

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 15th March, 1978

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

### ELECTORAL

#### *Legislative Council: Disallowed Question*

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Mr President, before I ask question No. 5 on today's Notice Paper I wish to draw attention to the fact that it is not printed as I gave notice of on opening night. I lodge a strong protest that my question has been reworded in this manner. However, I ask the Minister to answer the question as it is now printed.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member knows that I ruled the question, as she put it originally, to be out of order. She also knows she was given the opportunity to have the question printed on the notice paper in the manner in which it is printed and that she had the option to decide whether that course be taken or whether the question be disallowed completely.

I was given to understand that the honourable member did not agree to that course. It will remain unanswered because the honourable member wishes to retain it in the original form which is out of order.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Reverting to the question, I did say I would be prepared to ask it as printed on the notice paper of the day. I just wanted to register a protest about it having been changed.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member indicated to me when I placed the situation before her that she had not given approval for the question to be printed as it has been. I therefore said that unless the member was prepared to accept it in that form it would be out of order. The honourable member indicated by shaking her head that she did not agree with that so I ruled the question out of order. As far as I am concerned, if the honourable member wants to ask the question again she can put it on the notice paper in an acceptable form.

## COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

### *Statement by Leader of the House: Standing Orders Suspension*

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.55 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended so as to enable a motion concerning the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to be moved and proceeded with before the Address-in-Reply is adopted.

The PRESIDENT: I advise honourable members that this motion requires the concurrence of an absolute majority.

Question put and passed.

#### *Support: Motion*

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.57 p.m.]: I thank the House for granting permission for this statement to be made. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, at the 23rd conference in Ottawa with Western Australia being represented by the Hon. Neil McNeill, adopted a revised constitution, and it is considered timely to make a public statement concerning the association.

The CPA is an association of Commonwealth parliamentarians who, irrespective of race, religion, or culture, are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law and the rights and freedoms of the individual citizen, and by pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy.

In providing the sole means of regular consultation between Commonwealth parliamentarians, the association aims to promote understanding and co-operation among them and also to promote the study of and respect for parliamentary institutions throughout the Commonwealth.

The membership of the association, now 67 years old, consists of branches formed by members of Legislatures in the Commonwealth. The number of branches has grown from six in 1911 to the present 102 and the individual membership of branches stands at about 8 000.

Branches are autonomous but they are grouped geographically into seven regions for representation on the executive committee and for other purposes.

The Western Australian branch is grouped with the Commonwealth and other State branches,

together with New Zealand and Pacific Island branches, to form the Australasian region.

The president of the association is the Rt. Hon. Ripton MacPherson, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Jamaica.

The vice-president is Mr J. R. Harrison, ED, MP, Acting Speaker, House of Representatives, New Zealand.

The chairman of the executive committee is the Hon. Datuk Musa Hitam, SPMJ, MP, Minister for Education, Malaysia.

The hon. treasurer is Mr Neil Marten, MP, United Kingdom.

The president and vice-president serve for one year, the chairman and hon. treasurer for three.

The Western Australian branch was formed in 1925, and almost all members of both Houses have always been members of the branch.

The Presiding Officers are joint presidents with the chairmanship of the executive committee alternating annually between these two officers.

The leaders of the two main parties are vice-presidents and the Clerks of each House share the duties of honorary secretary and assistant honorary secretary.

I like to think that our branch plays an active role in association affairs.

In 1970 we joined with the Commonwealth branch and other State branches in hosting the annual conference, and we expect to do this again in about three years' time.

In 1979, our 150th anniversary year, we shall host three important association activities—

- (a) The 15th Australasian Regional Conference;
- (b) the meeting of the Executive Committee of the General Assembly—which has not met in Australia previously; and
- (c) a delegation from the United Kingdom Parliament.

We have received many delegations from overseas parliaments, the most recent being from the Legislative Assembly of Sabah, Malaysia.

We participate in the Australasian Parliamentary Seminar, the fourth of which will be held in September this year; we send one member on an overseas study tour each year; we have periodical invitations to fill vacancies at other overseas activities; and at this moment we have a member attending the 27th seminar at Westminster.

The value of the association is fully recognised by Commonwealth Governments. In the communiqués issued following their meetings,

heads of government have paid tribute to the association's work.

At a conference at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia some 15 months ago on "The Commonwealth and non-governmental organisations", seeking to increase public understanding of the Commonwealth, a number of steps for a more vigorous information programme were recommended, including two directly relevant to parliamentarians—

- (1) Government leaders, members of Parliament and other prominent Commonwealth identities—in their public speeches—to refer more frequently to the pertinence and value of today's Commonwealth;
- (2) on the parliamentary level, members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to be more active in publicising the valuable work of the CPA and to seek ways and means of putting on record the results achieved through CPA programmes.

During the Commonwealth conference in Ottawa last September, the association's executive committee warmly endorsed a proposal that a fresh commitment in support of the association should be sought on the floor of each House of Parliament as near as possible on the same day right across the Commonwealth.

In step with this proposal I am pleased to make this new commitment to the CPA on behalf of the Government of Western Australia and to pledge our continuing support for it. I do this as near to Commonwealth Day as is possible.

I now move—

That this House upholds the aims and objectives of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and pledges its continuing support for the organisation and its activities.

THE PRESIDENT: Before I put this motion I want to correct an oversight when I announced that the previous motion was carried. I should have advised members that I did count the House, and there being an absolute majority present and no dissentient voice the motion was carried with an absolute majority.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.05 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to second the motion moved by the Leader of the House.

Question put and passed.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

*Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 9th March, on the following motion by the Hon. W. M. Piesse—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

**THE HON. D. K. DANS** (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.05 p.m.]: In speaking to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, which was moved by the Hon. W. M. Piesse, may I congratulate her on the very excellent manner in which she presented her points of view. I am very happy to say that, perhaps, she made us realise the contents of her speech, but to be perfectly fair I cannot see a great deal coming out of it. However, the honourable member presented her speech in a forthright manner, and I congratulate her on doing that.

The Governor's Speech in this House and, indeed, in this system of parliament has been traditionally the method by which the Government details its legislative plans for the future well-being of the people of the State. On this occasion, unfortunately for the people of this State the legislative programme outlined by the Governor in the State Parliament last Thursday revealed that this Government had nothing to offer.

The Government has been in power now for some four years, and it appears to me we are in a state of stagnation. Unemployment is rising, and the Government is continually ignoring this situation, and also ignoring the question of constantly rising prices.

Today inflation in Western Australia is the worst. To the end of 1977 this State was 1.4 per cent worse off than the other States of the Commonwealth in regard to inflation. This State was 1.4 per cent over the figure for the national average, and it was 2 per cent worse off than the average for the States of New South Wales and Queensland. In money terms this meant that every Western Australian was \$3 worse off per week than his counterparts in the other States; or some \$150 worse off per year.

The Premier has stated on more than one

occasion that inflation could be beaten State by State, yet at the same time we have the situation of Western Australia experiencing the highest inflation rate of any State in the Commonwealth.

As the unemployment figures now stand—in referring to this I do not want to go into a mathematical exercise—Western Australia, if not having the highest unemployment figure in Australia, has the second highest. This has come about through a variety of reasons. We have been given to understand that in a certain number of years—it may be in no years at all, or 20 to 30 years' time—we will produce 100 000 jobs; that prosperity is just around the corner; and that the Government is really doing something about rising prices and unemployment. Let me remind the Government that empty promises and rhetoric do not create any jobs.

We on this side of the House would be only too pleased to stand up and support the Government on any concrete proposal to reduce unemployment—but not a figment of the imagination, or mere words—that somehow or other will be the means of creating job opportunities, if not for all the 35 000 people who are out of work, then at least for some of them.

I get no joy in talking about unemployment. I do not want to be a doomsday messenger, but if we cast our minds back to the time of the Tonkin Government we realise that when that Government came to office unemployment was rife, and it was growing. At that time it was a fairly simple exercise to blame the newly-elected Labor Government. As the Government we had the responsibility of taking steps to alleviate unemployment. We could not talk about grandiose schemes, because there was nothing offering. We could not talk about the creation of 100 000 jobs, because we could not see any way to achieve that. However, we did take some effective action; that was to subsidise local authorities in works programmes, and so provide work for some of the unemployed.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Do not forget about Salvado.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Salvado did not get off the ground. Perhaps if it had we would not be experiencing the degree of unemployment which we are experiencing today. The cold hard facts were that we as the incoming Government had to take steps to provide work for the people—not to provide people with work for 40 hours per week, and another 40 hours in overtime, but work. Gradually we brought the level of unemployment down, and we were successful in bringing the

figure for Western Australia down to the lowest of that of any State.

At that time Co-operative Bulk Handling decided to proceed with the building of a new grain terminal. With the assistance of the Government and the Rural and Industries Banks that project got under way.

My advice to the Government is to stop talking about the North-West Shelf gas project. I have no doubt that in the fulness of time it will get off the ground, but there is a long way to go before we will see any activity in that area in providing jobs in the field and on shore where the equipment will be made and put together.

