

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 10 September 1987

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 10.45 am, and read prayers.

VIDEO TAPES CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROL BILL

Amendment: Petition

MR BURKETT (Scarborough) [10.46 am]: I have a petition from 19 residents of the northern corridor of metropolitan Perth, in the following terms --

To the Honourable the Speaker, and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia assembled.

We, the undersigned, request that Parliament amend the VIDEO BILL to grant the people legal standing, and power of appeal, and review, so that we can have a ban placed on those unconscionable videotapes which we find are beyond the pale, and which are severely damaging the social environment.

We request that Parliament carry out its promise to make possession of child pornography a criminal offence, and set severe penalties for the possession of child pornography, bestiality, terrorism, drug promotion, rape and incest tapes.

We request that Parliament legislate that R tapes in shops be displayed separate and away from minors.

We request that Parliament legislate to make videotapes be so labelled that parents can be warned of the contents in regard to sex, language and violence.

Because we no longer will allow the money-makers to have sole right to determine what is available, we wish to have equal input into decision-making, gain EQUAL OPPORTUNITY for concerned parents to have the power also to appeal, and to ban and remove those unconscionable videotapes which breed crime, jointly with the power to give pastoral care to our social environment, because we know that children who are carefully supervised to prevent access to such horrendous viewing, MAY STILL BECOME THE VICTIMS of those who are not.

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

I certify that the petition conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No 58.)

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Budget Speech: Filming

THE SPEAKER: Members, I have authorised the three television stations to film the Budget speech. I apologise to members for not having been able to indicate that prior to today, but I received the request only late this morning. I have advised each of the stations that they may film the Budget and the Budget only, and nothing before it, under the normal rules.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT ACT*Report Tabling: Extension of Time*

THE SPEAKER: I have been informed of the following ministerial approval for an extension of time for the presentation of annual reports in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act: The Minister for Police and Emergency Services, annual report of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board, annual report of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Superannuation Board, and annual report of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Disablement Benefits Board. I table the relevant correspondence.

(See paper No 331.)

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AMENDMENT BILL (No 2)*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Thompson, and read a first time.

The SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Mr Speaker, --

Mr MacKINNON: Mr Speaker, --

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL*Second Reading: Budget Debate*

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga -- Treasurer) [10.55 am]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Points of Order

Mr MacKINNON: When I rose to speak, Orders of the Day had not been called, which is what the Treasurer now wishes to address. There was no business before the House and I wished to move a motion before getting to Orders of the Day.

Mr Brian Burke: He did say Orders of the Day.

Mr MacKINNON: The Treasurer, as you know Mr Speaker, is not correct in saying that. Orders of the Day had not been called, hence my wish to draw your attention to the fact that I wanted to move a motion without notice. Therefore I seek your permission to do so.

Mr PEARCE: Mr Speaker, I distinctly heard you call on Orders of the Day. As Leader of the House I indicated that the Treasurer should rise and address Order of the Day No 1.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! I quite clearly called Orders of the Day. Two people rose in their places at roughly the same time. Seeing the importance of today on the Notice Paper, I presumed that the Treasurer wanted to move something in respect of Orders of the Day. Quite frankly, I am not sure what he was saying because the point of order was taken so quickly, but I was merely presuming that he was going to move that we proceed forthwith on this matter. I gave the Treasurer the call and I intend to honour that.

Mr MacKINNON: On a further point of order, Mr Speaker, all I want you to say to me is that you believe you called Orders of the Day.

Mr Pearce: He did say that.

Mr MacKINNON: I am asking the Speaker.

Mr Pearce: You have no right to ask him; wait until question time.

Mr MacKINNON: He does not have to answer me if he does not want to.

Mr Bryce: Wait until question time. He has already told you once.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Everybody here quite clearly heard me call Orders of the Day.

Second Reading Resumed

Mr BRIAN BURKE: In moving that the Bill be now read a second time, I present the State Budget for 1987-88.

Mr Speaker, the economic signs for the State and the nation are more favourable than they were when I presented the last State Budget.

At that time, the sudden and dramatic decline in our terms of trade, brought about by weak prices and falling demand for many of our major agricultural and mineral exports, had caused severe damage to the national economy.

The balance of payments deficit was climbing to alarming levels, foreign debt was growing worryingly, partly because of the weakness of the Australian dollar, and interest rates were discouragingly high.

However, over the last year, encouraging changes have occurred.

Largely as a result of economic restructuring placing greater emphasis on increasing exports and import substitution, the national economy is projected to grow by about three per cent this financial year.

The balance of payments position is steady, the dollar is stronger and relatively stable, interest rates are falling, inflation is being wound back slowly and there is evidence of some firming in commodity prices.

Nevertheless, while I believe the worst is over, there is still much to be done to restore the national economy to robust health.

The task of economic restructuring must continue to have the highest priority while continued restraint from every section of the community is essential.

Western Australia has weathered the current national economic difficulties better than other parts of the nation.

Western Australia's rate of unemployment was below the national average during 1986-87 and we had the lowest youth unemployment rate of any State at the end of 1986-87.

The proportion of 15 to 19 year olds who were seeking employment fell from 12.3 per cent to 10.4 per cent during 1986-87 while the number of first job seekers recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics fell from 2 900 in June last year to under 2 000 this June.

After the dramatic growth in the number of Western Australians employed during the previous three years, employment in Western Australia continued to grow faster than in Australia as a whole during 1986-87, increasing by 2.8 per cent, compared with two per cent nationally.

We also continued to have a higher proportion of our population in employment than any other State.

The outlook for 1987-88 is for stronger employment growth as the economy benefits from falling interest rates and new investment.

Investment in Western Australia remained buoyant last year with new capital expenditure by private businesses in the nine months to March being more than 30 per cent higher than in the comparable period a year earlier. This increase was the highest recorded in any State and almost 70 per cent above the national increase.

The total value of new dwelling approvals per capita was the highest of any State in 1986-87 while the value of non-residential building approvals was more than double that in 1983-84.

The percentage increase in the value of retail sales in Western Australia between June last year and this June was the second highest of any State, while Western Australia recorded the highest number of new vehicle registrations per capita in June this year.

Resources development continues to be an enormous source of economic strength for this State, with more than 30 resource projects under construction, at final feasibility stage or under consideration.

During the past year, commitments have been made to proceed on projects involving the production of titanium dioxide pigment, gallium, zirconia and sodium cyanide, as well as projects involving liquefied petroleum gas extraction, monazite processing and the establishment of a petro-chemical industry.

In addition, an extraordinary number of gold projects continue to come on stream; construction will start early in 1988 on the Channar iron ore project, a joint venture with the Chinese Government that forges an important new link between Western Australia and the world's most populous nation; and contracts have been signed opening up the Eastern European iron ore market, a market which is as large as Japan.

Projects under consideration include those which would lead to the production of ammonia/urea, silicon metal and more oil.

