public sector in information technology is that it has proved to be difficult to retain staff. This is due to a worldwide shortage of staff in this area. This shortage is exacerbated in the public sector because it cannot match the salary levels offered in the private sector. The committee has made recommendations in that area. One of the real difficulties in the public sector has been created by shortage of staff. It has been necessary for the public sector to buy in private resources by hiring contractors and consultants, and the committee was very concerned about the processes applied in this area. Those processes were highlighted in evidence given to the committee, in which a witness stated, "... contrary to any other acquisition process in Government. It seems to be rather ridiculous that we have to go through severely constrained procedures to buy the mainframe when one considers that we can pick up the phone and call someone to say, 'I have a \$500 000 consulting contract; are you interested?'"

The committee believes that expenditure on services can be as high as expenditure on hardware, and that these informal processes are not appropriate. The committee has recommended that formal purchasing processes be adopted with the purchase of services just as they apply to the purchase of equipment. We have further recommended that given the involvement of consultants, sometimes in positions of management responsibility, these people should be required to provide a written declaration of interests, which should be checked and updated at regular intervals during the term of the contract. Another issue in this area related to the use of contracting in or contracting out. Contracting in is broadly defined as the hiring of individuals to join a pre-existing project team because that project team cannot employ on the permanent staff all of the IT professionals required. Contracting-out refers to the situation in which an entire systems development project is handed over to an outside firm which is contracted to do the job and to provide the product to the Government.

The committee received strong representations from the local industry that to develop a mature industry encouragement should be given to firms which make a commitment to training as well as to firms which may have the ability to compete nationally and internationally. That could be done by purchasing resources, not through contracting in but contracting out. Government agencies advocated the opposite view. They said that if we contracted out we would not have the expertise or the information necessary to maintain the system after it was purchased from the outside firm. The committee considered that potential difficulty and recommended joint venture contracting out. This highlights the need for the agencies to be represented on project teams. It highlights the need for a transfer of skills from the firm which produced the contracted out work to the public sector agencies involved. This is not a question of whether the public or the private sector is more efficient. At present the public sector is buying these private resources anyway and the committee has made a recommendation about the best way in which to buy those resources both from the point of view of the Government and the industry that we want to encourage. The committee's recommendation for joint venture contracting out is one of its most important.

Many people considering computing in Government give great prominence to compatibility between the computing systems of the various Government agencies. Members of the committee discovered that compatibility is perhaps an overrated issue and there is no universal requirement for compatibility of computing systems at all levels across the public sector. What is important is the optimum solution for the agency; the best solution to the agency's particular problems. The committee has recommended that compatibility requirements be dealt with in the planning process through explicit analysis and assessment.

That is a brief summary of the important recommendations of the committee. Some

members may consider that a rather lengthy summary, but it illustrates the scope of the topic and the variety of issues which the committee has investigated. I commend the report to the House. I commend its recommendations to the House and to those Ministers who will be responsible for restructuring our management of information technology.

[See papers Nos 503 and 504.]

MR STRICKLAND (Scarborough) [2.35 pm]: I endorse and support the remarks of the chairman of the committee. The report is extensive and covers a wide area of Government expenditure. The chairman mentioned that \$200 million is spent annually and the large number of submissions the committee received reflects that there are 150 software companies in the industry. The Government makes up 40 per cent of the market and the public sector plays an important role in the industry. This document will have far reaching effects. It brings forward proposals for direction. We can obtain an overview so that we can grasp the direction in which the industry will be going. For that reason I believe this report is very important. The committee spent a lot of time coming to grips with the situation in the industry. It looks at what is going on and also makes suggestions to address the problems. I will place on record some additional comments to those made by the chairman and to dovetail in with his comments.

The report addresses three areas - acquisition procedures; consultancy and contractor use; and the role of DOCIT. It is important to bear in mind the context in which the problems have been addressed. There was a realisation in the early stage that these problems are not unique to Western Australia, and I support the chairman's comments on the lack of a statistical base. The report does not focus in depth on the allocation of Government funding or the priorities established by Government, but it does go into the Budget process and how various line agencies acquire the funds. It was also identified that the problems were not technical, but mainly managerial and administrative. DOCIT was established in March 1984 and we saw its demise in May 1990. Its charter was to ensure the effective and efficient use of information technology. It had to facilitate the development of information systems and to promote technology awareness. It had varying levels of success in those roles. The committee received many pieces of evidence, and I support the chairman's comment, to indicate that central control gave the feeling that bureaucratic paperwork slowed reaction times and that on occasions purchasing opportunities were lost. To counterbalance that, information technology awareness has definitely increased.

One must reflect on the climate in which DOCIT was established which is quite different from today's climate. One of the disappointing realisations following the demise of DOCIT was that it did not establish a big picture, one which painted directions. I support the comments of the chairman on the need to separate planning and policy functions from management functions. The evidence indicates that DOCIT used coercion because of its control over purchasing of equipment. If DOCIT was slow in providing a response eventually the agencies felt coerced into coming around and falling into line. It is important when looking at the information technology area to realise that purchases tend to lock one into a system for a long time. For that reason it is essential to have a long term strategy to avoid short term replacement.

The other difficulty that must be addressed with rapidly changing technology, of which I am sure members are all aware, is the urgent need to focus on implementing procedures which help evolve planning. It is important to properly identify the problem. In other words, do not focus on a quick answer to a short term problem. A little further down the track one could find oneself in a situation where one wished he could start again and take the time to find out the full scope of the problem, and to take the long term approach to solving it to obtain a better solution.

The chairman pointed out that, despite the fact that DOCIT no longer exists, there is a need for many of the things it did to continue. There is a need for an information technology centre, the advisory service and a bureau service. It is important for the bureau service to introduce the user pays principle because, if it is to promote efficiency, people should know exactly what the service costs rather than allowing somebody else to pick up the bill. Information technology awareness and the expertise of senior management are highlighted as being crucial to the success of all aims and goals, because if the people making the decisions - the managers on the ground - cannot get it right they will not start properly and that means they will not finish properly.

As has been indicated, the acquisition process is a complex one and one about which there has been much criticism. I have mentioned that DOCIT had a de facto veto. Agencies saw the time delays in approval grantings as an impediment to their ability to get on with the job.

I should also highlight how important it is for the agency to have equipment to solve problems. The point was made to the committee that it is not imperative that the equipment be of the latest model. It was pointed out that, as long as the equipment could do the job, there are times to update the system and times when it has to be decided that the equipment is good enough. Recognition of different levels of compatibility appeared to be a bogey early on, but it is not. Advances in telecommunications technology and in other technologies are reducing the problem of incompatibility and I support the chairman's comment that, as long as the long term strategy viewpoint is taken and decisions are made early about what needs to be compatible, that problem is not of the magnitude that many people believe it to be.

Of concern to me was the lack of development of performance indicators. If there is to be an assessment of how one is going in information technology, one needs to be able to make measurements, and agencies generally have made little progress on developing performance indicators. Unless such indicators are available, how can the progress and effectiveness of agencies be assessed? The report recommends that the Auditor General be given additional staffing and expertise to become involved in that role.

I have indicated that staff shortages are a global problem. The chairman said that it is a challenge to agencies to retain their staff and it is not just a question of salary levels. The retention rate relates partly to career paths and it is recommended that those be looked at.

It came to our attention that IT personnel are technology driven and because they are technology driven they are often extremely mobile; they like to get themselves involved in some of the new technology. That should be encouraged because not only does it allow staff to gain extra knowledge and experience, but also, as they move from one agency to another, there is a flow-on effect. In other words, there is strong support for secondment from one agency to another.

I share the concern that has been expressed about the letting out of contracts. I fully support the proposal to get agencies to consider seriously joint venture contracting out which has some benefits. When agency personnel are mixed with outside expertise, skills transfer management is maximised as is residual knowledge which complements the agency structure. Local industry gains many benefits and experience from that and develops a track record which is something that people overseas look for when letting out contracts. Therefore, local industry sees that as being important.

This report is far-reaching. I guess its value will be measured by the action taken by the Government and various departments. I am sure there will be a lot of professional interest in the report and I hope that, in due course, there will be some feedback to the committee about its recommendations. Recommendations such as the one allowing five years for people to gain experience through a management awareness course otherwise their promotions will not occur are far-reaching. They are important and I look forward to the feedback that the committee is sure to receive on such recommendations.

I enjoyed the opportunity of working with the other committee members. All of the members have had different experiences in life and are from different political persuasions. We got together and sorted out the problems that presented themselves to the committee. The only difficulty we had was the time it took to produce the report. However, the task was huge. Follow-up reports may be necessary. It is very important that when one starts something one goes back to see how it is working and I believe that is what the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee has done. The directions proposed in the report are good directions.

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [2.48 pm]: I assure the House that I was on the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee and therefore had better say something in support of the report. This is a serious matter. The report is very substantial. I support the remarks that the chairman made to this House and I commend the report to the House.

The input to the report from a large spectrum of the community was important, even though the committee was shaken to its foundations by a couple of Government decisions and a few other events. Information technology and management is an important part of Government

which will not go away. Whatever happens in the future, Government departments will always have an input into IT. I strongly recommend to the members of this House and to the public that they read the report. I hope that the Press will read the report thoroughly and not just skim over the surface of it; the findings of this report are very substantial.

I want to put one more point on the record because it has not previously been dealt with in detail. I have a particular interest in that part of the report which deals with communications because when the Department of Computing and Information Technology was established its charter was to look at the difficult communications problems that face people in a State the size of Western Australia, particularly between Government departments. A report was made on this matter but it has vanished somewhere into the wilderness. I hope the Government will take notice of that small section in the report which refers to communications.

In summary, the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee is a very effective tool which is of great value to this House, and its efforts should not be taken lightly. The members give many hours of their time to this very hard working committee. I hope the recommendations will not fall on deaf ears.

Question put and passed.

GUARDIANSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION BILL

Assent

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE - STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION

State Government Insurance Corporation

THE SPEAKER (Mr Michael Barnett): Earlier today I received a letter from the member for Avon seeking to debate as a matter of public importance the State Government Insurance Commission and State Government Insurance Corporation.

If sufficient members agree to this motion, I will allow it.

[At least five members rose in their places.]

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Sessional Order, half an hour will be allocated to each side of the House for the purpose of this debate.

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [2.53 pm]: I move -

That this House -

- (1) congratulates the Minister for Finance and Economic Development for suggesting that the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Corporation be sold;
- (2) requests the Minister to provide the House with a current market valuation of the Commission's and the Corporation's assets and liabilities;
- (3) urges the Minister to give priority to any prospective West Australian purchasers; and
- (4) calls on the Minister to make it a condition of sale that all current staff at the Commission and the Corporation retain their jobs.

This has been a very eventful week for the State Government Insurance Commission. Before going into the details of the motion, I would like to run through some of the history of this organisation, and it should not be lost on the people of Western Australia or those in this Chamber.

The question is: Why is the Government now considering the option of selling the SGIC? It is not an institution of long standing and in terms of this House and the way it works it is a mere baby, having been in operation since 1986. It was born out of a report put together by Connell and Webb from Rothwells and Price Waterhouse. The legislation was passed by this

House in 1986. The directors of the SGIC during its short and illustrious career have included Messrs Lloyd, Edwards and Rees who have been very prominent in media discussions in Western Australia for some time. It should also be recognised that of the 17 Ministers in Cabinet in 1986 when it was decided that this Bill should be introduced, 12 are still Ministers. If that figure is not accurate, it is close enough to make my point. It should be remembered that the Minister who presented the original concept to the public is from the left of the Labor Party and, of course, is still a Minister in the Western Australian Government. It is a very peculiar mix to say the least and certainly it is the last place one would expect a proposal to sell off public assets to come from.

The question must be asked: Why is this proposal on the agenda? Why, after four years, all of a sudden is discussion being held on the death of the SGIC? It revolves around the fact that the Government knows a lot more than we do. Only two probabilities arise: Firstly, that the Labor Party has been bitten by the sell-off fever affecting the Prime Minister; that is, all public assets will be flogged for some ideological purpose. I do not think anyone in this Chamber believes that to be the case. The second probability is that more could be wrong with the SGIC than we have yet been told. In my opinion that is the true position. Is the financial position of the SGIC so bad that this Government has no option other than to sell it? One could add spice to that statement by suggesting that if the SGIC were sold, the Government would remove a hot political issue from its agenda. Nothing is more certain than that next year's financial report for the SGIC will also record a loss. It would be handy for the Government to wipe the board clean now and to have no further problems arising from the SGIC. That would mean not only that no loss would be reported by the SGIC next year, but also an Auditor General's report would not be released on the SGIC's accounts. The figures now available have yet to be audited, and we are all aware of the problems SGIC had in getting its figures for last year past the Auditor General. Perhaps the Government is anticipating a rough ride in that arena again this year. The problem is that members on this side of the House do not know the true position of the SGIC. Those of us who have been around for a while will remember that before the 1986 election the Labor Party campaigned strongly against privatisation; therefore, it is remarkable that it should come to this Chamber and to the people of Western Australia and talk about selling an asset it created. In fact, such an about-turn is almost unbelievable.

Mr Pearce: Then why are you moving a motion to congratulate the Minister?

Mr TRENORDEN: I am congratulating the Minister because it is assumed that he has come to his senses and will now tell the House the real position of the SGIC. If this asset is to be sold, the Government must tell the buyer what it is selling and it must provide valuations.

Mr Taylor: Now that it is clear you are being critical we must rethink our position.

Mr TRENORDEN: What position?

Mr Taylor: You are not being straight down the line. I am very disappointed in the member for Avon.

Mr TRENORDEN: Before an asset can be sold it is necessary for the seller to provide a valuation. With the Government's talk of privatisation and selling off the SGIC, I presume it will come clean and tell us the real value of the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Corporation. That is why I congratulate the Minister in this motion. It is the first time the Government has shown any sign of coming clean on this issue.

Mr Taylor: I am really disappointed.

Mr TRENORDEN: The family silver should not be sold for the sake of obtaining money that has been blown by this Government. The sell-off should be based on efficiency - which I do not believe it is - or it should be on the basis that it will solve a problem created by this Government. That is precisely what this issue is about: It is about selling an institution which has been raped and pillaged by this Government and it has reached the stage where it is bleeding to death.

The current value of the State Government Insurance Commission to a purchaser is \$162 million turnover in premiums. The so-called assets of the SGIC are of no value to a purchaser. I presume, therefore, that the only saleable asset of the SGIC is its premium base. Are we talking about selling the other assets of the SGIC? Will a valuation of those assets be

made? The value of some of those assets has been detailed in the McCusker report. The Bell Group Ltd notes are valued by the SGIC at \$95 million. The same report stated that the Luxembourg Exchange values similar notes at \$12 million. There is one hell of a gap between \$95 million and \$12 million.

We also know from previous debates that all the valuations which have recently fallen over were current last year. Valuations were made of all the assets which have just vanished. How do we know that the present valuations will stand up? Those of us with any commercial brain at all know that several of those valuations will not stand up. For example, the Bell notes will not stand up to the market; Westralia Square, valued at \$175 million, will not stand up to the market. It is not known whether the income received on 12 per cent from the Bond Corporation for the indemnity is included in the figures. This argument is about a net asset base of \$66.5 million. It will take only one of the shaky assets held by the SGIC to fall to put it in the red. That is the true position. That is the reason the Government is talking about privatisation; it knows that many years of trading must take place before the SGIC is in the black. That is the reason the sale of the SGIC is on the agenda.

The public will not be told what are the true assets of the SGIC. The Chairman, Mr Rees, has said publicly that he will not release information to the public on the method used to value the assets. I am sure we will not receive that information from the Minister, but I invite him to do that. Last year, the then Treasurer, Mr David Parker, made a speech which should go into the *Guinness Book of Records* as being the most distant from the truth of any speech. We were told that the SGIC's financial position was rosy and that it faced no problems. This House was deceived about the SGIC's financial position in September last year and the Opposition's prediction about what would come to pass has, in part, occurred. The Opposition wants to know whether, apart from its insurance base, anything is left of the SGIC to be sold. If the Government were talking about selling only the insurance base the Opposition would be greatly concerned about the employees of the company.

The next member for a safe Labor seat will be Mr Clive Brown - the Government cannot afford to let him contest a touchy seat - and he has complained bitterly about this Minister's point of view. Mr Brown will be in the company of the member for Fremantle, the member for Morley and a number of other members who, publicly, have gone against the Minister's and the Premier's point of view. It has been a remarkable week in that regard. I am surprised the Minister has had the courage to bring forward this matter.

The SGIC, in its media releases, has referred to a \$97.1 million surplus. Members should note that it is not a profit, but a surplus. It is an interesting piece of propaganda. One may ask, what is a surplus? The SGIC has assets totalling \$1 billion and the surplus is obviously the earning rate of the \$1 billion because \$162 million worth of premiums does not provide a profit of three quarters of the premium base. In fact, we know from previous records that if the SGIO does not run at a deficit it runs close to break-even on its underwriting and not on its investment profit. The profit comes from its investment. Are we now told that that has gone and that is the reason we are talking about privatisation of the SGIC? It must be remembered that the Government has brought forward the idea of privatisation - not the Opposition, not the public, not local government and not the Civil Service Association. Had the Government not floated the idea, it would not be on the agenda. Why has the Labor Party changed its mind? The only reason could be that the SGIC is in much more serious trouble than we are led to believe. We cannot find out about that. The Opposition has spent two years in this House trying to find out the true position of the SGIC.

Mr Shave: Wouldn't you think perhaps the Government thinks there is a little bit of extra capital in there if they cash it all in?

Mr TRENORDEN: Yes.

Mr Shave: There is probably not a lot.

Mr TRENORDEN: That is a possibility. The 1987-88 and 1988-89 annual reports of the SGIC show that it has taken the top off those funds. About \$60 million has been taken from reserves and has been included in its reports as profit. In fact it has already done some raping of reserves. We do not know whether that is justifiable; we do not have access to the SGIC accounts. Only the Minister has that information. Every time the Opposition asked about this important issue, particularly last year, it was told what has now been proved to be

a great stack of untruths. The Minister and the Government are continuing in exactly the same vein. The last time this matter was debated the Minister accused me, as he will do again shortly, of being the soldier of the industry and wishing to get rid of the SGIC. It is interesting that the Minister is now the soldier of the industry and wishes to get rid of the SGIC. It is a turnabout that gives me some satisfaction.

Mr Bradshaw: You had better ask him why he didn't try to privatise the R & I Bank.

Mr TRENORDEN: That is important. The reason that the R & I Bank is not being privatised and it is proposed that the SGIC be privatised is that the R & I Bank is able to be rescued and the SGIC is not.

Dr Turnbull: Is that the question you are asking?

Mr TRENORDEN: That is what it is about and that is the reason I am congratulating the Minister. Hopefully he will say he will give us a valuation.

Mr Taylor: You say that, but you do not mean it. I am really disappointed now.

Mr TRENORDEN: I can see the tears in the Minister's eyes.

Mr Taylor: It's a great start to the week, being congratulated by the Opposition, but you have stood up and spoilt it all.

Mr TRENORDEN: It is important to the people of Western Australia, considering that the debate about the SGIC has gone on for some time, that we know the value and the current market value of the SGIC and the SGIO assets, particularly those which will be on the market.

I call upon the Minister to ensure that this comes forward. I hope, if the Minister arrives at the conclusion that the SGIC should be sold, that he considers prospective Western Australian buyers. They will not be easy to find. However, the Royal Automobile Club of WA (Inc) recently declared an interest. If it were able to buy the SGIC's portfolio of motor vehicle insurance it would have a substantial percentage of the motor vehicle insurance market. The question would arise then whether it would have a monopoly in that market. However, I will not pursue that line now.

If the SGIC is to be sold as an insurance base, which I presume is all it has left that is saleable, it is difficult to see how the staff of the SGIC and SGIO could be maintained; if it were sold to the RAC, or any other buyer, they would not have to pick up the whole staff and therefore we need to know, as the public needs to know - and, most of all, employees of the SGIO need to know - whether it will be sold as a working entity or piecemeal to corporate raiders, as has been done with other businesses in the past few years.

I believe that neither the National Party nor the Opposition will come forward with a recommendation about the SGIC. It is important to note in this debate that recommendations have come from the Deputy Premier and have been supported by the Premier. This sell-off ought to be investigated. The question is, why? Is the SGIC in such a poor state that it is starting to smell, or is dead, in fact, and all that needs to be held is the funeral? Is this what this is all about? That is what I presume it is all about, because the source of this debate is the left wing of the Labor Party in the Government, a most unlikely source. Why is this sale on the agenda? I can only assume because it is the last resort of the SGIC.

MR MINSON (Greenough - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.12 pm]: In seconding the motion I must say that the member for Avon probably hit the nail on the head when he said that more is wrong with the State Government Insurance Commission than we know. It is for that reason, in case the Deputy Premier has not gauged it, that we congratulate him for bringing this debate into the open so that it is aired.

I ask members of this House to consider the history of the State Government's insurance arm, which has been around for about half a century as the broad insurance arm of Government.

Mr Trenorden: It was born in the goldfields.

Mr Thompson: It existed for a long time under conservative Governments.

Mr MINSON: Yes. The reason for its existence was fairly simple; if a Government was to be in business at all it was in the way it was in business in the insurance industry - it kept its

nose clean and successive Governments did not fiddle with it. For that reason it survived for a long time and was a useful instrument for the people of Western Australia. Had it been left alone, we would probably not be having this debate today. Why has the Government precipitated this move? The answer is one of the following: Firstly, it wants to get at a nest egg buried in the SGIC; or, secondly, it wants to get it off the agenda because, as the member for Avon pointed out, it will provide a recurring problem for the Government over the next couple of years when its balance sheets and financial reports reveal losses.

I further congratulate the Deputy Premier for what he has done as this airing may provide an answer to the question of who was responsible for giving the orders that landed the SGIC in its present trouble. Members should consider the fact that the people who advised the State Government's insurance arm were clever people, at least as clever in giving investment advice as those who give that advice to other insurance companies in this country. For that reason, it is beyond reasonable commonsense to assume that those people would have advised the State Government's insurance arm to invest in such things as Bell Resources; Rothwells, in a covert way; and, also in a covert way, Spedleys.

I believe that when the order was given those advisers would have been horrified and would have argued with management about the wisdom of those investments. Obviously, the person who overrode that advice was someone very senior. I have asked publicly, and ask again today, who was that person? Answers to this question have been skirted and have not been forthcoming.

Privatisation, if I can use that word - or the selling of the SGIC - as the member for Avon quite rightly pointed out, will lead to a valuation of that business. That valuation may provide us with some answers, but it will be a little difficult to arrive at.

Mr Trenorden: It will be an interesting exercise.

Mr MINSON: Yes, especially when the Government will be trying to sell an ongoing instrumentality that is making a loss, and also has a cloud hanging over it regarding Bond Corporation's litigation. Its value is low. If any public instrumentality is to be sold it should be borne in mind that that instrumentality belongs to the people of Western Australia, that this Parliament is simply its custodian, and that we must get the best value possible for it. If we are to get that value in this case then the time to sell is not now, particularly when the SGIC has this cloud hanging over it. I will be interested to see the valuation so that we can obtain answers to some of these questions.

In the event that the SGIC is sold, we must get the best possible valuation for the people of Western Australia, and ownership should remain in this State. One of the important matters to be considered is the employment of the people who have given long service to the insurance arm of the State Government of Western Australia. In any move the Government makes through the Deputy Premier in relation to this matter the Opposition will be interested, first, in the situation which precipitated the move, and, secondly, in what happens to the people who now work for it.

Mr Trenorden: The employees should not have to pay the price.

Mr MINSON: That is correct. We will be interested to see what happens about the jobs of the people who have given long and faithful service to the insurance arm of the State Government.

MR THOMPSON (Darling Range) [3.20 pm]: People in the community must be extremely confused when they observe what is going on in Australian politics. In both the State and Federal spheres we have in Government parties which are committed to retaining ownership of State-owned assets, and in Opposition parties which are committed to selling off those assets. Over the years the conservative Governments in this State have created the situation where this present Government has been able to use the State-owned instrumentalities in its various business dealings. I hope the conservatives have learnt from what has happened because if ever there was justification for a conservative Government to get out of such things as banking and insurance operations - to which philosophically it is committed - this is the time.

I support the sale of the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Office, in the same way as I support the sale of the R & I Bank, because I do not believe it is appropriate for Governments to be involved in that sort of activity when there is

ample opportunity for private enterprise to be involved. A Government instrumentality cannot run a bank or an insurance office as effectively as the private sector, and the sooner that is recognised by Governments, the better off we will be. I am pleased this Government is seriously considering selling the SGIC and SGIO, and I congratulate it for that decision, but I am not pleased about the way this has been brought about.

During the 1986 election campaign the Liberal Party indicated that it intended to go down the privatisation path. We got slaughtered in the electorate by our political opponents, who put fear into the minds of people in the community about what would occur were we to privatise such organisations as the R & I Bank. Yet only a few years later, the very people who were spreading fear in the community are now contemplating selling the SGIC. Only a few days ago the Federal Government flogged off a bit of the Commonwealth Bank in order to extricate the Victorian Government from the same type of trouble in which this Government has become involved.

[The member's time expired.]

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Deputy Premier) [3.23 pm]: When I received notice of this motion earlier today - in fact, quite early when I arrived at Parliament House - I thought this week is starting off well because already the Opposition is congratulating me for something that I did last week. However, it is quite obvious from the comments made by Opposition members that they are really not at all serious about congratulating me about this issue. I am disappointed that that is the case, and later during this speech I will reluctantly be forced to move an amendment to the motion before the House - a motion which actually says it congratulates me, but nevertheless these things have to be done.

Dr Turnbull interjected.

MR TAYLOR: Not at all. It is very nice to be congratulated by the Opposition. It does not happen all the time. However, when one realises that members opposite are not serious, it comes as a shattering blow.

Dr Turnbull: We are serious.

MR TAYLOR: I can understand that the member for Collie probably is serious but the members on her side do not appear to be of that view.

The history of the State Government Insurance Commission is an interesting one, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Avon mentioned it in passing. Kim Beazley said a few days ago at the Victorian ALP Conference that some of the Federal Government-owned instrumentalities were born of necessity. I have pointed out to this House previously that the State Government Insurance Office was most certainly born of the necessity of finding a group or organisation that was prepared to insure for industrial diseases in the goldmining areas of Western Australia. In the early 1920s the industrial diseases of silicosis and pneumoconiosis were rife in the goldfields, and the insurance companies refused to pick up that insurance. The Liberal Government of the day decided to set up its own insurance arm to pick up that insurance, and it did that for about a decade or more, without even the necessary legislative backing to run that organisation. It was only after a decade had passed that it became known as the State Government Insurance Office, although I am not certain that that was its title. So the SGIO was born of necessity.

Mr Trenorden: Will it die of necessity?

MR TAYLOR: I will deal with that later.

Since then it has gone through a number of changes. Most of the changes have been for the betterment of the organisation. It is worth my canvassing what I said last week about this issue. I have said previously that I have been thinking about the SGIO/SGIC for some time, and also about the proposals for the privatisation or sale of the R & I Bank. The matter came to a head when the Victorian and New South Wales Governments decided to sell their insurance arms. Last Monday night, when a reporter was discussing with me the losses of the organisations, he again raised the question of a possible sale.

Mr Trenorden: Wyvern Rees said on 6 September that the Government supported it.

MR TAYLOR: I am well aware of that. The reporter asked me where I stood in relation to the sale of these organisations. I said to that reporter, "Seeing you have asked me the

question, let me give you the answer as I see it today". The reasoning behind my answer was that the matter was being raised time and time again, and that it was necessary to get the monkey off the back of the SGIO/SGIC. That monkey was: Where does the Government stand in relation to the ownership of these organisations? If we are to answer that question, we need information at our disposal in order to be able to make a proper and considered response. That response will come as a result of the Treasury report that will come to me about this issue.

Mr Trenorden: Not from your meeting this morning?

Mr TAYLOR: No. I will deal with that also. That Treasury response will take into account the views of a number of organisations which, in the past, have made clear their views on this issue. I have written to the Confederation of Western Australian Industry (Inc), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Inc) and the amalgamation of local government associations, as well as to the SGIC and SGIO, asking them to put in writing their views about this issue; and as of last Friday, at my invitation, both the Trades and Labour Council of WA and the Civil Service Association of WA Inc will, I expect, be putting in a submission on this issue. I am not going to give them a lot of time to do that because they do not need a lot of time. They all know where they stand and what their views are in relation to the future ownership of these organisations, so they will have about a week to put in their submissions, and during the course of the following week they will make a report to me. That report will cover the pros and cons of the sale or otherwise of the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Office. It will also, I hope, provide me with the whys and wherefores of how one would go about the sale, if we decide that should be the case. That is the way it should be; these organisations should have their say. We should take that say into account, and when we make the decision and determine where we stand on the issue everyone will know exactly where we stand. One way or another, I hope that at least for the foreseeable future this issue of the sale or otherwise will be off the back of the organisations concerned.

I will deal also with the Trades and Labor Council of WA, the Civil Service Association of WA Inc and the Labor Party in relation to the issue. I have said publicly that those organisations - I will call them the union-Labor organisations - know where they stand. They know they are opposed to any sale of the SGIC and the SGIO. I do not pretend that the TLC and the CSA have not made that very clear to me; they have made it abundantly clear. I do not mind, because it is their democratic right to put to me exactly where they stand and I am quite certain they will put it in writing. As well, some of my colleagues have also told me what they think about the issue, and they are quite right in putting their views to me, because if we were to decide to sell the SGIC and the SGIO we would certainly need the support of the Labor Party and, I believe, the support of some of the people in the union movement. There is no doubt about that. It is absolutely clear that would be the case and I would be foolish indeed if I were to suggest that as a result of the report we would sell the SGIC and the SGIO and it would not have to go any further because I had made that decision. It would not be my decision alone and I am quite happy that a number of people would have a say in it. That is the way our organisation works, and that is the way it will continue to work.

There is only one way to get the monkey off the back of these organisations, and that is to raise it publicly - to give it an airing and hear what people have to say about it. Speaking of what people have to say about it, it is interesting to note that at least one member of the Legislative Council and the Liberal Party, Hon Max Evans, thinks it is a good idea. However, on the other hand, it seems that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this place is not too sure about it. He will sit on the fence for a while and see which way the wind blows.

Mr Minson: I did not say that at all.

Mr TAYLOR: Well, what does the Deputy Leader of the Opposition think?

Mr Minson: I think it is a good idea to talk about it.

Mr TAYLOR: Hon Max Evans did not say it was a good idea to talk about it, he said it was a good idea to sell it. I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Is it a good idea, or is it a good idea to talk about it?

Mr Minson: It is a good idea.

Mr Trenorden: We need the facts. Are you going to give us the facts so that we can talk about it? No.

Mr TAYLOR: Let me come to some of the facts. The member for Avon talked about the SGIC having a smell about it. He said it was dead, and I am quite sure he would rather see it dead than alive.

Mr Trenorden: You are the one who is trying to kill it, not me. You are the one who moved for this privatisation.

Mr TAYLOR: The member should reread his speech in *Hansard* and see if, at the end of his speech, he comes to the same conclusion that I did; that is, he set about damning the organisation. I just want to put into perspective his efforts to damn the organisation.

Mr Trenorden: You cannot stop the flow of blood out of the SGIC, I agree. You are the one moving to privatise it, nobody else.

Mr TAYLOR: Since the formation of the SGIC on 1 January 1987, that organisation has achieved growth and returns and has made a very significant contribution to Western Australia.