If one needs further evidence to substantiate what I am saying, one only has to go to Rottnest Island and see the *Ocean Digger* lying idle at anchor outside the limits of the Port of Fremantle, in want of a job.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It was put there by the Whitlam Government, as you well know.

The Hon. D. K. DANCs: It seems that Mr Pike invariably backs a loser. The rig he is talking about is the *Ocean Endeavour* and I was just coming to that. This rig was built at a time when unemployment was acute, and it was built at Naval Base on the initiative of the Tonkin Government. As far as I know, the *Ocean Endeavour* is being used, gainfully I hope, in Bass Strait.

The *Ocean Digger* has performed a useful service, and this rig was built in Whyalla long before I entered Parliament. This is the rig that is lying at anchor at Rottnest; and it was put there during the terms of the Fraser Government and the Court Government. Do not let us be pettyfogging on these matters. I would much prefer to see the *Ocean Digger* being put to work. We were able to get the *Ocean Endeavour* under construction. It was the means of providing a lot of labour, but it also caused a lot of headaches.

We have proved in this State that given the co-operation of the people and the skill and the ingenuity of the work force, we were able to build a rig which is far superior to the one that Mr Pike has talked about, and which is languishing off the coast of Rottnest. However, I would much prefer to see that rig being put to work.

I am not original in saying that day by day we see more and more young people failing to obtain work. Irrespective of the side of the House on which we sit, I suppose all of us can tell stories about young people who are prepared to go out and look for work, about those who refuse to work, and about television programmes on unemployment. The facts are that the vast

majority of young people do wish to obtain employment and do look for work. Many of them have had sad experiences, some of which were caused by the Commonwealth Employment Service. Sometimes when they get spruced up to attend interviews for work they find that hundreds of others are looking for the very same job.

Many countries overseas, particularly West Germany, are experiencing unemployment; so, unemployment is not peculiar to Australia. I am not blaming the Government of the day for the unemployment which exists. However, this Government should not engage in delivering speeches to indicate that 100 000 jobs will fall from the sky.

Regarding the unemployment of young people, in the first three months of unemployment many young people think it is rather a pleasant experience that they cannot find jobs; then in the next three months they become apprehensive; and in the following three months, which brings them up to nine months of unemployment, the sad fact is that they suffer such devastating blows to their character, their ego, and their hopes, that some of them may not want to work again.

These are real social problems. I am not original in what I am about to say: Poverty is the parent of crime and civil disobedience. It would be all very well—and I would much prefer to be on my feet lauding it—if the North-West Shelf development were to take off. My advice is at least to have a look at the situation to find out what can be done on a lower plane. The Government should not dream about the rosy days of "the State on the move" because I do not believe they will ever come again, much as I would like to see them as would everyone else in this State.

There are many areas in which the Government can take the initiative, but it does not seem to take that action. We have possibly the highest charges in the Commonwealth of Australia for goods and services. They directly affect the consumers, and employers.

If we want to bring down inflation we have to look for some way to lower the prices of goods and services. We should encourage development and we support the Government in its encouragement of development. However, let us have a look at the manufacturing industry. Let us try to get a few small industries under way. I am not saying—and I would never make the claim—that we have a large consumer market in this State. I do not think we could ever possibly create manufacturing industries similar to those

in the Eastern States. The States on our eastern coast have large populations which take up the slack. The small businesses—those which may employ only four or five persons—would help if they were encouraged in the way I have suggested.

No investor will invest his money in a State where the essential services are so costly. This is one initiative which the Government could be looking at. The Premier seems to have a policy of forever increasing taxes and charges, but he does not budget for a surplus in the Estimates. He budgets for a great big heap of money left over so that he can do what he likes with it. That policy is very simple but it is extremely damaging to this State.

The State Government seems to have adopted a policy or a tactic of raising funds by introducing completely new forms of imposts on the people of this State. We used to have a \$10 refundable deposit for the connection of electricity to a house. We now have a \$15 nonrefundable deposit. Just recently it was announced that consumers would have to pay an extra \$50 to have three-phase electricity connected to their houses. Charges for connecting electricity to rural properties have been increased 100 per cent by the SEC. As far as I can ascertain, that proposal was never discussed in this Parliament. Surely that is an unjust impost on the rural section of this country.

Another impost is the recording fee when vehicle licences are renewed. The Government seems to budget for a great massive excess of funds, not just a surplus.

There are no clear signs as yet that the Australian economy is recovering from the effects of the last two or three years. However, it is clear to me that the Western Australian economy is faltering.

If our inflation rate, which is head and shoulders above that of the other States, is not evidence that our economy is faltering then the unemployment situation should provide the necessary truth. We used to be able to say we were fairly well placed in comparison with the other States with regard to unemployment. I have had a look at the question in relation to job opportunities. I was in Kalgoorlie during the Labour Day weekend. The nickel industry is in a very bad shape. It would not take very much more by way of a further drop in the price of nickel to force the nickel smelter to close down. I hope that does not happen.

If one is to believe industry representatives, there is a possibility that the Robe River pellet

plant will close down. I am told it will not be able to keep going because the price of pellets is too high.

It has been reported in today's Press that the Japanese have said they will not make a decision with regard to iron ore contracts for at least one month. What they were saying really was that they would not make a decision while Mr Anthony was in Japan; they would wait until he came home. If the Robe River pellet plant is scaled down, or shut down, it stands to reason the Hamersley plant will also have to shut down.

I am sure that Mr Leeson will touch on this matter, but surely the price of gold has reached the point where a little encouragement from the Government, not by way of subsidies but some long-term loan arrangement at either no interest or a very low interest rate, may help some of the mining companies. I have in mind specifically the North Kalgoorlie company. Some of the mines may be able to reopen, and at least those people will be kept in employment in the Kalgoorlie area.

I do not know how true this is but it has been said that the Soviet Union and French New Caledonia have literally thousands of tons of nickel. If the Anaconda company continues to flood the market this could bring about similar action by France and the U.S.S.R. One can understand the feeling of the people in Kalgoorlie if this happens. It has been said that the people in Kalgoorlie are getting some income from Kambalda and the nickel smelter but in reality that town is living on the dole. There are some thousands of people living in Kalgoorlie. I know it is not the fault of the Government but I think we should tell the people just where we are going and not just say that everything will be rosy if we can hold on a little longer.

One could go through the Governor's Speech word by word, but there is one particular matter which intrigued me. It was the very good announcement that the Commonwealth intended to allow the States to enter the loan market. I have been one of those people who have not been particularly anti that kind of operation. If funds have to be obtained to reduce unemployment then governments normally can borrow money at a lesser rate than private individuals. If my memory serves me correctly, on the Friday morning following delivery of the Governor's Speech—and I ask members not to hold me to the Friday—the Prime Minister said the proposal was all very well, and the Commonwealth would agree to it subject to the power to veto by the Commonwealth. That seems to me to put us back to square one—the same form of borrowing as previously but dressed up in a different package.

If the States put up a proposition and the experts in the Commonwealth Government do not agree, they will veto the proposition. We would then face further difficulties.

When the Leader of the Government in this place replies to this debate he should provide some clear definition from the Government of Western Australia of any positive plan to reduce unemployment. I can guarantee that if a positive plan is produced it will have the full support of members on this side of the House.

I also ask the Government what it really intends to do about the people in Kalgoorlie. Will the Government produce some positive projects by making available long-term loans either on its own initiative or as a result of an approach to the Commonwealth Government? At least, more goldmining areas should be opened in Kalgoorlie.

It has been suggested to me—and the statement could have been made with a feeling of hope—that the American financial institutions close down after Easter. It seems that would be the time to seek an increase in the price of gold.

The mines in the eastern goldfields have closed down not because there is no gold, but because the price of gold is not right. The leases have been renewed for some 21 years and those people can sit on the leases for those 21 years and do nothing.

When I was a boy living in Kalgoorlie there existed a system of tributing. Under that system miners leased a section of a mine where they were able to work on their own initiative as entrepreneurs. They were called "tributers." If they made any money they paid X number of pounds to the mining company. Those miners were able to keep the mines going until the price of gold doubled in the depression years.

I understand that tributers do not operate below a depth of 200 feet. Any miner knows that in the goldfields area the guts of the mines have been ripped out to a depth of 200 feet. I am sure that you, Mr President, would be aware of that because you have some knowledge of the goldmining industry.

Surely the Government could take some initiative in the way I have suggested. I do not think it would take very much money by way of long-term loans, even if some of the mining companies were only to resume on a break-even basis at this stage. I am one of those people who still believe the future of Kalgoorlie is founded on gold.

I have mentioned two areas of concern. There are a number of other areas, particularly in the country, where subsidies to country shires would enable the implementation of programmes around

the State. That would encourage private industry, even though they might not be big industries. At least, they would be able to employ some people.

The 35 000 unemployed in this State could stay unemployed for a considerable time, and the figure could increase to 70 000. The young people could marry, have children, and be in exactly the same socio-economic system. Eventually—in the not-too-distant future—unemployment could cost the people of Australia thousands of millions of dollars. The unemployed have to be rescued from that situation.