All this occurs against the background of the massive North West Shelf gas project where capital expenditure in 1987-88 is expected to average \$3.5 million a day.

The state of the economy has an important bearing on the Budget because of its influence on revenue, which in turn dictates the Government's capacity to provide facilities and services to the community.

The Government's Budget decisions influence the state of the economy because of the impact of taxes and charges and overall policies on business costs and activity.

The Government again had to exercise firm budgetary control during 1986-87 and expects to have to do so throughout 1987-88.

This financial discipline meant that in 1986-87 we budgeted for a balanced Budget and in fact achieved a modest surplus. It was the fourth successive year in which we have recorded a surplus.

The surplus of \$6.7 million was achieved without having to draw on interest earned from our short-term investments and reduced the deficit carried forward from the last year for which our predecessors were principally responsible to \$2.8 million.

In 1987-88, for only the second time in more than four decades, we are budgeting for a surplus, albeit a modest one of \$1 million.

This objective can only be achieved by a continuation of financial discipline and community restraint.

The task is made far more difficult by the Commonwealth's decision to slash total payments to the States by \$1 billion and the global borrowings of the States by a similar amount.

However, the Western Australian Government accepts the need for public sector frugality in the current economic climate and for the States to do as much as they reasonably can to make their policies complementary to national economic policies.

Now, more than ever, the public sector must ensure that its demands on the economy are tailored to leave additional capacity for private sector growth.

Only in this way will there be real economic growth, creating more jobs and preserving and enhancing living standards.

Broadly, this means that community demands for increased Government funding in areas of special need and new Government activities can only be met by achieving savings in other areas.

It also means that in the public sector, as in the private sector, improvements in the wages and conditions of the work force can only be achieved by greater productivity.

This has been underlined by the national and State arbitration authorities in making provision in the latest national wage case judgments for so-called second tier wage rises.

The Western Australian Government in second tier negotiations with its employees is following this principle faithfully and will continue to do so.

This is the overall economic and financial context within which the Government has framed the 1987-88 Budget.

The themes this year are broadly in line with those of our four previous Budgets --

- the encouragement of economic and employment growth, with Government assistance targeted to the areas we believe offer the best prospects for growth;

- the achievement of greater social justice; and

- improvement in community services consistent with responsible financial management.

In accordance with these themes, the highlights are --

- no new taxes and no tax increases;

- reforms and concessions in land tax, payroll tax and stamp duty;

- a further fall in recurrent Government expenditure as a proportion of Gross State Product;

- another substantial allocation for a wide range of employment and vocational training measures;

- funds for more than 2 000 homes;

- new measures to substantially widen the Government's highly successful regional development strategy which was initiated with the Bunbury 2000 programme;

a commitment to buy back chemicals from farmers and to expand soil testing programmes to protect the export meat industry;

an increase of 100 in the authorised strength of the Police Force and substantial additional civilian staff to the Police Department as part of a range of measures to fight crime;

a new package of special assistance to families, including subsidies for the purchase of bicycle helmets, a senior citizens' card and special help for junior sport, as part of a \$26 million commitment to the family by the Government;

a major campaign to combat alcohol and drug abuse;

the implementation of the Government's election commitment on school computers and increased access to pre-schools for four-year-olds;

a new, more generous scheme to help non-Government schools with interest payments on school buildings; and

the establishment of a register to protect used car buyers from purchasing vehicles on which money is owing to finance companies or other financial institutions.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Since taking office, the present State Government has pursued the philosophy that economic activity and growth are essential for the achievement of job security, new employment and a higher standard of living.

Economic growth finances progress and achievements in many other areas.

Our aims have been to:

- . minimise the burden of government on the community and the private sector;
- . diversify the State's economy while building on Western Australia's traditional strength in agriculture and mining;
- . encourage greater exports and more processing of mining and agricultural production;
- . actively pursue regional development to ensure balanced development throughout the State;
- . target for special help areas with particular potential, such as small business, tourism and high technology; and
- . improve the skills and, therefore, the employability of the workforce.

Taxation

The most obvious area in which the Government can make an impact is taxation and again this year we propose reforms and concessions.

Land Tax

For the last two years, the Government has provided a 10 per cent rebate on land tax bills.

In last year's Budget, I announced sweeping changes to land tax scales to apply for 1987-88.

The new regime is now operational and it is the first reform in almost a decade aimed at providing long-term relief.

The significance of the changes is indicated by their cost to revenue in 1987-88 which is estimated at about \$11 million.

Land tax collections are expected to be the same in nominal or dollar terms this year as they were last year, representing a substantial real reduction.

Payroll Tax

Since taking office, the Government has more than doubled the basic payroll tax exemption level. This raising of the exemption level is more than three times greater than would have been necessary simply to keep pace with inflation.

There is to be another increase this year with the basic annual exemption rising 10 per cent to \$275 000, freeing an estimated 300 employers from payroll tax completely and reducing the liability of every payroll taxpayer.

It will apply from January 1 and will be accompanied by commensurate increases in other payroll tax threshold levels at an estimated total full year cost of \$2.6 million.

Stamp Duty

There will be new concessions in three areas of stamp duty. The stamp duty exemption level for residential leases is to be increased to assist low income earners in rented accommodation.

In 1986, we introduced an exemption level of \$80 a week. From January 1, it is to be raised by \$45 to \$125 a week.

The full-year cost is estimated to be \$500 000.

At present, all rental businesses are required to be registered under the Stamp Act, irrespective of their income. However, a business can be exempted from stamp duty if the annual rental income is less than \$5 000.

To assist small rental businesses, for example, the taxi industry, it is proposed to increase the exemption level from January 1 to \$25 000, at an estimated full year cost of \$400 000.

It is also proposed that if the monthly rental income of a business is less than \$2 000, the business will not be required to provide a return or pay duty.

The annual income level at which rental businesses can opt to pay duty annually rather than monthly is to be raised from \$20 000 to \$50 000.

Currently, stamp duty is payable on the transfer of real property between spouses, except where this occurs because of a Family Court direction or to execute a will.

We propose an exemption from January 1 for the transfer of the principal place of residence between matrimonial spouses when the property is being transferred from single to joint ownership.

This is estimated to save a family \$450 on the transfer of an average home.

Transport Permits

Currently, vehicles carrying commercial goods to the North-West must apply for a permit for each trip, though annual licences are available for vehicles operating below the 26th parallel.

This anomaly is to be removed through the introduction of optional annual licences for operators serving the North-West.

The annual cost is estimated at \$500 000.

Employment and Training

It is pleasing that Western Australia's youth unemployment rate has been significantly below the national average and we believe that this is due, at least in part, to the initiatives taken by the Government in partnership with the private sector, to accelerate the absorption of school leavers into employment, training and further education.

A further \$12.2 million has been allocated to the State Employment Strategies Fund for 1987-88 to stimulate employment opportunities and to fund an extensive range of training schemes.