Mr Minson: What happened in Caucus this morning? Did they support you?

Mr TAYLOR: I will tell members what Caucus supported in a minute.

Mr Trenorden interjected.

Mr TAYLOR: Let us get things into perspective - it is afternoon tea time. If even Winston Churchill was speaking at this time of day in this Parliament he would be battling to get an audience as good as this. For afternoon tea time it is an excellent audience.

The net assets have increased sixfold from \$28.5 million at 1 January 1987 to \$181 million at 30 June 1989, with total assets growing from \$847 million to \$1 367 million during the same period. The result of the abnormal provision in 1990 sees the net assets dropping to \$66.5 million, over double that at commencement. So, despite that provision for losses - which I shall come to in a minute - those net assets have doubled. Total assets have dropped to \$895 million, or \$50 million higher than at commencement.

Mr Lewis: And what about your unpaid claims?

Mr TAYLOR: I will go right through this so that members opposite know exactly where they stand.

Mr Trenorden: What is a surplus? Explain to us what a surplus is.

Mr TAYLOR: Surplus achieved over the first two full years of trading was in excess of \$160 million, giving a return of 91 per cent on net asset worth.

Mr Trenorden: That is not profit; don't talk as though it were.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Avon has had a reasonably fair go.

Mr TAYLOR: He has, Mr Speaker. I do not mind, but I do not like to have to yell all the time.

The surpluses to which I have referred have come essentially from investment activities.

Mr Lewis: What is a surplus?

Mr TAYLOR: I have just told the House - \$160 million.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Applecross will get his turn.

Mr TAYLOR: He probably will not, actually, Mr Speaker; he was not clever enough.

The abnormal provision and resulting loss of \$116.9 million means these surpluses have in fact levelled out. Even so, \$62 million was earned from the sale of BHP shares - which was roundly criticised at the time by the Opposition - and the sale of central business district properties. The surpluses achieved in 1987-88 and 1988-89 are after making provision for losses associated with Rothwells Ltd, Spedley Securities Ltd, and a write down of Bell Group Ltd bonds.

I want to talk for a minute about Rothwells, Spedleys and the Bell Group, and the convertible notes. It is about time that, instead of focusing on the decisions of the SGIC alone in relation to these issues, we started to look a little wider - and some members of the Press decided to look a little wider - to see where the responsibility lies in relation to these sorts of losses and in relation to organisations such as Rothwells and Spedleys. We should look at who made the wrong decisions in relation to ripping off those organisations. It certainly was not the SGIC. One has only to read the McCusker report to get but an inkling of what these people were up to who were involved intimately in those sorts of organisations, lining their own pockets. Let me talk also about issues such as the Bell Group shares and how, quite clearly, something like \$1 200 million was ripped out of the guts of those shares by Bond and others associated with them, so that they were virtually worthless.

As well as that, if members opposite want to talk about convertible notes, throughout the world today - whether it be in Europe, the United States of America or Australia - there are plenty of organisations and major banks which gave advice to ordinary investors to pick up those convertible notes, and they were all paying the same price as the SGIC in relation to that matter. Therefore members opposite should not just concentrate on who made the decisions and why they became involved; they should look behind the picture to why the losses occurred. Those losses have occurred because people had interests other than those of the shareholders in mind when they made their decisions to rip those people off.

I return now to the SGIC and its financial and investment performance. An overall return of 14.2 per cent in 1987-88, 11.4 per cent in 1988-89 and 8.7 per cent before the provision in 1990 was achieved on investments. The combined earned premiums of the commission and its trading arm, SGIO, at \$331 million in 1988-89 places it in the top 10 general insurers in Australia. The combined gross premium for the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Office in 1990 was \$324 million. Over that time these organisations have made significant contributions to the State on all levels, be they dividends, payments in relation to corporate taxes, State taxes and charges, or sponsorship for a range of organisations such as the Eagles, Neighbourhood Watch, or Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital for chest research. Those sorts of returns to the State are very important indeed.

Members have queried the sale of the organisation. Tomorrow, members should read through the blue book because they will find the answer in it as to why I raised the issue - that is, one way or another we will get the monkey off our backs.

Mr Lewis: What is the monkey on the back?

Mr TAYLOR: I will not go over that again; for the edification of the member for Applecross the question is whether the organisation should be State-owned. That is it. The issue is one which in recent times has dogged the organisation, but I will sort it out.

Mr Minson: You have led it around by the neck; no-one else!

Mr TAYLOR: What does the member mean?

Mr Minson: The Government has been -

Mr TAYLOR: The member is the sort of person who sits and says that the operations of the people involved with Bond, Rothwells and Spedleys is the sort of thing to be approved of.

Mr Minson: No I don't!

Mr TAYLOR: Of course the member does not, and that is why the loss has occurred.

Several members interjected.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Lewis: Who are those people?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister should direct his remarks to the Chair, and the interjections should be more orderly.

Mr TAYLOR: To answer an issue raised by members opposite: These events may have occurred in the past but they will not occur in future.

Mr Trenorden: Why?

Mr TAYLOR: Because clearly if any ministerial direction is made regarding these sorts of issues it will not come from a Minister of this Government. I have made it clear to both organisations that they are to run their own show. Should any ministerial direction be given on any issue it will be in writing and published in the annual report.

An Opposition member: Will we find out what went wrong in 1987 and 1988?

Mr TAYLOR: As I said, it was made clear in this House two weeks ago that, as described in the McCusker report, those issues were not something of which we approved. We said that mistakes were made, and I do not pretend otherwise, on the parts of all sorts of people. At the same time we have made it clear that as far as the Government is concerned that sort of interest and involvement in those activities is not on - whether it be by any person outside Government or any person inside Government. It is not on, and that is the end of it.

I am pleased to note that in 1988 the SGIC appointed external investment advisers to the commission to advise on the best way to go about making investments. That advice has been accepted.

I turn to the issue of solvency raised by the member for Avon. The commercial trading arm, SGIO, meets the Commonwealth Insurance Act solvency requirements, although the SGIC is not required to do so. The Insurance Act 1973 requirements are that assets must exceed liabilities by not less than 20 per cent of earned premium. In other words, net assets or paid up capital must represent 20 per cent or more of earned premium. In 1988-89 the SGIO's general insurance assets exceeded liabilities by about \$35 million and premium income was \$137 million. This gives a solvency of 20.6 per cent. Since this time the SGIC has increased its shareholding in SGIO giving it a paid up capital of \$76 million and a solvency margin at 30 June 1990 of 32.1 per cent. The solvency of the organisation cannot be queried.

Mr Wiese: What about the issue of increased premiums?

Mr TAYLOR: The member should refer to his colleague, the member for Avon, about that.

Obviously the Opposition was not serious in congratulating me.

Amendment to Motion

Mr TAYLOR: I move -

To delete all words after "House" with a view to substituting the following -

notes and endorses the State Government's decision to investigate all options for the future of the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Corporation.

MR RIPPER (Belmont) [3.46 pm]: After listening to the speech by the member for Avon - a member of the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee - in support of the motion, I realise one can summarise his comments in the following way: Good idea; wish we had thought of it, but the motives are suspect. In other words, the member states that the Government cannot be doing the right thing just because it is the right thing; its motives must be suspect. There must be some other reason for its adopting that course of action, which the Opposition thinks might be the right thing. That is an appropriate summary of the member for Avon's position but it is based on a misconception because, unlike the mover of the motion, the Government has not adopted a position on the future of the State Government Insurance Commission and the State Government Insurance Office. The Government is in the process of finding out the facts and of seeking information on the options.

Mr Minson: Will you give us the facts when you find them?

Mr RIPPER: Unlike the Opposition, the Government has not adopted a preconceived position. It is determined that it will begin a process which will analyse all options and enable a rational decision on the future of the organisation - one in which the interests of Western Australians will be considered.

In his motion, the member for Avon put forward a preconceived idea in advance of any investigation; that is why the motion cannot be supported. It is correct to have a motion before the House congratulating the Minister for Finance and Economic Development, but it is based on a misconception. The motion states that the Minister has adopted a position which he has not adopted. The Minister has adopted a rational process of investigation and

analysis so that the Government can make a proper decision in the interests of all Western Australians. Some problems exist in the current arrangements regarding the SGIC. One is illustrated here today. There is a conflict between the best commercial interests of organisations such as the SGIC and the SGIO and accountability to this House.

As I have said many times if we had a debate in this place on the solvency of private insurance companies, the industry would be outraged. Clearly, damage would be done to that industry. Of course, public organisations have to be accountable to this House, yet that accountability can damage the commercial prospects of the organisation; it can damage the confidence of the public in the future of that organisation. I support a rational process which analyses the best options in the interests of all Western Australians. That is what the Opposition should do rather than debate a preconceived position in advance of the facts.

Turning to the conflict between accountability and commercial interests, that was borne out here today when we heard comments by the member for Avon. He claimed that the option to sell must be on the agenda because the situation inside that body must be worse than imagined. That is a very damaging comment for the commercial interests of that organisation. It illustrates one of the problems which exists because of the current arrangement in relation to the SGIC. That problem does not confront the private sector. When Bond Corporation makes a mistake - or worse - in investment matters do we see an editorial in *The West Australian* calling for Alan Bond's resignation?

Mr Trenorden interjected.

Mr RIPPER: We do not! Much more public attention and political attention is focused on the Government.

Mr Shave: We have just seen Alan Bond resign.

Mr RIPPER: Did we see an editorial calling for that to happen? No we did not. There might be a variety of reasons why we did not see an editorial in that newspaper on that theme. However, the general point holds true: We do not see the same sort of public scrutiny applied to investment decisions by private sector business people as we see applied to investment decisions of public authorities. That can be a problem. An additional problem is ensuring competitive neutrality with regard to the State Government Insurance Office as required by State legislation. We have a State-owned agency which competes with private companies which are subject to Commonwealth supervision. That is a problem. What is the constitutional position of the State if we give direct supervision to Commonwealth authorities? On the other hand where is the competitive neutrality if we do not have the State agency supervised in the same fashion as private agencies are supervised? Everyone knows that the supervision involves questions of judgment and if two different organisations are making judgments we are likely to get two different outcomes. There has been a lot of debate and controversy on this subject. It is important to make a rational analysis of the best future options in the interests of all people in this State. It is important for the Minister for Finance and Economic Development to get the future of the SGIO and the SGIC settled because continuing debate, particularly of the sort we have had this afternoon, can only damage the commercial interests of those organisations. The Minister for Finance and Economic Development should be congratulated, although not for the reasons outlined in the motion or those given by the member for Avon. He should be congratulated for adopting a rational approach to the future of the SGIC, for seeking to get the information before making a decision, and for seeking to make the decision quickly so that this organisation has a settled future and its commercial interests are protected.

Amendment put and passed.

Motion - as Amended

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDERS (FULL FEE OVERSEAS STUDENTS) REGISTRATION BILL

Second Reading

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park - Minister for Education) [3.53 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to regulate education institutions currently enrolling or proposing to recruit full fee overseas students. The full fee overseas student program is one of significant importance to the economy of Western Australia. A recent survey conducted by the Department of Trade Development showed that the gross revenue for the State earned by the full fee student program in the February-March intake alone was in the vicinity of \$15 million. Adding this figure to previous survey information, the Department of Trade Development estimates the total gross revenue to be approximately \$59 million. These figures do not take into account the additional revenue earned from student outlays on housing, food, accommodation and travel which is conservatively estimated to be 1.5 times the amount spent on tuition fees. Since 1987 the combined export earnings from the students' education and living expenses total approximately \$147.5 million and the industry continues to grow at a healthy rate with a 25 per cent increase in student numbers expected next year.

The objective of this Bill is to formalise and regulate the registration of Western Australian education institutions enrolling full fee paying overseas students. Prior to the financial failure of two education institutions with enrolments of full fee overseas students in 1989, negotiations with the industry were well advanced to register all institutions and courses with such students. This legislation is needed to provide protection for overseas students and to maintain Western Australia's reputation as an internationally recognised study destination for overseas students. For these reasons it is supported by the private and publicly funded sectors of the industry.

The Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training delegated the responsibility for registration to all States and Territories as from 1 January 1990. The registration of education institutions is being conducted under this delegation of responsibility from the Commonwealth. However, it is critical that the arrangements are given a legislative base and the accompanying authority of being enacted in legislation. While the Commonwealth has delegated the responsibility for approving institutions and courses for full fee overseas students, the Commonwealth still maintains a national register which is communicated to Australian overseas posts to be used as the basis for issuing student visas. Western Australia's contribution to the national register is reliant on a State register of approved institutions and courses being built and maintained. This Bill will enable the Ministry of Education to keep a State register of existing institutions with full fee overseas students, to add new entries to the register of approved institutions and courses and to ensure that every step is taken to prevent a recurrence of the financial collapse of educational institutions with full fee overseas students. While the Government cannot provide guarantees of success for all institutions with full fee overseas students it can, by introducing the measures provided for in the Bill -

1. Appraise the financial viability of institutions.
2. Approve indemnity arrangements or guarantees to protect students' fees and accommodation payments.
3. Endorse the educational accreditation of courses on offer to overseas students.
4. Inspect the facilities and student services including those providing for counselling, pastoral care and grievance procedures; and
5. Suspend or cancel registration and apply appropriate penalties if, on investigation, an institution has failed to comply with standards being followed by the rest of the industry.

The Bill provides for different approaches to the registration and monitoring of statutory and non-statutory educational institutions, which is appropriate given that statutory providers are already regulated under other legislation. While both kinds of institution are required to comply with registration criteria, the statutory institution will be registered automatically on application whereas the applications from non-statutory institutions will have to be considered for approval by the Chief Executive Officer. Moreover the functions conferred by this Bill on the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education will be discretionary functions and will be concerned only with those affairs of the statutory providers which relate to full fee overseas students.

The Bill provides for an appeal to the Minister where the education institution is aggrieved by a decision of the Chief Executive Officer under the Bill. Non-statutory providers or

private institutions will be required to appoint an auditor who will be expected to report any material irregularity in the affairs of the institution that relate to full fee overseas students. This provision is intended to ensure that the continuing financial viability and the management practices of private institutions are monitored on a regular basis. Most statutory institutions are already covered by the requirements of the Financial Administration and Audit Act to conduct their financial affairs in specified ways.

Significant penalties have been incorporated into the Bill to deter operators from providing an education service in contravention of the legislation where the benefits potentially could far outweigh lesser penalties. The Bill includes provision for prosecution to cover the eventuality of a non-statutory institution offering a course to overseas students where registration has not been sought or where it has been sought but refused, suspended or cancelled.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Blaikie.

HERITAGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA BILL 1989

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

MRS BEGGS (Whitford - Minister for Transport) [4.00 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR LEWIS (Applecross) [4.01 pm]: It is appropriate at this stage of the debate to re-emphasise the position of the Opposition on this legislation. I said in the second reading debate and in the Committee stage that the Opposition supports heritage legislation, but does so on the basis that equity should prevail with regard to people's rights to properties that may be covered by this legislation. It should be emphasised that legislation should not be introduced which subverts the individual's rights to his property without putting in place rights of appeal against arbitrary decisions that may be made by the Heritage Council. Also, any legislation that affects owners of these properties should provide proper compensation for the injurious affection that a conservation order or the like may have on a person's property rights.

The Opposition was very pleased that during the Committee stage the Government accepted the amendments that were proffered by the Opposition in an endeavour to improve the legislation. The Opposition is grateful that the Government accepted those amendments because it believes they will improve the legislation for the benefit of the community at large. I also stress to the Minister and the Government that the Opposition considers it necessary to include in the legislation compensation provisions and appeal rights with regard to decisions made by the Heritage Council relating to the adequacy of compensation, specific and narrow though it may be, and dismissing compensation. It is natural justice for the Bill to include rights of appeal against any arbitrary decisions. The legislation contains only one right of appeal, and that is against an order being placed on a person's property. That is inappropriate.

The Opposition commends the legislation with those non-negotiable caveats; that is, the right of people to be compensated for injurious affection, and also their right to appeal against what they consider to be inappropriate decisions by the Heritage Council. On no account should the legislation be passed without containing those provisions.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

EXPLOSIVES AND DANGEROUS GOODS AMENDMENT BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

MR CARR (Geraldton - Minister for Mines) [4.06 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a third time.

During the course of the Committee stage a number of questions were raised by members of the Opposition and I undertook to defer the third reading during my absence and to provide information to the House today. I asked members of my department to read the debate that took place, to note the questions raised, and to prepare answers to those questions. I have given a copy of that briefing note to the member for Nedlands and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and I will provide the member for Warren, who has just entered the Chamber, with a copy. I will put some of these points on the record.

The Leader of the National Party expressed concern about the agricultural industry and raised the question that some of the products commonly used in agriculture and which were transported around the countryside may be brought under those controls. He wanted it clearly recorded in *Hansard* that the people who transport reasonably large quantities of these products will not be in any way affected by the legislation. I can assure the Leader of the National Party that of the two products mentioned, namely urea and ammonium nitrate, only ammonium nitrate will be affected in the way referred to by the Leader of the National Party. Urea is not used in the explosives industry. The Western Australian regulations controlling the transport of ammonium nitrate have applied since 1984 with no adverse effect on the farming community. These regulations follow the national code for the transport of dangerous goods and will continue to do so. There will be no change in that area.

Mr Blaikie: If it does have an adverse effect, what will you do?

Mr CARR: It will not have. I suggest that the member for Vasse should obtain a copy of the material provided to the member for Nedlands. The Leader of the National Party also queried the power of the Minister to give permission for certain items to be declared explosives goods, and asked whether that power would be delegated to the chief inspector. I said at the time, and I repeat now, that the advice of the chief inspector will be taken into account but the Minister will make the declaration.

The member for Nedlands asked whether the specific definition of a pipeline would cover the design of piping in a petrochemical plant. The answer I gave at that time was correct; namely, that the definition of "pipeline" does not cover the design of piping on premises. It is intended that the definition cover only those pipelines which carry dangerous goods from one premises to another, and that it include the ends of the pipeline that are on those premises. The design of piping within the premises will not be regulated by these proposed amendments for pipelines. The member for Nedlands asked whether at present any pipelines which are carrying dangerous goods are causing concern to the Government. I am advised by the chief inspector that although several oil pipeline fractures have occurred over the past two or three years, he is not aware of any pipelines carrying dangerous goods which are causing concern for the maintenance of public safety.

The member for Nedlands asked about the explosives dumps at Woodman Point and Byford, and whether the explosives at defence establishments are covered by this legislation. I advise him that the Woodman Point explosives reserve was closed in 1984, and the area is now used for public recreation. Byford and the other facilities referred to by the member for Nedlands are operated solely by the Commonwealth. Section 63(a) of the Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act excludes from the provisions of the Act any dangerous goods which are the property of Her Majesty's military, naval or air forces or any other defence force or volunteer defence force, or police force constituted or established under any Act.

The member for Nedlands asked also about the exemptions for the farming community. While this has been fairly well covered previously, I reiterate that all existing exemptions for the farming community, whether granted by the chief inspector, by authority of section 62(5) of the Act, or by the provisions of the existing regulations, will be maintained.

The member for Warren asked whether there would be some redress for those people who may have some impositions placed on them by the chief inspector. Section 52(1) of the Act makes provision for any person who is aggrieved by a decision of the chief inspector to

appeal against that decision to a Stipendiary Magistrate sitting in a Court of Petty Sessions. The member asked also whether it is intended that there will be a list of the chemicals to which this legislation applies. I advise that the list of chemicals to which the legislation applies is published from time to time in the *Government Gazette* in accordance with section 42 of the Act; vide Explosives and Dangerous Goods (Classification of Dangerous Goods) Order 1988.

I hope these remarks will satisfy the queries raised by the Opposition during the previous debate.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [4.13 pm]: I thank the Minister for giving us in writing some of the replies to the questions raised during the debate. More often than not when we are told by Ministers that they will look into a matter and give us an answer, that is the last we hear of it, so we appreciate it when we actually get the answers in writing.

I know the Minister will have the right of reply in his third reading speech, and I have to be careful that I do not bring up new material during the third reading debate, but there has been a big controversy in recent weeks about the problems at the Port of Esperance, which resulted in the resignation of the head of the department. It may be possible for the Minister to give us a few words of explanation about what happened because the Opposition was not privy to all the details surrounding that action from a public safety point of view. The Minister for the Environment was also involved in this matter, and he may also be able to give us an explanation. The Opposition does not propose to make an issue about this at this stage because we presume that something must have happened behind the scenes to which we were not privy.

MR PEARCE (Armadale - Minister for the Environment) [4.15 pm]: I am happy to respond briefly in relation to the sequence of events in which I was involved in respect of the importation of ammonium nitrate through the Port of Esperance. The situation as I understand it is that ICI, the company which proposed to import the ammonium nitrate, had been purchasing ammonium nitrate from CSBP, and it was being manufactured in Kwinana. There was a dispute between the two companies about the continuity of supply, and as a result ICI sought to import ammonium nitrate from overseas through the Port of Esperance. The Esperance Port Authority grabbed that opportunity, as any small port would do, because it recognised the advantages of a potential new cargo, and it was very keen to see that arrangement adopted. The necessary arrangements were made, and the two vessels put to sea.

The next thing that occurred was that one of the officers of the Department of Mines became concerned about the safety levels that were involved in the importation of that cargo. He brought his concern to the attention of the Esperance Port Authority and pointed out to the authority that he had no power of his own to intercede in the matter but asked the port authority to reconsider its position. The authority reconsidered its position but reiterated its original position that it was satisfied that the cargo could be imported through the Port of Esperance without any problem. I am not sure how or why the following happened, but the matter was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority, not by the Esperance Port Authority but by somebody else; I am not sure by whom. The EPA submitted the matter to a public environmental assessment. The result of the assessment was produced in a bulletin, which recommended that importation not be allowed on the grounds that because of the location of the jetty at the unloading facility in the harbour at Esperance, there was a risk that if there was a fire the toxic fumes could cover a proportion of Esperance. In fact, were we to draw a line representing the one in a million per year hazard contour, centred around the spot where the ship would unload, it would take in only four houses in the townsite.

The EPA assessment was open to appeal, and a number of people appealed to me - including ICI, a number of the goldmining companies who were to be the beneficiaries of the product, the Esperance Port Authority, the Esperance City Council, and others - on the basis that the EPA assessment was inadequate. The appellants supported their point of view by providing a detailed hazard analysis that had been prepared by Bureau Veritas, an international firm of consultants on hazard analysis. Therefore, I was in a position, as the person to whom the appeals were made, of having to go through the documents to sort out who was right and who was wrong, because by then feelings were running strongly on both sides. In the end I decided to allow the importation, subject to the very strict conditions laid down in the Bureau

Veritas report; that is, that the things that needed to be done to protect Esperance from a potential fire did occur, and that the unloading was done safely.

I saw the report in the Press of the resignation of the gentleman to whom the member referred. My understanding was, at least from his comments to the Press, that he neither confirmed nor denied that his resignation was a result of this matter. All I can say is that I just acted in the normal way. A public environmental assessment was produced; people appealed against it; and I settled the appeal on the basis of what seemed to me to be the fairest thing.

MR CARR (Geraldton - Minister for Mines) [4.19 pm]: I might say briefly that from a Department of Mines' point of view, there were some differences of opinion at the time in relation to the views of particular officers, and one officer did feel somewhat concerned. My understanding is that he had been considering early retirement for some time but certainly his resignation did in some way relate to that issue at Esperance.

It is fair to say that the issue has raised the question of responsibility in terms of which agencies ultimately have responsibility, and it has also raised questions relating to the respective roles of the Chief Inspector and the Minister. It is fair that I should be looking closely, in particular, at the question of the power of the Chief Inspector in relation to the power of the Minister. Some differing verbal legal advices were given at the time, and I think it would be appropriate for me, as the Minister responsible for the Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act, to be looking closely at the question of the respective powers of the Chief Inspector and the Minister. Clearly in a situation of a technical nature, it is important that the views of the Chief Inspector be given very great importance. At the same time, if a decision is made which is not correct, the elected people will ultimately bear the responsibility. That is something which I think is a legitimate question for me to look at, and I will be looking at that issue.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

SUPREME COURT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 22 August.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [4.21 pm]: This is a comparatively short and fairly simple piece of legislation, yet under some circumstances it may have considerable relevance to the expedient and effective business and work of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. The legislation deals with the required qualifications for a Master of the Supreme Court. It expands the scope of these qualifications to include practice, but only judicial practice, in a country outside Western Australia, but only a so-called common law country or common law jurisdiction.

Mr D.L. Smith: I wondered how you personally felt about that?

Mr MENSAROS: I will tell the Minister that in a minute. The requirement for five years' standing remains, but this could include judicial practice, as specified, somewhere else.

Originally, as the Bill was introduced, the qualifications were intended to expand to any practice, not only judicial practice, outside Western Australia and to anywhere outside Western Australia, not only in a common law jurisdiction. The amendments moved by the Opposition, and accepted without any criticism by the Government in another place, leave something to think about. Personally I would query their wisdom and absolute propriety. Without having any inside knowledge of the circumstances which prompted this amending legislation, I take it from the debate in the Legislative Council that the necessity for the amendment arose from a particular case which was mentioned in the debate there. That was actually stated by the Opposition spokesman and was not contradicted by the Attorney on behalf of the Government. Obviously, in this particular case the person to be appointed had judicial experience outside Western Australia; hence the amendment restricted the extension of qualifications to outside judicial practice, as opposed to general legal practice, because such a restricted extension of the required qualification suited that particular case.

I have two comments about this restriction. The first is whether it is desirable and absolutely proper to legislate for individual cases - or, as they were called, particular cases - even if the intention of the legislation is such. Of course, once the intention, particularly an exclusive intention, is accepted - and that is what I implied just a moment ago - the non-acceptance of the legislation which targets that individual's appointment might rightly be called hypocritical. In my view, when the conditions of a position - be that a judicial or other position - is legislated for, it is more desirable to set general conditions down according to the objective merit of the requirement. This is so from a theoretical as well as a pragmatic point of view. Unless the legislation covers only a one-off case it could well be argued that a judicial practice is in all cases superior to a general legal practice.

The Minister will well know that there are countries or jurisdictions, even in what the Bill calls common law jurisdictions, where judges are restricted to one field of law. They might be criminal law judges who deal only with criminal law and not with any civil cases. There are even more specific fields of experience for judicial people; for an example we do not have to go further than the Family Court of Western Australia. Under such circumstances, a general practitioner might very well have a much broader experience which, after all, is required for the position of Master of the Supreme Court, a very important position in our highest judicial system.

My second comment and query about the restrictive scope of the required qualification is that the judicial practice should be in a common law country or a common law jurisdiction if outside Western Australia. My personal preference is for common law jurisdiction as opposed to Statute law jurisdiction, and I would prefer to use that expression as against "civil law", as must be well known to anyone who listened to my arguments during the four or five years when I was legal spokesman for the Opposition. Nevertheless, the question is the definition of a common law country. There is no statutory definition; therefore it remains for our judgment to decide whether we deal with a common law country or a Statute law or civil law country, as was mentioned in the second reading speech.

To try to arrive at a definition through exemplification, there is no doubt in anyone's mind that England, or even the United Kingdom, has a common law jurisdiction. They do not even have a written Constitution, and convention, custom and case law decided by the judicial authorities prevails. Yet in England the hierarchy of rules - that is, the hierarchy of objective law; Statute, by-laws, and so on - really places the Statute law before the custom, so that the Statute law prevails over custom.

However, in most countries on the Continent, although they might not be considered common law countries, custom prevails over the Statute law. Very few people know that a persistent custom can disqualify even an unrepealed Statute. Thus I suppose it is not very easy to define concisely what is a common law jurisdiction. For instance, is the United States of America a common law or a civil law jurisdiction? It has a written Constitution which, however, can be and is amended outside the constitutional provisions by the Supreme Court via so-called interpretation. That, of course, is the case in the Commonwealth of Australia; with the High Court of Australia we only have to go back to the Franklin Dam case in Tasmania. If the United States is not a common law jurisdiction, an ex-American judge without five years' practice in Western Australia cannot be appointed as a Master of the Supreme Court. I do not know whether that is a desirable situation; I am only posing the question after having analysed the provisions of the Bill.

This Bill - as was implied in the second reading speech made by the Minister for Justice - is only an ad hoc forerunner of more comprehensive provisions to specify the qualifications required by judicial appointees, generally, where the whole or part of their practice is outside Western Australia. This statement by the Minister proves that the Government is hell bent on legislating for every minor issue rather than on preserving the law-making machinery for comprehensive general provisions. No wonder - as I have repeatedly said before - that Western Australia, with a population only one thirty-sixth of the population of Great Britain, enacts two and a half times more Statutes yearly than does Great Britain.

Finally, anyone listening to my argument could justifiably ask why the Opposition supports the Bill. The answer is that the Bill will enable the executive Government to implement its executive duties, even though that will be via the Supreme Court or the Chief Justice. In this case, in my humble opinion, which might be different from that of many of my colleagues,

the Opposition should not obstruct the Government's administrative aims. Therefore, I do not oppose the legislation.

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell - Minister for Justice) [4.33 pm]: I thank members opposite for their support of the Bill and the member for Floreat for his contribution to the debate. As always, he has brought his special expertise to play concerning the provisions currently before us. I share some of his concerns about the amendment made in the other place, but for a different reason; that is, as Minister responsible for equal opportunity legislation I am keen to see fewer barriers to people who are qualified overseas entering their professions in Australia. The amendment, which restricts appointments to this position by people who have experience in common law countries, is such a barrier. However, I also endorse the lucid reasons of the member for Floreat for his concerns and I assure him that I will convey them to the Attorney General so that when the general review of judicial appointments is undertaken those views can be taken into account. I agree that a problem exists because many of these amendments come to Parliament in a piecemeal fashion and it would be preferable to reduce the amount of legislation by single amending Bills being introduced each year rather than by a number of amending Bills for the one Statute. However, I understand there is a crisis at the moment in relation to attracting judicial officers, particularly Masters. It is considered that filling the Masters' positions at the moment is difficult and for that reason these amendments should be introduced urgently. For that reason, the Government appreciates the support given by members opposite, despite the concerns expressed by the member for Floreat. I recommend the acceptance of the Bill by the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee and Report

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 30 August.

DR TURNBULL (Collie) [4.37 pm]: I will briefly summarise some of the statements I made about the Bill two weeks ago in this House: First, the National Party supports the existence of regional development authorities. It believes that regional development authorities can play a major role in the future of Western Australia, first by the devolution of Government decision making, particularly Government department decision making, and second, by the devolution of Government to the grass roots of society; that is, devolving a centralised Government here in Perth to local government. We must ensure that democracy is relevant to the people of our society. With Western Australia covering such a vast area, regional development authorities can facilitate and coordinate development of local initiatives and ensure that those bureaucratic impediments placed on development throughout Western Australia are kept to an absolute minimum.

Regional development authorities must assist local government. Local government must not be usurped or undermined by development authorities. It is the philosophy of the National Party that local government must be the strong arm of democracy. It must not be destroyed. We know that one of the reasons for the formation of regional development authorities is related to the Fabian Society and Whitlam philosophies of two tiers of Government. That has been a favoured philosophy of a number of people in the socialist section of Australia. They want a strong Federal Government and a number of regional governments. We must fight this issue wherever it raises its head. The National Party does not support the area advisory committees as proposed by this Bill. It does not support an organisation which will compete with local government.