It seems to me all the facilities of the State which deal with crime and civil disturbance will be taxed to the utmost because it goes without saying that Satan finds work for idle hands. Those are the initiatives in which I would like the present Government to engage.

I do not intend to knock the search by the Government for development. One has to be honest: the development of our natural resources possibly offers the greatest area for employment. However, today we have a world which is oversupplied so we have to get out of the habit of just talking, and go back to some of those old-time Government leaders who had to deal with more difficult situations and a much tighter financial situation than we have today in order to provide work for the people.

I would like to speak about a number of matters concerning my area, and first of all I would like to refer to the answer given to a question I asked of the Minister for Transport concerning the future of the Fremantle Port Authority. I notice the Minister is listening to what the Leader of the House is having to say.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I am listening intently to you.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: This is a matter of real concern in Fremantle because rumour has been rife in the port area for months. I went with the Minister for Industrial Development to the opening of the Frigo Scandia freezing works at Spearwood, and naturally a whole host of shipping people from all levels were present at that gathering. These people are all concerned about the rumours.

I accepted Mr Wordsworth's answer in good faith; however, what is happening in Fremantle is not generally known to the rank and file workers. I refer to the foreman stevedores, the wharfies, and the people who work for the Fremantle Port Authority, as well as many others. I am very much aware of what has happened in other ports, but the situation that has persisted in Fremantle since 1903 has served our port very well.

It is a well known fact on the Australian waterfront that at the moment only two stevedoring companies are operating; they are Patricks and Mercantile. I am told it is boasted that Fremantle will be included in this giant octopus, and it is also a boast of Patricks that once that is accomplished that firm will gobble up Mercantile. I do not want to stand up here and tell Mr Wordsworth how this will unfold, and I am sure he would not want to tell me. I do not want to say how the efficiency of the port will be affected, or what else will be affected.

However, a couple of things are very sure, because I have seen the terms of reference under which the matter is being examined. I am advising the Government and the port authority to come clean, because there is nothing like rumour of what is going to happen to worry people. The people do not know what will happen if Patricks and the Mercantile company take over the complete stevedoring operations in the Port of Fremantle.

For the benefit of members, the situation in Fremantle is that the cargo on the wharf side of the ship is handled by the Fremantle Port Authority, and the authority exacts a levy on cargo that is to be exported. In addition to this the present Government—and I have objected to this but it seems to be here to stay—exact a 3 per cent levy on the income of the Fremantle Port Authority; and no-one can seriously suggest to me that exactly the same levy would be applied if private stevedoring companies took over stevedoring operations in the port. Therefore, the State would suffer a loss of revenue, and coupled with this is the loss of revenue it will suffer from the decline in the iron ore and nickel industries. All this will have a very bad effect on employment opportunities in this State.

The Hon. G. W. Berry: Where do you think the rumour started? Did one of the big stevedoring companies start it?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If Mr Berry had listened to the answer given by the Minister for Transport he would have heard the Minister say that studies are under way. I am quite happy with that answer, because the Government is looking at the situation.

The second point is, of course, that this kind of rationalisation must surely decrease the port strength not only in respect of waterside workers, but right across the board from the port authority building to shed clerks and tally clerks, etc, and this will add to the bad unemployment situation. At this time we do not know if the efficiency of the port would be greater if private companies did

the work, because I am led to believe at present the Port of Fremantle does not have a peer anywhere in Australia as far as efficiency is concerned. Perhaps it could well be argued that the Fremantle Port Authority is exorbitant in its charges because it exacts a charge on exports.

This matter is worrying the people in the port. After all, the wharf strength is already down from 2 400 to some 1 100; and the latter number cannot be held much longer. Already a review is under way to bring down the port strength to about 900. This situation is symptomatic of the problems we face right across the board, and they are problems which cannot be solved by empty rhetoric. This is a real, living example of some of the things that we miss when we talk about policies. I believe it is incumbent upon the Government to tell the port authority that if it carries out the studies then at least they should be open to the public so that the people on the job, the people who provide the goods and services in the Port of Fremantle, know what is going on, rather than having it dropped on them overnight as so many things have been dropped overnight on people in commerce and industry and those down on the job.

After all, let me remind members that the nickel industry was going to be the saviour of this State. So good are we at forecasting the future that now, some little time after that forecast, the world nickel industry is facing a serious decline!

It is not so long ago that the Chamber of Mines wanted to bring in 400 Filipino miners. One could well imagine what would be the situation now in Kalgoorlie if those Filipinos were out of work along with the many others who are already out of work. Perhaps we could see a repetition of what occurred in 1933.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Are you suggesting there will be fewer watersiders employed if private companies do the work as distinct from the port authority?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am not suggesting anything of the sort. I said that in the current situation the wharf strength will perhaps decrease to 900 if the private companies take over. However, I do not know what will happen, and this is what is worrying the people in the port. For instance, if we remove the authority that is handling the cargo on one side of the ship and use the people who are handling the cargo on the other side of the ship, then it stands to reason fewer people will be required. In the case of Fremantle, this would affect not only the port but also the townspeople, and if that were to happen all the talk in the world would not change

anything. However, what I am saying is that at least the people should know about it.

I do not want to belabour the matter any further. It is a serious situation which concerns people who may lose their jobs—or at least they think they may lose their jobs and so they are very touchy about the matter. Once unemployment moves into that area it will be moving into the breadwinner field of unemployment, a field in which the rate is low at the moment if the statisticians' figures are correct.

Already one shift has been stood down at the steel plant in Kwinana, and it is said that has been achieved by natural attrition. I do not know whether the workers die on the job or whether they are fed into the blast furnace, because it is such a hot and dangerous job; but the cold hard fact is that instead of creating 100 000 jobs, the number of jobs is being gradually reduced.

A further point I would like to mention is that I would like to ask the Government to use its good offices with the Commonwealth Government once more to see that the western end of Garden Island is kept for recreational purposes.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That matter is still under examination.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I realise that, but I am aware of the way the Commonwealth Government works, no matter which party is in office. It is something like creeping paralysis.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You sound like a great federalist.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Federal systems have many drawbacks, as Mr Pike well knows; and particularly so in a continent as large as ours. The federal system in West Germany has its problems.

The reason I make this request to the Government is that again the people are gradually awakening to the fact that slowly but surely their areas of relaxation and recreation are being denied to them. Despite the fact that all of us in this Chamber, including Mr Pike, are very much pro-Western Australia, if we look around the areas that we have for aquatic sports we find they are becoming more and more limited. If one sails a boat from the mainland to Rottnest, I suggest one could find weather as bad as that to be found anywhere in the world. The situation is a little better in Cockburn Sound, which provides a very worth-while area for the public to participate in recreation.

If the present trend of automation and mechanisation continues, then it is inevitable we will have a shorter working week and an earlier

retiring age. Then, of course, the pressure on our relaxation and recreation areas will become intolerable, particularly in the case of water sports.

I am one of those who have never been in favour of the naval base being built at Garden Island. I feel it should have been constructed in the territory of Mr Tom Knight, where it would serve two purposes; firstly, it would inject activity into an area where it is needed and, secondly, it would provide the naval base that both political parties have decided is necessary.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: At least that will endear you to Mr Knight.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have made that suggestion before. Perhaps the naval base should have been established at Exmouth; the people there would be happy to see it. It seems so stupid to me to establish it adjacent to a heavily populated area. I do not make that statement on the basis of defence, because I have been advised that a submarine standing off the east coast of New Zealand could launch a ballistic missile to land on the other side of Garden Island.

I do not know how we got into this situation of having the naval base constructed on Garden Island. However, we are in the situation and all we can hope for in the future is that the defence chiefs will allow us to continue to use certain parts of the island under certain circumstances. We all know how hard it is to get land from the defence chiefs once they have their hands on it; it is well nigh impossible to get it back.

I would now like to refer to a thorny problem, and I hope I am not accused of being racist. I would like the State Government to make positive approaches to the Federal Government on the matter of illegal immigrants entering this country.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Did you say "illegal"?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: In my opinion they are illegal; the Minister may disagree.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am genuinely trying to ascertain what you said.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Let me rephrase my remarks, seeing that the Minister is being so pedantic. I would like to see people coming to this country being asked to enter through the normal channels; and I am referring particularly to the Vietnamese people who are arriving willy nilly in Darwin by boat. We have all heard all kinds of weird and wonderful stories about this. I am assured by a person who does not belong to my political party that one Vietnamese gentleman who arrived in Darwin on a ship was accompanied



by his three servants. He is hardly a poor person fleeing from repression.

We have all heard stories of animals being brought ashore illegally, and we know that when the boats tie up at the wharf the occupants walk up to policemen and ask where they should give themselves up. We have heard stories about how these Vietnamese people pay for goods with gold leaf.