These schemes include:

- . The expansion of traineeships under the Youth Traineeship programme at a cost of \$3.8 million.
- . the Joblink programme and Employment Development Scheme which help people under the age of 25 to gain the skills and confidence needed for secure employment. About 40 projects throughout the State are to be funded at a cost of \$1.7 million, helping an estimated 13 000 people.
- . \$1 million to help people take up self-employment opportunities and to start new businesses.
- . a new apprenticeship assessment system at a cost of \$1 million.
- . new group apprenticeship schemes in Albany, Geraldton, the Central Wheatbelt and the Pilbara.
- . the provision of \$900 000 for the establishment of a vocational year following Year 10 of school for students not progressing to higher education.
- . a 41 per cent increase to \$800 000 in funds for the successful Youth Employment Scheme (YES). YES was initiated to assist young people in their career choices and to co-ordinate employment, training and further education opportunities for school leavers. YES short courses have been particularly successful in targeting employment opportunities for young people with 70 per cent of participants being placed in employment.
- . \$500 000 for the continuation of Westrek which is to be run through a joint public-private foundation.
- . special programmes to improve employment prospects for migrants, women and Aborigines.

An allocation of \$25 000 has been made for a campaign to educate young job seekers and parents about misleading job advertisements.

Multi-lingual booklets already produced for job seekers will include additional material about misleading advertisements. Complementary posters are to be produced and Channel 9 will include the topic in a series of videos being produced on employment issues.

In addition to lifting the skills of the work force, it is essential in an increasingly competitive world that all avenues of improving productivity are explored.

To assist in this, \$1.1 million has been set aside for selective assistance to individual businesses on productivity matters.

Capital Works and Housing

State governments make their biggest direct impact on employment and economic activity through their capital works programmes.

The framing of our programme this year was especially difficult because of the need to balance employment and activity in the building and construction industries against the need for public sector restraint, especially in borrowings. We received reduced allocations at the Premiers' Conference for both general capital purposes and the global allocation.

Western Australia's global borrowing allocation for the year is \$584 million, compared with \$635 million in 1986-87, and our authorised Loan Council allocations in total were reduced by \$116.7 million.

The substantial reductions in public sector borrowings are necessary to reduce government borrowings in domestic and overseas markets to ease pressure on domestic interest rates and the country's current account deficit.

They are also necessary to reduce the burden on the taxpayer of debt servicing costs.

The Government's overall capital works programme this year will cost \$1 088.6 million, much of which will come from internally generated funds, and from an unusually high carryover of funds from 1986-87 as a result of delays in project planning and completion.

This compares with expenditure last year of \$1 058.5 million, representing a cut in real terms of about 4 per cent.

As in every year since we took office, priority has been given to housing because of the social needs it meets and because it generates significant economic activity and jobs.

For the fourth successive year, the State's entire Loan Council borrowing allocation will be channelled into housing, enabling Homeswest to undertake a capital program of \$164.3 million.

During the year Homeswest will:

- construct or purchase about 860 dwellings, in addition to work already in progress;
- make more than 1 500 housing loans to low-income families; and
- double expenditure on land acquisition and development for rental accommodation.

Other important items in the capital works program are:

the expenditure of \$10.8 million under the Commonwealth-State Bicentennial funding arrangements for the Forrest Place/City Station redevelopment, the centrepiece of the Bicentennial Program in Western Australia.

the completion of the \$21 million Hillarys Boat Harbour, designed to accommodate up to 1 000 craft within the next decade, providing a much-needed recreation facility for the northern suburbs.

the commencement of the \$33 million Harris River Dam project, near Collie, which is vital for the supply of high quality water to country areas.

commencement of the new Perth bus station and construction of a contra-flow bus lane on the Kwinana Freeway.

a provisional allocation of \$4.3 million for harbour deepening at Esperance and another allocation for extension of the fishing boat harbour.

\$100 000 to commence extensions to Parliament House estimated to cost \$7 million. The extensions will alleviate overcrowding. In addition, \$100 000 has been allocated for air conditioning Parliament House, the total cost of which is estimated to be \$3 million.

Agriculture

The Government has met its commitment to maintain support for agriculture with an allocation of \$67.5 million for the Department of Agriculture.

Most importantly, we have moved to combat the danger posed to the meat export industry and community confidence in the meat industry by chemical residues. A total additional amount of \$460 000 will be made available for this purpose.

Of this, \$200 000 is available this year to buy back from farmers supplies of DDT and Heptachlor they are holding.

DDT will be purchased back at \$1.50 a litre and Heptachlor at \$12 a litre.

As a matter of priority, additional facilities are being developed for the testing of soils and fat samples.

The Department of Agriculture is undertaking a soil sampling program, based at Bunbury, and the department's capacity to test samples from livestock in quarantine and on properties believed to be at risk is being increased.

Other allocations give special emphasis to farm management extension to keep farmers up-to-date with the latest developments in agricultural technology and methodology.

A sheep lice eradication program is to be commenced, aimed at routine testing for wool, the formation of community interest groups and assistance for owners of infested sheep flocks.

Farmers and the Australian Wool Corporation are meeting about half the \$1.2 million cost of the eradication program.

The rural counselling program is to be extended to take in centres in the northern and central wheatbelt.

Funding has also been provided for the investigation of a number of potentially valuable export-oriented industries.

The State Government has asked the Commonwealth to approve subsidies under the Rural Adjustment Scheme to support borrowings by farmers of \$70 million in 1987-88.

Regional Development

The State Government remains firmly committed to regional development.

The undoubted success, in the face of initial scepticism, of the Bunbury 2000 development strategy has provided the impetus for the extension of this approach to regional development to the Great Southern, the Mid-West and the Kimberley.

Funding for the South-West Development Authority, the catalyst for the Bunbury 2000 strategy, is to increase by 42 per cent.

This will enable the Authority to enhance its coordinating role in a number of promising potential developments in the South West.

There is a \$300 000 for planning and preliminary work associated with the exciting redevelopment of the Bunbury central business area.

Other allocations provide for health, education, transport, road and environmental improvements throughout the South-West region.

An allocation of \$516 000 for the Great Southern Development Authority will enable it to continue the implementation of the Albany Tomorrow development strategy.

There is \$800 000 towards the \$6.3 million cost of the Albany Hospital redevelopment and more than \$800 000 for improvements to high schools at Katanning and Gnowangerup.

A major study into the Geraldton and Mid-West region was an important initiative during 1986-87.

Funds are provided this year for the completion of the study and the preparation of a development plan for the region.

As with Bunbury 2000 and Albany Tomorrow, the plan will provide an overall strategy for economic and social development of the region.

In addition, the shifting of the Westrail marshalling yards from the Geraldton foreshore to the industrial estate of Namgulu will begin in 1987-88, opening up Geraldton's foreshore.

The total cost will be \$8.1 million.