When talking about the politics and tactics of the Government in proposing area advisory committees, the National Party believes that the Government is creating re-election bodies for the seats of Mandurah, Collie and Manjimup. Interestingly, these three seats were lost by the Labor Party in the 1989 election. We have documentation - as the member for

Mandurah will tell members later - to show that the office in Mandurah expanded from one officer to seven personnel under the direction of the former member for Mandurah. I am not being rude. I am reiterating what most people say about the office in Mandurah, that it was a re-election ploy.

Mr D.L. Smith: You are casting aspersions; you are not telling the straight facts.

Dr TURNBULL: It is appropriate that we are debating this Bill to expand the South West Development Authority today because the Minister for South-West who is responsible for the South West Development Authority is planning to reduce the staff from 32 to 28. He has not told us that this is because of a budgetary cut but I presume that is his reason. The Minister is following the Premier's line for reductions in expenditure, and the staff are the most easily expendable. I predict that this reduction of four personnel will comprise two officers and two secretarial support staff from Collie and Manjimup. I also predict that the Minister for South-West will announce that the reduction of staff is as a result of opposition to this Bill by the members for Collie and Mandurah. I want members to know, here and now, that the Minister is setting out to blame me for the loss of the office in Collie.

Mr D.L. Smith: The member for Warren supported the Bill quite strongly, apart from the question of area advisory committees.

Mr Shave: He does not like the politicisation of them.

Dr TURNBULL: The National Party supports the Bill except for the area advisory committees, which are a reflection of Labor's re-election campaign.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

Dr TURNBULL: I predict that the Minister for South-West will cut staff by four and that those four will come from Collie and Manjimup. I predict that the Minister will say that the staff cut is caused by a lack of support for the Bill. That is not so. It will be because this Government has to cut its budget because of huge financial losses through the mismanagement and interference by Ministers of this Government in the financial affairs of Western Australia, including the instrumentalities of this Government. That is why the Government must cut expenditure. Financial losses and budgetary cuts are the reason that personnel have to be shed. That is why the Minister will make the statement - if and when he makes it - about the staff who will be lost. It is interesting that the reduction will be four and not seven. We will not lose the office in Mandurah. I supported the stationing in Collie of resource personnel from the South West Development Authority. Any country town and any local government in Western Australia would welcome resource personnel within their area. If resource personnel are answerable to local needs, that is even better.

Collie has the Collie Shire Council's industry committee. This industry committee was set up in 1987-88 as a result of the shire council's desire to promote its area. The shire had consultations with the Minister for South-West at that time and it was agreed that an officer paid by the South West Development Authority would be stationed in Collie. That officer would be responsible to the Collie Shire Council's industry committee along with some responsibility back on the South West Development Authority. This could have been a very effective formula for the functioning of such an officer in Collie. Such cooperation between a regional development authority and local government would have been welcome. Local government has been starved of funds. Local government can provide the direction, the need and the impetus for development within its area, but it cannot do that on starvation funds.

In summary, the National Party supports the changes to the South West Development Authority with some exceptions. Some of the changes are mechanical, like name changes and changing of roles, but the major thrust of the legislation is the formation of area advisory committees. The National Party does not support the creation of area advisory committees because they could usurp the role of local government. Funding could be channelled through the area advisory committees to implement the will of the Government of the day and that could ensure the election of the Government's candidates. I said in this place two weeks ago that the Government's excuse for advisory committees is that it is a forerunner to the regional development authority. The Minister for South-West also said that two weeks ago.

Mr D.L. Smith: That is quite true.

Dr TURNBULL: That is just a diversionary tactic.

Mr D.L. Smith: It is not in the least.

Dr TURNBULL: It is just a diversionary tactic because the South West Development Authority Act allows such a subcommittee to be formed. The legislation allows a subcommittee to be funded; it allows expenses for people on the committee to attend; and it allows for administrative and support staff funding. A subcommittee could be set up now. Right now there could be area subcommittees, but the real reason the Government wants area advisory committees is to usurp the role of local government. If the Government is keen to have a Peel region it can achieve its aim by establishing a subcommittee of the South West Development Authority or an independent authority.

Another interesting point to consider is the method of consultation with local government about area committees. I understand that Boddington, Pinjarra and Mandurah are in favour of area advisory committees. I expect them to be in favour of them because they have been told it is the forerunner of a regional development authority. Other local government authorities in the area covered by the South West Development Authority have not heard about this Bill. I know that the Shires of Collie, Manjimup, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Donnybrook-Balingup and Boyup Brook have not heard about it. I have not checked with the other local authorities concerned. Of course, I know that the Shire of Boddington has been informed about the legislation and that it welcomes it because of the role it will play. The local authorities which may have had a different opinion about this Bill have not received any notification of it. I do not know whether the south west development advisory committee has heard about it. That is the reason that I believe my interpretation of the Bill - that is, the politics behind it - is correct.

The National Party supports the concept of regional development authorities provided they coordinate and facilitate the activities of local authorities. It supports regional development authorities as being complementary to local government, but it does not support them if they are to compete with local government. If extra money is available from the Government's Budget it should be directed through local government; if extra expertise is available it should be provided to the officers associated with local government. In that respect, the National Party supports only the mechanical factors of this Bill - the few changes which are really administrative changes.

Another change the National Party will support is included in the amendment proposed by the member for Warren, and I will leave it to him to present his case. His amendment has the National Party's support because it is directed at strengthening the role of local government in relation to regional development authority boards.

I warn the Minister again that when he makes the proposed staff cuts to the South West Development Authority and not to his ministerial office, he should not make them in Collie or Manjimup and then blame the member for Manjimup and the member for Collie because the staff have been withdrawn.

MR P.J. SMITH (Bunbury) [4.54 pm]: At the outset I congratulate the staff at the South West Development Authority for their dedication to the ideal and principle of decentralisation. I could go on loud and long about the Government's commitment to decentralisation and its gradual building up of the South West Development Authority, the Mid-West Development Authority and others. The staff involved in those authorities are working hard for the people in their respective areas and they work closely with local government, with the various advisory committees and with the local people. What worries me about the general attacks on the Government by Opposition members over the development authorities, particularly the South West Development Authority, is that regardless of their concern they always say that it is political.

Mr Bradshaw: A lot of it is.

Mr P.J. SMITH: It depends on what one means by political. If members opposite are of the opinion that it means working with the people of the south west to make it a better place in which to live, I am for it. A great deal of progress has occurred in the south west since the authority was established in 1983 and it has occurred not only socially, but also in the general development of industry in the region.

The South West Development Authority has not always been successful in the programs it has supported, but that applies also to Government authorities, different social groups and

business - they cannot win all the time. Members in this place should be supporting the South West Development Authority, its officers and the Government in what they are attempting to do. I deny that development authorities do not work closely with local government councils and that there is not a need for area advisory committees. We all know that local government councils comprise 12 or 13 people who are elected from the general populace. Since this Government has been in office everyone has been given a chance to vote in local government elections and to be a candidate. Members are aware that only certain types of people are elected to council.

Dr Turnbull: Why are the Minister's nominees any better?

Mr P.J. SMITH: I will come to that in a minute.

It is quite possible, because of the way that local government voting is structured, for small pressure groups to be instrumental in having one or two candidates elected to the council. Even though individual councillors are entitled to have their say they may not be in the majority and it is the majority of councillors who tend to represent certain areas of the constituency. It is necessary for as many areas in the community as possible to be represented.

Dr Turnbull: How on earth can the Minister think that he is better at choosing who the representatives for an area should be than are the local people?

Mr P.J. SMITH: The local people put forward the names of people to serve on the South West Development Authority's advisory committee and I presume that the authority and the Minister actually select them.

Dr Turnbull: Anyone can nominate himself to the Minister and he chooses who he wants. That person may have been on his election campaign committee or he may be a supporter of the Labor Party.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I recall that on one occasion the Minister selected the member for Collie and I do not think she served on his campaign committee. The member for Warren was also selected.

Dr Turnbull: That is right and that was his prerogative at the time. Does it mean that I represent the people of the south west better than Joe Bloggs? I wasn't elected to the committee.

Mr P.J. SMITH: No, of course not. At the moment the membership of the advisory committee is wide ranging because the development authority is in constant contact with local government authorities. The development authority requires feedback from people in industry and from people involved in the area like the member for Collie and the member for Warren, who was a local government councillor at one time. It is important to obtain a wide range of opinions in order that they reflect community opinion. Those opinions should not reflect such things as footpaths, controlling dogs and the many other things handled by local authorities.

Dr Turnbull: Local government is constrained to rates, roads and footpaths because of their rating programs. They are starved of funds. If the South West Development Authority channelled even half of its funds to local government it would be a help. My argument is that area advisory committees are not elected, they are ministerially appointed.

Mr P.J. SMITH: The member is trying to say that the area committees or the South West Development Authority committees should be elected from all the people in the south west.

Dr Turnbull: I am saying there is no point in it because there is local government and they can have a local government industry advisory committee similar to that which operates in Collie.

Mr P.J. SMITH: Those people tend to be elected from certain areas and to be looking at rates, taxes, footpaths and so forth. There is more to living in a country area than worrying about footpaths and drainage - there are social services and the people involved. Members opposite will find that many shire councils in fact say, "We want nothing to do with welfare or community services." I can remember being in this House when Opposition members have said, "We do not want local government to have anything to do with this and will oppose that clause of the Bill."

Several members interjected.

Mr P.J. SMITH: If members opposite still agree with that approach then surely that is a section of the community that needs to be represented so that it can pass advice to the South West Development Authority, which is trying to look after all aspects of the community, and which finds out what is needed so that it can make representations to the State or Federal Government.

Mr Blaikie: I can understand why the member is carrying on in the way he is; he is worrying about local government.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I am not worried about local government, which is a part of the community.

Mr Blaikie: The member is attacking Dr Manea.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I am not attacking Dr Manea. He is one of the few people who has said he thinks the Bunbury City Council should have something to do with welfare, which is different from the approach of people on the other side. I cannot see where I am attacking him.

Mr Blaikie: What is the member doing to Dr Manea at the moment?

Mr P.J. SMITH: I am doing nothing to Dr Manea; I support the way he is running the city. I gather that the member is trying to draw an inference about the harbour city development. The council has had difficulty understanding what is going on with that development. Is the member opposite now going to read from the front page of the *South West Times* where it says we are attacking Dr Manea?

Mr Omodei: The member said that people on this side oppose social welfare being taken over by local government. There are already Federal and State welfare bodies and now the member is suggesting there should be a local government authority, and the South West Development Authority as well.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I am not suggesting they take it on at all. I am answering the member for Collie by pointing out that a large section of the community believe a need exists for an integrated feedback to a central body such as a development authority.

Dr Turnbull: That is good; let it go back to the South West Development Authority advisory committee. However, we do not need little subregional committees.

Mr P.J. SMITH: We do, because that is the way to get feedback on the total area. Local shires do not believe what the member for Collie is suggesting is the way to do things. Some local shires, and some members of Bunbury City Council, say they want nothing to do with welfare, or with people who are not ratepayers.

Dr Turnbull: What will the basic advisory committee do when all these little sub-area advisory committees are appointed? Will it be disbanded?

Mr P.J. SMITH: I would not do anything about it, as that is not my concern at this stage. I am looking at area committees because, having worked in an area like Bunbury, I know how many groups work within the community, and often with little input or interest from the city council. Many of those groups have to say to the city council, "Please send someone along so that we can tell you what is happening in the area and what we need." The proposed setting up of area committees is the way to go.

Dr Turnbull: Of course they are, so far as the member for Bunbury is concerned, because then people can run off to them instead of asking local government to do the job it should be doing.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I do not see that local government cannot be part of this committee system. In fact, it would play an integral part.

Dr Turnbull: It does not say that in the Bill.

Mr P.J. SMITH: No. It is obvious that a couple of councillors would have to be on the committee because it always happens that way. People who are elected from certain sectors are also elected to the council. They are often people involved in sporting groups, sometimes in social groups, and sometimes in industry groups. Local government is not involved in those bodies in any way. At the moment about half the members of the South West Development Authority advisory committee are members of shire councils. The thing that

annoys me is the constant assertion that this is all done for political reasons. We are doing this to get the local people elected. As I said previously, one can attribute politics to anything. The thing that worries me most about all this, as I have said before, is that whenever something is working it has this "politics" label attached to it.

Mr Fred Tubby: It is obvious; one was set up in Collie, one in Manjimup and one in Murray, three seats won by the Government at the last election.

Mr P.J. SMITH: Where would the member for Roleystone set up one of these committees apart from in Bunbury? The member does not answer.

Mr Omodei: What the member for Bunbury is saying is not true because politics were involved prior to the 1986 election. The member for Collie and I can vouch for that fact because Baden Pratt was at the advisory committee meetings and we know he was Premier Burke's right hand man.

Mr P.J. SMITH: As I understand it, Baden Pratt was working for the Minister at the time. I was not sitting in on committee meetings, nor were candidates, apart from the two members opposite.

Dr Turnbull: We were kicked off the committee because we became candidates.

Mr P.J. SMITH: As soon as someone becomes a political candidate, of course they step down. I note that the member for Collie is able to regularly quote into *Hansard* the things which went on when she was a member which she observed happening - sometimes good things, and other times things she thought were not right.

Dr Turnbull: One thing I tried to do was ensure that the policy of the Labor Party at that time, which was recentralisation, was not implemented. Despite the fact that I moved three motions relating to the matter, nobody took any notice. The advisory committee was saying, "Do not rape the countryside to fill up the tower in Bunbury," but nobody took any notice.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I do not agree with the member for Collie that the countryside has been stripped or raped to fill up the tower in Bunbury, because most of the people involved held jobs which were relocated from the city, which is the sort of thing country members right around the State should be trying to do; we should be trying to get jobs relocated from the city to the country and should be encouraging genuine decentralisation. We should not be doing what often happens in this place; that is, country members attacking country members. Country members should not be saying, "We do not have a development authority," or "Bunbury is getting more than Manjimup or Avon." Irrespective of what members opposite say, the message that goes out clearly to country electorates is that country members are fighting each other, that there is something going on in Bunbury that is causing other areas to be disadvantaged.

We should be attacking the metropolitan area, the people who sit up here in charge of departments, guarding their little territories as tightly as they can to ensure that as little work as possible goes to the country. They centralise matters in this central area. We should be saying, "Look at Bunbury and the south west, we should be getting things equally in other areas." We should not be saying, "Bunbury is getting too much and we should be getting a share of that."

Dr Turnbull: I endorse the remarks made by the member for Bunbury in the past few minutes.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr P.J. SMITH: I support the Bill and in particular the setting up of area advisory committees.

MR BRADSHAW (Wellington) [5.09 pm]: The Opposition supports an increase in the number of board members from three to seven, believing that is a step in the right direction. Some of the comments made by the member for Bunbury were interesting. He talked about how we label the South West Development Authority as a political tool of the Labor Party. When it was first set up, it was. To some extent, for the past two years it has settled down and has not been the political tool it was set up initially to be.

The member for Bunbury said earlier that the South West Development Authority had close liaison with local government. That is a load of rubbish. I remember when the then Premier announced in Bunbury that an aluminium smelter would be established in the south west. It is interesting that the smelter was to be at Kemerton, in what was then the electorate of Murray-Wellington. The announcement was made in Bunbury, for obvious reasons, because the Government needed to retain the seats of Bunbury and Mitchell.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

Mr BRADSHAW: It was still a snub to the Shire of Harvey because the Minister at the time had not spoken to them about it but just made the announcement. The announcement was made in Bunbury, and the two members of Parliament - the Smith brothers - sat up there in full view, yet the Government is saying the South West Development Authority was not political. What a load of rubbish! It was a political tool, and it was forever pushing out propaganda about the Labor members of Parliament.

Dr Alexander: The Shire of Harvey said it did not want the smelter anyway.

Mr BRADSHAW: That is not true.

Several members interjected.

Mr Kobelke: Tell us all the things the previous Liberal Government did for Bunbury and the surrounding area.

Mr BRADSHAW: We did quite a bit.

Mr Kobelke: Bunbury Foods!

Mr BRADSHAW: That is still going. What is wrong with it? Is the member suggesting it should be shut down? That is an asset to the south west. It is not like the Government's lead balloon, the petrochemical plant, which is a vacant block of dirt which cost \$400 million plus. The member should keep his mouth shut because what he is talking about is a load of rubbish.

Mrs Beggs: You are very angry over there today.

Mr BRADSHAW: Members opposite stir us up by trying to give us balderdash about how the South West Development Authority was not political.

Another interesting thing is that when Vince Papparo, the former chief executive officer of the South West Development Authority, came to that position I wrote to him and said it was about time the South West Development Authority recognised other local governments in the south west, not just those in Bunbury, and held some of its meetings at local governments around the south west.

Mr D.L. Smith: That is now being done, you realise.

Mr BRADSHAW: I know, but there are not very many around the place. They started up after I had written to Vince Papparo, but some of them have since fallen into a hole. I thought that was a smart idea because by getting around, the South West Development Authority could find out what was going on and give people an opportunity to be listened to.

I said earlier that increasing the board of management from three to seven members is a good idea, but I hope the South West Development Authority will be more careful with funds than it has been in the past. Last year I went to Hong Kong to attend what the South West Development Authority called a trade fair.

Mr D.L. Smith: I was trying to keep the fact that you went a secret. Now you have let it out of the bag!

Mr BRADSHAW: That is all right. I went for a reason, because I was not very pleased with what I had heard about the 1987 trade fair, and when I heard there was to be another one in 1989 I felt it might be a good idea to find out what it was all about. So I rang up the South West Development Authority and asked if I could go - I did not want it to look as though I was trying to sneak in the back door to check up on them - and I was told to send them the money, and it would be all right. However, a couple of days later I got a telephone call to say I was not wanted.

Mr D.L. Smith interjected.

Mr BRADSHAW: It did for a while but then things got a bit rough. So the next day I spoke to the then Minister for South-West in Parliament and asked him to intervene because I had just been told I was not wanted on the trip. A couple of days later he told me that it was all fixed. A certain person working for me - I am not sure whether he is still with the South West Development Authority or whether he has moved to the Department of Trade - said the decision should not be made by me but by the then Minister for Economic Development and Trade, and I told him that was his problem. At that stage I thought everything was all right, but a couple of weeks later, about two or three weeks before we were to go to Hong Kong, I again received a telephone call to say I was not wanted and that the Minister for Economic Development and Trade had said so. So I made a phone call to him, and he eventually relented and said I could go. It would not have worried me whether he had said I could or could not go; I was going to go with that delegation regardless.

I found that trade fair to be an absolute waste of money. It is not wrong to have a trade fair in Hong Kong but I was concerned about the way it was presented. I believe a trade fair should take place in a forum where displays can be set up, where people in industry can be invited to look at our products, and where we can talk with the people who are the proponents, manufacturers or suppliers of those products. However, this trade fair took place at a counter in a department store in Hong Kong, where the people on the delegation set up their products. They gave away a few samples, and if customers happened to walk in off the street, they would sell them a few things at retail prices. If that is a trade fair, I will go he! That is a joke, and a waste of time. I would not have had any problems if this had been a true trade fair, and I would not have cared if it had cost double the amount of money to promote it. The trade fair in 1987 actually cost twice as much - \$110 000 - and this one cost only \$71 000.

What worried me about this trade fair - and I will call it that for want of a better name - is that the South West Development Authority paid the fares, wages and expenses of five models, plus two women to look after them, who modelled Liz Davenport clothing at various hotels in Hong Kong. I have got nothing against Liz Davenport. She is a great Western Australian, and makes some beautiful clothing, but the interesting thing is that Liz Davenport does not have an outlet in Hong Kong.

The South West Development Authority also paid the fares, wages and expenses of three people from the Mucky Duck Bush Band, who played at various hotels in Hong Kong. They had an agent in Hong Kong. Two people from the South West Development Authority also went to Hong Kong, along with one person from the Department of Agriculture and one from the primary products promotion unit. A journalist and a cameraman from the Golden West Network also went to Hong Kong. The then Minister for South-West had only just been appointed, and it just happened that the journalist came from Kalgoorlie. That may have been a coincidence, but their fares and expenses were also paid by the South West Development Authority.

Mr D.L. Smith: This was not the trip you went on but the one before.

Mr BRADSHAW: This was the one I went on.

Mr D.L. Smith: Tell us where you went and whether you thought you benefited from going.

Mr BRADSHAW: I benefited from seeing the waste of money by the South West Development Authority.

Mr D.L. Smith: Tell me about the other advantages that you talked about when you came back.

Mr BRADSHAW: I will think about them while I am talking. I will also talk about what I said to the then Minister for South-West when I got back, because I was not very impressed with his attitude to what I tried to tell him.

Mr D.L. Smith: Was your fare paid for?

Mr BRADSHAW: That is a load of rubbish! Kevin Stratford tried to tell me it was a subsidised theft. We had identical brochures at the hotel about the promotion.

Mr D.L. Smith: You said it was subsidised before you went.

Mr BRADSHAW: I did not think it was subsidised. I had a brochure to see what the fares were and to examine the package deal. It was identical.

Mrs Beggs: Your brother's trip to Italy was subsidised.

Mr BRADSHAW: It might have been. It has nothing to do with this.

Mrs Beggs: What benefit was that?

Mr BRADSHAW: We took two chefs from the south west, and those two chefs went to different restaurants around Hong Kong. I am not sure what they did for the south west.

Mr D.L. Smith: What were they cooking at the hotels?

Mr BRADSHAW: They were probably cooking some south west food.

Mrs Beggs: They were cooking produce from the south west - probably Harvey beef and marron farmed in the south west. I understand many of those hotels began to import those products from the south west as a result, because they became a regular part of their menus.

Mr BRADSHAW: I doubt that very much. The trade fair in Hong Kong was sponsored by the South West Development Authority, and only five different categories were represented. We had four people from Esperance with abalone. Two men and their wives came from Margaret River with rainwater. Somebody was promoting non dairy ice confections. There was somebody from Perth promoting lobster and prawns, and someone else I cannot think of at the moment. That made up about five. The propaganda put out by the South West Development Authority was to the effect that more than 20 companies and 29 participants were involved. I have listed those people paid for by the South West Development Authority, like the five models and the two people supporting them, the Mucky Duck band and the chefs. I suppose they accounted for the 29, but as far as the 20 companies were concerned, that was a put up job. Bottles of wine were on display, and I suppose one could have bought them retail if one wanted to. Brownes orange juice was on display, and for sale; but those companies which had sent those products were not represented in Hong Kong, except by the people from the South West Development Authority. The Brownes orange juice and wine and other products were there to make up the 20 companies promoting products up there. These displays would have been put on by the South West Development Authority. The products were sent to Hong Kong to help fill up the displays and for no other reason. Only one participant was from the south west. That does not worry me, because if we sell products from Western Australia, that is good, but this was not what I would call a trade fair; it was an absolute insult.

This was the second trade fair; the previous one was in 1987. The former Minister for the South West opened them both. It is a sad state of affairs if he can condone those sorts of trade fairs and trips. No wonder the State declined the way it did while he was the Minister. I spoke to one of the participants in the 1987 trade fair. He said it was miserable and a dead loss. The trade fair was set up in a dead pocket of a department store where nobody went. He described where it was, and I can remember that area. I asked a question about the 1987 trade trip and what resulted from it. The Minister's answer indicated that the promotions had led to the penetration of the overseas market by the south west manufacturers, including jarrah furniture, fashions, perfumes, dried flowers, meat, agricultural products and seafood. One firm established a substantial overseas market after participating in a promotion in Hong Kong. I assume he was talking about an orange juice factory in Harvey. I spoke to the person involved, and he said he got nothing out of the trade fair; he did not sell orange juice or juice of any description as a result.

Mr Blaikie: From what you saw at first hand, the taxpayers did not receive very good value for their dollar.

Mr BRADSHAW: They received an extremely poor return on their money invested.

Mr P.J. Smith: Are you saying we should not try to run a trade fair?

Mr BRADSHAW: I have already said we could have spent twice that amount if we did it properly, but it was not done properly. It would have been preferable to hire a hall or a room in a hotel, and put on proper displays to show importers, wholesalers or restaurateurs in Hong Kong all these fantastic goods; the Mucky Duck band could have provided a little entertainment if required. People would have been able to try the products, and if they liked them, hopefully they would have imported them. This trade fair was like going to a Myer store. People walk in off the street to buy something retail. As they walk past the displays they are given a sample or sold something. When I returned I tried to talk to the current

Minister for South-West, who had just taken over the job. I tried to explain to him that the trade fair was not what I expected, and that I was rather disappointed with it. He made a smug remark, lifted his shoulders and smiled as though he could not care less about it.

Mr D.L. Smith: Has one been sponsored by the South West Development Authority since?

Mr BRADSHAW: I am bringing this matter up today because we have them every two years. On that basis there will be one next year. I hope that the new board will be more responsible with taxpayers' money. I would not care if another trade fair is put on in Hong Kong, provided it is done properly. We have had two which were a dead loss, and I doubt if we received any benefit from them whatsoever. I hope we do have more trade fairs up there, but they must be done properly.

To return to the Bill, the Opposition supports the idea of increasing the membership of the board of management from three to seven. We see the establishment of the area advisory committees as purely setting up a political network in the south west. We do not see it as an advantage to the south west.

Mr D.L. Smith: If there were a Peel development authority now, do you expect it would have its own advisory committee?

Mr BRADSHAW: Yes.

Mr D.L. Smith: Is it Liberal Party policy to have one now?

Mr BRADSHAW: Yes.

Mr D.L. Smith: You would have a development authority, and an advisory committee now, but you will not have even an advisory committee now?

Mr BRADSHAW: This is different. The Bill permits the setting up of area advisory committees all over the South West Development Authority area.

Mr D.L. Smith: That is correct.

Mr BRADSHAW: If the Government had brought in a Bill and said, "We are now going to set up a Peel development authority and an advisory committee," there would have been no problems.

Mr D.L. Smith: Do you have amendments along those lines?

Mr BRADSHAW: No, but when we are in Government in 1993, that will be fixed.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRADSHAW: If the Government lasts that long; that is correct. It will probably be well and truly hung, drawn and quartered by the people of Western Australia for its mismanagement of the State before then.

Mr D.L. Smith: We will see what happens in 1993.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRADSHAW: We have heard those words before. You can fool the people some of the time but you cannot fool them all the time. Members opposite have been good con artists for the last two elections, and that has come to an end. The public have at last realised the deception, the mismanagement and the corruption which has taken place in this State over the last seven years.

[Leave granted for speech to be continued.]

Debate thus adjourned.

BILLS (2) - RETURNED

1. Builders' Registration Amendment Bill
Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.
2. WADC Liquidation Bill
Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

[Questions without notice taken.]

Sitting suspended from 6.03 to 7.30 pm

SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR BRADSHAW (Wellington) [7.30 pm]: I wonder whether the Minister for South-West has his heart in it. Earlier this year I suggested we should be having the biotechnology park promoted by the Government in the Coogee area transferred to the south west. We have a lot of the raw materials there and we talk about decentralisation. The Government and all parties talk about decentralisation, and here we have an opportunity to do something about it, but the Minister says we will have a second biotechnology park in the south west. Our chances of having a second one are about as slim as a hen's growing teeth. It is beholden on the Minister to try to push for this one. A lot of work has been done in the Coogee area, but we should be looking at decentralisation. It is a bit of a con job on the people of the Fremantle area.

Mr Trenorden: The meeting in Coogee was about the most violent I have ever attended; it was a real sensation.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Government is trying to dress up obnoxious industries to look good in the eyes of the public. Regardless of whether this industry is dressed up or not, the people in that area do not want it and they would like to see it moved somewhere else.

The Minister recently said he does not want a steel mill in Bunbury. He should have had a good look before shooting from the hip.

Mr D.L. Smith: Be careful; I said in the Bunbury harbour area. There is a difference between being in Bunbury and being in the Bunbury harbour area.

Mr BRADSHAW: What is wrong with the steel mill being in the Bunbury harbour area?

Mr D.L. Smith: I suggest you ask the residents of Eaton, Glen Iris and surrounding areas what they think.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Minister could have been a little more positive rather than shooting from the hip. I wonder whether he has his heart in the idea. The people of Bunbury are not happy about what is going on in the south west. The Mayor of Bunbury called a meeting of business people to work out why the economy of that area was being boosted because things are depressed, as they are throughout the rest of Western Australia.

Mr P.J. Smith: The Department of Trade was there. You said the South West Development Authority. The relevant department was there.

Mr BRADSHAW: It does not say much for the South West Development Authority if it was not there. This is an indication of the duplication going on in that area. It was not reported in the newspaper that the department was at that meeting; it said it was a closed shop with the mayor and the business people of Bunbury or the south west.

Mr P.J. Smith: Newspapers report what they want to report and leave out what they want to leave out. You know that.

Mr BRADSHAW: I certainly do. The Opposition supports the increase from three to seven members on the board but does not support having an area advisory committee. We recognise the fact that the Peel area should have its own development authority. These are two totally different regions and they should be kept separate.

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [7.37 pm]: I recently had the privilege of spending a weekend at Bunbury and speaking to a few people at the National Party conference in that city. Bunbury is a great place to visit, and I enjoyed it. We in the National Party get down there fairly often, and we have our own members in that area. They have a fair bit to do in the South West Development Authority.

The South West Development Authority was born out of a good idea but it was hijacked by the Government.

Mr P.J. Smith: You mean financed by the Government.

Mr TRENORDEN: The Government finances its own pocket; that is right. Just before the last election I was in Bunbury and I heard the most blatant advertising in favour of the Labor Government coming from the South West Development Authority. It was an absolute disgrace. I was amazed to hear what was coming across the air waves. It was a blatant push for the Labor Party by the South West Development Authority.

Mr P.J. Smith: When was this?

Mr TRENORDEN: In 1986. It was all about what a great job the South West Development Authority had done in promoting this, that and the other for the benefit of the Labor Party.

Mr Omodei: The South West Development Authority often issues brochures featuring the Minister for South-West and the member for Bunbury. Very seldom do they have the other regional members.

Mr Bradshaw: What do you mean, rarely? Never.

Mr TRENORDEN: The corner has now been turned. I do not believe the South West Development Authority in its present form is becoming involved in those activities, but there was a time when it did become involved. It is a good idea that it was hijacked by the Government, but it still has great problems. We in the National Party have a very great interest in regional development; it is one of our key platform areas and we will keep pushing regional development until 1993, when we start doing it.

The problem with regional development authorities, whether we are talking about the South West Development Authority or the Geraldton Mid-West Development Authority, or the soon to be formed Goldfields-Esperance Development Authority, is that they do not belong to the community. It is quite easy to see that the South West Development Authority is running into problems. It is proposing these small committees in regions because the South West Development Authority is seen by the people of the area as a Government department and has all of the stigma of a Government department.

Mr Read: How did you reach that conclusion?

Mr TRENORDEN: By talking to dozens of people in the area, and also to the board itself, which we did a couple of weeks ago.

Mr D.L. Smith: Have you spoken to Sir Donald Eckersley about it?

Mr TRENORDEN: Yes.

Mr D.L. Smith: Is that his view?

Mr TRENORDEN: He said the current changes proposed by the Bill are attempting to make the South West Development Authority more accessible to the people. When I was in Bunbury we spoke to a number of local councils, who said they are concerned that the South West Development Authority is starting well and truly to step on their toes and is usurping the role of local government.

Mr D.L. Smith: Which ones?

Mr TRENORDEN: Bunbury.

Mr D.L. Smith: Is that it?

Mr TRENORDEN: No; does the Minister want me to name a few others? They get a bit smaller as we move away from Bunbury. I am not here to send the Minister around the councils of the area, harassing them, which is no doubt what he would do. That is the Minister's record - he intimidates them. The South West Development Authority and all regional development authorities are important. Members must understand that if the National Party were in power we would not seek to do away with the South West Development Authority.