We should extend the hand of friendship to these people and extend help to whoever needs it. However, there is a right way and a wrong way to enter this country. Each and every one of us has been approached by constituents in order to get someone from another part of the world back into this country on the basis of reuniting families; and we know how difficult it is. If a boat load of people fleeing from the repressive Callaghan Government in the United Kingdom were to arrive in Darwin we well know what would happen to them; they would be bundled up, locked up, and sent back!

But the really serious part of this problem—and most members will have seen Dr Alice Stack on television—is that animals, birds, and other things which have been brought ashore constitute a grave danger of serious stock diseases entering this country, and we have a fine record of keeping them out of the country. If we have problems now with our cattle and other aspects of our rural industry, heaven help us if that were to happen; and there is always the possibility that it can happen.

Members should not misunderstand me: if these people wish to come to this country, that is all right and there is a legitimate way of doing it. I saw in the newspaper this morning that we have agreed to take another 8 000 of these people. If they come in through the front door, that is all right. A few years ago the Hon. Bill Withers made some very fine speeches concerning the tracks of the Indonesians and the pig pens and the chicken coops which had been found up north. He warned us of the dangers of rabies and blue tongue. I listened to what he had to say. If that was the case then, it is even more so now, particularly having regard to the nearness of our State to the Northern Territory. We still wish to be humanitarian, but these people should use the front door only and not the back door and should comply with our quarantine and health regulations.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Supposing we agree, and it could be that we do, how do you send them back when they arrive in such rickety old boats? What do you do?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I concede to the Minister his point, but the mistake was made on the first occasion when the first lot was allowed to land. We should bear in mind that we are not dealing with many poor refugees. If members read the newspaper today they will see that the diamond woman is now six months pregnant. I do not know whether this is how we got Diamond Lil, but the point is that this issue is worrying the ordinary men and women of Australia.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What is the solution?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The solution—and it could be made known very quickly—would be to say, "We are going to reprovise your ship and put you back to sea again".

The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs: Did that woman stow away in two different ways?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr Stubbs' hearing aid is excellent!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That hearing aid has brightened Parliament no end!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It may be a pun, but the issue is very simple: let us extend the hand of friendship and humanitarianism to these people, but let them enter the country in the right way. I can well imagine the furore that would break forth if any of these exotic diseases got loose in this country.

I should like to bring forward two other points and they have some relation to what I was speaking about previously in respect of creating job opportunities. I have made a number of approaches in this Parliament about the Government making wharf facilities available in the Fremantle area. I know it has gone some way in this direction by setting aside a number of berths as repair berths and assisting local engineers with installing adequate machinery and facilities. I am not going to be as blase as to say that we should have floating docks, although we should have them, but floating or permanent docks have a long history of not making money. I know of none which make money but they do provide a facility, and if we looked at the dock situation and the things that flow from it perhaps we could get a different picture.

I should like the Government to have a look at this because in Fremantle we have a very high rate of unemployment and many people through no fault of their own, and, for want of a better description, are poverty stricken. It would not take a great deal for the Government to adopt what I referred to earlier in my speech as the low horizon approach by encouraging the smaller sections of industry which would take up the slack

as we go along. The situation does not need the provision of large sums of Government money because sometimes encouragement is all that is needed, and sometimes a loan is all that is needed. I know that all these projects must be researched because in any area in which grants are made available some of the propositions which come forward are certainly not viable. This is one of those matters that we should look at.

During the last speech I made in an Address-in-Reply debate in this Chamber from this position I called on the Government to have a look at the water supply situation in this State. I was not very harsh in my criticism but I did say that the situation was reaching a very bad stage and that the Government should be looking not only at alternative water supplies but also at the possibility of converting sea water to fresh water, because it appears to me the current water shortage will not improve in the future. It may not be so bad in the future but if we start on research now—and I am a great believer in the ingenuity of man—just as we pioneered solar hot water systems, and they have their critics, perhaps in a short space of time we could be leading the world in the technology of reclaiming fresh water from salt water.

The reality of the situation is that if the Government had been monitoring the situation properly, water restrictions should have been imposed two or three years ago. To my way of thinking, the situation is now almost out of control. I know it would be a very fine thing if we could take water from Mr Withers' territory—and perhaps one day we may have to when the money can be found—but the Government should be condemned for not imposing water restrictions at least three years ago.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I warned them in 1972.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It should have happened. I am not concerned about lawns—my own or anyone else's—but we should also be looking at bores, and I am not suggesting that we restrict bores.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Certainly not in this House!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I almost anticipated that interjection, including the ones that live down on the farm and run around snorting!

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I was not referring to you personally.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It is not for me to criticise water boring contractors because the old law of supply and demand is operating, but it has

been suggested that since water became short their charges have risen by about 250 per cent. There have been all kinds of arguments in the newspaper as to how far the water table has dropped, if it has dropped, and all the risks concerned. All I know is that today I went past Bibra Lake and there is hardly a cupful of water in it. I also went past Lake Yangebup and it is bone dry. Some people paid thousands of dollars to install their own reticulation systems to be connected to the mains, and are they weeping now! I should not like to see people paying thousands of dollars to install their own bores only to find that one fine morning restrictions have been placed on them. I suppose it is too late now to say what should have happened three years ago—and I agree with Mr Withers—but we should take positive action in the future to educate the people of this State that water is one of our most precious resources.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: That happened with the Serpentine Dam and the Serpentine River.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: What was that?

The Hon. Neil McNeill: Restrictions on the use of bores by those people who were already using water supplies from that source.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: We have the same situation to some degree with regard to the Jandakot mound. Surely if the aquifer is to be tapped at some stage some people using private bores excessively in that area may have their activities halted. All I am saying is that the absolute amount of information should be made available to people in respect of water. Our lack of fresh water is the greatest inhibiting factor in some areas of development. I repeat: if the Government had been aware of this problem it would have warned people two or three years ago that some form of water restriction would be necessary.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I would have extended that period a little further.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: In trying constantly to find ways of soaking up some of our unemployed and some of the people who have gone on to higher education and who now feel very dispirited and turned off simply because they cannot find jobs, the Government—and I know it has problems with money—should be looking at the establishment in Fremantle of some kind of maritime institution, notwithstanding the fact that as an election issue, despite our very fine overtures to the Federal Government, such a college was placed at Launceston.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Disgraceful!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It may be disgraceful,

but one of Mr Wordsworth's friends, with whom I flew back from Melbourne recently and who is an ex-mayor of Launceston, thought it was wonderful that it was placed there. This gentleman has some interest in Sheffield Shield cricket and Mr Wordsworth probably knows who I am talking about. There is an excellent opportunity to look at the possibility of establishing an institute of higher learning, for want of a better name, which would train people not only in the skills of operating small craft, but also in the technology of oceanography. I use the term "technology" rather than such terms as biology and zoology and all the other subjects which make up an oceanographic team, because they can be adequately taught in universities.

Having regard to our very long coastline we need a great many technologists. We could well explore the possibility of opening some kind of polytechnic clinic as opposed to a university, a high school, or a technical college. I read in the newspaper that the Government is going to draw together all the studies which have taken place in relation to the coastal dunes. I am of the opinion that we are in an excellent position to provide a kind of institute or clinic where the Government, by way of the Education Department or the university, could train people to do this kind of work. It is very saddening to us in Fremantle to see almost daily Japanese, American, and numerous Soviet vessels examining the potential of the fishing grounds, the chemistry of the seawater, the tides, and the currents of the Indian Ocean.

This is probably not a problem which should be faced by the State Government alone, but on the basis of the fact that this State provides about a quarter of the export earnings of this country surely we could say, "We can improve that export situation provided you can give us the money to train our own technologists". It is galling to see these ships of other nations using our port facilities and, in many cases, embarking our own scientists to work from them.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The point you make is very good and a lot of the basic study was done at the time of the establishment of the Launceston institution. A lot of this information is there and many people agreed with you, and I was one.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The only difference is that the institution in Launceston is a maritime college. Perhaps some of the private venturers in this State could do what has been done in other parts of the world, which is to endow such an institution.

I am sure that would lead to bigger things; it would lead to the development, perhaps, of additional offshore industries such as the fishing industry, the crayfishing industry, the prawning industry, etc. With the extension of the offshore limit I am sure that the money spent in this direction will be very well spent.

Having regard to the time and the agitation of members in this Chamber I conclude by supporting the motion.

*Sitting suspended from 6.01 to 7.30 p.m.*

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [7.30 p.m.]: Mr President, I found the Hon. Win Piesse's address very interesting and she is to be congratulated on her forthright and no-nonsense approach.

In 1972 the Government of the day brought into this Chamber some very enlightened Bills. They were Bills which the Council agreed to and they became legislation which eradicated the racist Statutes that existed within this State. It is a great pity that the people in Canberra, our past and present Governments, have not been able to adopt similar attitudes. Instead our past Governments and present Government have adopted racist legislation. They have adopted this in the mistaken belief that it will cure the social ills of communities that have mixed races with varying needs.