Bulk handling facilities at the Port of Geraldton are to be upgraded, a preliminary planning study for the Abrolhos Islands is to be undertaken and a start is to be made on planning for a three court complex in Geraldton which will eventually cost \$2.5 million.

The Kimberley regional planning study, designed to prepare a long-range strategy for that region is about half-completed.

Funds are provided for its completion.

Western Australian Livestock Holdings, a subsidiary of the Western Australian EXIM Corporation, is continuing its work on reconstruction of the Kimberley pastoral industry.

Four pastoral leases held by EXIM are being improved and stock disease eradication programs are under way with the aim of offering the properties for sale to private interests.

Industry Support

As I said earlier, economic diversification and special assistance for targeted industries with strong growth potential have been amongst our priorities since taking office. The recent creation of the Technology and Industry Development Authority rationalises, concentrates and intensifies our efforts in these directions.

Funds for the Authority this year represent a 21.6 per cent increase on equivalent expenditure last year.

In addition, \$7.7 million in capital funds is to be spent over the next two years to complete Technology Park, \$1.2 million is to be contributed to the Technology Development Fund and special marketing projects are to be undertaken at a cost of \$1 million to encourage market diversification and expansion interstate and overseas.

Building on past successes, projects will be undertaken in Sydney, Singapore, Jakarta and Hong Kong for the furniture, fashion, electronics, building products, agricultural equipment, defence and food industries.

It is anticipated that the results of these efforts will at least match those achieved by over 100 participating firms in 1986-87 which amounted to \$80.2 million in direct sales and sales under negotiation and about \$220 million in anticipated sales over the following 12 months.

In recognition of the strong level of activity in resources development outlined earlier, the allocation for the Department of Resources Development will rise by 26.9 per cent.

The Department is to become more involved in strategic energy policy and planning and will be called upon to provide improved co-ordination in the development of the State's mineral and energy resources.

New undertakings in the small business area for 1987-88 will focus on ensuring small business people in country areas are as well serviced by the Small Business Development Corporation as those in the Perth metropolitan area.

Small business centres are to be developed to provide additional support for non-metropolitan small business. They will be modelled on the Corporation's successful "First Base" in Hay Street in Perth.

Western Australia's tourism industry continues to grow strongly.

In 1981-82, an estimated 4.9 million visitors spent \$781 million. In 1895-86, an estimated 5.8 million visitors spent \$1 313 million.

A special allocation of funds was made in 1986-87 to capitalise on the America's Cup. Consequently, this year's allocation is down on last year. However, this year's allocation still represents an increase of more than 150 per cent over the allocation for tourism in the last Budget brought down by our predecessors.

Emphasis this year will be placed on assisting the development of tourist infrastructure in regional areas.

Almost \$1 million in regional tourism grants will be provided.

Special evaluation, allocation and development of land for tourist accommodation in country areas is being arranged with projects already being undertaken by the Department of Land Administration in Broome, Lancelin and Mount Magnet.

The Western Australian Tourist Commission is increasing its marketing activities in Japan, has expanded the regional tourism research monitor program and has launched a New Zealand tourist market segmentation study.

An important aspect of its 1987-88 program is an in-depth study of the Perth tourist motoring market and the development of strategies for each of the State's tourist regions.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

In every year since we took office, we have attempted to increase the resources available to assist families and the needy.

Once again, that is our aim.

The Family

The centrepiece of our efforts is a special package of assistance for families with a total value of more than \$26 million. The package includes a range of new activities designed to help family groups, children and elderly, as well as funding increases in existing family-oriented schemes.

Among the most innovative of the new activities are a scheme to subsidise the purchase of bicycle helmets for school children and the provision of a senior citizens' card.

An amount of \$100 000 is to be allocated in each of the next three years to subsidise the purchase of safety helmets for school children.

Full details will be announced by the Minister for the Family.

An amount of \$100 000 has also been allocated for the development of the senior citizens' card.

The Government expects it will provide a ready means of identification for retired people and as such will enable them to obtain some private sector concessions for recreational activities.

The Minister for the Family will also be announcing full details of this scheme in due course.

A further \$100 000 is allocated for junior sport to increase participation rates and for skills development among upper primary children.

Other new elements in the family package include:

\$645 000 for grants for activities such as school holiday activities, play groups and toy libraries, after-school and vacation-care centres and youth support services. Provision has also been made to provide public liability insurance till the end of the year for after-school and vacation-care centres. This should overcome the difficulties such centres are experiencing at present in this area until a permanent solution is negotiated with the SGIO.

\$300 000 for capital grants for children's facilities. Grants of up to \$25 000 will be available to church groups and other incorporated bodies.

\$75 000 for the provision of emergency crisis care in the South-West through the Bunbury Emergency Care Service. The service developed by this group is to be further developed and evaluated as a likely model for other groups elsewhere in the State.

\$200 000 for family counselling in country areas. This will complement the financial counselling service already being developed jointly by the Commonwealth and the State. It will be operated by means of grants to existing organisations.

Full details of these initiatives will be given by the Minister for the Family.

Existing programs to be expanded or funding increased include:

the family support program which provides financial counselling;

the poverty program which provides support through non-government agencies;

clothing assistance for low income families with children in years 8, 9 and 10 of school;

low interest furniture loans for the needy;

emergency relief funds from the Department for Community Services; and

textbook assistance for families with children in high school years 8 and above.

Additionally, the amounts set aside by Homeswest for bond assistance and rental support for tenants in private accommodation are to rise.

Also, as previously announced, the State Energy Commission's concessions on energy costs for low income households have been increased for 1987-88 in line with changes in SEC tariffs. Almost \$3 million of the cost of these concessions is to be met from the Budget this year.

Welfare

Indicative of the importance we place on assisting the disadvantaged in the community is that funding for the Department for Community Services has been increased by almost 123 per cent over the last five years.

This year's allocation has risen by 14 per cent.

Education

Changing attitudes to education are demonstrated by the school retention rate having risen from 35.1 per cent in 1981 to 50.3 per cent in 1986.

One of the major developments in the last year has been reform of the administration of government schools to allow schools to exercise greater self-determination in meeting community needs.

To support this, additional administrative support staff for primary and secondary schools are to be provided, at a full-year cost of \$2.6 million.

Computerised administrative systems are to be phased into senior high schools and district high schools at a cost of \$2.8 million this financial year and a total of \$6.5 million over three years. These systems will enable school administrators to devote more time to educational matters.

One of the Government's key undertakings at the 1986 election was to provide a place in preschool education for all those four-year-olds whose parents want it for them.

In 1988, 2 600 more places will be provided at an estimated full year cost of \$1.2 million.

This will mean a total of about 9 000 places will be available in 1988.

The Government also committed itself at the last election to making Western Australia the national leader in the provision of school computers.

At a cost of \$5.5 million, computers will be installed in schools for educational purposes.