Mr P.J. Smith: You would just seek to politicise it.

Mr TRENORDEN: No, we would not. The member for Bunbury will see in 1993 that those authorities will be given back to the people.

Mr P.J. Smith: How will that be done?

Mr TRENORDEN: It will be done as it is done in every country of the world except this

one. We are running on a model which is at least 40 years old. These authorities can be found right throughout Canada, the United States of America, Europe and Great Britain, and I have seen some of them. I have been involved in seminars with Canadian and United States people, and in all of those cases all the State or National Government does with regional development is to become involved with funding - nothing else.

Mr Read: Except make political appointments.

Mr TRENORDEN: They do not make political appointments. Many of them in the United States do not have Government funding at all.

Mr P.J. Smith: What about the British ones, though - the Islands and Highlands Development Authority, for instance?

Mr TRENORDEN: The ones I saw on the mainland - such as the Cotswolds and those sorts of areas - receive a cheque -

Mr D.L. Smith: The Manchester Development Authority, the Shannon Development Authority, the Scottish Development Authority -

Mr TRENORDEN: The Scottish one is more politically driven, I will grant the Minister that; but the ones I saw in central England just received funding, and that funding had very few strings attached. The employees of those authorities were put there by the locals. There was not a single appointment by Government on those local enterprise agencies, as they are called. In fact, that made it a lot better. The person with whom I went through the Cotswolds was like a missionary. I do not know how many hours per week he worked, but it was certainly a great many. He had fire in his belly and would do his job come hell or high water. He was getting paid for 36 hours per week but was working many hours in excess of that because he loved his job and knew what he was doing. He was local and did not have to answer to anyone but his local community. That is what we need to do in this State. It is amazing that the only reason we keep to the system that we have is political advantage. There is no other argument for putting together such bureaucracies in Labor Party seats - and that is the only place they go. The Government thought it would pull off Albany, but it could not, so the regional development authorities are either in Labor Party seats or in seats the Government lost. Why cannot regional development be delivered to all Western Australians? I see the Minister for no regional development looking at me.

Mrs Buchanan: I am listening to what you have to say.

Mr TRENORDEN: Why cannot regional development be delivered to all Western Australians?

Mrs Buchanan: It is.

Mr TRENORDEN: We cannot get two shillings and sixpence in the central wheatbelt - Moora, Narrogin and Avon receive not a zack. The situation in the Narrogin office is quite interesting in relation to regional development.

Mr D.L. Smith: What is the name of the Government building in Northam?

Mr TRENORDEN: McIver House.

Mr D.L. Smith: Right.

Mr TRENORDEN: Right - it helped the Government lose the election. Does the Minister know what that building is called now? It is called Maxwell House!

Regional development authorities definitely have a role, but they should be responsive to the people. Given success in 1993, we will make the South West Development Authority responsive to the people.

Mr D.L. Smith: By setting up local advisory committees - the National Party wants one centred in Bunbury.

Mr TRENORDEN: As soon as the South West Development Authority was set up in Bunbury all those years ago it pulled people out of Collie and other towns and stuck them in Bunbury; now, when everyone has become upset, the Government is trying to do the reverse. It has not been a success.

Mr P.J. Smith: That is not true.

Mr TRENORDEN: It is. I went to a meeting in Collie four years ago and the people there were up in arms.

Mr P.J. Smith: The South West Development Authority did it; or are you talking about the Water Authority?

Dr Turnbull: Who suggested the idea?

The SPEAKER: Order! This is like having a chat in the corridor. It is not a debate, but it ought to be. We ought to get back to debating practices instead of this sort of business. Members have been back from dinner long enough to operate properly, so it is over to the member for Avon.

Mr TRENORDEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point I was trying to make is that we will not take away from the Bunbury people the institution of the South West Development Authority; we will change it and make it responsive to the people. As for the Government's efforts now, it can do what it likes, but it will not be successful because the South West Development Authority will still be seen to be encroaching upon the activities of local government, and will still be seen as a Government department by the people of the south west, who will not participate in it, as they are not participating in it now. That is the truth. I ask the Minister why he is introducing these amendments to the Act. It is a backhanded attempt to make the South West Development Authority work, because it is not working. It is not responsive to the people.

Mr D.L. Smith: I suggest you read the speech of the member for Warren.

Mr TRENORDEN: I would be happy to read the speech of the member for Warren.

The National Party - and the Opposition, I am sure - does not support giving to one section of the State at the cost of another. In Narrogin - which is not in my electorate but if the member for Wagin were here he would fully agree with me - there is a riot in the community because the Government, through regional development and, at the moment, sport and recreation is causing absolute havoc in that town.

Mrs Buchanan: You cannot say that about regional development - I have just put an officer in there.

Mr TRENORDEN: The Minister has just refused to put an officer in there.

Mrs Buchanan: No, you said regional development, and I have just put an officer in there.

Mr TRENORDEN: They were in the building supplied by the Department for Sport and Recreation. It is a precarious situation and I hope that the Minister can sort it out with her fellow Minister, and that Narrogin will be the better for it. At the moment we have a great deal of doubt about that, and this applies particularly in my area. We are struggling in an attempt to get the message through to the Government that we want to do something in our area because we have been ignored. Our funding has been worked out at \$15 a head and in the Bunbury area it has been worked out at \$130 a head!

Mr D.L. Smith: It is \$15.19.

Mr TRENORDEN: The Minister is right; it is \$15 for Bunbury and 19¢ for my area! It is interesting to see the ideas tossed around in the Bunbury area; this area has fantastic potential, and the people of Bunbury need to have a great deal of say in what goes on in the area. Picton is an important development.

Mr P.J. Smith: The people in the area have a big input into what takes place.

Mr Omodei: All they need are a couple of decent members.

Mr TRENORDEN: That is right; they will be fixed up after 1992.

Mr P.J. Smith: They will need to work pretty hard to work harder than the existing members.

Mr TRENORDEN: We will treat the people of Western Australia fairly and make the South West Development Authority fair and ensure that it is not Government driven.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [7.52 pm]: I handled the Bill to establish the principal Act when it came before the Parliament in 1983. While supporting the legislation in those days, its shortcomings were pointed out to the Government and the Opposition recommended amendments to the Bill. Part of those amendments were that local government should, as of

right, be part of the three member management body. It is now history that that never occurred. However, that has been one of the shortcomings of the authority in its quest to attain credibility with local government bodies throughout the south west. The Government is now proposing to make important changes. It seeks to increase the membership of the board of management from three members to seven members and to establish a series of interim management committees as well. It is the Opposition's view that if the South West Development Authority is to have the impact sought by the Government when working with the 14 or so local government bodies in the area, the Government needs to ensure that the local government bodies have representation on the seven member management committee. At this stage the Government is not proposing to include local government.

Mr D.L. Smith: We have always had that in practice.

Mr BLAICKIE: No, it has never been the case in practice. When the South West Development Authority was established who was the first member from local government on the committee?

Mr D.L. Smith: It was Dr Ernie Manea, who had some association with local government.

Mr BLAICKIE: I will argue these points in detail during the Committee stage. Notwithstanding the fact that Dr Ernie Manea had local government experience, he was not a member of local government in all the time that he was the director.

Mr D.L. Smith: That is true, but several members of local government were on the advisory committee.

Mr BLAICKIE: They were appointed subsequently, but not initially.

Mr D.L. Smith: You could check with the member for Warren and ask when he was appointed.

Mr Omodei: When invited.

Mr BLAICKIE: That was not the case with the initial board. We still see the shortcomings of the Minister's legislation in that the executive members of the authority should be representative of local government but they are not.

Mr D.L. Smith: You will be pleased to know that I will probably accede to the request, although not in the present form as it needs to be amended slightly. However, we will discuss that during the Committee stage.

Mr BLAICKIE: Our proposal is for the local authorities of the new enlarged South West Development Authority to be represented from local government. The State could have saved a lot of needless argument which has ensued over the last seven years. This was due in part to the pig-headedness of a previous Minister who failed to receive the message that local government was concerned about how the authority should be operating. Notwithstanding the best intentions of the members of the advisory committee or the executive, a number of concerns were highlighted from time to time. Quite frankly, it frightened local government in that it thought its role had been taken over by SWDA.

I shall indicate a number of occasions on which local government thought it was threatened. In the Shire of Busselton, it was the South West Development Authority initiative for the establishment of a boat facility at Point Picquet. The proposal was put to local government and it was an occasion on which the local government authority had to make a quick decision. Once it made a decision it could not turn back on it, whereas if the local government body had time to consider the proposal and to work the proposal through the local community I have no doubt that a boat facility will have been constructed on the western coast at Dunsborough. However, it was not because the South West Development Authority went about it in the wrong way. No doubt the authority was well intentioned but it did not understand how to approach the project - it used a sledgehammer to open a peanut. Now we have an ongoing controversy in the region with the development of boat harbours.

Another example which occurred some years ago in the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River relates to a Press statement which was released by the then director, Dr Ernie Manea. On the Thursday the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River learned at a council meeting that the South West Development Authority was promoting an airstrip in that shire. The shire needed an airstrip and was attempting to acquire one, and the SWDA was promoting an airstrip of

3 000 metres in length. After the initial wonderful reception by the community that Government was to be involved in construction of the airstrip, the shire had to ring the South West Development Authority to find out about the Press release. It was not told; it found out about it in the Press release. Apparently, the airstrip was to be 3 000 metres long and built in a State forest adjacent to the town. Somebody who had returned from the Philippines at that time and who knew that the Clarke Air Force base in the Philippines which took the largest aircraft in the world was 3 200 metres long thought the Press release sounded pretty good. However, the Government was long on rhetoric and short on facts. The community, in attempting to find out more information, was told that 747s would be flying into Margaret River carrying thousands and thousands of tourists. When the local shire council eventually found out what was going on and tried to retrieve the situation, the horse had bolted and the community had come out overwhelmingly against the proposal put up by the South West Development Authority. Again, the South West Development Authority was well intentioned but it did not go about it the right way. Not only did the local government authority become frightened about what had happened but it also completely rejected the South West Development Authority and all it stood for.

We all remember 1985, 1986 and 1987 when the Government blatantly used the SWDA for political advantage through the Bunbury 2000 proposal. In fact, many people in the south west referred to the South West Development Authority as the Bunbury development authority. I am placing these matters on record because they become interesting when one reads the speeches made in 1983 and compares them with the speeches made in 1990. Development authorities have a lot to offer the State. However, it is not what is done, but the way one does it. I certainly hope that many lessons have been learnt from those events. In fact, the Minister has indicated that those lessons have been learnt and that changes for the better are being made. These changes will take into account the importance of working with local government and not frightening it off as it has in the past.

I was disappointed to learn that, during the 1986 election campaign, the Minister for South-West and the member for Bunbury said that, if the Liberals ever got into power they would abolish the South West Development Authority. That has never been on the Liberal Party's agenda. That was a pack of lies.

Mr D.L. Smith: I suggest that you read your Press releases of that time.

Mr BLAIKIE: I know the Press releases that I made.

Mr D.L. Smith: You are not the Liberal Party.

Mr BLAIKIE: I know the Press releases made at that time and at no time did the Liberal Party intend abolishing the SWDA. It was never part of our platform.

Mr P.J. Smith: That was not the impression you gave.

Mr D.L. Smith: I suggest that you have a listen to a tape of your current leader's statement in Geraldton this year.

Mr BLAIKIE: I will certainly listen to the tape. However, I assure the House that it was never our intention to abolish the SWDA. The impression was created that those wicked, evil Liberals were going to abolish the SWDA. We intended putting in place changes to the structure and membership of the SWDA to make it more representative of the community. It is important to have on the management body key personnel including local government representatives to handle the full operation of the SWDA. It was our policy to ensure that the President of the South West Shire Councils Association would automatically be a member of the executive of the authority.

Mr D.L. Smith: That has always been my intention while I have been Minister.

Mr BLAIKIE: That is our policy and was our policy in 1983. The only problem with having policies while in Opposition is that they cannot be implemented.

I want to put the record completely straight and say that it was never the Liberal Party's intention to abolish the SWDA although it was our intention to make changes of the nature that I have indicated.

At that time, Dr Manea got upset with some of the rumours that were going around. Those rumours had no validity whatsoever. However, that was during an election campaign and

while Dr Manea may have given us a fairly torrid time as he is able to do - he is a pretty competent operator - I now note that he is giving the Government a pretty torrid time which it deserves.

Mr D.L. Smith: You should read the newspaper article thoroughly instead of just a few lines or read the *South West Times* instead of the *Bunbury Mail*.

Mr BLAIKIE: The Minister is suggesting that we should read newspapers selectively.

Mr P.J. Smith: It is not that so much. You are reading a newspaper to get your information. Perhaps you should talk to Dr Manea or to the councillors who discussed the item with the Minister for South-West on Saturday and were told a different story to that which they were told previously.

Mr BLAIKIE: Does Dr Manea want to knock down those silos?

Mr P.J. Smith: Yes, he has always wanted to knock them down and has made no bones about it. He has done everything possible to make sure they come down.

Mr BLAIKIE: What does the member want to do?

Mr P.J. Smith: I want to retain the white historic ones because of their heritage value to the State.

Mr BLAIKIE: The important thing is that the member for Bunbury and the member for Mitchell have a problem; they want to retain the silos and Dr Manea wants them knocked down. I will take bets on who wins.

Mr P.J. Smith: That may be so. The question I always ask is what has it to do with the council what happens in the Bunbury harbour city development when the people of Bunbury voted on that. It was Liberal Party policy to pull them down and guess who won the last election in Bunbury. If it is claiming a majority wants them down and that was what it ran on, they had better look at the figures again.

Mr BLAIKIE: One never knows. Maybe Dr Manea wants to get an endorsement to run for the seat of Bunbury.

Mr P.J. Smith: I do not think Dr Manea would like that sort of worry.

Mr BLAIKIE: That is part of the problem that the Government has. It has run foul of Dr Manea and will continue to run foul of him because of broken promises.

In raising other matters relating to the south west, I want to criticise the Minister for South-West for not delivering the goods as the people have expected. There are many matters that are of great concern to a wide range of people, including the closure of the beds at the Bunbury Regional Hospital. It is disturbing that the Minister has publicly vindicated the Government's reasons for closing the beds at that hospital. The people of the south west believe the Minister should ensure that the beds are not closed, rather than apologise for the Government's closing them down.

Mr D.L. Smith: Why are they closing down?

Mr BLAIKIE: Because the Government has lost hundreds of millions of dollars in devious schemes in which it should have never have become involved. If the Government had money in the kitty, it would not have closed down those beds.

Mr P.J. Smith: You don't know why those beds were closed.

Mr BLAIKIE: If we were in a public forum in Bunbury and each of us put our arguments about why the beds were closed, I bet the public would accept my argument before it would accept the argument from Government members. The Government's poor financial management and its loss of hundreds of millions of dollars is responsible for the reduction in the number of hospital beds.

Mr P.J. Smith: The hospital beds have been closed down because of the difficulty in finding nurses.

Mr BLAIKIE: It is because of the difficulty in finding money.

Another matter that is causing the people of the south west great concern is the Government's decision with regard to the sale of the old Margaret River Hospital. I am

aware that the Minister has defended that decision and attempted to vindicate it. I am the first person to acknowledge that the Government has built a new hospital at Margaret River, but the people in that community understood that the old hospital building would be available to them for community purposes.

Mr P.J. Smith: The community wanted it closed down. The whole election in 1986 was on that basis; they wanted the old hospital pulled down and a new one built.

Mr BLAIKIE: The old Margaret River Hospital was no longer suitable for use as a hospital and the community wanted a new hospital. That building has been constructed but the community expected to have the use of the old hospital building. The Government told members of the community that they could have the old building, which they as taxpayers owned anyway, for \$275 000. Imagine the people of Margaret River buying a property they already own and giving the money back to the Government. In similar circumstances in Geraldton a couple of years ago the Government spent \$1.2 million refurbishing the old hospital building and gave it to the community at no charge whatsoever. I am sure the member for Geraldton will suggest that that was completely different. I refer also to the former Queen Street school in Bunbury - which I attended many years ago - which is a magnificent old building now used as an arts and craft centre. It is located on four or five acres in the heart of Bunbury and when that was made available for community purposes it did not cost the people of Bunbury a bean. The Government even helped in the refurbishing of that building. However, the Margaret River community is expected to pay for community use of the old hospital building. That has not happened anywhere else in Western Australia. The Government may propose four different concepts for land exchange, but it still boils down to the fact that the Government is broke and it wants to find money from somewhere. The community will have the use of that old hospital but the shire will be obliged to give several parcels of land to the Government which it can then sell as part of the hospital land exchange program. It is grossly unfair to the community.

Another area of concern to the people in the south west region is the Government's proposal for the mineral sands industry at Beenup and Jangardup, and the Minister's publicly declared preference for road transport in that industry. Were the Minister to take a poll of local opinion he would find - as he is already aware - that something like 95 per cent of the community rejects road transport as the medium of operation.

Mr D.L. Smith: That is not the view of the shadow Minister for South-West.

Mr BLAIKIE: The member for Warren is entitled to his view and I am expressing mine. The Minister for South-West is one of the few Government members who has championed the cause of road transport. As far as I am aware he is the only Minister who has rejected rail transport entirely.

Mr D.L. Smith: I have not rejected it entirely.

Mr BLAIKIE: The people of the south west look to the Minister for some guidance. In my view about 95 per cent of all the people in the south west prefer rail rather than road as the method of transport in this industry. The people are concerned that the Minister for South-West has ignored their view.

Mr D.L. Smith: You are simply wrong, as you often are.

Mr BLAIKIE: I invite the Minister to indicate what percentage of people he thinks is in favour of road transport.

Mr D.L. Smith: I believe the majority support the two-road option.

Mr Omodei: They do but I would not like to be the member for Bunbury or the member for Mitchell when the trucks start using the roads.

Mr BLAIKIE: Or the member for Vasse or the member for Wellington.

Mr P.J. Smith: It will only double the number of trucks going through the area now. At the moment trucks go through every 10 minutes and it will mean one will pass every four minutes. When I ask people whether they notice the trucks now, most say they do not.

Mr BLAIKIE: I am of the view that before the Environmental Protection Authority delivers its final report it should consider the rail option. I support the development at Beenup and Jangardup, but it is proper for the EPA to investigate the operation of mines and mining sites.

Mr D.L. Smith: I am pleased to hear that.

Mr BLAIKIE: I have always supported this development, subject to meeting stringent controls by the EPA. I have never varied from that view. Just as it is appropriate for the EPA to investigate this mining development and to make recommendations, it is also appropriate for the EPA to carry out similar surveys and make recommendations with regard to road or rail transport, and to consider all the options.

Another area of concern relates to the Kemerton site. In 1987 I attended a briefing on the SCM Chemicals Ltd proposal at which time the Opposition was given 24 hours in which to make up its mind because the Government of the day wanted to introduce legislation quickly. The Government needed the legislation to be passed by the Parliament within 24 hours because the major players were from America and Australia, and the Opposition was given the option of agreeing or disagreeing. We were told that if the Opposition agreed to the legislation employment opportunities would be available for 500 people, and if it refused those jobs would not be available. At that briefing I raised the question of effluent disposal. I made known during the second reading stage my concern that moving the plant from Leschenault to Kemerton would only transfer the problem and not get rid of it. That is what has happened. Currently, Kemerton is producing a toxic waste which is being transported to Dalyallup in the Capel Shire. They are now looking at areas in the Busselton Shire at Ruabon and about a million gallons of waste a month -

Mr D.L. Smith: Have you checked the description of that waste as toxic with SCM?

Mr BLAIKIE: It has been described to me as toxic waste.

Mr D.L. Smith: I hope you have discussed the matter with SCM.

Mr BLAIKIE: It was not SCM Chemicals Ltd's description of it but I have seen the waste and it is highly acidic and not at all pleasant. SCM's brand new state of the art plant at Kemerton, built only two or three years ago, now has to transport its waste - probably a million gallons a month - some 130 kilometres away. That will continue for the life of the plant for the next 50 years. If there has been a lack of foresight and direction that would have to be the daddy of them all. It is that part of the lack of planning that has concerned the Opposition.

I support the moves to improve the South West Development Authority because it has an important function in the south west. The Opposition will be proposing amendments which will enhance the legislation.

MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell - Minister for South-West) [8.22 pm]: I thank members opposite for their support of some of the legislative changes proposed in this Bill. It is unfortunate that they will not support other parts of the legislation but I will deal with that detail during the Committee stage. I noticed while listening to speeches made by Opposition members that there seems to be some confusion in their minds. I am not surprised, because over the last six years the Opposition has not been able to make up its mind on its attitude towards the South West Development Authority; it constantly varies from a position of wanting to abolish the authority to one of congratulating it and its staff for the work that it does.

The one consistent comment that has been made is that somehow or other the South West Development Authority is a political instrument for the Government to support some local members. Members opposite will eventually understand what a development authority actually does. The member for Warren correctly identified one of the problems that a development authority, through its work, is often able to claim all of the credit for many things initiated by the Government. Often these changes are initiated by local members. It can be a frustrating experience, especially as a backbencher, when one notices a Government agency or department receiving the credit for what really has been an initiative of the local member. Anyone who thinks a development authority in that context is supporting local members will learn a different lesson when he or she becomes either a backbencher or a Minister in a Government.

I need only to look around the Chamber to see the political advantages of being involved in the South West Development Authority. The member for Collie began her political career as a shire councillor for the Shire of Collie. She then became a member of the advisory committee of the South West Development Authority and used that as a base to launch her

political career. The member for Warren began his political career as a shire councillor and later president of the Shire of Manjimup. He later became a member of the first advisory committee of the South West Development Authority and in turn used that as a base to launch his political career. The Federal member for Forrest, Mr Geoff Prosser, began his political career as a councillor for the City of Bunbury and then moved to become a consultant to the South West Development Authority. He then launched his career in the field of politics, taking with him the then Press officer of the South West Development Authority as his own Press officer when he first became a member of the House of Representatives. The member for Mandurah also began his political career in local government. The conservative parties have always used local government and organisations such as development authorities as a training ground for likely candidates.

In reference to the Government choosing political people to lead the authority, does the member for Vasse think Dr Manea is a red blooded socialist who supports the Government on every occasion?

Mr Blaikie: Dr Manea is one of those rare people who will oppose a Government at the drop of a hat if he thinks fit.

Mr D.L. SMITH: He will oppose the Government of the day on any issue where, in his view, it disadvantages Bunbury. He is one of the great citizens of the south west. Had there been an election at the time of his appointment as the first director of the South West Development Authority he would have won hands down.

The second managing director of the South West Development Authority is, I am pleased to say, Sir Donald Eckersley. He is not the arch Fabian socialist that some people opposite think he is. He is a man who has spent much of his life in the service of the community, and local government in particular. He sought endorsement as a National Party candidate for the Senate and continues to serve the south west as a distinguished citizen in a completely apolitical way.

One could go through all of the appointments of directors to the advisory committee of the development authority and one would see a consistent message that, in the main, the appointments to the authority are not in any way political. It would be true to say that they have been more aligned to the Liberal Party and National Party than they have been to the Labor Party.

For an organisation to be a political tool it must be an extremely successful organisation. It has to be associated with the Government of the day; it has to be seen as positive, good and effective. For members opposite to portray the South West Development Authority as a political tool is really to say that it has been a potent force for development in the south west, in terms of the economy, the population growth and the development of community facilities and other facilities which the community needs.

Mr Nicholls: Like the silicon smelter which was moved around in the south west region.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The silicon smelter is in the Kemerton industrial park and was developed by the Department of Resources Development in conjunction with the South West Development Authority and the Shire of Harvey. The park now accommodates the SCM Chemicals Ltd chemical works and the silicon plant. The Government hopes that in due course a steel mill and other facilities will be established, subject to environmental assessment and approval.

The member for Warren is the shadow Minister for the South West and one needs to examine what he said in his opening remarks -

I congratulate the members of the authority, and in particular those dedicated staff members who have been most loyal and who take their job very seriously in projecting the south west as a progressive and expanding region of Western Australia. During the time the South West Development Authority has been in place it has undertaken a number of worthwhile projects. The authority has been involved in more than 300 projects since 1983 . . .

Clearly his speech was about the fact that the authority has been a most successful vehicle, yet members opposite are saying the changes they would make to the authority somehow or other would have made it a better authority. The changes which they have promoted from

time to time would have involved local government more directly in the work of the development authority. Under the legislation which currently governs the South West Development Authority, the first function of the authority is contained in section 11 of the Act which reads -

- (a) to provide a framework within which local authorities, statutory bodies, representatives of industry and commerce, employer and employee organisations, . . .

And so it goes on. They formulate coordinated action for the economic and social development of the south west region. It continues -

- (d) to consult, and have regard to the representations of -

. . .

- (ii) local authorities; and . . .
- (g) to provide local authorities in the South West Region with information gained by studies referred to in paragraph (f) and by other research; and
- (h) generally to take steps to encourage, promote, facilitate or assist economic and social development in the South West Region.

In the early stages of the authority two basic thrusts were made by the then Opposition. They were firstly to try to drive a wedge between the local authorities and the development authority. From the first debate in this House, the then member for the South West -

Mr Omodei: Which member?

Mr D.L. SMITH: He made a concerted effort to try to drive a wedge. Hon Vic Ferry did that in a very particular way, visiting every local authority in the south west to promote that view.

The second thing the Opposition tried to do was to endeavour to represent the South West Development Authority as somehow representing Bunbury alone.

Mr Omodei: That is not true, and you know it. You forget that members on this side of the House were in local government at that time, and that is not the case.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I personally visited authorities in the wake of Hon Vic Ferry and attended meetings.

Mr Nicholls: Which councils did you attend where he had been?

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Donnybrook Shire Council.

Mr Nicholls: Had he actually gone there to drive a wedge?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes.

Mr Nicholls: On what issue?

Mr D.L. SMITH: He distributed a copy of the Bill to every local authority in the south west and encouraged opposition to the Bill.

Mr Omodei: Why did you not distribute a copy of the Bill to every local authority?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I distributed copies to the local authorities in my electorate and I discussed the matter with them. It has taken time -

Mr Blaikie: Did you attend the meeting in Donnybrook?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes.

Mr Blaikie: You were aware of their concerns about being represented as of right?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Hon Vic Ferry addressed that council ahead of me. He promoted the notion that somehow or other the development authority was a threat to local government. He concentrated on the notion that it was a Bunbury development authority and it was not focusing on the other areas. A lot of the energy of the authority and a lot of the energy of the Minister at that time had to be exerted in persuading local authorities that that was not the case. Peter Beeson, one of the first executive directors of the authority, spent an enormous amount of time going around to all the local authorities that he could contact and mending the bridges members opposite had destroyed.

Mr Blaikie: You actually chopped him; you got rid of Peter Beeson.

Mr D.L. SMITH: In Mandurah Peter Murray performed a similar role. I was pleased to hear the member for Mandurah speak of the great work he did while associated with the authority in working with local government agencies and the like. Since Sir Donald has been a director, he has done a substantial task in a similar way. He makes sure that he visits all the local authorities on a regular basis and ensures that the board itself visits various areas in the south west on an ongoing basis, admittedly at my request. They have meetings in various towns in the region so that this is seen to be a south west development authority.

Mr Blaikie: Where was the last meeting held?

Mr D.L. SMITH: In Collie.

Mr Blaikie: Sir Donald encourages briefings of all members of Parliament, irrespective of political party.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Not only personally, but he has been directed by me to encourage that. The substance of what I want to say to members opposite is that the greatest disservice we do to ourselves as country members in general, and as members of Parliament representing south west electorates in particular, is the way that we bicker about and attack these agencies. Members do not realise how difficult it is to go into Cabinet when other Ministers have seen the media statements which have been made by members opposite. Whenever the authority is involved in a development, there is a snide remark or suggestion that somehow it is political and the like. In a way members opposite almost encourage local authorities to oppose what the South West Development Authority has been doing. All that does is give the bureaucrats advising Ministers based in Perth an excuse for not following through the things which ought to be happening in the south west.

Mr Nicholls: Do you deny the South West Development Authority has been a tool used by the Government to further its own ends?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I was pleased to get the drift from the speeches of members opposite that they were effectively saying that the work of the authority has been used as some sort of political tool, but over the past two years that has lessened.

Mr Fred Tubby: You have two and a half years to the next election.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I want members opposite to read through all the speeches.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The member for Wellington made reference to it. I have been endeavouring to do that by instructing Sir Donald and the executive director of the authority in terms of their consultation with members opposite. We must get away from using the South West Development Authority, in the view of members opposite, as a political tool to criticise or in some way promote the Government. We must get back to a consolidated effort by all members in the south west, of whatever political persuasion, to get behind the projects going on in the south west, whether in their electorates or not.

Mr Blaikie: You are quite right, and I agree with you totally. Obviously you have been doing some polling in your electorate and you have seen how bad it is.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The member for Vasse will be aware that I do not poll. I have always conducted my political life on the basis that I take a stand. If people do not like it they vote me out of office; if they like it they continue returning me.

Mr Nicholls: You have my full support.

Mr D.L. SMITH: If in 1993 they make a decision to vote me out, it is of no consequence to me one way or the other and I shall accept it. I came to this place with two basic objectives: One is to ensure that the south west gets what I consider to be its fair share of Government attention in terms of development, prosperity and community facilities. The second is to do with my own political philosophy of supporting people I consider to be disadvantaged in our community. Members opposite may disagree with me on the latter, and I can understand that, but I simply cannot understand why we make a political issue of development in country areas. In the end result, all it does is provide excuses. One has only to look at the figures for the employment of public servants. Something like 3.2 per cent of

Commonwealth public servants employed in Western Australia are situated in the south west, which represents 8.4 per cent of the population. On a State basis, 6.2 per cent of all public servants are based in the south west. If we look at health, education, cultural, sporting facilities and the like, there is a strong argument that the south west in particular is disadvantaged in overall Government expenditure. It does no good to say, as the member for Avon did, that the south west is being spoilt in comparison with his region. I could just as easily talk about the Melver centre and all the money spent in the central wheatbelt area and in the upper great southern area; I could refer to the support and various subsidies given to those areas in order to keep industry alive and well.

Mr Fred Tubby: It would not be a long speech.

Mr D.L. SMITH: It would. Replying to the member for Collie, I could also make a long speech about the single worst decision made in Western Australia, especially in the south west and the wheatbelt areas, in terms of the small communities. That decision to deregulate to direct smalls away from Westrail was made by a former Liberal Government. That was a move which decimated many country towns which employed stationmasters and support staff.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D.L. SMITH: The decision was made to deregulate to take Westrail away from smalls.

Dr Turnbull: Who decided that?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Cyril Rushton!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D.L. SMITH: As a consequence that had an enormous impact on country communities.

Dr Turnbull: You cut Collie Westrail from 129 to three in about six months.

Mr D.L. SMITH: All that happened in that process was as a consequence of a Liberal Government's decision.

Dr Turnbull: You moved the bogey work from Collie to Bunbury, and it took about 16 men with it.

Mr D.L. SMITH: There is now no railway line to Boyup Brook, because of a decision taken by a previous Liberal Government.

Mr Pearce: The member for Collie came to see me to get the closure finalised. She should not fib about that. She made representations to get the Boyup Brook line closed.