It is unfortunate also that the Australian people, as well as our legislators, refer to Aborigines as if they were one people with the same sort of way of life and with the same desires and aspirations. We seem to think they have similar needs and they live under similar life styles. How false and nonsensical this attitude is! How false and unrealistic is the premise upon which our racist legislation is based!

Would any of the Caucasian members in this Chamber be happy with legislation that was developed purely for Caucasians? I am quite sure they would not.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Which legislation is racist?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Let us look at the secondary grants scheme for Aborigines. This scheme was adopted, and at the time it was seemingly fair. It had high ideals; but unfortunately it was racist legislation. It enables any Aboriginal child or part-Aboriginal child to attend secondary school—private boarding school—regardless of whether the parents can afford it. Irrespective of the need, this cannot apply to a non-Aboriginal student.

When opportunity is denied any child in this

country purely on racial grounds, this is something which must be stopped. Racist legislation will permit this. It is deplorable. This same racist legislation causes tension among the members of the community.

The correction for this deplorable situation is simple. Instead of having the scheme designed purely on racist grounds, let it be implemented on the basis of need. Instead of calling it the "secondary grants scheme for Aborigines", let it be called the "secondary grants scheme for disadvantaged persons". There should be no racial discrimination in this country. Unless we do away with racist legislation we will compound the feeling of racism, which will develop first in areas of inequality.

I might add that it is this developed racism which causes people to talk about "the drunken Aboriginal". Not all Aborigines drink; not all drunks are Aborigines; and not all drunken people who collect unemployment benefits are Aborigines. I must admit, of course, there are Aborigines who do have more money for the purchase of alcohol than their white counterparts. I will explain that later.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Would you support legislation for disadvantaged persons?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Yes; I believe we should have legislation for disadvantaged persons. This is the whole theme. Our legislation should not be based on race. It should be based on need regardless of colour.

Racism has developed because our laws seem to couple Aborigines together as if they have one need, as I mentioned earlier, and yet they are not expected under our laws to show any form of responsibility. This should not be.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Are you saying there was no racism before this legislation?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: No. There was a great deal more racism. As I said, the racism in the State Statutes was eradicated in the legislation brought forward in 1972 in this Chamber and also in the other place.

There are Aborigines who have aspirations and desires, and who also wish to accept responsibility; but most of the Aborigines appear only to be able to achieve this if they escape from the outskirts of the fringe of white society.

I might add that I consider the racist laws—our racist legislation—and our attitudes only expand the mental attitudes of poverty.

Mr President, you may have been puzzled, as probably other members were puzzled, a few moments ago when I mentioned it was possible

that an Aboriginal could have more money for the purchase of alcohol than his white counterpart. Probably members will be puzzled further when I tell them that an Aboriginal person has more money for the purchase of alcohol when he is living on a reserve and when he is unemployed, than his white counterpart who is an income earner with a high salary of \$250 per week.

In order that members may understand this, I have compared the fixed commitments of the two people I have just mentioned, under certain criteria. Each party will have a family of three children. One child will be at senior high school. Each family will live in a Kimberley town such as my home town, which has no senior high school. The Aboriginal person and his family will live on a reserve. The income earner will live in a rented house. The comparison will be shown in three columns. The first column will show the weekly commitment.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: You know you are going the right way about stirring up racial prejudice if these remarks are reported in the Press.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I hope they are.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: And they will be reported.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: If these statements are reported inaccurately, of course they will stir up trouble in the same way that anything can stir up trouble if it is inaccurately reported. If they are reported accurately, they will not stir up trouble, as will be seen as I progress. To continue, the second column will show the Aboriginal family, and the third column will show the income earner. After deducting the fixed weekly commitments, we will see that an amount is left over with which the family man will be able to purchase food, clothing, transport, insurance, luxury items, holidays, etc. The table is as follows—

Weekly Commitment	Aboriginal Family	Income Earner
Gross Income	104.70	250.00
Income Tax	Nil	38.05
Superannuation	Nil	12.50
Medical Benefits	Nil	7.00
Rental	Nil	60.00
Power	Nil	9.25
Water	Nil	4.20
School Fees (1)	Nil	52.50
Student (1) Pocket Money	Nil	Paid by Secondary Grants Scheme for Aboriginals
Student (1) Clothing Allowance	Nil	
		3.00
		5.76
Fixed Expenditure	Nil	\$192.26
Residual Money for Food, Clothing, Transport, Insurance and Holidays	\$104.70	\$ 57.74

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What are you trying to prove?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The honourable member will see.

It can now be seen that the example gives the non-income earning Aboriginal family, approximately \$47.00 per week more than his income-earning family counterpart.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Why should one pay superannuation?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: That is a form of saving; but, of course, sometimes superannuation schemes are mandatory and we are looking at the fixed commitments of a person to find out how much he has left over to purchase food and clothing.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: It is not necessary for the income earner to pay for such things.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: What about the standard of living?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Having stated the facts, it is up to members to refute and debate those facts. I have checked my facts from several sources. I ask you, Mr President, when looking at the table, to tell me where the incentive is for any person to be a responsible citizen, to try to get a higher standard of living, when the Government provides succour without asking for any responsibility to be shown by the person receiving that succour.

Members will note from the example that I have taken a person on a relatively high salary of \$250 per week, and one would expect such a person to have a relatively high standard of living. I have taken also a person with a very low standard of living and I have pointed out that the person with the low standard of living has a higher amount of residual money available for the purchase of food, clothing and luxury items. Therefore, where is the incentive for him to try to achieve a higher standard of living?

It is rather fortunate that many Aboriginal people have woken up to this weakness in our society; they have moved from the fringes of our society and they have formed their own communities. They have some tremendous problems and they will need a great deal of assistance and a considerable amount of help to enable them to achieve a stable community life in the future.

However, I should like to point out that the aid and assistance which we can give to such communities—and we do not have to call them, on racial grounds, “Aboriginal communities”, because they can be disadvantaged communities—can be given in the same manner as the assistance given to other disadvantaged

groups throughout the country. These groups include pastoralists when they are suffering from the effects of drought and manufacturers when they are protected by tariffs. This assistance is not given on racial grounds. Therefore, it is possible to give assistance to Aboriginal communities purely as a community and not because the colour of their skin is black or brown.

The amount spent on assistance to these people could be far less than the cost to the public purse if those people remained living on the fringe of society and on reserves without any employment and without any cause to be responsible to the community in which they are living.

There are quite a few of these communities in my province, as my colleague the Hon. John Tozer knows, and they are operating with varying degrees of success and failure. I would like to mention just one of them. Although it is facing many problems, it is starting to become self-sufficient in some respects, particularly in regard to food.

I refer to Oombulgurri. It is a 250-strong community which is mentioned in the news occasionally, mainly in connection with mining disputes. It should be getting into the news more often because of the endeavours these people are making for their community. They live across Bonaparte Gulf, 25 to 28 kilometres north-west of Wyndham. The community began in 1973 when an elder named Robert Roberts—who is illiterate and a good man—dreamt of leading his people away from the ravages of the fringe of white society.

At the present time the community collects Federal funds in lieu of unemployment benefits, and it redistributes these funds only after members of the community have worked for the development of the community. The community is further assisted by grants from private business houses, private people, and other sources, and it is also greatly assisted by the resident officers of the Institute of Cultural Affairs.

In January of this year I and others helped the Oombulgurri community to celebrate the demonstration phase of its development. At the demonstration celebration, the illiterate elder, Robert Roberts, addressed the people. Robert Roberts—the man who led the group from Wyndham because of his dream—asked the people in his address, “Where would you be today if the white man left you?” He then said to his own people that they would die because they had become lazy; they wanted things to be done for them; they wanted what the white man had but they did not want to work as hard as the white

man to get what they wanted. Those powerful words of simple truth were accepted without dissent by that community.

I might add the community runs its own store with weekly takings of 82 per cent of all available funds. It takes 82 per cent of all the available funds in the community. It produces its own beef, pork, poultry, and eggs and also cows' milk which the Caucasian communities in Wyndham and Kununurra have not yet been able to do.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You did not help the community very much in 1973 when you were very critical of the purchase of barges for them to transport their stuff.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I suggest the honourable member ask members of the community what they think about me.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You were rather critical.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am not offering to this Chamber anything in the way of praise for myself because I do not know what is the true opinion of the people about me personally. All I know is that I am well received; the people talk to me and I go to them. If I have not helped them, they have not told me so.

Despite the progress of the Oombulgurri community, we find it still has a lot of critics and knockers who say the community cannot succeed because it is not economically viable. The critics' view of the operation is based on the old economies of scale. The production of a community like Oombulgurri cannot be based on economies of scale, just as many other operations in our society today cannot be based on economies of scale.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: You had better watch out or you will be called a socialist in a minute.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: A man named Schumacher, I think, wrote a book entitled *Small is Beautiful*. He was a socialist. He had some very good ideas but also some very twisted ideas about political philosophies. I consider that Schumacher's views on intermediate technology are excellent and must be used more and more in our society if we are to survive. They will need to be used in communities like Oombulgurri, and, of course, Oombulgurri is using this technology. Many industries would not be so sick today if they could switch to intermediate technology.