They will be supplied generally on the basis of three in every primary school and one for every 40 students in secondary schools.

There will again be a substantial primary and secondary school building program costing \$42 million.

New primary schools will be built at Alinjarra, Beechboro, Ocean Reef, Karratha and Mundaring. Additions will be made to the Ashburton Drive, Eddystone, Poseidon, East Greenwood, Lancelin and Leonora primary schools.

Construction will commence on a second high school for Mandurah and additions will be funded for Leeming, Padbury, Belmont, Kelmscott and Paraburdoo high schools.

A joint school-community recreation facility is being built at Leeming High School, funded by the Ministry of Education, the City of Melville and the Department of Sport and Recreation.

The capital works program for technical and further education amounts to \$26.7 million and includes work on the Perth Technical College, and Leederville, Midland, Carlisle and Wembley Colleges.

The Government is to change and improve the basis of assistance to non-government schools for building programs.

Currently, the State Government provides a subsidy for non-government school buildings by meeting the first 7.5 per cent of interest on borrowings to finance construction.

However, many schools cannot take advantage of the scheme because of the significant gap between the level of the subsidy and commercial interest rates.

The revised arrangements will mean that the interest rate for loans for eligible buildings in new non-government schools will be a maximum of 4.5 per cent for the first 10 years and a maximum of 6 per cent thereafter.

The rate will be a maximum of 6 per cent for loans for eligible new buildings at existing schools, except for schools in levels 1, 2 and 3, as defined by the Commonwealth which will pay a maximum of 7.5 per cent.

Loans will be repayable by 15 equal annual instalments.

Provision of \$5 million has been included in the capital works program for this scheme which will operate from January 1 for a 3 year trial period.

Further details will be provided by the Minister for Education.

Health

A highlight of health spending during 1987-88 will be a series of steps directed at alcohol and drug abuse.

The components of the program are:

- \$500 000 for a major public education campaign aimed at adults and young people on the dangers of alcohol abuse;

- \$360 000 for the Alcohol and Drug Authority to support community-based initiatives aimed at decreasing Aboriginal alcohol abuse;

- \$1.6 million for non-government agencies to address the problems of alcohol and drug abuse; and

- \$1.7 million to construct and operate a central drug unit, incorporating a court diversion program for drug offenders and an alcohol and drug information centre.

The highly successful and widely-acclaimed Quit campaign will also continue in 1987-88.

Expenditure under the Home and Community Care Program will rise by 21.2 per cent to \$29 million.

This Commonwealth-State programme provides maintenance and support services for frail aged and disabled people, helping them to remain in the community rather than in institutional care.

Allowance has been made for the opening of two new community health centres at Lockridge and Norseman and to meet the operating and staffing costs of the redevelopment of Albany and Collie hospitals and the Numbala Nunga Nursing Home.

Not all health-related activities are funded through the allocation for the Health Department.

The Government places substantial emphasis on occupational health, safety and welfare and on health maintenance.

A total of \$9.9 million -- an increase of 20.6 per cent -- has been provided for measures directed at ensuring the health and safety of people in the working environment.

An allocation of \$500 000 has been made for a campaign to inform employers and employees about occupational health and safety matters.

There is also \$130 000 for safety co-ordination activities for the North West Shelf gas project.

During the year, the tripartite Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Commission will undertake a comprehensive review of the 25 sets of occupational health and safety regulations.

A new information system of occupational injury and disease statistics will come into operation, assisting in the identification of hazards in the workplace and the development of strategies to reduce accidents.

Adequate sporting and recreational facilities are essential to the overall health of the community. The Budget contribution to the Community Sporting Facilities Trust Fund has been increased by 40 per cent to \$2.8 million.

Projects to be funded during the year include an aquatic centre at Midvale, the North Perth-Leederville Recreation Centre and the Leeming Recreation Centre.

Public Safety

The present State Government is proud of its efforts to bolster the Western Australian Police Force.

We have made a sustained effort to redress the neglect of the force that characterised the later years in office of our predecessors, substantially increasing the authorised strength of the force in every Budget.

The latest comparative statistics from the Grants Commission, show that at June 30, 1986, Western Australia had a higher number of police officers on a per capita basis than any other State except South Australia.

In Queensland, there were 18.5 police officers for every 10 000 people. In Western Australia, there were 23.1.

This Budget provides an increase of 100 in the authorised strength of the Police Force. This will lift the number of new appointments to 333 since 1985-86.

As part of the latest increase, 67 officers employed during the America's Cup in excess of the force's authorised strength will be retained.

In addition, allowance has been made for the appointment of 112 extra civilian staff to the Police Department and for the permanent appointment of 30 civilian staff previously employed on a temporary basis. This will free an equivalent number of police officers for operational duties.

This means that effectively the number of additional -- in real terms extra -- officers available for duty since 1985-86 will be 475.

The Police Department's allocation for 1987-88 will be increased by 11.9 per cent.

This includes an allocation of \$1 million to help combat crime through the acquisition of specialised and technologically advanced equipment.

An additional \$1.3 million has been allocated to enable a significant expansion of the police computer network to bring another 31 metropolitan and country stations on line.

A number of police programs are to undergo assessment and enhancement during the year. These include:

- the automated fingerprint identification system which allows national access to fingerprint records;

- the Gosnells pilot study, involving a truancy patrol, liaison with schools and students and publicity campaigns, that has significantly reduced daylight breaking and entering;

- Neighbourhood Watch; and

- the metropolitan policing plan to provide quick responses to community needs. This will be expanded by the establishment of a further base in the Fremantle police district.

Funds have also been set aside for the establishment of a co-ordinating committee on domestic violence to implement recommendations of the Domestic Violence Task Force.

The Committee will develop comprehensive measures to deal with the legal and social ramifications of domestic violence.

The maximum amount of compensation payable under the Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Act to the victims of criminal injury or, in the event of death, to their close relatives is to be increased by one-third from \$15 000 to \$20 000 from October 1.

Finally, the Government is concerned about criticism of the police force, from various quarters in recent times.

We believe there needs to be a sharper community focus on the importance and effectiveness of the role they play.

Consequently, there is to be a \$500 000 advertising campaign to underpin and support the role of the force in the community.

Other measures

Time does not permit me to outline all the initiatives and other items of interest included in the Budget. However, some notable inclusions are:

\$533 000 for the establishment of a computerised chattels securities register. This will protect the purchasers of used vehicles, the motor trade and the finance industry. It will do so by enabling motor traders and purchasers to check whether vehicles they are offered are encumbered in any way. The aim is to eliminate situations in which vehicles are purchased in good faith only for the purchaser to discover consequently that the vehicle belongs to a financial institution because of default on credit arrangements by the previous owner.