Dr Turnbull: I have not made a single representation to have that line closed. I asked the Minister when he was going to do that so that we could act in a reasonable fashion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is responding to the member for Collie's comments to which he listened, not in complete silence, but he did not have to put up with that.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I will endeavour to be less provocative. I will return to the thrust of the Bill.

Mr Omodei: The Minister does himself a lot of harm in his argument that there has not been any pork-barrelling. It is well known throughout the south west that Bunbury was used as a pork-barrelling exercise in terms of the South West Development Authority.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I will run through some projects carried out by the Government and the member can say which ones she would not have undertaken. Firstly, the establishment of the Institute of Advanced Education -

Mr Pearce: The member calls that pork-barrelling; we call it decentralisation. That is the difference between the two parties.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D.L. SMITH: I could easily go through a list of towns such as Manjimup, Margaret River, Augusta or Collie.

Dr Turnbull: Would the Minister like to make a list of what he considers is pork-barrelling in Collie?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I did not say anything was pork-barrelling. I asked the member which projects she would not have undertaken. I refer to the Police & Citizens Club, townscaping, the recreation centre, the redevelopment of the hospital - which one represents pork-barrelling? Which project would the member not have undertaken?

Dr Turnbull: The Police & Citizens, the senior citizens, the day care centre and Tom Jones.

The SPEAKER: Order! I wonder whether I can make what I consider to be a fairly reasonable request. If members agree perhaps they can comply with it. I wonder whether the Leader of the House and the member for Collie would like to continue their discussion in another place?

Mr Pearce: I would not. No thank you.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I return to the substance of the Bill. Firstly, the intention of the Bill is to increase the number of directors from three to seven. The Opposition supports that change, and I thank Opposition members for that. Secondly, the Opposition proposes that one of the seven persons should be a nominee of local authorities within the south west region. I assure members opposite that will be the case. While I have been Minister I have ensured that is the case. I am happy to accept the amendment because it does no more than fulfil my intention and will continue the policy of the Government.

Dr Turnbull: What is the name of the current local government representative on the south west advisory committee?

Mr D.L. SMITH: John Brockman. The member for Collie asked me a question a few weeks ago which worried me, so I checked on that point.

The second amendment relates to the advisory committees which the Government wishes to establish. In my second reading speech I made clear that the intention was to develop an advisory committee in the Peel region as a forerunner to the establishment of the Peel development authority but that I did not think that such an authority would be worthwhile until at least 60 000 people were resident in that region. I do not expect that time to be too far off.

Members opposite stated they did not wish to support that move because they fear the establishment of area advisory committees somehow will subvert local government. I do not understand that logic. The official policy of the Opposition appears to be that if it were elected to Government presumably today - but hopefully not for 10 or 15 years - the Opposition would immediately establish a Peel development authority. We presume by a Peel development authority the Opposition means a vehicle similar to the South West Development Authority - although I take the point that it might have a slightly different composition.

Obviously such an authority would have as part of its constitution an advisory committee for the development authority in the same way as in the great southern, the eastern goldfields and the mid-west. So effectively if the Opposition were elected to Government tomorrow it would not only create a Peel advisory committee but also a Peel development authority sitting over the four local authorities with the population around 37 000 persons.

Mr Nicholls: That statement is not correct because during the second reading debate I stated that if we have a separate authority it could interface with local government and local government would become the advisory body, therefore a separate body would not be needed.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I have two concerns about the establishment of a Peel development authority. Firstly, my concern relates to the small population and, secondly, only four local authorities exist in the constituent area. The risk would be that the development authority might be seen to be some super local authority overseeing the others. That has never been the intention.

Mr Omodei: You could relate that to the mid-west.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I would have to consult the Minister in relation to the number of authorities in the mid-west.

Mr Carr: About 19.

Mr D.L. SMITH: And the population is around 42 000?

Mr Carr: Around 45 000.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The geographic area is large. I do not include Kununurra in that.

Mr Omodei: Kununurra has a regional office.

Mr D.L. SMITH: If the member reads his speech at the second reading stage he will note that he included that in the mid-west area.

Mr Nicholls: The Minister referred to a population of 60 000; it is crucial that we talk about advisory committees versus a separate Peel development authority. The figure of 60 000 has been plucked out of the air. Therefore we are looking at another five years before the population has increased sufficiently.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I am much more optimistic about growth in Mandurah than is the member.

Mr Nicholls: Considering the current economic situation, that growth is not moving as fast as one would think.

Mr D.L. SMITH: Cannot members opposite see the illogicality of, on the one hand, arguing that an area advisory committee will take over the role of local government and, on the other hand, saying it would not have an advisory committee but a directorate, presumably with seven directors, with a budget of its own, running its own affairs? Members must see that their position is illogical and I cannot accept it.

Mr Omodei: How many directors are on the Mid-West Development Authority?

Mr Carr: Seven.

Mr Omodei: Seven for 40 000, but the Minister is being critical of seven for 30 000.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I am not denying the logic of eventually having a development authority for the Peel region. I ask members opposite to consider the illogicality of opposing an advisory committee and establishing in its place a development authority with its own advisory committee. That is a matter of plain logic which would be seen by members opposite who are not in that region. The member for Collie suggested that area subcommittees could be established under the subcommittee powers of the existing advisory committees. I remind members opposite of the power which is conferred in relation to subcommittees. The provision relating to advisory subcommittees requires a subcommittee to consist of members of the advisory committee and other people appointed by the advisory committee. In effect the advisory committee in a central sense would comprise part of the subcommittee for the Peel region together with other people appointed from the Peel region by the central advisory committee. As a matter of logic is that appropriate? Members in this Chamber who do not represent the south west must be looking on this debate with a degree of mirth and wondering what all this heat and acrimony is about.

Mr Omodei: There is no acrimony.

Mr D.L. SMITH: They must be wondering how those of us who are residents of the south west can spend so much time on a matter which is of no interest to them. When an advisory committee is drawn from the whole south west region, which is a very rich and substantial area, and its members are brought together under the current structure there may be only two or three members to come from the Peel region. These members attend meetings and listen patiently when matters from Augusta, Northcliffe, Pemberton and Boyup Brook are discussed. While they are interested in that as fellow residents of the south west they have to sit through an enormous number of lengthy meetings while issues of no real concern to them are discussed.

The Government is trying to set up an area advisory committee as a forerunner to a development authority, which can focus on the needs of people of the region. The simple reason for having a separate advisory committee for that region is not just the fact that it will be a forerunner of the development authority but because of the amount of activity that is going on in the Peel region. It is the fastest growing area of the south west. It is under enormous pressure with the special problems caused by the overspill from the metropolitan area. The Murray Shire has quite different problems from the Mandurah Shire and their

problems are not the same as those in Boyup Brook and other local authorities in the south west. In view of the time it takes for members from the Peel region to drive to Bunbury, to sit down and listen to long debates about issues which are of no concern to them, and as there are only three members from that region on the central advisory committee, there is good reason to suggest that it is not fulfilling its purpose in coping with the community input from the Peel region and the development there.

It is easy to say we have to be careful that the advisory committees do not take over the role of local government. As the member for Murray indicated, a poll of local authorities which will constitute part of this area advisory committee will indicate that they support an advisory committee. The premise of members opposite is that local government must be involved in decision making. How can the Opposition honestly say they are doing that when all local authorities in the region support the area advisory committees? For its own political reasons the Opposition has decided not to support area advisory committees. It is one thing to go out and consult and take the advice of local government -

Mr Omodei: Be specific. Are you talking about area advisory committees or the advisory committee under the development authority?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I am talking about the area advisory committee concept which is supported by every one of the local authorities within the -

Dr Turnbull: Which ones?

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Murray, Waroona, Boddington and Mandurah Shires all support it.

Mr Nicholls: Are you talking about area advisory committees?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes; as a forerunner to the development authority as local authorities understand the concept. If the Opposition is going to claim the high ground of consultation with local government it should have sought the advice of local government in relation to this matter. Having got that advice it should have weighed heavily on the Opposition in its decision. On the one hand the Opposition is taking an entirely illogical position, and on the other hand it takes a position which is inconsistent with the concept of consultation with local government.

Mr Nicholls: It is not totally wrong.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I can assure the member for Mandurah that when he gets home and thinks on it he will come to the conclusion that I am right.

Mr Nicholls: We support a separate Peel authority. All the local government representatives that I have spoken to have supported a development authority for the Peel region. Therefore, what you have said is incorrect.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The local authority for the Peel region will form a development authority plus an advisory committee.

Mr Nicholls: The debate has centred on the timing and the need for a separate authority before we start implementing advisory committees.

Mr D.L. SMITH: During the course of the various speeches members opposite have raised a number of issues - far too many for me to respond to in any substantial detail. I will pick up a couple of comments about the future of the South West Development Authority.

Mr Fred Tubby: If Hon David Smith is still the Minister for South-West in 1992 can he guarantee that the South West Development Authority will not be used to promote Government policy in the lead up to the 1993 election?

Mr D.L. SMITH: It certainly will not be used to promote Government policy. It will continue to promote the south west and the achievements of south west residents who are working to improve the quality of their community. One of the prime functions of a development authority is to promote not only the region but also the opportunities and achievements in that region - achievements by farmers, manufacturers, wharfies, railway workers and sporting identities. Mick Grasso is the latest example of that. We take great pride in all those achievements and the fact that some achievements are Government achievements will mean that they will be promoted in the literature. That is part of the job of the development authority. Any development authority that does not have a promotional

budget will not be doing its job. As a Government we are proud of what we have achieved. As members representing the south west we are proud of what we have achieved and we want that promoted as part of the great opportunity that is available for anyone who wants to invest in our region to see that we are committed to the region.

Dr Turnbull: Will that be stopped once the election banners have been called?

Mr D.L. SMITH: The member for Collie was concerned that there was not enough focus by the development authority on economic development. She was concerned that it was involved too much in social welfare and community development instead of economic development. That theme was used by several members opposite. Some of them said that the Department for Community Services should be used as the vehicle for community and social development. The member for Bunbury correctly outlined that community development encompasses much more than what is provided for in the community services budget; it is about a whole range of social and community infrastructure and development which sometimes requires capital expenditure and at other times requires staff and planning support. It simply cannot all be done through the Department for Community Services. I do not resile from the development authority's recent emphasis in terms of community or social development, or in terms of health, if I may use that as an example. I refer to the new hospital in Mandurah, the redevelopment of the Collie and Margaret River Hospitals, the latter after 15 years of neglect, improvements to the Augusta Hospital and the proposed redevelopment of the Warren and Bunbury hospitals.

Mr Nicholls: Why is the South West Development Authority doing it and not the Health Department?

Mr D.L. SMITH: One of the problems which members who do not represent areas in the south west have when it comes to understanding the role of the development authority and measuring what is spent by that authority against what is spent in their region, is that they do not understand the way in which the authority works. The role of the authority in relation to Government expenditure is to urge that the priorities of individual departments be changed. For example, if the redevelopment of the Collie Hospital is low on the Health Department's list of priorities, the role of the development authority is to liaise with the department in an endeavour to change that priority. Occasionally the development authority is told by the Government agencies that they will not change their priorities. On those occasions the development authority steps in and picks up the burden. I refer to the Bunbury Port Authority and the harbour land: The port authority did not have the money to buy the land in the Glen Iris area which was required for the extension of the port. It was clear that the port authority would not be in a position to do that, the residents of Glen Iris would be left in a state of uncertainty and the land would not be provided for the development of the port. The development authority became the purchaser of that land and borrowed the money.

Mr Omodei: If there had not been a development authority, what would have happened?

Mr D.L. SMITH: The situation would have remained the same as that which prevailed in the 10 years in which the Opposition was in Government. The land would have remained in a rural zoning and even though the area in question is between Eaton and the City of Bunbury the owners would have been locked into a situation until the port authority was in a position to buy their land. The development authority's action solved the social and planning problems of the people concerned and it provided the opportunity for all the harbour land to be made available to the port authority. The port authority is now buying the land from the development authority.

Mr Omodei: Was it bought at market value?

Mr D.L. SMITH: The land was purchased at market value or on the basis of a compromised value between the Valuer General and the private valuers.

Mr Nicholls: Why was \$100 000 put aside by the SWDA for the central business district of Mandurah?

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that this sort of detail is better addressed during the Committee stage.

Mr D.L. SMITH: If members refer to the figures quoted by the member for Warren on the growth of the development authority's budget it may be difficult for them to pick up the fact

that a lot of that growth is debt servicing for such things as the port land acquisition. Figures for the expenditure of the SWDA per head of population have been quoted by members opposite as \$30 in the south west and \$15 in other areas.

Mr Omodei: He quoted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The debt servicing comes from the CRF. Capital works are financed from the loans program and the repayment of those loans is through the CRF. Members opposite, by raising those issues, are distorting the nature of expenditure in the south west and it provides an opportunity for other members to say that the south west, including Bunbury and Mandurah, have received more than their fair share of funding and for some reason or other they should now be disadvantaged. In the current economic climate there is a need for the development authority to shift its emphasis from community and social development, which has been the case in the last couple of years, to economic development. In the process of doing that it will require a degree of restructuring of the authority which may, in the end, cause some pain to some areas and, no doubt, political pain to the Government. In these harsh economic times we must be careful that we are not only paying for the salaries of staff, but that there is sufficient money set aside for projects. In those terms I agree with members opposite to the extent that there is a need for the development authority to become smaller, not in its budget, but in more money being spent on projects and less on salaries - more money should be spent on economic development and less on community and social development.

As to the changes I will announce over the next month or two, I ask members opposite to be aware -

Mr Omodei: Just a minute ago you were criticising us on the social and welfare aspect.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D.L. SMITH: - that with the current emphasis on the increase in unemployment and the decline in economic activity due to the Federal Government's actions and to other reasons, there is a need to shift the focus to economic development.

I hope that in the election of the seven directors and of the Peel advisory committee, the emphasis will be on economic development rather than on social development. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Dr Alexander) in the Chair; Mr D.L. Smith (Minister for South-West) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Long title amended -

Mr OMODEI: I oppose the clause. The clause provides for the establishment of area advisory committees. The Minister has referred to the proposal to set up these committees and members of the Opposition are aware that the South West Development Authority board operates in conjunction with an advisory committee. The proposal to establish area advisory committees is not accepted by the Opposition because it believes they will clash with local government and will take over some of its responsibilities.

The important point is that the setting up of an area advisory committee will be by Government appointment rather than by democratic election. Members on this side see local government as that properly elected, responsible body in the south west where there are 12 local authorities. Each of those authorities could, in its own right, be an advisory committee to the South West Development Authority. I impress upon the Minister the importance of that fact. He has talked about the Peel area, but in my travels in the South West Development Authority area from Bunbury southwards I have found that most local authorities see area advisory committees as a threat to their future. There is no doubt there will be duplication which will create a lack of communication and competition for attention in specific areas.

It is important to acknowledge that local government opinion is that it can do without area advisory committees. If one is talking about a new Peel authority, I point out that a number of sections of the original Act allowed committees to be set up. The Minister touched on one where the advisory committee can set up subcommittees. Schedule 3 of the Act states -

5. (1) The Advisory Committee may from time to time appoint a committee consisting of -

- (a) such Advisory Committee members; or
- (b) such Advisory Committee members and such other persons,

as it thinks fit and may discharge, alter, continue or reconstitute any committee so appointed.

(2) Subject to the directions of the Advisory Committee, each Advisory subcommittee may determine its own procedures.

Section 6 of the schedule to the Act sets out the procedures of the board and the fact that it may from time to time by regulation appoint a subcommittee consisting of such board members or such board members and other persons as it thinks fit for the purpose of assisting or advising the board, etc.

There are two areas where subcommittees can be appointed. The first is under the board and the second is under the advisory committee. I would have thought that if one wanted to start a separate authority at Peel taking in the Shires of Mandurah, Waroona, Boddington and Murray that the authority could have set up such a subcommittee with representatives on it from all those local authorities so there would be strong local government membership on that committee. On that basis, I argue that the setting up of an area advisory committee for Peel, or any other area in the south west, is unnecessary. The Minister may disagree, and has done so in the past.

Local government in many areas sees the South West Development Authority as taking part of its role. It is a fact with which the Minister must agree if he talks with local government authorities, whether administration or councillors, as they all see regional development as usurping part of their role. The solution to that clearly is that local government be involved in regional development by way of membership on advisory committees and, of course, as appears later in the Bill, as part of the board. That is important.

If the Minister wishes to work closely with local government throughout the south west, or any other part of Western Australia, it is important that local government play a greater role in regional development. I know that the South West Development Authority board and its advisory committee have had members from time to time who are also members of local government. Obviously, people involved in local government are high profile figures in their communities and from time to time gain positions on the board. I believe they should have those positions as a right as members of local government and of right under the amending Bill.

The Minister mentioned earlier, when talking about the Mid-West Development Authority that it is a small, regional development board which has an advisory committee working well with local government. The main reason for that is that the bureaucracy has not yet taken off in Geraldton and a small, close knit group exists which is working efficiently and effectively with local government.

The other area I mentioned which may have confused the Minister related to Kununurra. There are still areas in Western Australia which do not have regional development authorities such as the Geraldton Mid-West Development Authority and the Great Southern Development Authority. The authority has regional officers in Kununurra with two members in that office who work very effectively. They need more resources. It may well be that rather than focusing total attention on these major regional areas such as the south west, mid-west and great southern - and a future goldfields development authority - it would be better to spread the resources across the State to ensure that places such as Kununurra and Gascoyne receive extra resources.

I have deviated from the real issue of establishing area advisory committees. The National Party will vote against the establishment of those committees as part of the South West Development Authority. I suggest to members opposite that if they wish to work in harmony

with local government - and this is a challenge for the Minister who I believe is concerned about the proper working of the authority - they should accept our argument.

I have close liaison with local government authorities in my area, of which there are 12, and have spent a great deal of my life in local government. I know how they feel about the evolution of regional development and, more particularly, about Government by appointment rather than by election. They see that area as a real threat to them. In some areas regional managers are finding that local authorities are resisting their efforts to work in cooperation because they are seen as a threat to local government in lobbying the Government and doing all the things a regional development authority does. The solution to that problem is to involve the advisory committee and the board in local government in a significant way. I think that would break down the barriers.

If we are to see proper development in the south west and in the rest of Western Australia, regional development needs to work closely with properly elected people and the grass roots people; that is, people in local government.

Mr NICHOLLS: Following on what the member for Warren has said, we talked about a separate advisory body. The Minister in his reply went to great lengths to try to paint a picture that members on this side of the House did not support a separate advisory body and were quite negative in their attitude towards a regional development authority. That is not only wrong but also takes all the things that have been said out of context. We are talking about the establishment of an area advisory committee to advise officers in Mandurah and the South West Development Authority board on what they see their direction to be.

We have a body in the Peel area comprising representatives of all local government areas. At this stage I believe that Mandurah is an observer to that body. There is no reason why that cannot be the advisory body to the South West Development Authority and, in fact, facilitate what we are talking about.

Mr D.L. Smith: Which body is that?

Mr NICHOLLS: That is the body which all the local governments have formed. It is the Peel ward of the Country Shire Councils Association.

Mr D.L. Smith: The simple fact is that they couldn't because they are not members of the advisory committee.

Mr NICHOLLS: It is a group which could interact with the South West Development Authority office in Mandurah.

Mr D.L. Smith: It does.

Mr NICHOLLS: There is no reason that they could not interact to a greater degree. That would ensure that local government not only has a direct involvement in the South West Development Authority's role in the Peel region, but also fills a gap. That should ensure that another advisory body is not set up which could create the impression in the community that the local government authority does not have direct interaction with the South West Development Authority.

Mr D.L. Smith: I suggest you read again the sections referred to by the member for Warren, in the sense that if a subcommittee of the board or of the advisory committee is to be established it must have as members, members of the board or the advisory committee. To that extent, you could not have the sort of delegation you are talking about.

Mr NICHOLLS: I do not support the Minister's current proposal to establish advisory committees and the suggestion that one will form the future development authority in the Peel region. Local government bodies in the area have created an avenue giving them direct interaction with the development authority without the need to establish an advisory body or a subcommittee. If the lines of communication were open and the two-way communication was credible and well established -

Mr D.L. Smith: How do you then get input from industry, social workers and welfare groups?

Mr NICHOLLS: Input can be obtained from those groups by the same method as occurs now. People are employed by the South West Development Authority to regularly obtain input from the community. For the Minister's benefit I point out - although he should

already know - that local government obtains a great deal of input, be it about industry, urban development, or tourist development. Local government also receives information from the local community on social issues, amenities or other matters which need to be raised such as environmental, health or miscellaneous problems. The local government officers facilitate that interaction with the community. I am not saying that should be the only interface -

Mr D.L. Smith: Is that meeting at council level? My understanding is that that used to be done at city clerk, town clerk and shire clerk level.

Mr NICHOLLS: That is where it has grown from. It would need to be made clear between possibly the South West Development Authority or the Minister and the local government bodies that representation existed. At present, I know that a representative from Mandurah attends meetings as an observer. However, I am quite sure that arrangements could easily be made to ensure that local government was not only a voice from the community, but also that it had an input and an influence on events in the Peel area. Should that line of thought be followed, bearing in mind the Minister's view that the population in the Peel area does not warrant an individual office, establishing a separate body will not add to the benefits of the community. In fact, it may cause some conflict between the local government's role and the advisory committee's role with an office which is operating and still reporting to Bunbury.

I ask the Minister to agree to delete this clause and to take on board the view that that local government representative body could be the vehicle to ensure the community receives input on issues, and that local government has a role to play in the development of the Peel area.

Dr TURNBULL: I am opposed to clause 4 which provides for the establishment of area advisory committees, because those committees will be introduced into an area by Government appointment rather than by election of the people in the area. There is no need to create new bodies when local government already provides those bodies and where it can provide them in areas where they do not now exist. The Collie Shire Council's industries committee is representative of the area. If such an industries committee, or development committee, or subcommittee of the shire council knew that the South West Development Authority and the Minister for that region were lobbying for them in Cabinet they would receive a great boost in confidence and it would add prestige to the local government committee. The big problem of having an area committee where a shire council or local government body already exists is the competition for scarce financial and human resources. I once worked on a regional development committee for the whole of the south west - a larger area than under the current SWDA - and the members of that committee came to the conclusion that it would be just as well to amalgamate all the committees set up by the Government because the same people were members of them all. They were the people with the expertise and the time to contribute to committees. That is the situation in many areas today.

Fortunately, in an area such as Collie with its 11 000 people, the resources are not so scarce. However, it is still difficult to establish two committees comprising two completely separate sets of committee members. Also, in many cases the issues would overlap. There is no point in a duplication of committees in local areas. If, as the Minister has already said, this is the forerunner of the Peel development authority, so be it; that is all right, but the Act does not need to be changed in order to achieve that end. The cooperation among the shire councils in that area would be recognised and would be understandable had the Minister told them that this is the forerunner to a regional development authority. However, as the member for Warren and I have pointed out tonight, the Minister did not consult local government in any other area under the South West Development Authority to seek its opinion about area committees. In that respect the area committees, especially as they would be appointed by the Minister, are a wasteful duplication within a local government area and we do not support that situation.

In saying that, I am not saying that the Government should remove the facilitators or the coordinators the Government already has as the South West Development Authority officers in Collie and Manjunup. If these people liaise and coordinate with local government and facilitate activities within the local government area, they are valuable as resource persons in our local areas. It is even more applicable to the personnel who hold those jobs at the moment, because they were appointed on the understanding that they would live in and relate

to the area. That was a very good condition of appointment, as it means they do not just travel up from Bunbury or Australind, as quite a lot of other people do.

Mr READ: I am very disappointed that the Opposition intends to oppose this clause. In my opinion, with regard to the Peel region this clause is the very cornerstone of this Bill. I am also concerned that the Opposition is placing a lot of emphasis on the advisory roles of the South West Development Authority to local government. The reason for my concern is that, while I recognise local government has and will have a role to play in advising the South West Development Authority, I do not think it should be given that total responsibility. Giving that responsibility solely to the Peel Ward of the Country Shire Councils Association, for instance - as the member for Mandurah suggests - is to ignore many other groups in the community. The Minister has mentioned industry and social workers and there are other voluntary organisations, sporting groups, youth groups, parents' and citizens' associations, and so on which perhaps will not have the same say they may have had with an advisory committee such as is suggested in this Bill.

Mr Nicholls: Are you suggesting that local government does not listen to those groups or represent their views?

Mr READ: No, my next point is that local government, which has a very large role to play, is not as representative in many cases as the member for Mandurah would like us to believe. That is reflected in the fact that, in our respective areas, 80 or 90 per cent of people choose not to select who is on the local council. If the member for Mandurah asked the majority of people who their local councillor was, they probably would not know.

Mr Strickland: They are satisfied with the level of service.

Mr READ: When there is a low voter turnout at a State election, especially when it is a Government held seat, it is said that it is a sign of disillusionment with the Government; so we have both sides of that argument.

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Let us have one interjection at a time so that the member for Murray can be heard better.

Mr READ: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I do not believe that by having solely local government representation on any sort of advisory committee or board the South West Development Authority would be achieving what we hope it will achieve; that is, to provide a large degree and a large cross-section of community input to the South West Development Authority.

It is interesting to note that organisations which operate with similar advisory bodies - for instance, the Peel Inlet Management Authority and the Leschenault Inlet Management Authority - operate very successfully yet have local government representation on them as well as community representation.

Mr Nicholls: Do you see this as similar to the Peel Inlet Management Authority; that is, that it will be basically along the lines of PIMA, which has been set up to manage the Peel-Harvey Estuary?

Mr READ: There will obviously be differences, but that principle, with some differences, is being applied successfully.

Mr Omodei: One is for a specific purpose, the other is not.

Mr READ: Okay, but there is still that principle of an advisory committee, and local government is not saying that is duplicating any role.

Mr Omodei: It will come home to haunt you.

Mr READ: That is a big prediction. We hear many big predictions from the other side, and we do not always see them come to fruition.

Another point to note with regard to advisory committees is that the City of Mandurah has chosen to set up an advisory committee to deal with environmental matters - I think it is called the Mandurah Environmental Advisory Committee. That committee receives a large degree of input from the community about environmental matters.

Dr Turnbull: That is just as it should be - the local government body should do it.

Mr READ: I return to the point that, while I see local government as having a role to play, I do not believe local governments are as representative as members opposite would have us believe and I do not believe that just having local government representatives on advisory committees will serve the purpose which these area advisory committees are designed to serve.

Mr Nicholls: So you would see that the advisory committee you are proposing would be far more representative of the people than the local government?

Mr READ: No, I am saying that the advisory committee should consist of local government representatives as well as representatives from other sections of the community such as business, small industry, and perhaps youth. That is to be decided at a local level.

Mr Nicholls: Local government is made up of them.

Mr READ: No, I do not believe it is. That is a different matter and we probably have a basic ideological difference about that. I do not believe local government is as representative as it could be, and that is an issue the revised Local Government Act will address.

Mr Nicholls: Your statement is that you fundamentally believe that people from the community who are appointed to an advisory board will be far more representative than an elected council.

Mr READ: Yes, provided they are appointed in the right way and from the right sections of the community, such as the Peel Inlet Management Authority. However, we are getting right off the track, and I will make just one more point: Often councils are elected by 10 per cent or less of the people.

Dr Turnbull: That is more than a Minister.

Mr READ: That is not more than a Minister - a Minister is elected by a large majority of people, and so is the Government of the day.

I repeat that I am disappointed that instead of the Opposition's amending this clause in some way it is choosing to oppose it out of hand and thus is denying the community - in the first instance the community of Peel and in the second instance the people in other areas in the South West Development Authority region - a voice in the decisions made by the South West Development Authority.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I will just say, firstly, what should almost be unnecessary; that is, the Government and members on this side of the House support local government to the hilt. I suppose in two contexts we have demonstrated that over the years. Firstly, we tried to give constitutional protection to the role of local government in Australia. That, of course, was opposed by the conservative parties in Australia. Secondly, we are in the process of introducing into this House some very substantial amendments to the Local Government Act which will substantially increase the powers and the role of local government. I will be interested to see what the role of the Opposition will be regarding that legislation when that matter comes to the vote. The need for amendments to the Local Government Act demonstrates that the role of local government, while extremely valuable and important, is a restricted one and is dependent on people giving their time without remuneration, except to recover some of their expenses. This involves attending local council meetings, subcommittee meetings, attending meetings with public authorities, meetings of groups of local authorities and doing other community committee work. The role of a local councillor is an extremely onerous one and very often it is a role that many people in the community shy away from.

Mr Nicholls: They are dedicated; they are not just after financial gain.

Mr D.L. SMITH: This requires an enormous degree of commitment. It involves two aspects: First, these people act voluntarily and second, they have limits on their time. Also, these people have legislative limitations regarding their powers within the Local Government Act. While in many cases it would be hoped that the local councils will be more involved in the work of the South West Development Authority, they are not in a position at the moment to do so in a legislative sense. Also the local councillors do not have the time to take on the much broader roles involved with the development authority which looks at matters on a local, State and Commonwealth Government level for a whole range of community organisations. It has already been mentioned that a problem exists in country towns in that

the same people always turn up to meetings. Councillors are extremely committed and involved in the local community. I emphasise that these people are involved as representatives of local authorities and it is just not possible to extend the situation within the present powers of the Act, as suggested by the member for Mandurah.

Looking at the power of the board to delegate powers, which is referred to in schedule 3 of the Act, one finds that it is not a power to delegate all its powers. Frankly, that is one of the first principles of delegation. While people have the power to delegate they cannot delegate their role to a subcommittee in a general sense.

Mr Nicholls: We are not suggesting that they should delegate their role. We are suggesting that there should be an interface between them and the authority

Mr D.L. SMITH: The power of delegation will only apply to specific functions and on specific matters. Also it has to be a delegation in the context of the schedules to which I have referred because a common element of both of those powers of delegation is that it is not a delegation to an entirely separate committee or board. It has to be a delegation by the board to such board members, or to such board members and such other persons. In relation to the delegation of power to the advisory committees, it is to be given to "advisory committee members or such advisory committee members and such other persons". The local government group which coordinates in the Peel region could not delegate any of its powers unless its local government group members were appointed to the advisory committee of the development authority itself or to the board of the development authority itself. If members of those coordinating groups were asked whether they want members of the development authority coming along to discuss their business, or whether they want advisory committee members from other places coming in to discuss their business, they would indicate that they simply do not want that to occur. An area advisory committee is simply a prelude to the setting up of a separate development authority.

The Government has demonstrated its commitment to the Peel region regarding the development authority by firstly making the Mandurah office the largest office of the authority, with seven staff, outside of the head office, and secondly, by the Government transferring the second in charge of the authority to be the regional manager at Mandurah.

Dr Turnbull: Who is that?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Ken Fisher. The person advising me on the South West Development Authority in Perth is Peter Murray, who was formerly with the office at Mandurah, and he is our ongoing Mandurah contact. More importantly, we are identifying funds for the Mandurah-Peel region and we want the advisory committee to advise on how the money will be spent.

It is important to understand the nature of the committee about which we are talking. As the name implies, it is an advisory committee, and it has no power at all in that it can only hold meetings, discuss things and provide advice. I do not understand how members opposite can say that a group which will do no more than meet, discuss and advise can be a threat to local government, which has the powers duly allocated to it through the Local Government Act. This ensures that in relation to the allocation of money in the Peel region it will not be done by Government alone nor will it be done by the staff at the Mandurah office of the authority alone. The advisory committee will be involved in the process.