The knockers of Oombulgurri, to forgive them, have experienced some rather unpleasant sights. They have seen some rather stupid expenditures and some rather stupid attitudes concerning Government handouts and assistance. They have

also had the unpleasant experience of seeing some members of the community on a spree in Wyndham. From those odd observations they tend to judge the whole community as being like the people they have observed. However, they are not. In regard to those observations I would like to say to the knockers that it is a fact that since the inception of the Oombulgurri community the number of court charges in Wyndham has dropped dramatically.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How would you compare them with the Looma community?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The honourable member asks about the Looma community. They are two totally different communities with two totally different aspirations and two totally different methods of development. The members of the Oombulgurri community have set out to drag themselves up into a trading society in which they look at self-survival first and then at more sophisticated housing. They are living in tents and shanties in order to get the community going and provide food for themselves. The Looma community has not done that. Members of the Looma community have been put into Government houses.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You do not know what you are talking about.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It will be rather interesting to hear what the honourable member has to say about it, and if he would like it spread around the Kimberley to the communities I would be happy to do it.

I mentioned there would be savings to the taxpayers if they assisted these Aboriginal communities because it would be cheaper in the long run. I might add it has been estimated by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs that the savings to the Government and the taxpayers in the last year were \$903 000 compared with the cost had the Oombulgurri community continued to live on the fringes of white society and on the reserves.

In view of this example, we should consider instituting a similar system in other societies to use the unemployment benefits in the same way as the Oombulgurri community has done, by redistributing the income from unemployment benefits to those who work for the community. I have previously presented a proposal to the Government and to past Federal Governments. The proposal has been endorsed by the Local Government Association and it is dated the 12th August, 1974. In it I said—

To protect the taxpayers' funds from misuse and to sponsor responsible attitudes in some persons drawing unemployment

benefits, I suggest the following proposal be adopted for the benefit of the community and the individual.

That:

- (1) Local authorities be approved agencies of the Commonwealth Employment Service and will be eligible for normal agency payments.
- (2) Such local authority will be responsible for keeping unemployed registers as well as a register for employers seeking employees.
- (3) An advance account be paid to the authority and be replenished on evidence of benefit payments to unemployed persons.
- (4) A Commonwealth Employment Service inspector to make period checks with authorities to ensure that the system is functioning correctly.
- (5) A scale of hourly rates be calculated to match existing awards for tradesmen, office workers, unskilled workers, etc.
- (6) An unemployed person should report to the local authority at office opening time and register at that office.
- (7) If work is not available in his or her normal occupation (for which proof of occupation must be given otherwise the person is listed as unskilled), then the authority may use the skills of that person for the benefit of the community.
- (8) The unemployed applicant must have some time to seek work of his choice so he may elect to work on any day he chooses during local authority hours. If the person does not wish to work, then the person does not receive any benefits.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Is this applicable to Europeans as well as Aborigines?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I do not like racist legislation, so it is hardly to be expected that I would suggest racist legislation. To answer the honourable member through you, Mr President, this applies to all members of the community and has nothing to do with their ethnic background, race, colour, or creed. To continue—

- (9) When the applicant registers each morning at the local authority office, he will be given a job card which must have a sign-on and sign-off time written by the leading hand or foreman of the working team. This will also carry the trade and hourly rate of the unemployed person.
- (10) At the end of each day the card virtually becomes a payment record within the authority's office where it is countersigned by the unemployed person and an authorised paying officer who then retains the card for record purposes and pays out in cash or C.E.S. cheque.
- (11) When the calculated maximum weekly unemployment benefit is reached by the particular person, then the remainder of the week is free for him or her to seek occupation elsewhere.
- (12) If a person reports to the authority's office in the morning and no community work is required, then that person will be credited with a full day's pay at the hourly rate of his listed occupation. The same will apply if local work is completed before the day ends.
- (13) If a tradesman cannot be occupied within or close to his trade, then the same rule will apply but there should be some flexibility and commonsense in the application of this principle.

This proposed system could restore a person's pride in himself by doing a job well. It will also reduce the maintenance expenditure of the shires and improve the general appearance of the community. Such a proposal, if introduced, would open up permanent job opportunities within the shire for those who displayed particular attributes and skills.

Mr President, you may wonder why I have dwelt on matters which are within the legislative responsibilities of the Federal Government. The reasons are as follows—

- (1) The majority of Federal members come from States which are not even aware of the matters I have discussed concerning Aborigines; nor are the majority of Australian citizens aware of them, for that matter.
- (2) I consider it is necessary for States such as this, with areas of high Aboriginal population, to take the initiative and press for Federal legislation which will do away with racism and grant equal rights to all Australians, regardless of their ethnic background.
- (3) The unemployment benefits system as it now exists is destroying the pride of individuals and it needs to be changed so that the use of that ugly expression, "dole bludger", will disappear from use by the media.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You had to get that one in.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: That is right, to eradicate it.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It is a stock phrase over that side.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Here is a man who wants to keep it alive; Mr President, listen to him.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: It is the lack of employment that is destroying people's pride—

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Yes.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: —thanks to the Federal Government and this State Government.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I said, "Yes" prior to the honourable member's reference to the Federal Government. I agree that the lack of pride in many cases stems from unemployment. That is an accepted fact.

Here is a chance to give people jobs so that they can avoid being called by that detestable name. They would be able to work with pride and they would know at the end of the day that they had earned their money. They would know also that they could have time off to look for work elsewhere.

I have received some funny replies from Labor Ministers and Liberal Ministers in Federal Governments about such a scheme. Some of the Ministers say that the scheme would contravene the ILO Convention. What a lot of garbage! It does not contravene the ILO Convention in any way. I have also been told that this would amount

to forced labour, but it is not forced labour. A person is invited to work; he does not have to work. If he does not want to work, we should not have to pay unemployment benefits.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: It is part-time work; it is not full-time employment.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: The Whitlam Government tried to help unemployment by the introduction of the RED Scheme, and the Fraser Government cut it out.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: We have discussed the RED Scheme before. On other occasions in this House I have said—as the honourable member knows—that it was a magnificent scheme except that its administration was amateurish. It left so many loopholes; it was impossible to close them up.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Can you imagine what the administration of your scheme would be like?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Mr President, I have looked for loopholes in this scheme. Fundamentally it is a very simple system. Unfortunately there are always some people who try to beat the system, but fewer will beat this system than beat the system operating under the RED Scheme.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: If you can't see it is a form of forced labour—

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It is not.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: —you would not be able to see what the loopholes are.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: How can anyone say that it is forced labour when someone is invited to work for a certain sum of money?

The Hon. R. Thompson: I would be interested if you could tell us of the job opportunities at Balgo, La Grange, Lombardine, and Looma. It is all right to dream up a theory, but where is the job opportunity?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I was told by the member earlier this evening that I did not know what I was talking about in that regard and I offered him my services to spread the word amongst the community. If he likes to stand up in the House to give his views on the communities he has mentioned and to make his comments, I will see that his remarks are circulated to those involved.

The Hon. R. Thompson: But you are putting up a proposition and you have no substance behind it. What are the job opportunities?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: It is common sense.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What are the job opportunities?



The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: As I have mentioned, a person could be employed for community work, and if he proved to be a good worker in a particular field—and this often happens if someone wants to work in a particular field—he usually stands out beyond anybody else and that becomes a job opportunity for him and a job in that field may be offered to him.

The Hon. R. Thompson: But who is going to employ him in the regions I mentioned?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Mr President, he would be employed by people in the community who could see him working—

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell me one employer—

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am not going to carry on with this cross-Chamber debate.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You don't know what you are talking about.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You didn't listen to the first half of his speech.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The honourable member can read through my speech in *Hansard* and possibly he may understand it then.

I hope members will consider what I have said, and request their parties and Federal legislators to eradicate racism in legislation and also to inject some realism into the methods of distributing unemployment benefits.

I support the motion.

**THE HON. G. W. BERRY** (Lower North) [8.05 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion, and I would like to refer to some matters that concern the Lower North Province.

The first matter I would like to refer to tonight is the breaking of the 22-month drought of the Gascoyne River, or perhaps I should refer to it as the lack of flow of the river for that period. The breaking of the drought has come as a welcome relief to the people who work the irrigated area of Carnarvon.

For members who have not heard me speak on this subject before, I would like to repeat a comment I have made before in this House; the Gascoyne River is a rather fickle river. I have gathered some figures that may be of interest to those who have not heard me speak before about this river. I have here figures which go back to June of 1928, and I believe these will interest members. They are as follows—

River Flowed	Period of Drought or Non-River-Flow
June, 1951	25 months
February, 1957	24 months
May, 1931	23 months
February, 1945	23 months
February, 1937	22 months
January, 1940	22 months
February, 1978—this year	22 months
February, 1960	20 months
June, 1928	15 months

Although I do not have the official figure, I believe that at one stage a drought lasted some 31 months.