\$585 000 to upgrade facilities at Government Chemical Laboratories so that a more satisfactory doping control service can be provided to the racing industry.

a loan of \$500 000 to the Southern District Thoroughbred Racing Association for the establishment of a horse-training complex at Baldavis.

a further \$440 000 for the completion of a network of 80 heritage trails, including a driving trail linking the architecture of the noted architect Monsignor John Hawes in the Mid-West, a 120 kilometre coastal walk trail from Cape Naturaliste to Cape Leeuwin, a driving route based on the life of Albert Facey, author of the acclaimed book "A Fortunate Life", and a nature trail for the disabled and visually impaired at Star Swamp.

PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT

As I said near the outset, this is the time for frugal and efficient public sector management.

A major cost-saving initiative introduced by this Government last year was a 3 per cent reduction in public service employment. There were good savings as a result in 1986-87, but the full benefit of this austerity is felt in this Budget.

To monitor staff reductions, the Government has moved away from the previous concept of staffing establishments to the more effective system of average operative staffing levels based on full-time equivalents.

This provides the Government with more effective control of staff numbers and financial allocations for wages and salaries, while giving greater flexibility to departmental managers.

A computerised personnel information management system has been introduced to provide a comprehensive central data base of human resources information throughout the public sector.

Apart from imposing tight staffing limits, a range of measures are taking effect to monitor efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector and to get the best possible value for money.

These include:

the establishment of a Senior Executive Service within the public sector to increase the opportunities for the development and mobility of senior managers to improve management performance.

the benefit of the more stringent reporting requirements to Parliament imposed on departments and authorities under the Financial Administration and Audit Act. The detailed reports required for Parliament under the Act are beginning to flow through, providing for increased accountability in the public sector and more effective public and parliamentary scrutiny.

the establishment within the office of the Auditor-General of a team to examine the operations of departments and statutory authorities on a value-for-money basis.

the introduction from July 1 of a new public sector superannuation scheme which establishes a more equitable cost-sharing arrangement between taxpayers and public sector employees. While substantial payments from the Consolidated Revenue Fund are expected in the early years as retiring long-serving employees exercise their rights under the new scheme, very significant long-term savings are expected.

The Western Australian Development Corporation, which includes in its charter improving the return on public sector assets by the application of private sector skills and principles, had another successful year in 1986-87.

Its profit was \$9.1 million, of which \$4.1 million is paid to the State Development Fund.

In less than four years, the State's dividend entitlement from the Corporation has been \$23 million while we have subscribed only \$15 million in capital.

The Corporation's net assets now stand at \$40 million and promise a continuing level of profit which will assist to finance government activity.

It is noteworthy that the Corporation's wholly-owned subsidiary, GoldCorp Australia, has contributed \$2.5 million to the profit in only seven months of trading.

This reflects the outstanding success of The Australian Nugget series of gold bullion coins. The proof series, launched in November, 1986, sold out in less than three months.

The standard coins were released in April and by the end of June, 570 416 coins had been sold with a sales value of \$163 million.

In less than three months of full-scale trading, GoldCorp Australia leapt to 35th on the list of Australia's top 100 exporters in 1986-87, published by "The Australian Financial Review".

The research organisation responsible for the list described this performance as "remarkable" and "unprecedented".

This performance reflects the strong international demand for the coins because of their high quality and aggressive marketing.

This demand is likely to make GoldCorp Australia a substantial long-term contributor to Australia's exports.

BUDGET OUTCOME

Recurrent receipts from all sources in 1987-88 are projected to increase by 8 per cent to \$3 547.9 million.

Revenue from Commonwealth sources is expected to increase by 9.2 per cent and receipts from traditional State sources, other than interest earnings, are projected to rise by 6.9 per cent.

Compared with an expected year-on-year inflation rate of about 7 per cent and a projected population growth rate of more than 2 per cent, total capital and recurrent expenditure is budgeted to increase by a modest 6.7 per cent, after adjusting for changed accounting arrangements.

On that basis, recurrent outlays are estimated to increase by 8 per cent and outlays for capital works and services by 2.8 per cent.

On an adjusted basis the budgeted recurrent expenditure represents a decline of around 1.5 per cent per capita in real terms compared with 1986-87.

The degree of expenditure control exercised by the Government is highlighted by the decline in recurrent government expenditure as a proportion of Gross State Product since we came to office.

Gross State Product is a broad measure of economic activity, and recurrent government expenditure's proportion has declined by more than 13 per cent since 1983-84.

On that same basis, recurrent expenditure in 1987-88 will be at its lowest level in a decade.

In conclusion, this is once again a Budget for the times.

It is frugal, but aims to strike a practical balance between the hard-line ideology of small government and the economically irrational advocacy of public sector profligacy.

As always, some will argue expenditure should have been cut back further, while others will say a more expansionary approach should have been adopted.

As I have just demonstrated, this Budget continues our substantial record of restraint directed towards economic growth, while making room for modest initiatives aimed principally at assisting families and attending to pressing community needs.

It aims to be responsible rather than spectacular.

I turn now to the formal purposes of the Bill.

The Bill seeks appropriation of the sums required for the services of the current financial year, as detailed in the Estimates.

It also makes provisions for the grant of Supply to complete requirements for 1986-87.

Included in the expenditure estimates of \$3 546.9 million is an amount of \$361 242 000 permanently appropriated under Special Acts, leaving an amount of \$3 185 658 000 which is to be appropriated in the manner shown in a schedule to the Bill.

Supply of \$1 850 million has already been granted under the Supply Act 1987. Hence, further Supply of \$1 335 658 000 has been provided for in the Bill.

In addition to authorising the provision of funds for the current year, the Bill seeks ratification of the amount spent during 1986-87 in excess of the estimates for that year. Details of these excesses are given in the relevant schedule to the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House and, in doing so, seek leave to table:

the Consolidated Revenue Fund Estimates 1987-88;

Supplementary Budget Information;

the Western Australian Economy 1986-87; and

Budget Outlook 1987-88.

Before resuming my seat I thank, firstly, all my Ministers for the way in which they have, for the fifth successive year, contributed positively and in good faith to the final Budget result, and to the way in which they have been able to accommodate each other and the competing interests and needs of worthwhile responsibilities that they represent as Ministers of the Crown.

I particularly pay tribute to the officers of Treasury, who have faithfully assisted Governments of the day for many years in the framing of their Budgets. This year the team, led by Mr Bob Boylen, with Ross Bowe, Ron Hazel, Garry Hall, and Jim Noney, assisted by Tony Lloyd and with help from Kevin Edwards of the policy secretariat, has done an outstanding job.

I single out for special praise Bob Boylen, the Under Treasurer. Bob has announced that he will retire at the end of this year. He has been an unassuming and quiet source of strength to me for a number of years, and I have been very grateful for the way in which he provided that foundation of support upon which what little success I have enjoyed as Treasurer has been largely based. Bob is a gentle and thoroughly refined man who has been able to absorb some of the political shocks that have been handed out to public servants and others from time to time. He has always been able to provide wise counsel and has stamped himself in the Budgets for which he has been responsible as certainly the best Under Treasurer this State has had during my 15 or so years' experience in Parliament. I sometimes smile to myself when I think about the high-fliers who have graced the office of under secretary in this State and have gone on to obtain all sorts of honours, quite deservedly, but who have not been of the substance that Mr Boylen certainly is. I place on the record of this Parliament the very fine service he has rendered to his State.