As the member for Mandurah correctly recognised, there is a preponderance of local government members on the committees. Along with the Boddington region, 16 bodies constitute the south west region, and one runs into the argument that everybody wants someone from their area to be appointed. By the very nature of the present advisory committees they are constituted by a majority of non-Peel residents. I assure members opposite that a preponderance of representatives from local government will occur in a Peel authority, but there will also be representation from business, commerce and industry groups which have broader interests than some people on local government have. As it is an advisory committee, it is important that it draw not just from certain secular expertise, but also from the expertise of the whole community. The only way in which that can be done is to take on board business people who are committed to their business and to the community interest while not seeking a role in local government. These people have an important role and can make a contribution to the development of their local community.

Mr Omodei: You are seeking to demean the position of local government; that is a disgrace and an insult.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The member would not send a local government councillor to a ministerial council meeting; the member would not send to Parliament persons who were elected to local government. People have certain roles and expertise. Local government has a role to play and we on this side of the Chamber are trying to increase that role; I will be interested to see whether that is supported by members opposite. It does not have a complete role in industrial development.

Mr Omodei: Are you saying that out of four local authorities you will not find enough people?

Mr D.L. SMITH: I said I would find enough to make a preponderance of the members local government representatives, but I want the broader experience that an area advisory committee would provide. I do not want to use members from the central board or from the central advisory committee for that role. I emphasise that by having an area advisory committee it will not mean that the Peel region will not be represented on the central advisory committee. It will be represented in the same way as it has in the past; but because of the number of local authorities it will not be possible for them to have a preponderance of people on that committee. In any event, it is a precursor to the establishment of a development authority. As to the logicity of what members opposite are saying, if we have a development authority the directors and the advisory committee will be appointed under the provisions of the Act. It is illogical and indefensible to say that having an advisory committee as a step on the way is more a challenge to local government powers than is an actual authority or an advisory committee. I hope that members opposite will think about it and recommend to their colleagues in the upper House that that is the case in order that it will be supported in that place.

I am not taking a pig-headed position. I made it clear earlier that I am prepared to accept the amendment to clause 6. In the course of my ministerial duties I am always willing to listen to appropriate amendments from members opposite which will more clearly define what they perceive to be necessary in the legislation. I do not for one second pretend that all intelligence resides in me, the parliamentary draftsman or in my advisers. I am more than happy for members opposite to approach me or the authority on issues about which they are concerned. If members want to oppose this amendment they will delay the opportunity for the Peel region to have its own advisory committee and the allocation of its own funds. They will also be delaying the opportunity for that region to have its own development authority, in due course. I ask members opposite to have proper regard for the interests of the people in the Peel region who will benefit substantially from this amendment, and not to take some shortsighted, illogical, political view.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Opposition is against this proposition because it is too wide-ranging. The clause refers to area advisory committees; it does not refer exclusively to the Peel region.

Mr D.L. Smith: Would it help you if I gave an assurance that I will not develop another development authority prior to the next election?

Mr BRADSHAW: No, it would not. I recall another Minister in this place saying that a greater percentage of the then proposed increased fuel tax would be spent on roads. What happened? It is going to assisting Transperth.

Mr D.L. Smith: Even though you will not accept it, I will give you that assurance.

Mr BRADSHAW: I will not accept it. The concept of area advisory committees is too wide-ranging.

Mr D.L. Smith: If the member for Floreat were in this Chamber he would remind us that he does not like amendments coming to this place on a piecemeal basis. He likes to see tighter legislation and less of it.

Mr BRADSHAW: The Opposition is of the opinion that another committee should not be established. The South West Development Authority already has an advisory committee. The Minister's second reading speech states that the people on that committee have local knowledge and come from all over the region administered by the authority.

Mr D.L. Smith: In this case we want people from the Peel region who have local knowledge.

Mr BRADSHAW: The existing committee already has people from the Peel region serving on it; I refer to Malcolm Wills who knows the region inside out. I understand he was appointed to the board. It is not good enough, although the Opposition supports the idea of a separate region for the Peel area. Where will the appointment of committees stop? The next thing we will have is committees to look after each street. The committees are taking over the responsibilities of local authorities which are capable of providing the South West Development Authority with advice.

Mr NICHOLLS: The comments of members opposite are disturbing. The Peel region is not situated at the top end of Western Australia. It is a quite small, but fast growing area with a fragile environment. The four local authorities in that area are doing an excellent job. To say that these people do not represent the broad base of the community and that they do not have the expertise, the time or commitment and may find that their legislative duties may bog them down, is absolute rot. The local government authorities in the Peel area are trying to facilitate the Peel region concept. We have an excellent opportunity to utilise their valuable knowledge and their genuine enthusiasm to volunteer their time for the benefit of the local people. They are not paid for the work they do, but they have a genuine concern for the local people. However members opposite are of the opinion they do not have the expertise to advise the South West Development Authority's employees about the pros and cons of the needs of the area.

It is absolutely ridiculous for the Minister to suggest that a 12 member advisory committee should include only one official representative from local government. All the local authorities should be represented. The Minister has suggested that the people appointed to the committee will represent a far greater cross section of the community than will representatives from local authorities, but that is absolute hogwash. I do not agree with the Minister's statement that the Opposition is opposing this clause for political reasons. All members know that the Opposition's arguments about the advisory body are based on the fact that there needs to be a separate Peel region authority. If we reach a situation where a population count is required before that comes about, so be it. The local government authorities in the area have the expertise, enthusiasm and ability and they do not need delegated authority. I did not mention delegated authority; only the Minister referred to that aspect. I am quite sure that, if invited, they would be more than willing to play an advisory role on a voluntary basis, at no cost to the Government, for the benefit of the area. They would meet the criteria set down by the Minister and would meet, discuss, advise and amend. They do it every day of the working week and they would not find it hard if an opportunity were provided for them to have direct input into the South West Development Authority office. I hope the Minister will reconsider his position, and that the statements he has made about local government are from ignorance or miscalculation. I cannot support anything that would have the potential to undermine local authorities in the area or deny those people the opportunity to be the prime source of information and direction in the areas they are democratically elected to represent.

I ask the Minister to reconsider his stance on the amendment and I ask all members to think very carefully about the role played by local government authorities, and the way in which benefits would flow from a genuine and very close liaison between local government authorities and the South West Development Authority.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I do not believe this is just a philosophical argument; it is also a political matter. Certainly there is a wide range of experience within local government authorities throughout Western Australia, Australia and probably the world. However, they do not have all the experience, the answers to, or knowledge of, all the problems. Many other people and groups have expertise and should be represented on a truly regional basis in these area advisory committees.

Mr Nicholls: Are you saying that local government is not truly regional or does not represent the truly regional concept you have in your mind?

Mr P.J. SMITH: That is exactly right. I do not believe local government does that. It is difficult for certain groups of people in the community to get into local government.

Mr Omodei: Which people?

Mr P.J. SMITH: Those who live in Homeswest houses and those who have social problems but who are part of the community and wish to become involved in it. Whenever I have been involved with various committees in Bunbury I have been amazed at the expertise and knowledge that people in the community have, but often those people do not have the confidence to stand for local government elections.

Mr Nicholls: The Mandurah City Council had a councillor who was a tenant in a Homeswest home who was doing a good job. Are you making a generalisation that some sections of the community do not get a word in?

Mr P.J. SMITH: Yes, I am making a generalisation. I am aware of a similar person on the Bunbury City Council who is an aged pensioner, now buying a Homeswest house. That person was elected to the council but it took a long time and a lot of effort to find someone to represent that pension group. In fact, all shires in the south west of this State are dominated by Liberal Party members or supporters. If the Opposition insists that local government authorities play the part of area advisory committees, it is saying that the Liberal Party must represent those committees from now until such time as people from other persuasions get a power base on the local authorities.

Mr Nicholls: Are you saying the local government people are all Liberal Party supporters?

Mr P.J. SMITH: The majority are on most councils in the south west. In fact, there are very few Labor Party or green supporters on any councils in the south west. I do not know about the Peel region.

Mr Nicholls: You are making a gross miscalculation.

Mr P.J. SMITH: I am not making a gross miscalculation. The Harvey shire has more Labor Party supporters as councillors than most other shires in the area but even that authority is dominated by Liberal Party members or supporters. The Opposition's philosophy has always been the same. It has insisted on representatives of shires being the permanent members of boards. That means that members of the Liberal Party are permanent members of these bodies and can check up and find out what is going on.

Whenever discussion has taken place on the membership of these boards, the Government has always insisted on appointing the best people. The previous Minister for South-West could quite easily have decided that for political reasons the present member for Warren and the member for Collie could not be on any of these committees because it wanted Labor Party members or supporters involved. However, the Minister decided that he wanted the best people irrespective of their politics. If the local government representatives made up the area advisory committees, the only consultation with the South West Development Authority would be with these council members, and there would be a preponderance of Liberal Party members or supporters on the committees. That would allow a political influence which I find unacceptable. I oppose the amendment.

Mr Nicholls: Does that mean that when the Minister appoints the advisory committees he will make sure there is not a preponderance of Liberal Party or Labor Party members and that he will be evenhanded?

Mr P.J. SMITH: I am saying that other people in the community should be considered. I am sure that a number of those people will be from local government because many of them have the grassroots involvement and expertise. However, all people in the community should have an opportunity to be represented.

Mr OMODEI: I cannot help but comment on the statements made by the member for Bunbury. I am amazed to discover that the reason for the make-up of the area advisory committees is that the Government thinks local government is dominated by Liberal Party people. It must have a good network to find out the politics of all those people. I was not a political person until the previous Premier came on the scene.

Mr D.L. Smith: The member for Bunbury was expressing a personal view, which has nothing to do with the legislation.

Mr OMODEI: The comments made by the member for Bunbury are an insult to the properly elected representatives of local government. It is rubbish to suggest that all local councils in the south west area are dominated by Liberal Party members or supporters. I am suggesting to the Minister that if local government and regional development is to work in harmony, the

area advisory committees need to be made up of representatives from local government authorities. It has been said that we need an advisory committee for the Peel area which would be outside local government because local government is not representative of the people. Acknowledging that the Government believes that -

Mr D.L. Smith: That is not a Government view. That was the view of -

Mr OMODEI: I think the Minister expressed the view as well that local government was not representative of the broad spectrum of the community.

Mr D.L. Smith: That is not a view I expressed.

Mr OMODEI: The Minister has changed his mind. The important thing is that if we have an area advisory committee for Peel, why cannot we have one for Manjimup, Collie or Margaret River on the basis that local government in those areas does not properly represent the people? I find that unbelievable. The message that is coming through very strongly is that local government comprises only those people who have the time to make the effort. A number of people right across this State sacrifice their time to make a contribution to local government.

Mr P.J. Smith: That is completely true but that does not mean to say they cover all the areas of expertise within their area.

Mr OMODEI: Does the member want me to go through each council and tell him the members and what they represent - those who represent single mothers and fathers, retired farmers, butchers, sports people -

Mr P.J. Smith: You can probably do it but there will still be areas that are not represented.

Mr OMODEI: I do not believe that. During the last week there has been a rumour that the regional managers in Manjimup and Collie will be retrenched or withdrawn. The Minister may like to comment on that.

Mr D.L. Smith: You asked that question in question time today and I gave you what I thought was an appropriate answer.

Mr OMODEI: The question was not referring to that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Let us return to clause 4.

Mr OMODEI: The rumour is that regional managers in Manjimup and Collie are to be withdrawn. We will have area advisory committees, but what will we do with them? Where will we put them? The message that is coming across to me is that we will have area advisory committees because local government is not representative of the people. I implore the Minister, not only for my sake but also for the sake of the people in the south west, to vote against this clause because I believe it will create division between local government and regional development.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I reiterate that the member for Bunbury was expressing a personal view. Despite what members opposite may think, we on this side have differences, whether they be about rail versus road or against the view expressed by the member for Bunbury. I assure the Chamber that local government and councillors have my full confidence and support. I do not know of any local authority in the south west which allows any political consideration to enter into its deliberations. I also repeat, for the benefit of the member for Warren in particular, that my comments about wanting to have more than just local government on this committee were in relation to the desire to have a broader expertise in the representation, including business and welfare, and, as the member for Murray indicated, representation from young people and from other groups who may want to be represented.

I would also hope, because of the size of the Nyoongah population, especially in the Pinjarra and Waroona area, that a Nyoongah representative would be on the advisory committee. It is simply not possible, when we look solely at local government, to have the total breadth of representation that I think a proper advisory committee should have. I emphasise again that the advisory committee will be advisory. It will have no power apart from its providing advice to the board, the Minister and the staff of the authority. To that extent, it cannot be seen to be subverting in any way the role of local government. Indeed, it will not do that. It will enhance the role of local government and facilitate local government in achieving its objectives.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5: Section 3 amended -

Mr OMODEI: I move -

Page 2, lines 13 to 19 - To delete the lines.

We have already had a wide ranging debate about the area advisory committees and I ask members opposite to reconsider the deletion of that section.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The Government's reasoning in relation to clause 4 applies also to clause 5.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6: Section 5 amended -

Mr OMODEI: I move -

Page 3, line 13 - To insert after "members" the following -

one of whom shall be a councillor who is a nominee of the local government authorities encompassed by the SWDA.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I inform members that the amendment I would accept to clause 6 would be along these lines: Page 3, line 13 - To insert after "members" the following "one of whom shall be a councillor who is a nominee of the local government authorities within the south west region who shall be nominated in a manner similar to that provided for in subsections (4), (5) and (6) of section 30 of this Act". I am foreshadowing that I propose to move that amendment if the amendment moved by the member for Warren is either withdrawn or lost. Although I agree with the principle that there should be a nominee of the local government authorities, it is easier to say "within the south west region" because the south west region is defined in the definitions section of the Act.

Secondly, if we have a nominee of the local authorities we need to have a clear method of nomination and selection, and I propose to adopt the provisions of the legislation in respect of the local government representative on the advisory committee. I emphasise to members opposite, so that they will not be misled, that that process is that each of the local authorities in the region nominate three members, and the Minister then makes a selection from the totality of those nominations.

Mr Nicholls: So the councils will not nominate the people whom they want to represent them? They will put them up for nomination, and you will choose?

Mr D.L. SMITH: Yes, because there is not a consistency of boundary in respect of all the boundaries in the south west local government area. I do not want to delay members by adjourning the debate and going off and searching for a different method of nomination. It will have the desired effect in that the 48 nominees that will come to me will be of councillors, and I will have to select from them.

Mr Nicholls: Are you talking about one representative or representatives from each local area?

Mr D.L. SMITH: One, as the amendment originally required, but it will be one from all the nominations. If we adopt the method in section 30 it will mean there will be 48 names. There may be consistency in those names. If all the local government bodies decide that they want to nominate the same three people, for instance, then there will only be three names. On a worst case scenario, when there is no consensus between the local authorities about whom they will nominate, we would finish up with 48 nominees, from whom I would select one. If the local authorities got together and selected three - so that they all nominated the same three - effectively I would be choosing from one of three.

Mr Nicholls: So in the Peel region there will be one representative from local government on the advisory body?

Mr D.L. SMITH: No, we are talking about the board.

Mr Nicholls: I just wanted to clarify that.

Mr D.L. SMITH: There will be one member. The only other alternative I was going to suggest was the possibility that we might select one from the shire presidents of the local authorities of the region. The problem with that is that, because of the nature of their duties, one could never guarantee that those people who are shire presidents will want to take on the role, and this will give each council or the collaboration of councils an opportunity either to nominate independently or to collaborate in their nomination.

Mr OMODEI: I stand by my amendment. The Minister would be aware that one of the original amendments I proposed was that the nominee be the President of the South West Shire Councils Association or his or her nominee. The reason I have now proposed that a councillor from the South West Development Authority represent local authorities in that area is that we acknowledge that some of the shires are outside the South West Shire Councils Association's area.

The Minister is quite at liberty to move an amendment at a later date with regard to his proposal. I reiterate that local government is well and truly qualified to put up its own nominee. Why does the Minister require a possible 48 nominations when the local authorities in that region are quite capable of discerning for themselves the best member to represent them? It would be an insult to those councils to suggest that the Minister knows more about their local bailiwick than they do.

We were talking a little while ago about the role of local government not being representative of the community or some sections of the community, or not being broad enough. At the moment those members are democratically elected to serve local government in the south west. I believe the local authorities have the ability to elect the proper person to represent them. The Minister would be well aware that in the new proposals under discussion for the revised Local Government Act, one section which is strongly supported by the Western Australian Municipal Association is that there be regional councils and that those councils have the ability to meet on a regional basis to discuss between themselves issues peculiar to them or their region. Surely, if that is to be the case under the new Act members on this side of the House would support that concept, and surely those regional councils would have the ability to select one of their membership to represent local government in the south west on the board of the South West Development Authority.

I appreciate the Minister's recognising that one of those seven board members should be a representative of local government. We also have a representative of local government on the advisory committee, appointed under the Minister's direction, but in this case I think it behoves the Government to show some confidence in local government and not dictate to it as to the method of appointment. I appreciate the Minister's allowing the amendment to proceed but I believe the nominee should be elected by local government.

Mr BLAIKIE: I support the amendment moved by the member for Warren. The reasons advanced by the member for Warren as to why the Opposition seeks to have a local government representative appointed to the management board as of right really go back to the core of the Opposition's attitude to local government. We accept local government, warts and all, for the responsibilities it projects, and we also accept the fact that local government shall select a person in whom it has confidence to represent the local authorities within the area of the South West Development Authority. We see that position as being important in the context of this legislation.

The position we hold in 1990 is no different from that which we held in 1983. The Minister's position has changed significantly from the Government's position in 1983, when the Government rejected out of hand any opportunity for local government to have a representative on the South West Development Authority board. Therefore the Minister has come part of the way towards our attitude. He has already indicated that the Government is prepared to accept only the provision where all the local government bodies within the area of the South West Development Authority have the opportunity of providing three names to the Minister, and then the Minister will draw a ticket in the raffle at the end for the person he deems is the most satisfactory. I repeat those words - "for the person he deems is the most satisfactory". That is where we are poles apart.

We accept local government on the basis of trust and responsibility, understanding that it may or may not make wrong decisions but accepting that in the end, if it has made a wrong decision in a nomination, it will ultimately correct it. What the Minister said is that the

Government acknowledges responsibility to local government and is not prepared to allow local government to take on that responsibility. We will argue this with the Minister. While the arguments to this part of the debate will be confined within the parameters of Parliament House, we will go back - not by subterfuge but by open comment - to the local government bodies, indicating to them what our proposals are. I have already spoken to some local authorities and have ascertained their views in relation, firstly, to advisory committees and, secondly, to this clause of the Bill, to which the amendment proposes that a local government representative, as of right, will be a member of the board. Without exception those local authorities have said that is the way they want to go. I would like to know who is advising the Minister, and I will pose a question to the Minister and pause for the answer: Would he indicate to the Chamber during this Committee debate which local authorities he has contacted, or which have contacted him, do not want a representative as of right but are prepared to accept the Minister's "submit the names and I will draw a ticket in the raffle" system?

Mr D.L. Smith: In relation to the amendment moved by the Opposition, I have not consulted any local authority. What is implicit in the amendment moved is that no number of nominations is provided for in that amendment. What I have sought to do is to quickly accede to the Opposition's request that there be a nominee of local government, and to provide myself an easy method of nomination that is readily identifiable in the existing legislation.

Mr BLAIKIE: Very well; I can understand the difficulty the Minister has now. First of all, the South West Development Authority has certainly endeavoured to correct some of the wrongs of the past, whether they were misconceptions, perceptions or otherwise. I want to acknowledge the very sterling work Sir Don Eckersley has done in endeavouring to heal the breaches. His has been an excellent appointment and he has done a very good job. I suggest that the member for Warren recommend to the Government that it report progress so that local government bodies can be consulted. If we are to have a spirit of cooperation, let us begin on a good basis with this amendment. I can assure the Minister that if he adopts an entrenched view, we will go all out for local government. However, we want to ensure that the South West Development Authority works properly -

Mr D.L. Smith: I assure the member that I have no predilections about this, and the opportunity he is seeking will arise because we will not be able to proceed with the third reading tonight as we need an amended copy of the Bill. When the Bill is transmitted to the upper House a suitable amendment could be moved during the Committee stage, and I will be happy to consider that at that time. However, I do not want to delay the Bill any more than I have to because the Peel region has been waiting for this for some time and I am keen to appoint the extra director as soon as possible. I certainly do not want to see this legislation stood over again as it was at the end of last session.

Mr BLAIKIE: The legislation was stood over only because of the Government's priorities; the reason the Government placed itself in that bind with the members for the executive appointment was that it was found to be illegal. For goodness' sake, the Minister could have brought this legislation into the Chamber 12 months ago!

Mr D.L. Smith: This Bill has been on the Notice Paper, having run over from the last session, for quite some time. When did the Opposition place its amendment on the Notice Paper? If anyone has been slack regarding the opportunities to sort these things out, it is the Opposition. If the Opposition wants to move this amendment, opportunities for consultation have been in place for quite some time. I am prepared to be amicable about these things and if members opposite can come up with some alternative form, we will have an opportunity to amend the legislation in another place.

Mr Omodei: You are amicable only when it suits you.

Mr BLAIKIE: That is right. I assure the Minister that the member for Warren has been consulting many shires in the south west region and has done so in a most exemplary way. It was only yesterday that the member was at yet another shire council, as is his wont, seeking advice on its views of the proposals. The member has been running around the local government bodies in the area and the Minister has not; that is one of the sad things about it.

Mr D.L. Smith: I do not want to detail all the local authorities I have been to in the last three months.

Mr BLAICKIE: But with all those local authorities the Minister has not raised the question of whether they want the person appointed as a right or the person to be picked out by a raffle.

In conclusion, this is a matter of principle and it is no different from where we were in 1983. The Government has moved fractionally, yet the Minister needs to give some guarantee that he will be prepared to go all the way because if this matter is to return to local government to be debated further, I have no doubt about which side local government will favour. We do not want that; we want the legislation to work correctly and for the amendment to be properly assessed by the Parliament.

Mr BRADSHAW: I am disappointed in the Minister's attitude. In the past the South West Development Authority had a political odour and the amendment moved by the Opposition would take away that political odour. The Minister would not be able to say which councillor would be selected for the advisory committee, and I find it staggering that he will not go along with this amendment. I know that he has suggested that if we draft a suitable amendment he may accept it, but I cannot see anything wrong with this amendment. It involves the nomination of a councillor for the committee and this encompasses the entire South West Development Authority region. This is acceptable and a move in the right direction. It is unreasonable for the Minister not to take this on board; it is unreasonable for him to be pig-headed and say that he wishes to choose from a certain number of nominations. The Minister should give this matter serious consideration. If he does not have the influence to choose one person who may be to his liking, the political odour will be removed. It is important that local government nominate certain persons and it is an insult to those bodies that several persons must be nominated from which the Minister shall choose one. It is important that the Minister shows some common sense and aptitude and accepts this amendment.

Mr OMODEI: As a relatively new member of Parliament I apologise for the fact that the amendment did not come forward earlier. However, I have noted in my short time in this place that a number of amendments to other Bills have been placed on the Notice Paper at short notice by members on the Government benches, for example the conservation and land management Bill - I believe that that Bill has been removed from the Notice Paper to be redrafted. For the Minister to suggest that people on this side of the House have been unfair with their amendments is inappropriate; after all we have only six amendments. Was this Bill sent to local authorities in the south west so that they could comment and suggest amendments? I suggest that this Bill was not sent to local governments in the south west and the only copy they received was sent by me.

Mr D.L. Smith: How many was that?

Mr OMODEI: I sent one to the Manjimup Shire. I know that the other shires have not seen the Bill because that has been indicated in their responses to questions I have put to them. If we are to talk about regional development and the good running of it in the 12 local authorities in the area, these groups should have had access to the Bill. The Government was critical of the Opposition for its late introduction of this amendment, but I reiterate that we want the representatives on the South West Development Authority to be the best equipped people and local government should be able to make a nomination by any means they think fit. I am sure that it will be by a democratic election, and I cannot see why the Minister for South-West must direct local government authorities as to how they will make their nominations.

Dr TURNBULL: I support the amendment moved by the member for Warren. It is unreasonable for the Minister to say that he could receive 48 different names from local authorities in the South West Development Authority area. They will be able to collaborate and produce three names. The Minister should not suggest that each authority will send in three names.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I have foreshadowed my amendment because the amendment moved by the member for Warren does not provide a method for nomination. My amendment suggests a method of nomination which has already been accepted by the Parliament in relation to another important local government position provided for in the Act; that is, a person representing local government authorities conjointly with the chairman of the board selects the nominees to go forward to the Minister for appointment to the advisory committee of the authority. If that method has been accepted by the Parliament before as being an appropriate

method of selection to that important position, I do not see why we need something different with these nominations especially as it overcomes the problem of boundaries and the like.

I suggested to the member for Vasse that if, in the time between our dealing with this legislation and its being dealt with by the Committee in the other place, some other methodology is proposed, I will be happy to consider it.

The member for Warren moved an amendment which was not on the Notice Paper and which does not provide for the method of nomination; it is defective. I am prepared to fix that by adopting a method that has been accepted by the Parliament before. Hopefully, if the local authorities collaborate, the maximum number of nominees will be three and a selection will be made from the three nominees.

Some local authorities have been told directly about the contents of this legislation. I am sure the others have been informed by the wide publicity that was given to the reduction in the number of board members who were nominated early last year because of the criticism by the Opposition that there was no provision in the legislation enabling us to elect seven. Everybody is aware that we had to remove people who had been appointed as directors and we had to assure those people that, when vacancies occurred, we would reappoint them. That caused substantial controversy and there was a lot of media coverage. Therefore, I am certain that no local authority is not aware of the problem.

I am certain that the increase in the number of directors to seven is known to have the support of all local authorities. The admission of the Boddington area to the South West Development Authority area also has the support of all local authorities. I understand that local authorities in the Peel region also support the advisory committee. I am not being difficult or political. I want to accomplish what members opposite want to accomplish.

Mr BLAIKIE: I appeal to the Minister to accept the amendment moved by the member for Warren and to understand that what he has put forward will not be acceptable to local government. The Minister said that his proposal intends using the provisions contained in subsections (4), (5) and (6) of section 30. While those subsections provide for local government to submit the names of people for determination by the Minister, subsection (5) also provides that where a local authority does not provide within 21 days the names to the Minister, the Minister can make a determination anyway.

Mr D.L. Smith: You are not seriously suggesting that 16 local authorities would fail to respond?

Mr BLAIKIE: I am using a hypothetical argument in the most extraneous of circumstance to prove that the Minister is wrong. If a request were sent out by the Minister's office on 16 December, local authorities would have to reply by 6 January. If not, the Minister would appoint a person of his choosing. The people of Australia already mistrust Governments and politicians in general. The amendment places responsibility with local government and allows it to make a determination as to who will represent it. The Minister wants to deny it that right and ensure that only he can make that determination.

The member for Warren did not spell out in detail how local government will provide the method for appointment. Surely that can be done in another place with goodwill and cooperation?

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (19)

Mr Ainsworth
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr Bradshaw
Mr Court
Mr Grayden

Mr Lewis
Mr McNee
Mr Mensaros
Mr Minson
Mr Nicholls

Mr Omodei
Mr Shave
Mr Strickland
Mr Trenorden
Mr Fred Tubby

Dr Turnbull
Mr Watt
Mr Wiese
Mr Blaikie (*Teller*)

Noes (24)

Dr Alexander
Mrs Beggs
Mr Bridge

Mrs Buchanan
Mr Catania
Mr Cunningham

Dr Gallop
Mr Graham
Mr Grill

Mrs Henderson
Mr Kobelke
Mr Leahy

Mr McGinty
Mr Pearce
Mr Read

Mr Ripper
Mr D.L. Smith
Mr P.J. Smith

Mr Taylor
Mr Thomas
Mr Troy

Dr Watson
Mr Wilson
Mrs Watkins (*Teller*)

Pairs

Mr MacKinnon
Mr Cowan
Mr Kierath
Mrs Edwardes
Mr Clarko

Dr Lawrence
Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Donovan
Dr Edwards
Mr Carr

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr D.L. SMITH: I move -

Page 3, line 13 - To insert after "members" the following -

one of whom shall be a councillor who is a nominee of the local government authorities within the South West Region who shall be nominated in a manner similar to that provided for in subsections (4), (5) and (6) of Section 30 of this Act.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 12 put and passed.

Clause 13: Section 21 amended -

Mr OMODEI: I move -

Page 5, lines 12 to 22 - To delete the lines.

These lines relate to the area advisory committees. This issue has been debated at length and there is not much more I can add. I suggest that the Government changes its mind.

Mr D.L. SMITH: We have debated the issue of area advisory committees before. The Government will not accept the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14: Part IIIA inserted -

Mr OMODEI: The Opposition intends to vote against this clause as it relates once again to the establishment of area advisory committees and to the functions of those committees.

Mr D.L. SMITH: We support the clause, for the reasons we have given previously.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15: Section 38 amended -

Mr OMODEI: I move -

Page 7, line 22 - To delete "5 years" and substitute the following -

2 years

The Minister indicated quite clearly in his second reading speech in respect of the review of the Act as stated in clause 15, which relates to section 38 of the principal Act, that an undertaking was given by the Government of the day to conduct a review of the Act every four years. Members would be aware that a review of the Act was undertaken in 1988. This clause proposes to extend that period by deleting "4 years after the commencement of this Act" and substituting "as soon as is practicable after the expiry of 5 years from the commencement of the *South West Development Authority Amendment Act 1990*". That means that the Act will not be reviewed for another five years after this year, and that the period of time as proposed in the original Act will be extended to seven years as a result of the proposal under this clause.

I do not know whether that was an oversight by the Minister but I would not call this

amendment Bill a review of the original South West Development Authority Act. On that basis we propose that the period be reduced from five to two years which will mean, taking into account that the last review occurred in 1988, that the next four year review will be conducted in 1992. The Government has made much noise about accountability and about its being open to scrutiny by the public, but choosing to delay the next review by an additional five years is not acceptable to members on this side of the Chamber. On that basis we oppose this clause and seek to have two years inserted in the place of five years which will effectively allow for a four year review of the Act.

Mr D.L. SMITH: The amendments before the Chamber arise out of the formal review which was previously required by section 38, which was conducted externally, and an internal review, which has been done since. I assure the member for Warren that the legislation before the Chamber embraces all the elements of those two reviews. The object of reviewing sections such as this is to provide a minimum period within which the review has to occur, and we will continue to review the operations and effectiveness of the Act from time to time, and we are happy to do it on a compulsory basis in four years' time. In the context of its being a compulsory minimum period, members opposite should be willing to accept that, remembering that the first review was required after four years, the internal review has since been done, and that this will constitute the third review. It is just a cost effectiveness problem in terms of how often we do these reviews. External reviews are very expensive and we have got to engage someone to do the consultation and other work required. We do not want to have them too often or unnecessarily. The four years provided for in this clause is an appropriate period and will take us through to 1994.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 16 and 17 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

IRON ORE (MOUNT NEWMAN) AGREEMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), read a first time.