One interesting feature of these figures is that most of the droughts have been broken in January and February or in May and June. Strangely enough, in latter years, the droughts seem to have broken earlier in the year.

I have obtained another set of figures setting out the number of times the Gascoyne River has reached the bridge, and presumably the water has flowed out to the sea. These figures relate to the years from 1925 to 1975, and are as follows—

Month	No. of Times Gascoyne River reached Bridge
January	7
February	20
March	19
April	9
May	16
June	21
July	10
August	3
September	—
October	—
November	1
December	1

The Hon. R. T. Leeson: Did the river fill up the dams on the Gascoyne?

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: There is no dam on the Gascoyne, as the honourable member is probably well aware.

The Hon. R. T. Leeson: There isn't?

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: This breaking of the drought has recharged the underground water scheme which the Public Works Department had developed over the last few years. It has proved conclusively its value, and I hope that the scheme is on the way to completion. We now know that even with a drought period of 22 months, the town and irrigated areas can be supplied with water.

While that is very pleasing, I urge the Government to see that the scheme is completed so that we can remove the spectre of the drought completely. It must still be borne in mind that there have been longer droughts than the one experienced recently. However, the system has been tried and proven in respect of a 22-month drought period, and I commend the Government for the action it took in the past, and for the courage it has shown to continue with the work on the river.

Had it not been for the scheme, many of the residents would have been seeking unemployment benefits. Certainly the plantations could not have been operated without water. No plantation operator had to vacate his plantation over this period, and that proves the value of the scheme.

I have been in the Gascoyne area since 1950, and I have seen many changes. In the early years the emphasis was not on winter production, but mainly on the production of bananas. While the lack of a flowing river was serious in those days, most of the production of the area was bananas, and this crop requires more water in the summer months than during the winter months when there is sufficient winter rain to help the crops. However, in the middle or late 1950s when metropolitan growers moved up to develop other crops, of course the problem in regard to water became greater. As much water was used during the wintertime as during the summertime, so there was a constant draw on the river.

The winter crops are very valuable, as indeed are the banana crops, and so this project in regard to the Gascoyne River has gone a great way to remove the spectre of drought from the area.

When I first entered this House, the prospect of sufficient water seemed a long way away. Indeed, I doubt whether the member who represented the area before me ever envisaged the possibility of such a scheme. I want to conclude my remarks on the river on that note: I urge the Government to continue with the scheme. While the impetus is there, I would like to see it continue. Once the scheme is completed, the fear of drought will be removed for all time in the irrigated areas of the Gascoyne.

While speaking of droughts, another welcome feature is the acceptance by the Federal Government of drought relief for pastoral properties. It is indeed very gratifying to think the State has made a breakthrough in this respect because in the past the accent has been on the agricultural side of the industry, and those in the pastoral industry have not been able to meet the requirements for drought relief.

Probably we will find some bugs to iron out in regard to drought relief, but it is a great step forward. This year has been very worrying for the pastoralists, and in many cases operating costs have caused great hardship. So I commend the Federal Government on its progress in this area.

Another item of interest to me also concerned my colleague from the North Province, Mr Withers. Recently the Commonwealth Satellite Communications Task Force visited our area to take evidence regarding the possibility of establishing a communications satellite over the Commonwealth to service the whole area. Arising from some of the evidence given, a little concern was aroused amongst some of the metropolitan television stations. As a result of this, Mr Withers issued a Press release, and I would like to read this release to the House. It stated—

In Kununurra today the member for North Province, Bill Withers, said the critics of an Australian satellite system needed to remove themselves from their city offices and to look at our great country which produces its wealth from country regions.

Our future wealth will come from regions which already need an important communication system.

For city executives to talk about T.V. localism at the expense of important communications throughout the nation indicates the myopic fantasy land which television has developed in those areas serviced by local T.V. he said.

Mr Withers said he could appreciate the worth of local content in T.V. but it should not even be discussed at the same level as the need for modern communications across the nation.

Important communications and radio in remote areas were far more important than television but if a satellite could service important communications, radio and T.V. to the whole nation, then he would applaud the system and expect other Australians to do likewise.

I believe that was a very commendable sort of Press release to put out, but there was an ironical side to the story. I believe Mr Withers gave the Press release to the *News of the North*, the *Northern Times*, the *Hedland Times*, and the Australian Broadcasting Commission. The ABC used the release in its regional news service. However, in a letter to the Secretary of the Commonwealth Government Task Force, National Communications Satellite System, Mr Withers made the following statement—

The A.B.C. did use the release in the regional news and I understand it was repeated several times, however, it could not be understood by the people in my home town of Kununurra because of the interference of Asian music on the frequency used by the A.B.C. during the news release time.

I think that would apply to all areas in Lower North Province, because radio communications are at a very low ebb; at times during the day it is virtually impossible to hear them. In fact, I doubt very much whether the news release would have got through to the people, regarding the attitude of some of their city counterparts towards television transmission to country areas.

It seems rather ironical that we are worrying about a satellite communication system. I would have thought such a system would have been installed long ago, when one considers how vital communications are in Australia. When the American tracking station was in operation at Carnarvon, the personnel could pick up a telephone and speak via their system to any of the other units in the network, including Houston, Texas. Ironically, they sometimes had great difficulty in raising the local exchange only two miles away, as the crow flies. It seems rather ironical that, despite the remarkable technological advances in the field of communications, we cannot establish a decent radio service.

Until we install a communications satellite, there will be no possibility in the world that we will get television to areas of the Lower North unless we lay down co-axial cables, on microwave systems and couple them to the entire system; however, that seems to be beyond the bounds of possibility. I just mention these matters because it illustrates the problems and difficulties being experienced in the field of communications, whether it be telephone, radio, or television.

Although this next matter does not directly concern my province, I was very interested today to read a letter from the Minister for Health regarding dental therapists. Members will recall that some time ago, we established the School of Dental Therapy and today dental therapists serve schools throughout the State. I was very interested to read what has happened since that scheme came into operation.

I believe the State took a great step forward when it established the School of Dental Therapy, and I have no doubt it will go on to greater things and that the system will expand to include all schools. I am a little disappointed that, as yet, the scheme has not reached North Province, apart

from the Gascoyne area where, I believe, one is proposed for Carnarvon. However, I do commend the scheme. I believe we will see the fruits of the programme in not too many years' time, because I feel sure the dental care the therapists are able to apply to children of school age must be of great benefit to them in their later life.

As everyone is aware, dental treatment is a very costly process. In fact, it is probably more costly to go to the dentist than to the doctor. Possibly, this is because we have not placed sufficient accent on dental health. Probably, the way we eat and our general nutrition do nothing to help dental care. Although the Commonwealth Sugar Refinery did bring out a special sugar, as far as I know it has never been a howling success. Dental care is a matter of our personal hygiene, but in the past insufficient attention has been paid to this area of health.

I speak with authority, because by the time I was 21 I did not have any of my own teeth; they were all gone. I can tell members that there is nothing like one's own teeth; the made jobs are never as good as the originals. I am pleased at the way the school dental system has been implemented and I hope it will be continued and expanded. Certainly, the establishment by the Government of dental therapists in clinics at schools throughout our State is a move in the right direction.

I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Grace Vaughan.

## COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

### *Assembly Personnel*

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

## LEGAL AID COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West—Leader of the House) [8.22 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr President, my understanding is that because of the change in our Standing Orders I may move the second reading of the Bill, but the debate must be adjourned after the second reading speech; it cannot be proceeded with beyond that stage.

The Legal Aid Commission Act at present

specifies that the Director of Legal Aid cannot engage in any other remunerative employment. Apart from the obvious implication, it also means that he cannot serve in the reserve or citizen forces of the Commonwealth if he wishes to do so.

The discretion to allow other members of the commission's staff to serve in such a capacity already rests with the Legal Aid Commission.

The Australian Capital Territory Legal Aid Ordinance has taken a general approach to a similar problem by giving its commission the power to decide whether approval should be given and a similar line has been taken in the Bill now before the House. This will require the Director of Legal Aid to obtain the approval of the commission in each instance.

The remaining amendments are to correct printing and drafting errors in the existing legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Grace Vaughan.

*House adjourned at 8.25 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### FIRE BRIGADE

#### Wanneroo Area

1. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

Will the Minister advise—

- (1) Is it intended to establish a fire station in the Shire of Wanneroo?
- (2) Has a site been allocated for this purpose?
- (3) Have plans been prepared or in course of preparation for the fire station?
- (4) When is it expected that funds will be allocated for construction of the fire station?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The Wanneroo Fire Station is planned for the financial year 1978/79.
- (2) Not at this stage, but the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board has made an initial approach to the Joondalup Development Corporation for a site.
- (3) No.
- (4) 1978/79.