I commend the Bill to the House.

(See papers Nos 332 to 335.)

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr MacKinnon (Leader of the Opposition).

APPROPRIATION (GENERAL LOAN AND CAPITAL WORKS FUND) BILL

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga -- Treasurer) [12 noon]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to appropriate sums from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund to finance items of capital expenditure. The total capital works programme proposed for this year amounts to \$1 088 617 000. Of this amount, \$388 627 000 is to be appropriated by this Bill from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund.

The legislative changes introduced last year to widen the scope of our capital works appropriations have been well received. In addition, the changes we made in 1986-87 to the format of the Estimates have been welcomed as being more helpful and informative.

This year we have made another minor change to the Estimates to make it easier to identify the financial progress of individual projects. Total expenditure to the close of the financial year just ended is now recorded along with the estimated total cost of the project and the amount planned to be spent in the current financial year.

I have already referred to the more significant matters of interest in the Capital Works Programme in the Budget speech. I do not intend to take more time now to talk about other programmes and projects to be undertaken this year. Financial details of these are contained in the Estimates and further descriptive information is provided in the document "Supplement to the Capital Works Estimates" which I will seek leave to table at the end of this speech.

I now turn to the main purpose of the Bill which is to appropriate from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund the sums required for the works and services as detailed in the General Loan and Capital Works Fund Estimates of Expenditure. An amount of \$388 627 000 is

sought from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund as part of the total financing arrangements required for the Government's planned works programme. The amount to be provided from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund, which is subject to appropriation in this Bill, is clearly identified in bold type on page 5 of the Estimates.

The Supply Act 1987 has already granted supply of \$200 000 000 and the Bill now under consideration seeks further supply of \$188 627 000. The total of these two sums, namely \$388 627 000, is to be appropriated for the purposes and services expressed in schedule 1 to the Bill.

As well as authorising the provision of funds for the present financial year, this measure also seeks ratification of amounts spent during 1986-87 in excess of the Estimates for that year. Details of these amounts are provided in schedule 2 to the Bill.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House and, in so doing, request leave to table --

the General Loan and Capital Works Fund Estimates of Expenditure for the year ending 30 June 1988; and

the document "Supplement to the Capital Works Estimates".

(See papers Nos 336 and 337.)

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr MacKinnon (Leader of the Opposition).

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR PEARCE (Armadale -- Leader of the House) [12.03 pm]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Section 34 of the Constitution Act 1889 requires that amendment to the Standing Orders of either House be assented to by the Governor. Until the Governor's assent is given, no Standing Order has effect.

The Clerk of the Legislative Council has expressed the view that the Governor's involvement is anachronistic. The Governor agrees that it would be entirely appropriate for the Constitution Act to be amended to delete the necessity for the Governor to approve Standing Orders.

This Bill proposes to amend section 34 of the Constitution Act to remove the requirement for approval of Standing Orders by the Governor. The Presiding Officers of both Houses have received a copy of the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

BLOOD DONATION (LIMITATION OF LIABILITY) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie -- Minister for Health) [12.05 pm]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides for an amendment to the Blood Donation (Limitation of Liability) Act 1985. The purpose of this short Bill is to ensure that workers will be able to receive workers' compensation should they contract AIDS during the course of their employment.

Members will recall that the principal Act provides a statutory limitation of liability in respect of any "AIDS related action". An "AIDS related action" is one brought by a person who claims to have contracted AIDS by reason of having been administered blood or blood products supplied by the Red Cross Society or a hospital or by having been involved in the process of blood donation and transfusion. It also covers actions by persons who contract AIDS from a person who has contracted AIDS in such circumstances. This limitation of liability is available to the Red Cross Society, hospitals, and persons associated with them in respect of blood and blood products taken, prepared, and supplied by them, providing that the strict criteria specified in the Act are followed.

It was not contemplated at the time of drafting the principal Act that the definition of "AIDS related action" would exclude the right to receive workers' compensation. This amendment remedies that defect and permits workers' compensation to be claimed should AIDS be contracted in the course of employment.

Because of the higher standards of care exercised by care workers in Australia, there have been no reported cases of persons contracting AIDS as a consequence of their employment. Members may be aware of reports from the United States of America regarding health care workers contracting AIDS. I am informed that one worker in the United States has contracted category "C" AIDS as a result of a "needle stab" injury. Three other cases are also under investigation in which AIDS may have been contracted through blood exposure to mucous membranes through conditions such as broken skin or dermatitis. In all four cases the workers were not taking precautions to prevent infections. This underlies the importance of observing infection control guidelines.

As the right to receive workers' compensation was never meant to be excluded, it is appropriate that the amendment be retrospective in nature. The amendment is deemed to have come into operation immediately after the commencement of the principal Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bradshaw.

SMALL BUSINESS GUARANTEES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR PEARCE (Armada -- Leader of the House) [12.08 pm]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Small Business Guarantees Act 1984 to --

- (1) Remove any doubt as to the legal ability of the Small Business Development Corporation to undertake the administration of the Act.
- (2) Clarify, by definition, the term "amount of the guarantee" as it applies to the Act to include the principal sum only and to not include interest charges and expenses.
- (3) Modify the provision for enforcement of a guarantee by a lender against the Minister by allowing the lender to have first "taken all reasonable steps to exercise" his rights and remedies under securities pertaining to the guarantee.

The Small Business Development Corporation administers the guarantee scheme which was introduced in 1984 as part of the Government's policy on assistance to small business.

Since the Act's introduction, it has been deemed preferable and necessary in law for the corporation to be empowered by expressed ministerial delegation to undertake the administration of the scheme.

The amendment Bill contains a section which empowers the Small Business Development Corporation to administer the Small Business Guarantees Act 1984 subject to the general direction and control of the Minister, thereby removing any doubt as to the legal ability for it to do so.

The Small Business Guarantees Act 1984 also contains reference to the amount of any one guarantee which may be executed in accordance with the Act. The amount of the guarantee is prescribed by regulation and currently stands at \$150 000.

There has been some doubt amongst users of the Act such as the members of the Australian Bankers Association as to whether the prescribed amount of the guarantee -- that is, currently \$150 000 -- is restricted to the principal amount of the loan or whether it includes interest charges and expenses.

The intent of the Act is that the prescribed amount be the principal amount of the loan which is the subject of the guarantee and that any associated interest charges and expenses not be contained within the threshold of the prescribed amount. The amendment Bill clarifies the issue by the insertion of a section which defines "amount of the guarantee" to include the principal loan sum only and to not include interest charges and expenses.