House adjourned at 11.07 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

VETTER TRITTLER PTY LTD - STAHL PTY LTD

Government Guarantees

1039. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Finance and Economic Development:

- (1) Has the Government extended any guarantees in the last three years to a company trading as Vetter Trittler Pty Ltd or Stahl Pty Ltd?
- (2) What was the extent of the guarantee?
- (3) Why was the guarantee extended?
- (4) Is there now any possibility that the guarantee might be called on?
- (5) If so, why?
- (6) When was the guarantee extended?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes, to the Commonwealth Bank to support a loan to Vetter Trittler Pty Ltd.
- (2) \$2 million.
- (3) In late 1988 the publicly listed national company Westeq Ltd went into receivership. Vetter Trittler was one of a number of wholly owned subsidiaries of Westeq and employed over 100 people in this State. A partial management buyout of Vetter Trittler Pty Ltd, together with investment by the German company R. Stahl GmbH, was arranged to retain the business. The Government guarantee was extended to secure the company's working capital requirements.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) The appointment of a provisional liquidator has resulted in the CBA seeking to recover money through its loan securities which include the Government guarantee. Secured creditors, including the Government will be pursuing recovery action.
- (6) The guarantee and associated documents were executed on 14 February 1990.

HOMESWEST - PENSIONER ACCOMMODATION, WANNEROO

Rental/Loan Assistance Wait Turn Listing Date

1087. Mr LEWIS to the Minister for Housing:

What is the current Homeswest wait turn listing date for applicants listed for rental/loan assistance for pensioner accommodation in the Wanneroo area?

Mrs HENDERSON replied:

The wait-turn listing date for one bedroom rental accommodation applicants in the Wanneroo and surrounding areas varies from May 1986 (Beldon, Kingsley) to October 1983 (Wanneroo). There are 32 pensioner units under construction at Joondalup which have a significant impact on the current wait-turn times. Loan assistance waiting time for all applicants in the Wanneroo areas is August 1986.

HEPTACHLOR - CHLORDANE

Health Effects Studies

1096. Mr COURT to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What studies have been done in Western Australia into the effects of the pesticides heptachlor and chlordane?
- (2) Who carried out these tests?
- (3) What were the results and conclusions from these tests?
- (4) Has the Minister considered a ban on the use of heptachlor?

- (5) Was the pesticide withdrawn in the United States in 1987 after an investigation by the environmental protection agency there?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1)-(2)

There have been no studies in Western Australia into the health effects of the pesticides heptachlor and chlordane. Studies have been conducted to look at the levels of organochlorine pesticides in adipose tissue and breast milk. The studies looking at the organochlorine levels in adipose tissue were -

"Storage of Organochlorine Pesticides in the Body Fat of People in Western Australia": Wasserman M, Curnow DH, Forte PN, Gray Y. Industrial Medicine and Surgery; 1968; 37:295-300

"Pesticides in Western Australia": Lugg R. Health Department of Western Australia; Occasional Paper; 1970

"Organochlorine Pesticides Residue in the Adipose Tissue and Blood of Western Australians": Waddell V, McFarlane A, Hilton J. Health Department of Western Australia; Occasional Paper; 1989.

The Health Department has conducted intermittent monitoring of organochlorine levels in breast milk since 1970. The years in which monitoring was done are -

1969/70	1980
1974	1982
1978	1990

Mr C. Stacey of Curtin University has undertaken three studies -

"Organochlorine Residues in Human Milk - Western Australia 1970-71": Stacey C.I, Thomas W. Pesticides Monitoring Journal; 1975; 9 (2):64-66.

"Organochlorine Pesticides Residue Levels in Human Milk: Western Australia 1979-80": Stacey C.I, Perriman W.S, Whimsey S. Archives of Environmental Health; 1985; 40:102-108.

"House Treatment with Organochlorine Pesticides and their Levels in Human Milk - Perth Western Australia": Stacey C.I, Tarum T. Bulletin of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology; 1985; 35:202-208.

An environmental study was conducted by the Environmental Protection Authority and was released as a report titled "A Review of the Use of Heptachlor for the Control of Argentine Ants and Termites in Western Australia - Bulletin 354 October 1988".

A whole of Government study was conducted by the Western Australian Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances (WAACHS) on the use of organochlorines as termiticides in 1989 with the report being released as a public discussion paper titled "Organochlorine use as Termiticides - August 1989" by the Government.

- (3) Analysis of the breast milk levels of heptachlor and chlordane in the 1990 study show -

Heptachlor was detected in 74 per cent of the sample at a mean level of 0.018ppm. When first studied in 1980, heptachlor was present in 100 per cent of the samples at a mean level of 0.117ppm. The levels of heptachlor are therefore now one sixth of those 10 years ago.

Chlordane has not been measured in routine monitoring of breast milk prior to the most recent study when it was found in 62 per cent of the samples at a mean level of 0.013ppm.

The EPA report recommended -

Broad scale application of heptachlor for the control of argentine ants or any other pests should cease because of the environmental contamination and ecological disruption caused by external sprayings.

Also the report states -

Until environmentally appropriate alternatives become available, it is desirable that the cyclodienes continue to be registered for use as termiticides in this state.

The WAACHS report concludes -

The recommendations in the report are consistent with Government policy to phase out all organochlorine pesticides within 5 years and to institute a research program on alternatives to organochlorines.

- (4) I am advised that an immediate ban of heptachlor would not be justified on public health grounds. As with any other chemical it is important that it is used properly to ensure safety. During the 1989 election campaign the Government committed itself to phasing out all organochlorine pesticides within five years.
- (5) The manufacturer voluntarily withdrew heptachlor from use as a termiticide in 1987, although the registrations are maintained. However, it is still registered and used for fire ant control.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS - DEATHS *Blood Alcohol Content Samples*

1133. Mr WATT to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Are blood samples taken from road death victims and tested for blood-alcohol content?
- (2) Of those killed during 1989 and 1990, how many in each year were in the metropolitan area and how many in the country?
- (3) In each of the above figures, how many were -
 - (a) pedestrians;
 - (b) drivers of motor vehicles;
 - (c) passengers in motor vehicles;
 - (d) motor cyclists;
 - (e) passengers on motor cycles?
- (4) If the answer to (1) is yes, how many in each category in (3) above had a blood alcohol content of -
 - (a) less than 0.05 per cent;
 - (b) between 0.05 per cent and 0.08 per cent;
 - (c) between 0.08 per cent and 0.15 per cent;
 - (d) above 0.15 per cent?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes, unless a pedestrian or passenger is hospitalised for a period exceeding 12 hours preceding death.
- (2) Country 1989 - 128; 1990 - 60 (to 19 August 1990)
Metropolitan 1989 - 114; 1990 - 63 (to 19 August 1990).

	COUNTRY		METROPOLITAN	
	1989	1990	1989	1990
(a)	9	5	24	18
(b)	59	32	43	19
(c)	49	17	24	10
(d)	7	6	17	11

	(e)	1	0	2	0	
	(Bicyclist)	3	0	4	5	
	TOTALS	128	60	114	63	
(4)	COUNTRY 1989		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d) (Unknown)
	Pedestrian		3	1	0	5
	Drivers of m/vehicles		38	1	5	16
	Passengers - m/vehicles		31	0	5	11
	Motor cyclists		3	0	0	4
	Passengers - motor cycles		1	0	0	0
	Bicyclists		3	0	0	0
	COUNTRY 1990					
	(to 19 August 1990)		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d) (Unknown)
	Pedestrians		2	0	2	0
	Drivers of m/vehicles		18	0	3	4
	Passengers - m/vehicles		10	1	2	1
	Motor cyclists		4	0	0	1
	Passengers - motor cycles		0	0	0	0
	Bicyclists		0	0	0	0
	METROPOLITAN 1989		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d) (Unknown)
	Pedestrians		15	0	0	9
	Drivers of m/vehicles		24	1	10	6
	Passengers - m/vehicles		14	3	5	0
	Motor cyclists		9	1	4	2
	Passengers - motor cycles		1	1	0	0
	Bicyclists		3	0	0	1
	METROPOLITAN 1990					
	(to 19 August 1990)		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d) (Unknown)
	Pedestrians		11	0	4	3
	Drivers of m/vehicles		15	0	0	2
	Passengers - m/vehicles		6	0	0	1
	Motor cyclists		6	1	1	1
	Passengers - motor cycles		0	0	0	0
	Bicyclists		5	0	0	0

ROTHWELLS LTD - MCCUSKER INQUIRY
Government Witnesses - Crown Privilege

1135. Mr COURT to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Was Crown privilege waived for any Government witnesses appearing before the McCusker inquiry?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

Mr McCusker has advised that no Government witness made a claim to Crown privilege before the McCusker inquiry.

ROTHWELLS LTD - MCCUSKER INQUIRY
Government Witnesses - Crown Privilege

1136. Mr COURT to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Was Crown privilege used by any Government witnesses appearing before the McCusker inquiry?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

Mr McCusker has advised that no Government witness made a claim to Crown privilege before the McCusker inquiry.

STEEL MILL - GOVERNMENT INCENTIVES

1143. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Resources:

What incentives has the Government offered to the proposed steel mill, the possible establishment of which by Compact Steel was reported in *The West Australian* newspaper on 23 August 1990?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

No incentives have been offered.

CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT - "FOUR
CORNERS: THE EXPOSE EXPOSED" DOCUMENT

1154. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for the Environment:

Referring to the document issued by the Department of Conservation and Land Management titled *Four Corners: The Expose Exposed* -

- (a) how many copies of this document were produced;
- (b) what were the costs of -
 - (i) production;
 - (ii) distribution of this document -
including the cost of the time of CALM employees and facilities;
- (c) who authorised the production of this document;
- (d) who authorised the inclusion of colour glossy inserts in this document and what was the cost of these inclusions;
- (e) who (both within and outside CALM) worked on the production of this document;
- (f) why was it considered necessary to produce this document;
- (g) what will be the perceived benefits of this document;
- (h) is legal action being considered against the Australian Broadcasting Commission because of this program;
 - (i) if so will the Minister provide details of the intended action and;
 - (ii) if not, why not?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (a) 1 220 copies of the complete document were produced.
- (b) \$20 453. The document was written by senior staff primarily on unpaid overtime.
- (c)-(d) The Minister for the Environment. No additional cost for inclusions because they were in stock.
- (e) Senior Department of Conservation and Land Management officers.
- (f) The Four Corners program contained serious inaccurate statements about forest management and the forest industries which, if they had remained unchallenged, would have caused serious damage to the cause of good forest management and the forest industries of Western Australia.
- (g) The document will correct the inaccurate statements and provide a way by which the community's understanding about the forest management and the forest industries can be improved.
- (h) No. Legal action is not an appropriate way to deal with this matter.

LAND - BURNS BEACH
Freeholding of Leasehold Land

1177. Mr CLARKO to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What is the latest position concerning the transition of land tenure from leaseholder to freeholder at Burns Beach?
- (2) When is it expected that the matter will be resolved?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1)-(2)

It has been agreed that the leases will be converted to freehold title on a cost recovery basis. The timing and funding of the development, the terms of sale and price have not yet been decided.

SWAN BREWERY SITE - HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA
Government Cost

1182. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister representing the Minister for Planning:

What was the cost to the Government of its involvement in the High Court of Australia action in relation to the old Swan Brewery site?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

As previously advised, (see reply to question 1038 of 5 July 1990) the High Court ordered that the respondents pay the appellants' legal costs. However, the appellants have yet to submit their claim.

EDUCATION ACT - REPEAL
Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Conference

1186. Mr HOUSE to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Can the Minister explain the reasons for the Minister's recent announcement at the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Conference that the Minister intended to repeal the current Education Act?
- (2) What role do parent organisations play -
 - (a) in the current Education Act;
 - (b) the proposed replacement education legislation?
- (3) What role does the Minister envisage for those parents who have joined staff in making decisions about running school under the auspices of the Better Schools Report?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) There is no intention to repeal the current Education Act. However, it is intended to repeal section 23(2) and replace it with a new section enabling schools to establish school decision making groups. The creation of a new section will enable parents to participate in school decision making in all our schools with the endorsement of the State School Teachers Union of WA, the Civil Service Association, the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union, the WA Primary Principals' Association and the WA Secondary Principals' Association.
- (2) (a) The current Education Act enables schools to establish Parents and Citizens' Associations for the purposes of -
 - (i) bringing about closer cooperation between parents, teachers and students;
 - (ii) providing facilities and amenities at schools; and
 - (iii) fostering community interest in educational matters.
- (b) It is proposed to create a new section under the Education Act which enables schools to establish school decision making groups. These will consist of elected representatives of parents and the school staff members, and the school principal. Not more than two elected representatives of secondary school students may be included as well as coopted, non-voting community representatives. School decision making groups will formulate the school's educational objectives and priorities through the school development planning process. They will be able to check that resource allocations reflect the priorities they have set before endorsing the school's plan.

The replacement of section 23(2) does not diminish the role of parent organisations in schools but, by enabling the establishment of school decision making groups, provides a more appropriate focus for participation.

- (3) Parents who have joined staff in school making decision under the auspices of the Better Schools report will be able to continue. However, the proposed changes will provide a framework for the extension of parent participation in school decision making groups to all schools on an orderly and agreed upon basis.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT - KALGOORLIE OFFICE
Budget Cut Notification

1187. Mr COURT to the Minister for Goldfields:

- (1) Why has the local regional development office at Kalgoorlie been notified that there will be a cut in its budget this year?
- (2) Does this mean that the new Goldfields-Esperance Development Authority will have its funding cut?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1)-(2) The Western Australian Government's 1990-91 Budget is still being prepared. It will be presented to Parliament by the Treasurer when it is completed.

CORPORATE AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT - EMPLOYEES
Future Employment Opportunities

1188. Mr COURT to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) What is the current situation in relation to the future employment opportunities for Corporate Affairs Department staff?
- (2) Are staff being offered positions in the Australian Securities Commission?
- (3) Are these salaries on par with existing salary structures?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

- (1) Although the department is working towards 1 January 1991 as the commencement date for the Australian Securities Commission, the future employment opportunities for Corporate Affairs Department staff remains with the department and will do so until the Government endorses the heads of agreement document.

- (2)-(3) To date no staff have been offered positions with the Australian Securities Commission.

BRYCE, MR M. - PREMIER AND DEPUTY PREMIER ASSISTANCE

1189. Mr COURT to the Premier:

- (1) Has former Deputy Premier Hon M. Bryce been advising the Premier and Deputy Premier in recent months?
- (2) Has this involved him travelling to Canberra to assist the Premier and Deputy Premier?
- (3) Have these activities been additional to his duties as Chairman of the Western Australian Technology and Industry Advisory Council?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1)-(2) Mr Bryce provides advice to the Minister for Finance and Economic Development in the context of his responsibilities as chairman of the Technology and Industry Advisory Council. For the honourable member's benefit, the functions of the Technology and Industry Advisory Council as defined in the Technology Development Amendment Act No 32 of 1987 are -

- (a) to advise the authority and the Minister on the encouragement, promotion, facilitation and assistance of the development and use of technology in the State generally;
- (b) to make reports or recommendations to the Minister on any matter pertaining to -
 - (i) the role of science, industry and technology in the policies of Government;
 - (ii) the social and economic impact of industrial and technological change;
 - (iii) manpower requirements in, and the training of persons for, scientific, industrial and technological activities in the State;
 - (iv) the adequacy of, priorities among and coordination of, scientific, industrial and technological activities in the State;
 - (v) methods of stimulating desirable industrial and technological advances in the State;
 - (vi) the application of scientific, industrial and technological advances to the services of the Government;
 - (vii) the promotion of public awareness and understanding of development in science, industry and technology;
- (c) to consider any matter relating to science, industry or technology referred to it by the Minister and to advise the Minister thereon;
- (d) to liaise and cooperate with, and give advice to, any person, body or organisation with respect to the conduct of any investigation, study or research into a matter relating to science, industry and technology in the State.

As chairman of TIAC Mr Bryce visited Canberra in April for meetings with the chief scientist, Professor Slatyer and Dr Stocker, the chief executive officer of the CSIRO.

(3) No.

ROYALTIES - CHANNAR PROJECT *Trust Fund Establishment*

1190. Mr COURT to the Minister representing the Minister for Resources:

- (1) Has a special trust fund been established to accept the royalties to be paid by the Channar project?
- (2) When was it first made public that this trust fund was being established?
- (3) What is the purpose of the trust fund?
- (4) Who are the people responsible for administering this fund?
- (5) On what projects will the trust money be expended?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) All royalties are paid to the Consolidated Revenue Fund, but a trust fund, the WA Government/China Economic and Technical Research Fund, has been established to receive funds up to \$5 million.
- (2) November 1988.
- (3) To hold funds for the promotion of joint studies of future areas of long term mutually beneficial economic cooperation between Western Australia and China, particularly in the development, processing and marketing of Western Australia's mineral resources as well as areas of education, training and cultural awareness.
- (4) The fund is managed by a committee comprising Dr R. Garnaut (chairperson); Mr J. Morhall, coordinator, Department of Resources Development; Vice

Minister Yin Ruiyu, Ministry of Metallurgical Industry, People's Republic of China.

- (5) No specific projects have been approved, but will be in accord with (3) above.

PETFOOD - STUDY

1191. Mr HOUSE to the Minister for Finance and Economic Development:

- (1) In relation to question 1065 of 1990, can the Minister detail who carried out the study into petfood that the Government commissioned?
- (2) (a) Can the Minister tell the House when this report will be made public;
(b) if not, why not?
- (3) Can the Minister outline exactly -
 - (a) the current cost of producing petfood using offal by-products of the abattoir industry;
 - (b) the estimated cost of producing petfood using mutton at -
 - (i) peak of the season;
 - (ii) low of the season?
- (4) Did the study find that any ingredients other than mutton were required to make petfood?
- (5) If yes to (4) -
 - (a) what were the ingredients;
 - (b) what is the cost of these ingredients?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) The study was prepared by McIntyre Management and Marketing.
- (2) (a) A public version of the report has been available since late July 1990.
(b) Not applicable.
- (3) (a)-(b)
It is not possible to provide detailed information on costs. Such information is confidential between abattoir owners and pet food manufacturers. Additionally costs are influenced by factors such as the scale of the operation, the technology used in the operation and the type of packaging used.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) (a) A variety of ingredients may be used including grains and fish meat.
(b) The cost of such ingredients varies with market forces. Such information is freely available.

WARDLE, STEPHEN - OMBUDSMAN *Death Inquiry. Recommendation 1 Implementation*

1192. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is the Commissioner of Police going to implement recommendation 1 by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations resulting from his investigations into allegations concerning the death of Stephen Wardle viz -

"I recommend that attempts should be made at regular intervals to arouse all detainees at the lockup to note their conditions, and obtain medical assistance where necessary"?
- (2) If yes, will the Minister detail the extent of the implementation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Commissioner of Police is presently studying the Parliamentary Commissioner's report and considering the recommendations.

WARDLE, STEPHEN - OMBUDSMAN
Death Inquiry, Recommendation 2 Implementation

1193. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

(1) Is the Commissioner of Police going to implement recommendation 2 by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations resulting from his investigations into allegations concerning the death of Stephen Wardle viz -

"I recommend that immediate steps be taken to determine better arousal techniques in conjunction with the Commissioner of Health and having regard to experience in other jurisdictions"?

(2) If yes will the Minister detail the extend of the implementation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Commissioner of Police is presently studying the Parliamentary Commissioner's report and considering all of the recommendations.

WARDLE, STEPHEN - OMBUDSMAN
Death Inquiry, Recommendation 3 Implementation

1194. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

(1) Is the Commissioner of Police going to implement recommendation 3 by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations resulting from his investigations into allegations concerning the death of Stephen Wardle viz -

"I recommend that the administrative practices of the specialist investigative divisions of the police force such as the Criminal Investigations Branch and the Internal Investigations Branch be reviewed and improved"?

(2) If yes will the Minister detail the extend of the implementation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Commissioner of Police is presently studying the Parliamentary Commissioner's report and considering the recommendations.

ABORIGINES - LOCKRIDGE FRINGE DWELLERS, SWAN VALLEY
House Construction

1196. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Housing:

(1) Does the Government intend to build homes for the Swan Valley fringe dwellers?

(2) If yes, will the homes be temporary or permanent?

(3) Where will the homes be built?

(4) What will be the cost of building these homes?

Mrs HENDERSON replied:

(1) Relevant Government agencies coordinated by the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority are addressing the accommodation needs of the Swan Valley fringe dwellers. In the meantime, temporary needs have been met by provision of transportable units.

(2)-(4)

The type, design and location of accommodation is the subject of discussion

between Government agencies and the Aboriginal communities concerned. Final decisions will be made at the conclusion of necessary consultation.

FAMILY - HOME PURCHASE, ONE BREADWINNER
Mortgage Repayments, Weekly Food Cost, Average Income, Marriage Breakdowns

1199. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for the Family:

- (1) What is the current number of families who are buying their own home, with only one bread winner, in Western Australia?
- (2) What is the average mortgage repayment for a 3 bedroom house, north of the river and south of the river?
- (3) What is the average cost of the weekly food needs for -
 - (a) family - 2 parents and one child;
 - (b) family - 2 parents and two children;
 - (c) family - 2 parents and three children;
 - (d) family - 2 parents and four children;
 - (e) family - single parent and one child;
 - (f) family - single parent and two children;
 - (g) family - single parent and three children;
 - (h) family - single parent and four children;
 - (i) two adults;
 - (j) single adult?
- (4) What is the average income for families in Western Australia?
- (5) How many marriage breakdowns occurred in Western Australia, each year since 1980?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

I refer the member to the publication produced by the Office of the Family, Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Family Studies entitled "Families in Focus in Western Australia" which provides a lot of statistical material relevant to his questions. The questions can only be answered in the form in which the statistical information is available.

- (1) In Western Australia in 1986 almost three in 10 families with children living at home owned their own homes outright (29.4 per cent). Almost half (46.3 per cent) were currently paying off a mortgage and almost a quarter (24.3 per cent, were renting. (Ref Families in Focus in WA.)
- (2) This information is unavailable from ABS without special analysis. Mortgaged dwellings - weekly household income by monthly payment is available from ABS 1986 Census of Population and Housing small area data, format CSD. C61.
- (3) The Australian Institute of Family Studies has conducted several research projects to estimate the costs of raising children. The costs of children rise as the children's age increases. Costs of children vary according to the number of children in the family, the parents' incomes and whether one or both parents are working. Food costs have been estimated as -

1412 for 0-1 years
 1244 for 2-4 years
 1309 for 5-7 years
 1829 for 8-10 years
 2014 for 11-13 years

Annual expenditure on December 1989 prices (AIFS 1989). Other figures are available from the Household Expenditure Survey 1988-89.

- (4) Refer ABS Census of Population and Housing 1986. Table 12A. In 1986 two parent families with dependent children had a median income of \$25 800.
- (5) Reference 1989 Divorces Australia. ABS Catalogue No 33070.

POLICE STATIONS - MANDURAH POLICE STATION

Police Officer Employment

1201. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many Police officers are currently employed at the Mandurah Police Station?
- (2) Of those officers identified in (1) -
 - (a) how many are involved with general duties;
 - (b) how many are holiday relief personal;
 - (c) how many are administrative officers;
 - (d) other duties?
- (3) How many additional officers would be needed to man the Mandurah Police Station 24 hours per day?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) 43 police officers.
- (2)
 - (a) 24 officers.
 - (b) One officer. However, an additional officer may be required subject to leave commitments.
 - (c) Four officers.
 - (d) 11 - Traffic.
2 - CIB.
1 - Forensic.
1 - Community Policing.
- (3) The Commissioner of Police advises that to have the police station attended for 24 hours it would require an additional 11 officers. However, currently the Mandurah region has a 24 hour seven day per week policing service.

CONSULTANTS - GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

Review

1202. Mr NICHOLLS to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government completed a review of all consultants to the State Government or Public Service, this year?
- (2) If so -
 - (a) when was it completed;
 - (b) how many consultants were identified;
 - (c) how many are still contracted to the State Government or Public Service;
 - (d) how many are involved in journalism, marketing or public relations;
 - (e) what is the average salary of a consultant;
 - (f) what is the average period of each contract?
- (3) How many Government vehicles are provided to the identified consultants?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) The review is ongoing.

(2) (a)-(f)

Where appropriate, Ministers provided estimates of savings anticipated in the period March-June 1990 from reductions in the use of private consultants. Specific data was not sought on the number of consultants employed or on the terms of individual contractual arrangements between private consultants and public sector departments and agencies.

In framing the 1990-91 Budget, Ministers and the Expenditure Review Committee have required Government departments and agencies to justify proposed expenditure for all purposes, including the employment of consultants. However, consistent with Government policy, chief executive officers will retain the authority to deploy the resources allocated to departments and agencies in the 1990-91 Budget to implement Government policies, priorities and programs. This will permit the continued employment of private consultants where that employment meets the criteria set out in my circular to Ministers.

(3) See (2) above.

SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY - PROJECTS COMPLETION
Assets Purchase and Disposal

1203. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for South West:

(1) How many projects were completed by the South West Development Authority in the financial years -

(a) 1987-88;

(b) 1988-89;

(c) 1989-90?

(2) What were the projects referred to in (1)?

(3) What assets have been purchased by SWDA, since the Authority was created and what was the cost of each asset?

(4) How many assets, referred to in (3), have been disposed of and for what cost?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

(1)-(2)

Information on projects completed by the South West Development Authority in the financial years 1987-88 and 1988-89 are contained in the corresponding annual reports of the authority. Information on projects completed in 1989-90 will be provided in an annual report to be tabled in Parliament in approximately four months' time. A summary of progress on the People's Plan is currently being prepared and a copy will be provided to the member for Mandurah later this year.

(3)-(4)

The South West Development Authority has acquired and disposed of the following assets since 1983. The figures do not include the Westrail land transaction of \$3.5 million referred to in question 1450.

	PURCHASES	SALES	ON HAND 30/6/90
Land & buildings (Picton & Glen Iris)	\$5 973 312	\$1 317 945	\$4 655 367
Furniture & office equipment	\$430 605	\$1 618	\$428 287

The above figures do not include disposal value equipment such as photocopiers and typewriters where these were traded in on replacement items. The authority's motor vehicles are valued at \$185 386 and have generally been traded in for new vehicles with a small surplus. The amount of

this surplus is reported in the annual accounts of the authority. In addition, SWDA has built or contributed to the building of facilities for local authorities and other non-profit agencies in the south west.

JUVENILE OFFENDERS - MANDURAH COURTS
Homeless Children Statistics - Child Abuse Statistics

1205. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) How many juveniles have appeared before the Mandurah Courts, each year since 1986, due to charges relation to -
 - (a) unlawful use/stealing vehicles;
 - (b) assault;
 - (c) breaking and entering
 - (d) drug offences (excluding alcohol);
 - (e) alcohol offences;
 - (f) theft;
 - (g) other?
- (2) Of the above -
 - (a) how many were male;
 - (b) how many were repeat offenders;
 - (c) how many were not living with their parents;
 - (d) how many were employed;
 - (e) how many were aged between 0 - 10, 11 - 15 and 16 - 18?
- (3) How many juveniles are regarded as homeless in Mandurah?
- (4) How many cases involving child abuse have been recorded by the Department of Community Services in Mandurah in each of the previous three years?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

- (1) The following numbers of juveniles appeared before the Mandurah Children's Court due to charges in relation to -

	1986	1987	1988	1989
(a) unlawful use/stealing vehicles	6	10	16	8
(b) assault	4	15	21	9
(c) breaking and entering	31	27	25	21
(d) drug offences (excluding alcohol)	18	16	13	17
(e) alcohol offences	7	16	29	4
(f) theft	37	37	50	47
(g) other	77	126	145	109

The total of these figures for the four years is 1001.

- (2)
 - (a) 862 were male.
 - (b) 40 juveniles made five or more finalised court appearances in this period.
 - (c) No data is presently kept to indicate whether or not a juvenile appearing in court is living with their parents which is readily retrievable (for broad-based data purposes). Addresses of the juveniles is available.
 - (d) Neither is information obtained as to employment status.
 - (e) Nil 0-10, 179 11-15, 822 16-18.
- (3) There are no reliable figures as to the number of homeless juveniles in Mandurah.

- (4) Statistical records in regard to child abuse have been gathered on the Child Protection Information System since July 1988 and are kept by financial year. There were 51 notifications to the Mandurah office in 1988-89 of which 28 were substantiated. There were 64 notifications in 1989-90 of which 24 were substantiated.

SCHOOLS - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
Capital Works - Low Interest Loan Applications

1206. Mr TUBBY to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the total amount of the applications for low interest loans for capital works from independent and Catholic schools for the coming financial year?
- (2) Are all these applications likely to be approved?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) When will schools be notified of the success or otherwise of their applications?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) Applications lodged by 28 February 1990 totalled \$30 180 000. These were to be funded over two financial years as follows -

1990-91 - \$14 050 000

1991-92 - \$16 130 000

(2)-(3)

The extent to which applications are funded is dependent on the level of funds provided in the 1990-91 General Loan and Capital Works Budget.

- (4) After the Budget is passed by Parliament.

LEAD POISONING - CHILDREN STATISTICS

1212. Mr GRAYDEN to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are any statistics available on the incidence of lead poisoning among children in Western Australia?
- (2) If yes -
 - (a) does such poisoning constitute a problem in this State;
 - (b) where can such statistics be viewed?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Yes. There are a number of different sources of statistics on the incidence of lead poisoning among children in Western Australia. They include notification from doctors, information on death certificates and data on hospitalisations.
- (2)
 - (a) No. The last doctor notification of lead poisoning was received in 1973. Over the five year period 1984-1988 there was only one child (0-14) who was admitted to a short stay hospital for lead poisoning.
 - (b) The relevant statistics can be obtained from the Director, Epidemiology & Research Branch, Health Department of Western Australia.

FERAL CATS AND FOXES - DAMPIER ARCHIPELAGO ISLANDS
Complete Eradication Program

1213. Mr GRAYDEN to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Apart from the poisoning program to reduce the numbers of foxes and feral cats threatening populations of the Rothschild Rock Wallaby on islands in the Dampier Archipelago has any attempt been made to completely eradicate foxes and feral cats on these islands?
- (2) If not -

- (a) why not;
- (b) what would such a program entail?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Foxes have been present on Dolphin, Angel and Gidley Islands in the Dampier Archipelago. Rock wallabies do not occur on Angel and Gidley. The Department of Conservation and Land Management's poisoning program has successfully eradicated foxes from Angel and Gidley Islands. In the case of Dolphin Island, similar success has been achieved but is only temporary because foxes reinvade that island from the Burrup Peninsula. Feral cats are not so great a problem as predators of rock wallabies. The status of feral cats on the abovementioned islands is not known. Available poisoning techniques are not an effective method for eradicating feral cats.
- (2) (a) Eradication of foxes from Dolphin Island will continue periodically as required to protect the rock wallabies there.
- (b) Not relevant.

EARLSFERRY HOSTEL - FAIRHOLME HOSTEL, GUILDFORD
Government Ownership Circumstances

1216. Mr GRAYDEN to the Minister for Health:

What were the specific circumstances in which the Guildford area buildings Fairholme and Earlsferry came into the possession of the State Government prior to their use by the intellectually disabled?

Mr WILSON replied:

The Earlsferry and Fairholme buildings were purchased in June 1950 by the Government with moneys available through a grant from Mr Nathaniel White Harper. Mr Harper donated 20 000 pounds to the Government for the specific purpose of "expanding and improving the care, treatment and education of subnormal children" in Western Australia. The buildings were originally called the Nathaniel Harper Homes.

WARDLE, STEPHEN - OMBUDSMAN
Death Inquiry, Recommendation 4 Implementation

1224. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is the Commissioner of Police going to implement recommendation 4 by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations resulting from his investigations into allegations concerning the death of Stephen Wardle vis -

"I recommend that a permanent nursing post be immediately established at the lockup and that it be staffed 24 hours a day by qualified nurses."?

- (2) If yes, will the Minister detail the extent of the implementation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Commissioner of Police is presently studying the Parliamentary Commissioner's report and considering the recommendations.