## HEALTH

### Tobacco Smoking

2. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Health:

In view of—

- (a) evidence which shows a dramatic drop in tobacco consumption in Norway following a blanket ban on all forms of advertising and promotion in 1970, accompanied by an education campaign;
- (b) the recommendation of the Australian Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare that State Governments be encouraged to ban the advertising of tobacco products; and
- (c) the overwhelming medical evidence of the serious dangers of smoking to health;

will the Government—

- (i) take action to have all forms of advertising and promotion of tobacco products banned in this State; and
- (ii) introduce a comprehensive education campaign on the question?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (i) No. There is an active working party of the Health Ministers' Conference considering all aspects of the advertising and promotion of tobacco products. The media and industry have agreed on a voluntary Code of Practice on advertising and I believe that we must wait to assess the outcome before any further action is taken.
- (ii) The Health Education Council and other organisations are already engaged in a comprehensive education campaign.

## ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

### Contributory Extension Scheme

3. The Hon. T. McNEIL, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) With reference to the State Energy Commission's Contributory Extension Scheme, will the Government request the State Energy Commission to reconsider their policy on the Contributory Extension Scheme which has increased the charges 100 per cent, and states that no further connections will be undertaken where the connection cost is above \$3 000?
- (2) With regard to the "special arrangements" referred to in the State Energy Commission's brochure on the Contributory Extension Scheme, what criteria are necessary before an applicant falls within the special arrangements?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) Cabinet has already given detailed consideration to the State Energy Commission's revised policies relating to the Contributory Extension Scheme. This consideration included both the increased charges and the policy relating to the limitation placed on the basic capital cost. These policies have been endorsed. Despite these changes, I would remind the honourable member that the new policies involve a subsidy to the rural customer in excess of 50% of the actual cost of making supply available. Having regard to the Commission's overall financial situation, the Government regards this situation as providing a reasonable level of support to this group of customers—borne by the metropolitan consumers.
- (2) Two cases are involved. Extensions to prospective customers who have already been included in the Commission's current work schedules and scheduled for connection before December 1978, will be completed even though the basic capital cost may exceed the \$3 000 limit. In cases encountered in the future, instances may occur where extensions whose basic capital cost exceeds \$3 000 may be undertaken within the limit of the Commission's system capacity and available work force, and where other customers would not be disadvantaged. In these cases the costs in excess of the \$3 000 limit will be non-refundable.

## ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

### *Enrolments and Quotas*

4. The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Attorney-General:

- (1) What is the present enrolment for each of the 55 Legislative Assembly Electorates?
- (2) What is the quota for each category of seats?
- (3) Which seats are out of quota by more than is allowed for under the Electoral Districts Act?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) The present enrolment for each Legislative Assembly District as at 13/3/78 is as follows—

DISTRICT	ENROLMENT
Ascot.....	15 512
Balcatta.....	18 189
Canning.....	18 264
Clontarf.....	16 674
Cockburn.....	16 278
Cottesloe.....	15 711
Dianella.....	17 542
East Melville.....	16 738
Floreat.....	16 057
Fremantle.....	16 949
Gosnells.....	18 766
Karrinyup.....	17 572
Maylands.....	17 149
Melville.....	16 507
Morley.....	17 012
Mount Hawthorn.....	16 589
Mount Lawley.....	16 496
Murdoch.....	20 843
Nedlands.....	15 052
Perth.....	14 880
Scarborough.....	15 589
South Perth.....	14 925
Subiaco.....	15 521
Swan.....	16 755
Victoria Park.....	15 585
Welshpool.....	16 235
Whitford.....	23 138
Albany.....	8 354
Avon.....	7 906
Bunbury.....	9 267
Collie.....	8 607
Dale.....	8 285
Darling Range.....	8 185
Geraldton.....	8 947
Greenough.....	8 999
Kalamunda.....	9 379
Kalgoorlie.....	7 854
Katanning.....	7 848
Merredin.....	8 224

Moore .....	9 820
Mount Marshall .....	8 047
Mundaring .....	8 592
Murray .....	9 885
Narrogin .....	7 921
Rockingham .....	11 325
Roe .....	8 796
Stirling .....	8 595
Vasse .....	9 453
Warren .....	8 896
Wellington .....	8 830
Yilgarn-Dundas .....	7 996
Gascoyne .....	3 767
Kimberley .....	5 278
Murchison-Eyre .....	2 132
Pilbara .....	15 303

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Total: 693 019

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- (2) On the above figures the quotas would be—
- Metropolitan Area—16 908.
  - Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral Area—8 750.
  - There is no quota for the North-West-Murchison-Eyre Area.
- (3) Murdoch;  
Whitford;  
Rockingham.

## ELECTORAL

### *Legislative Council*

5. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House:

- In view of the fact that reforms were recently achieved in South Australia, and agreed upon by both Labor and Liberal Parties in New South Wales, for the election of the Legislative Councils in those States by proportional voting thereby introducing the principle one-vote-one-value, and in view of the dissatisfaction expressed by some sections of the community over a period of time, will the Government take similar action to introduce a more equitable system of election for the Legislative Council in this State?
- If not, why not?

*At the direction of the President this question was not proceeded with.*

## DENTAL THERAPY CENTRE

### *North Innaloo School*

6. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Health:

- Which schools will be serviced by the proposed dental clinic to be located at North Innaloo Primary School?
- When is it proposed to commence construction of this clinic?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- Birralee and St. Dominics Primary Schools.
- Construction has commenced.

## MINING

### *Diamond Exploration in the Kimberley*

7. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House:

With reference to the following question without notice asked by me on the 15th November, 1977—

- Is it true, as the Aboriginal leader Mr Jack Davis has claimed at the meeting just held outside Parliament House, that the Government is anxious to amend the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act, to clear way for mining, including diamond exploration, in the Kimberley?
- Will the Leader assure the House that no member of the Government holds shares in any of the mining companies now seeking diamond exploration permits in the Kimberley—Conzinc Rio Tinto Australia, Stockdale, or Dampier Mining?
- If the Leader of the House is unable to do this today, would he undertake to obtain the information and supply it to me?

and his reply on that date—

- to (3). In answer to part (3) of the question, "Yes". I will obtain the information and supply it to the member.

and with further reference to my letter of the 29th November, 1977, on the same matter, as four months have now elapsed will the Minister please answer the question in this Chamber?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

As indicated by the Hon. Member when giving notice of a further question earlier today, this was answered by letter dated 9th March, 1978.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I did ask that the letter be read in this Chamber so it could appear in *Hansard*.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I suggest the honourable member send a copy of the letter to me and I will read it out.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister has given an answer. If the honourable member is not happy she could ask the question again.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### PORT OF FREMANTLE

#### *Control of Labour*

1. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Has the WA committee of the Australian Chamber of Shipping asked the government to change the system which has operated at the Port of Fremantle since 1903, whereby at all conventional berths except the State Shipping Service terminal, the Fremantle Port Authority controlled all shore labour and private stevedores only direct shipboard operations?

Additionally, exporters have traditionally been responsible for the payment of Fremantle Port Authority handling charges.

(2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes", what changes have been recommended to the Government by the WA committee of the Australian Chamber of Shipping?

(3) If the proposed changes are implemented, what effect will they have on—

(a) the revenue of the Fremantle Port Authority;

(b) the work force at present employed by the Fremantle Port Authority?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) No. However, studies are continuing between the Fremantle Port Authority and the Australian Chamber of Shipping representatives at the latter's request to ascertain whether or not the system currently in use in Fremantle can be improved.

All parties involved in the operation of the port are being consulted in the course of this work.

(2) No changes have been recommended to the Government.

(3) The studies which are being undertaken are not sufficiently advanced to answer this question.

## MINING

### *Diamond Exploration in the Kimberley*

2. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House:

I ask the Minister whether he will answer my question without notice asked on the 15th November, 1977?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

Mr President, I will read the letter that I sent to the honourable member. I quote—

Dear Miss Elliott,

I refer to your question without notice of the 15th November, 1977, and would advise as follows:—

(1) It is possible that Mr Davis may be referring to a proposed amendment to regulation 8 of the regulations issued under the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Act.

If that is so then I would advise that the amendment is to correct a technical defect in that regulation to give legal effect to the long-standing belief that the Minister for Community Welfare had power to issue permits to enter Aboriginal Reserves in line with the Minister's overall responsibility for the administration of the Act as set out in section 7 of the statute.

It is then proposed to issue permits to enter to Stockdale and Dampier to explore for diamonds in a portion of the Forrest River Aboriginal Reserve in the Kimberleys.

These permits will be subject to the same comprehensive conditions to protect the welfare and way of life of the Oombulgurri people who live some thirty kilometres south of the exploration area, as were imposed by the Aboriginal Lands Trust in a permit issued by the Trust to C.R.A. Exploration Pty. Ltd.

Extensive exploration for diamonds has been continuing for some years now over a large part of the Kimberleys and as you know it has been the policy of Western Australian Governments since pre-Federation days that the State's basic resources such as water, minerals and petroleum belong to all the people of the State as constituted by their Government

and not to any particular group or section of the population.

It is in the interests of the State as a whole for the diamond potential to be explored and the Government proposes to ensure that this work is carried out as far as possible, with of course the adequate protective conditions referred to above.

(2) Yes.

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