STEEL PLANT - NEW COREX TECHNOLOGY
Development Briefing

1225. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Resources:

- (1) Has the Minister been thoroughly briefed on the proposed steel plant to be developed with the new COREX technology in the south west?
- (2) What are the proposed incentives, if any, the Government is going to offer towards the realisation of this important development?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The project is in the very early stages of development and it is premature to discuss incentives at this stage.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY - ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

Public Submissions - Public Availability Policy

1227. Mr MINSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Is it Environmental Protection Authority policy not to make public the public submissions which it receives in regard to environmental projects which it reviews?
- (2) Does the Minister routinely receive and consider copies of the complete public submissions?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?
- (4) Is it anticipated that these submissions will be available to the public consistent with the proposed freedom of information legislation?
- (5) Why are these public submissions not available to the public at the present time?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1), (4)-(5)

It is the Environmental Protection Authority's policy to include a summary of issues raised in public submissions together with the proponent's response to those issues, in its report and recommendations on proposals. The report's recommendations are freely available to the public. Unless the submissions from the public specifically state they may be published in full, the submissions are only to the Environmental Protection Authority and are not available to anyone else.

(2) No.

(3) the environmental assessment of proposals is the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Authority. If the public (including those who lodged submissions) do not agree with the content or recommendations of the authority's report they can appeal to me.

ENVIRONMENTAL TERMS - DEFINITIONS

Significant Environmental Impact, Environmentally Unacceptable and Acceptable, Potential Adverse Impact

1228. Mr MINSON to the Minister for the Environment:

What are the definitions of the following frequently used environmental terms -

- (a) significant environmental impact;
- (b) environmentally unacceptable;
- (c) environmentally acceptable;
- (d) potential adverse impact?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(a)-(d)

These frequently used phrases are undefined in the Environmental Protection Act 1986, and procedures. The Environmental Protection Authority in viewing the environment makes judgments based on scientific information and public input, and like other advisory bodies uses terms in its advice, not dissimilar from those used elsewhere such as "economic significance" or "politically unacceptable".

POLLUTION - GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OFFENCES
Environmental Protection Authority Act - Charges Assurance

1229. Mr MINSON to the Minister for the Environment:

Given the findings by a Magistrate against Palos Verdes Estates Pty Ltd in the Court of Petty Sessions for pollution under the Environmental Protection Authority Act of 1986 and reported in *The West Australian* of 11 August, 1990 -

- (a) will the Minister and the Environmental Protection Authority ensure that Department of Conservation and Land Management and/or any other Government departments or agencies are similarly charged with offences under the Environmental Protection Authority Act;
- (b) if no to (1), why not;
- (c) will the Minister ensure that the Minister and the EPA specifically prosecute CALM and/or any party responsible for illegally logging the Shannon Forrest - D'Entrecasteaux National Park thereby using pollution as defined by the Environmental Protection Act 1986;
- (d) if no to (3), why not?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(a)-(d)

If complainants furnish specific details of any pollution incident to the Environmental Protection Authority, EPA officers will investigate and recommend prosecution proceedings as appropriate. In investigation of these matters, EPA draws no distinction between Government departments or agencies and its treatment of private companies or private individuals.

WORLD HERITAGE LISTING - LAND LEASE AND LICENCE DIFFICULTIES

1230. Mr MINSON to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Has the Minister been made aware of the difficulties of continuing to enjoy leasehold or licence rights in World Heritage areas because of the provisions and administration of the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act 1983, as amended in 1988?
- (2) Can these difficulties be overcome by complementary State and Commonwealth legislation?
- (3) Are there difficulties imposed on two Western Australian based companies, Cultus Gold NL and Southern Ventures NL, in regard to continuation of their tin mine at China Tin Camp in Queensland?
- (4) If yes to (3), how can the Minister assure the people of Shark Bay of fair and equitable treatment in regard to leases and licences by the Commonwealth when they are included within an area nominated for World Heritage Listing?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) I did receive a letter from Cultus Gold in March 1990 regarding its tin mine at China Tin Camp. I was advised then that the Federal Minister had commissioned Price Waterhouse to assess that company's claim for compensation.
- (2) The complementary legislation is designed to obviate the need to invoke the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act.
- (3) See (1) above.
- (4) The complementary legislation will ensure that management remains a State responsibility.

EDUCATION POLICY - STATE SCHOOLS TEACHERS UNION INFLUENCE
Parent Groups Influence

1231. Mr HOUSE to the Minister for Education:

Can the Minister explain whether the State School Teachers Union has more influence in the education policy process than parents groups?

Dr GALLOP replied:

The Ministry of Education consults with the State School Teachers Union of WA about matters which affect its members and with parent groups about matters which are of interest to parents.

SCHOOLS - PARENT ORGANISATIONS
Minister for Education's Statements and Government Policy

1232. Mr HOUSE to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Are the Minister for Education's statements on parent organisations made at the recent Western Australian Council of State School Organisations' Conference consistent with Government policy?
- (2) If yes, when was the policy changed and for what reasons?
- (3) Is Western Australia out of step with the rest of Australia in relation to parent involvement in schools?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) Yes. *Government Schools in Western Australia* (August 1988) states that the Government is committed to achieving greater community participation in schools. An intention is declared to introduce legislation to enable the formal establishment of school decision making groups, to provide a mechanism for schools to take account of local community needs.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No. Western Australia has developed solutions appropriate to its particular circumstances as has each of the other Australian States.

PORT KENNEDY PROJECT - WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Fleuris Pty Ltd

1233. Mr MINSON to the Minister for the Environment:

Given the Minister's Press release of 16 August 1990, regarding the Port Kennedy Development -

- (a) what is the position with regard to Western Australian Development Corporation's interest in this project;
- (b) has an agreement between the Government and Fleuris Pty Ltd or any joint venture company been drafted;
- (c) has any such agreement been completed;
- (d) if yes to question (3), is the document available;
- (e) what is the entire area of Government land and sea floor over which Fleuris Pty Ltd or its joint venture company has development rights;
- (f) are there any options for extensions to this area;
- (g) if yes to (f), what are the conditions of the option;
- (h) if yes to (f), will the Minister provide a copy of the conditions that the Minister has imposed on the development;
- (i) will the Minister make available the report of the independent committee referred to in the Minister's Press release of 16 August 1990;
- (j) will the Minister make available the report of the appeals committee

convened by the Minister under the Environmental Protection Authority Act of 1986 to review the advice given by the Environmental Protection Authority;

- (k) if the monitoring studies suggest that the bait fishery and/or the Little Penguin population of Penguin Island are threatened, will the Minister prevent the project from proceeding;
- (l) if these studies suggest that the bait fishery and/or the Little Penguin population of Penguin Island are threatened, and the Minister will not prevent the project from proceeding what procedure will be adopted in regard to fishermen and/or the penguins;
- (m) if this project is precluded from proceeding by a finding that fishermen or penguins will be jeopardised, will compensation be due to Fleuris Pty Ltd or its joint venture partners;
- (n) are the consultants retained to undertake monitoring studies of the proposal in regard to the bait fishery and penguins, the same as those reported by the former Deputy Premier, Hon David Parker, as being involved in the petrochemical debate as reported in *The West Australian* of 10 January 1989?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(a)-(d)

In answer to these queries I have referred to my colleague Hon Ian Taylor, Deputy Premier.

- (e) Of the 330 hectares total area of stage I site, 105 hectares will be set aside for conservation, and 225 hectares will be developed for various elements of the development concept, including substantial open space, passive areas, and areas of natural vegetation. The total marina area is nominally about 18 hectares. Of the stage II site, which is a further total area of 410 hectares it is a ministerial condition that not less than 75 per cent should be set aside for conservation purposes.

(f)-(h)

Any further intentions to develop the Port Kennedy site, including proposals for stage II, will be subject to a further and separate environmental impact assessment at the appropriate time.

(i)-(j)

The member is referring to one report, the report of the appeals committee to me as Minister for the Environment. This is confidential advice; however, the statement of advice entitled "Appeals Summaries", is available to the public in the Environmental Protection Authority reading room.

(k)-(m)

I am not prepared to pre-empt the findings of any monitoring studies, but will consider the need for further action on its merits at the appropriate time. The ministerial conditions on this project provide scope to take a range of remedial actions.

- (n) The matter of which consultants are to be retained to undertake monitoring studies is the decision of the proponents.

FOREST REGULATIONS 1971 - NOS 18 AND 20

*"Branding Hammer" Words Exclusion - Alternative Brands
Authorisation*

1239. Mr HOUSE to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) In relation to question 1046 of 1990, can the Minister confirm the Minister's statements in the Minister's answers (11) and (12) that the words "branding hammer" do not appear in the Forest Regulations 1971, 18 and 20?

- (2) In relation to the answer to part (12) of question 1046, under which regulation has the use of chalk, timber crayons, or axe mark as an acceptable registered brand been authorised?
- (3) In relation to (2) -
 - (a) who gave the authorisation for the use of the alternative brands to the branding hammer;
 - (b) when was the authorisation for the use of the alternative brands to the branding hammer;
 - (c) how often are the alternative brands to the branding hammer used?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) I confirm that the words "branding hammer" do not appear in regulations 18 and 23 of the Forest Regulations 1957. Regulation 20 does refer to "branding hammer" with respect to the cutting of timber on private forest.
- (2) Authorisation did not have to be given (see previous answer).
- (3) (a) The forest officer in charge of the operation.
 (b) I assume the member means "when was the authorisation for the use of the alternative brands to the branding hammer made?" The authorisation was given as a direction to the faller when he indicated that he had mislaid his branding hammer.
 (c) Frequently.

EDUCATION - COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS

Financial Crisis

1241. Mr TUBBY to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is a financial crisis being faced by Country High School Hostels?
- (2) Is the Country High School Hostels Authority using money allocated for maintenance to fund the hostels through this crisis?
- (3) If yes to (2), what is the Minister going to do to ensure that each hostel receives its maintenance grants?
- (4) Is the usual \$20 000 maintenance grant for each hostel to be cut back to \$15 000 for the 1990-91 financial year?
- (5) If so, what is the reason for this cut?
- (6) Is the Government only intending to meet half the deficit for each hostel this year?
- (7) If so, how are the hostels expected to pay the remainder of the deficits?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) No - some banks have redefined their policy regarding overdraft limits but this problem has been resolved.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The allocation of funding will not be known until the announcement of the State Budget.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) The Government will meet all commitments relating to hostel operations for 1990.
- (7) Not applicable.

HARMAN REPORT - COMMITTEE FINDINGS REASSESSMENT
Middle East Oil Crisis

1246. Mr COURT to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the Government asked the Harman Committee to reassess its findings in light of the Middle East oil crisis?
- (2) If not, will the Government ask for this reassessment and further details on the effect higher gas prices would have on energy costs?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) No. The Harman committee has finished its work.
- (2) Power station options are under detailed assessment and all relevant factors will be taken into account.

SCHOOLS - PRESCHOOLS
Professional Development of Staff - School Development Funding Eligibility

1251. Mr TUBBY to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Are preschools eligible for school development-type funding for the professional development of staff?
- (2) If so, what allocations are made to each centre?
- (3) If not, why not?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Preschools are community based, and in this sense are the same as independent schools. Preschools have the option to transfer to the status of preprimaries. Although the Ministry of Education is not responsible for the professional development of preschool teachers it does, however, provide two days of teacher relief for professional development for every full time equivalent preschool teacher.

WARDLE, STEPHEN - OMBUDSMAN
Death Inquiry, Recommendation 5 Implementation

1257. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is the Commissioner of Police going to implement recommendation 5 by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations resulting from his investigations into allegations concerning the death of Stephen Wardle viz -

"I recommend that the Commissioner of Police continues to study the question of the adequacy of surveillance and the need for electronic surveillance in all or part of the lockup."

- (2) If so, will the Minister detail the extent of the implementation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Commissioner of Police is presently studying the Parliamentary Commissioner's report and considering the recommendations.

ROADS - RANFORD ROAD, CANNINGVALE, LANDCORP SUBDIVISION
Under Width Approval

1267. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Has the Minister approved the creation of under-width roads in the LandCorp subdivision on Ranford Road, Canning Vale?

- (2) If so, when was that approval given?
- (3) If so, why was that approval given?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 27 June 1990 and 28 August 1990.
- (3) The approval was given in accordance with common practice for the subdivision of housing land.

STRATA TITLES ACT - AMENDMENT

1268. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is it still the Government's intention to introduce a Bill in this current session of Parliament to amend the Strata Titles Act?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Public and industry comments are still being considered following an extended comment period.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

ASBESTOS - CASTLEMAN, MR BARRY

WA Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances - Findings Assessment

337. Mr SHAVE to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What action is the Government proposing to take in regard to the assessment by Mr Barry Castleman, an international environmental consultancy expert on asbestosis, which assessment was prepared for the Asbestos Disease Society and questions the validity of the recent findings of the WA Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances?
- (2) Is the Government concerned that Mr Castleman has indicated in part that "the advisory committee's findings illustrate unbelievable ignorance of the state of the art in asbestos monitoring, on the part of the responsible officials"?
- (3) Will the Minister ensure a copy of Mr Castleman's assessment is tabled?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1)-(3)

I am not aware of Mr Castleman's report; I do not know what status it has. However, I can assure the member that the Western Australian advisory committee comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Productivity and Labour Relations and is chaired by the Commissioner for Health - a person who is internationally acknowledged as an expert in this area.

I assure the member and this House that I have absolute confidence in Dr Armstrong's ability to chair a committee which represents different agencies of Government and different expertise from those agencies, and to provide a report which not only has been put together from local experts, but also checked by international agencies for its veracity and accuracy before publication, and is of the highest calibre.

I will ensure in consultation with the Minister for Productivity and Labour Relations that the remarks by Mr Castleman are considered by the committee and that opinion is sought on his comments. However, I have no reason at all to doubt at the moment that the conclusions of the committee are the sort of conclusions in which the Government could have great confidence.

DAILY NEWS - CLOSURE

Government Reaction

338. Mr CATANIA to the Acting Premier:

- (1) Has the Acting Premier heard that the *Daily News* closed down this afternoon?
- (2) If so, what is the Government's reaction?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

I have heard that the *Daily News* closed down this afternoon. It is a very sad day in the history of publishing in Western Australia to witness a newspaper close its doors. It is an even sadder day for the 200-odd people who have lost their jobs because of what I regard as an abysmal bureaucratic action on the part of the Trade Practices Commission.

I received a facsimile from Aeroparts Aviation Consultants in this regard as follows -

My company Artic Ice Holdings Pty. Ltd. trading as Midwest Airlines is contracted to the *Daily News* to provide a daily air service - Perth to Kalgoorlie, to deliver the *Daily News*.

If the *Daily News* is forced to close because of the Trade Practices Commission's decision to once again prevent the West Australian Newspapers Ltd from taking them over, in excess of 200 West Australians will lose their jobs, in the midst of the worst economic climate we have been faced with for many years.

For my own part I will be faced with a ruined business, an \$80,000.00 aircraft lease, a \$20,000.00 bank overdraft, some creditors, and will be forced to retrench my full time pilot.

It seems unbelievable to me that the bureaucratic whim of a commission can be allowed to destroy the livelihood of so many people, and to cause so much hardship, especially in view of the fact that a genuine buyer is available.

I agree entirely with those sentiments. The Government will do everything it can to ensure that the *Daily News* reopens its doors to continue to provide the service it has provided for Western Australians for decades. We should remember that for many of those decades the *Daily News* and *The West Australian* were owned by the same group without the sorts of complaints put forward by the Trade Practices Commission in its so-called determination - which, on my brief reading of it, is nonsense.

How can a bureaucratic body such as the TPC hand down a determination so lightly on the question of publishing in this State because this city needs at least two newspapers and, more importantly, how can the TPC treat so lightly the 200 people who are now out of work? Those people have no prospect of finding work, particularly the journalists. I cannot believe that a Government body can put people out of work in such a light-hearted fashion.

My office has been in touch with the Federal Minister responsible for the TPC. The response received was that they cannot tell the commission what to do, that we had better deal with the commission. I will be pleased to deal with the commission and to indicate our total dissatisfaction with the way it has gone about its task.

I have asked staff in my office to work with the people at the *Daily News* to see what we can do - not in a political way but in a reasonable and responsible way - about reopening the doors of the *Daily News*. That is what at least 200 000 readers of the *Daily News* want, together with the 200 people who have lost their jobs - not to mention the newspaper boys and other people involved with and working for the newspaper.

The situation is not good enough. Every member in this House should feel the same way about the issue.

Members: Hear, hear!

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE CORPORATION - REPORTING
REQUIREMENT PROVISION
*Breach of Act***

339. Mr TRENORDEN to the Minister for Finance and Economic Development:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that regulations made under the State Government Insurance Commission Act 1986 require the State Government Insurance Corporation to report to the Minister in a manner similar to the reporting provisions of the Commonwealth Life Insurance Act?
- (2) Is the Minister aware of evidence given in the Supreme Court recently by the SGIC that the life division of the corporation has never done so?
- (3) Has the Minister taken any action in relation to this apparent breach of the SGIC Act?
- (4) If yes, what action has been taken?
- (5) If no, what action will be taken and when will the Minister take it?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(5)

The life division of the SGIO has only recently got off the ground. In fact, many people may have seen the advertisement which is being pushed very hard by that organisation and the campaign using Dennis Cornetti to make a lot of that business. It is important business for the organisation.

One of the reasons for making an agreement with Opposition members some months ago about the future of these organisations weighed heavily on me. Having fought for many years to have an open franchise and having got it through the Legislative Council I was concerned about how the organisation would stand up as a life insurer with the proper solvency ratios and the like. That is what it has sought to do. If, in getting that off the ground, the SGIC has overlooked that provision, I will draw it to its attention and I am certain it will be happy to provide me with the information.

**ABORIGINES - HOMESWEST
*Town Removal Claims***

340. Mr GRAHAM to the Acting Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Has the Acting Minister seen a media statement by Hon Norman Moore, MLC for the Mining and Pastoral Region, stating that it was rumoured that a number of Aboriginal families would be moved from Geraldton and Camarvon to Port Hedland and Karratha?
- (2) Is this rumour correct and what role has the Acting Minister played in this matter?

Mrs BUCHANAN replied:

(1)-(2)

I thank the member for this question. I am pleased that he has raised it because it indicates that his concerns are similar to the concerns of members on this side of the House about the manner in which some people deal with rumour and innuendo.

This issue was drawn to my attention late last week and again this morning by representatives of the media who I feel have acted very responsibly in bothering to check their facts before rushing into print. I was astounded by the suggestion because it insinuates that the State Government indulges in the forced mass migration of Aboriginal people. Such practices were abandoned many years ago.

I am concerned about the claims which the member used to whip up public emotion. There is no foundation or substance to the rumours. I have taken the opportunity to contact my colleague, the Minister for Housing, in relation to these statements and I have been assured that Homeswest's policy is to house people in the location of their choice irrespective of their ethnic or other backgrounds. I have been further advised that Homeswest advises people of the location of alternative accommodation. The final decision to take up that offer rests entirely with the applicant.

The statement by the member is another example of how some members prefer to shoot off their mouths without thinking about what they are saying or without availing themselves of my assistance or the assistance of ministerial colleagues which we are only too happy to provide.

SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY - 32 EMPLOYEES

Appointments Reduction

341. Mr OMODEI to the Minister for South-West:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that staff members of the South West Development Authority presently number 32?
- (2) Will the Minister confirm that, for at least six months, there has been a directive that no new or replacement staff will be appointed without the permission of the Minister and that the only replacement has been a director of the SWDA?
- (3) Will the Minister inform the Parliament which SWDA staff positions will be abolished to reduce the number of staff from 32 to 28?

Mr D.L. SMITH replied:

- (1) I cannot confirm that.
- (2) The only directive that has been issued is the one that is common to all Government departments and agencies.
- (3) The question of the deployment of staff and the Budget is something that will have to await the outcome of the Budget.

BELL GROUP SHARES - NATIONAL COMPANIES AND SECURITIES COMMISSION INQUIRY

Bond Corporation - Acquisition Settlement Fine

342. Mrs WATKINS to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of rumours that the Government waived payment of a fine by Bond Corporation Holdings Limited as part of the National Companies and Securities Commission's settlement of Bond Corporation's acquisition of Bell Group shares?
- (2) Is he able to outline the true situation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

We do not deal in rumours. However, I am aware of rumours circulating to that effect. I have taken steps today to ascertain the position.

I understand that, as part of the negotiations which led to the commercial settlement of matters arising out of the NCSC inquiry into the acquisition of Bell Group shares, the NCSC raised the issue of whether Bond Corporation Holdings should accept a fine for its actions. I have been advised that Bond Corporation denied quite strongly that it had breached the law in relation to the matter and, accordingly, would not accept the fine as a condition or element of the commercial settlement.

The Western Australian Government was consulted by the NCSC on the matter. The prime concern of the Government was to ensure that the settlement occurred, particularly from the point of view of the shareholders,

many of whom were small shareholders. Accordingly, the NCSC was advised that the Government would not insist on the NCSC's demanding a fine as a condition of the negotiated settlement. If the Government had insisted on the fine, it may not have been possible to achieve a settlement and the matter could well have become the subject of a long legal dispute. That would have disadvantaged many shareholders who accepted the takeover after confirmation of the State's position at that time was conveyed to the NCSC on behalf of the then Deputy Premier.

I trust that that clarifies the matter. It would be most unfair to suggest that the Government had favoured Bond Corporation as suggested in the rumours circulating today. If any favouritism was involved, it was involved in having the matter settled so that the shareholders did not go through a protracted legal dispute.

MOTOR VEHICLES - LICENCES *National Scheme*

343. Mr MENSAROS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Was it reported correctly in *The Weekend Australian* of 8-9 September 1990 that, at the State Transport Ministers' Conference in Hobart, the Minister agreed to develop a national drivers' licensing and vehicle registration scheme?
- (2) If so, is it the Government's policy to hand over State responsibilities bit by bit to the Commonwealth?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that, considering the fewer vehicles and longer roads in our State, a national scheme of vehicle licensing could only disadvantage Western Australia if the charges, as reported, are to reflect the full range of costs caused by road use?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) I did not see the article in *The Weekend Australian*. I understand that the member is talking about the national licensing of heavy vehicles, not of all vehicles.

Mr Mensaros: I am talking about motor vehicle licences and drivers' licences.

Mrs BEGGS: No, that is not true. The State Transport Ministers referred to a national scheme for the licensing of heavy vehicles. Certainly, Western Australia supports a uniform national scheme for the registration and licensing of heavy vehicles, but not of motor vehicles generally.

Mr House: Why?

Mrs BEGGS: Because the industry is asking for it for a start.

Mr House: The Western Australian industry?

Mrs BEGGS: Yes.

Mr McNee: Which part of the industry?

Mrs BEGGS: Several parts of the industry are asking for it.

Mr House: The Livestock Transporters Association?

Mrs BEGGS: That association has some difficulties with some aspects of it.

Mr House: I bet it has.

Mrs BEGGS: It has.

We have not agreed to all of the proposals put forward by the Commonwealth Government. However, there are some benefits in a national licensing scheme for heavy vehicles. In Western Australia we have set up our own heavy vehicle safety committee. We will be guided by the advice that we receive from that body as to what we eventually agree to and how that scheme will operate.

There is no suggestion that a national scheme will come into operation unless the member is talking about the Interstate Commission report. Western Australia has not agreed to any components of that report. I am at a disadvantage because I have not seen the article in *The Weekend Australian*. If that was said, I have been misquoted because the WA Government has not supported any provision of the commission's report.

(2) We do not intend to hand over our revenue raising base to the Commonwealth.

(3) No.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - LIQUIDATION BILL

344. Mr P.J. SMITH to the Minister for Finance and Economic Development:

Would he tell the Parliament what has happened to the Bill to liquidate the Western Australian Development Corporation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

As from today the Bill is back in this House. I will use this Bill as an example of the total ineptitude of the Opposition in handling these sorts of matters. I saw that ineptitude when the Bill was before this House. The Opposition, having demanded that the Government get out of business and get rid of WADC, proceeded to berate the Government for introducing a Bill into this House to liquidate or to get rid of the WADC. It then said it was not good enough.

I will refer to the way in which this Bill has been handled and returned to this place by the Legislative Council and the way in which the Opposition dealt with it in that place. The Bill, as amended in the Legislative Council, will not repeal the WADC Act of 1983. I am advised by Parliamentary Counsel that if the Bill were passed in its amended form - I can assure members in the Legislative Council that it will not be passed in that form - the resulting Act would be, in terms of drafting, short of the standards required of any legislation that goes on the Statute books.

Mr Bradshaw: Cover up - that is what you are trying to do.

Mr TAYLOR: Some cover-up - I brought this legislation to the Parliament so the Opposition would know what was going on! The original Bill provides that I will report to the Parliament and will be responsible under the terms of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. If we had done the opposite members opposite would be saying it is a cover-up.

I will deal now with the way in which the Opposition dealt with this Bill in the Legislative Council: The long title will still read that the Bill is an Act to repeal the Western Australian Development Corporation Act 1983 and thereby abolish the WADC. However, it will not be correct because there will be references in this so-called repeal Act to proposed section 10(3) and to the schedule. On top of that the amended Bill states that the board of the WADC will remain but it will have no functions, assets or staff. Despite that, it will still have to report under the Financial Administration and Audit Act. The liquidator would be required under proposed section 9(1)(c) to place the surplus funds into the Consolidated Revenue Fund even though the corporation would be in existence. The inconsistencies go on and on and it is an example of the absolute incompetence on the part of Opposition members in the Legislative Council who sought to make these sorts of changes. If the Government presents these sorts of things to the Opposition to give it the opportunity to know what is going on and to be involved in them and it wants to make amendments to the legislation, those amendments should be made in this House in order that we can consult on the issues and sort them out properly. As the Bill stands it will not achieve what members in the Legislative Council thought it would achieve. The amendments are totally

unacceptable to the Government and the Bill will go no way to achieving what it set out to achieve. The people of Western Australia will be worse off and they will not know what they would have known if the Bill had passed through in its original form. I ask members opposite to have a chat with their colleagues in the Legislative Council to try to sort out this problem. If they cannot sort it out in the Legislative Council, the amendments are certainly unacceptable in this place.

EDUCATION - COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS

Programmed Maintenance Funds - Stoppage

345. Mr AINSWORTH to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why was programmed maintenance money frozen for all country high school residential colleges recently?
- (2) What steps have been taken to overcome liquidity problems at some colleges?
- (3) Were programmed maintenance funds used to fund deficits at these colleges?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1) I would need to take some advice from the Country High School Hostels Authority. In relation to some of the general rumours which are circulating, it is surprising to me that issues are being raised without any knowledge of this year's Budget pertaining to country high school hostels. As has been the case with many questions by members of the National Party, it does not pay them or other members of the Parliament to speculate on what may or may not be in the Budget before it is brought down in this Parliament.
- (2) A couple of the nine country high school hostels in this State have recently experienced difficulties with their local banks and I refer in particular to the hostels at Merredin and Albany. The banks in those two towns have withdrawn the overdraft facilities for those hostels, despite assurances from the Government that their overdrafts would be met. In recent years the normal course of events for some hostels has been to run on a deficit financing basis because enrolments have been down. What has happened now is that the R & I Bank will be taking on board the accounts of those two hostels, the money has been provided to meet their current needs and they will function as they have done in the past.

(3) No.

SHARK BAY - FEDERAL COMPLEMENTARY LEGISLATION PROPOSAL

State's Position Draft

346. Mr MINSON to the Minister for the Environment:

Is the document titled, "Commonwealth/Western Australia Management Arrangements Proposed Complementary Legislation" which lists the objective administrative structures and future management for the Shark Bay area, copies of which were made available to people living in the area last week, genuine and current?

Mr PEARCE replied:

On the second last occasion on which I visited Shark Bay, along with the Acting Leader of the Opposition and his entourage and other people including the Federal Minister, I gave an undertaking that when the Federal Government prepared its proposal for complementary legislation and the proposed boundaries for the Shark Bay area for World Heritage listing, I would provide copies of the proposal to the local people. I said I would discuss it with them and put together a Western Australian negotiating position which I would present to the Federal Government. Pursuant to that the Commonwealth provided me with a document, to which the Acting Leader of the Opposition referred, which listed a range of things proposed for inclusion in the bilateral legislation. Many of those points were not acceptable to me or to the people in the area. The proposed map of the boundaries showed some improvements

to the Commonwealth's position, but did not go as far as we would have liked them to go. After I took the documents provided to me by the Commonwealth in good faith to the people of Shark Bay, through the intercession of a Federal Labor member, the Federal Minister said the documents had been released without her authorisation. I have spoken to her about it and I understand that to be the position. Although I was not impressed with what happened I was relieved because some of the positions that were taken in the document showed a considerable backsliding from the position which Mrs Kelly and I agreed on and to which she has since reaffirmed her agreement. I have drafted the State's position which involves five or six principles and I have forwarded it to the people in the Shark Bay area. I propose to visit the area again on Saturday to meet with representatives from the Camarvon, Denham and Useless Loop communities to negotiate from the State's draft an acceptable position to the State. I will take the State's position to the Federal Minister the following Thursday and will seek to negotiate the State's position, not worrying about Commonwealth documents which may or may not have any status.

AMMONIUM NITRATE - ESPERANCE

Unloading Safety

347. Mr Grill to the Minister for the Environment:

Was the recent unloading of the fertiliser grade ammonium nitrate at Esperance carried out safely?

Mr PEARCE replied:

I thank the member for the question. It was carried out safely and that was not contrary to my expectations because the conditions which had been set and which relied heavily on the recommendations of the international consultancy group Bureau Veritas and Testing Inspection Service were adhered to by the Esperance Port Authority and the emergency services in that area. The unloading was done not only safely but also without incident. In addition to comments made earlier this afternoon by me about this matter, I add that I was not impressed by some of the Press reporting. I guess that it will always be a matter of controversy when a Minister, exercising appeal rights -

Mr Court: Do not criticise the *Daily News* today.

Mr PEARCE: I will not do so. It was on my list, but I struck it off on the basis that one does not speak ill of the dead.

With regard to the controversy that erupted in relation to the matter, I was unimpressed by a report which appeared on one of our commercial television stations, if I remember correctly, Channel 7, which dragged out of its files - and I did not realise its archives went back so far - some old black and white film of an explosion which was alleged to have occurred in similar circumstances in the United States in 1942 or 1947. At the same time as it discussed the unloading procedures to be used at Esperance it showed a devastated city where a huge explosion had taken place. The Channel 7 people failed to check to establish that the material dealt with in that instance was the same as that being unloaded in Esperance. The simple fact was that it was not. In those days people were accustomed to coating ammonium nitrate with wax, I suppose to stop it breaking down during long sea voyages. In certain circumstances that rendered it explosive. That resulted in the explosion in the United States which figured so graphically on the Channel 7 news. It was pretty rough to show such film on a television program when it is factually incorrect thereby making people in Esperance fear for their safety when there was no reason to do so. It was an irresponsible thing for a media outlet to do.

Mr Blaikie: They were questioning the capacity of the Minister.

Mr PEARCE: I do not mind the channel's questioning the capacity of the Minister,

as many people do that. That is part of the business. It may be that sometimes they are right. However, it is not fair for a television station to show that kind of footage based on a wrong premise without checking its facts and in a way which may lead to unnecessary fears being held among a proportion of the Western Australia population. We generally have a responsible media in this State, and I include the channel to which I have just referred in that statement. However, I thought that was a particularly irresponsible action.