Section 5 of the principal Act deals with provisions relating to guarantees, including the exercise of rights and remedies by a lender under all other securities before a guarantee is enforceable against the Minister. The amendment seeks to modify the enforcement provisions by substituting the words "taken all reasonable steps to exercise" for the word "exercise". This modification is necessary to overcome what could currently be an absolute barrier to a lender before a guarantee could be enforceable.

The Bill is a simple and clear piece of legislation which is designed to clarify and remove ambiguity from the wording in the principal Act. Its content is in keeping with the original intent of the principal Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Lewis.

BUNBURY PORT AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR TROY (Mundaring -- Minister for Transport) [12.12 pm]: I move --

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Bunbury Port Authority Act 1909 to enable the authority to negotiate land lease agreements with private organisations, including those that are not port-related, for periods in excess of 21 years.

It has become increasingly important for port authorities to ensure the provision of efficient port services and facilities for industry, including the granting of land leases for extended periods. Section 25 of the current Act prohibits the port authority from leasing vested port land to industries other than those which are "exclusively connected with shipping" and then

for periods not exceeding 21 years. The implications of this provision are not so much a constraint on the operations of the port authority, but that it seriously hampers business undertakings in developing long-term plans and financing arrangements as well as not permitting the efficient utilisation of State resources.

The current Act precludes an organisation with manufacturing capabilities from being granted a land lease by the authority. Cable Sands Pty Ltd is such an organisation. Because of the narrowness of section 25, Cable Sands Pty Ltd cannot be granted a formal lease as the company's operations do not fulfil the section's requirements. The objectives of the proposed amendment are to overcome this problem and to give the authority greater flexibility in administering its vested land.

Amendment of the Act will permit the authority, with ministerial approval, to lease port land for purposes other than those exclusively connected with shipping, but only for periods up to 21 years. This will enable the authority to efficiently utilise land resources which may otherwise lie idle and be under-utilised.

Leases for periods exceeding 21 years but not exceeding 50 years will be granted only on receipt of ministerial approval. The proposed amendments will also ensure that there is integrity with respect to the granting of leases. For instance, where the port authority proposes to grant a lease for a period exceeding three years, the amendments would not allow this to occur until such notification had been issued and circularised in the *Government Gazette* and a local newspaper.

It is also proposed to insert a new section 25A to give the authority the power to grant leases for periods not exceeding 60 days. In such instances, due to the time period involved, granting of such leases will not require ministerial approval. The inclusion of this section will allow the authority to take advantage of short-term benefits without causing unnecessary paperwork.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Court (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Budget Papers: Ministerial Statement

MR PEARCE (Armadale -- Leader of the House) [12.15 pm] -- by leave: I apologise to members for the non-circulation of Budget papers during the time when speeches were made. Normally that is a courtesy applied to all members. Through circumstances outside my own control, the Clerks of Parliament were not able to circulate Budget papers until after the speeches had been made. However, all the papers are in the Assembly and are available at the back of the room. I understand the Clerk and his assistants will bring the papers to all members before the sitting is concluded. The papers will be circulated during question time.

[Questions taken.]

House adjourned at 12.51 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

DEFENCE

Vietnam Veterans: Welcome Home Parade

1518. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- What assistance is the Government giving to Vietnam veterans attending the "Welcome Home" parade in Sydney?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The Government has made a grant of \$10 000 to the State coordinator of the "Welcome Home" parade, to assist with the travel expenses of Vietnam veterans intending to participate. A further grant of at least \$10 000 will be forthcoming from the State Lotteries Commission, but this may increase once final requirements are known.

The Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hon Graham Edwards, MLC, has been appointed coordinator of the Government's involvement, and his department has provided the use of office and meeting room facilities.

I have also written personally to business leaders in the State supporting the requests for funds for the "Jet a Vet" appeal.

PLANNING

Mosman Park Tearooms: Jetty Licence

1530. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has he completed the jetty licence for the Mosman Park river tearooms development?
- (2) If so, when was it completed?
- (3) If not, what is the delay?
- (4) When is he going to make the lease available to me for perusal in accordance with his undertaking?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) to (4) The final execution of the documents has been deferred until today because one of the guarantors has been overseas. I will arrange for a copy of the lease to be made available to the member on Friday, 11 September 1987.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES: PUBLIC SERVICE

Databanks: Information Leakages

1545. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Who is primarily responsible for investigating alleged leakages of information from public sector databanks?
- (2) How many people have been charged with such an offence in each of the last four years?

(3) How many public sector employees have been -

- (a) disciplined;
- (b) dismissed,

for leaking confidential information from a public sector databank in each of the last four years?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) Permanent heads of departments and the Public Service Board where the matter relates to a breach of the provisions of the Public Service Act 1978.

(2) and (3) No officer employed pursuant to the Public Service Act has been the subject of disciplinary action for such matters. Public sector employees not employed under the Public Service Act are covered by specific legislation. Any concerns should be directed to me, and I will have them investigated.

DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

Public Opinion Polling

1548. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Has his department and any other agency for which he is directly responsible, involved itself in regular polling of public opinion?
- (2) If so, how regularly does that polling take place?
- (3) What is the approximate cost of that polling?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Not applicable.

EDUCATION

Priority Country Areas Programme: Funding

1568. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Education:

Is Commonwealth funding for the priority country areas programme -- PCAP -- to be discontinued, or is the funding being directed into State Budget funds?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The situation regarding funding for the priority country areas programme after 1987 will not be known until the Commonwealth Government has brought down its 1987-88 Budget.

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Staff: Superannuation

1573. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Minister for Education:

Why are university staff, including those who are not members of a trade union, compelled to join the superannuation scheme for Australian universities as a condition of employment?

Mr PEARCE replied:

Universities can only participate in this scheme if all members of staff are required, by their conditions of service, to join it.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES: PUBLIC SECTOR

Superannuation Scheme: Compulsory Membership

1574. Mr TRENORDEN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

(1) Do any employers in the public sector, other than universities, compel their employees to join a prescribed superannuation scheme as a condition of employment?

(2) If yes, which ones?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) The Public Service Board does not compel any officer employed pursuant to the Public Service Act to join any superannuation scheme.

EDUCATION: SPECIAL SCHOOL

Kim Beazley: Aide

1576. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Responding to question 705 of 1987, he indicated that a formal charge had been laid against a male aide concerning an alleged physical and/or sexual assault on a male nurse. What was the outcome of the said charge?

(2) Was this male aide transferred to another school when the matter became known?

(3) If yes to (2), why was he not suspended and prevented from all interaction with schoolchildren, especially the handicapped?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) On a charge of unlawful assault, the aide in question was found guilty.

(2) No. He was dismissed but subsequently reemployed at another school.

(3) He was reappointed because there was no question of an offence against any child and because his record of service in his previous school was exemplary. The matter was reviewed after the transcript of proceedings in the local court was available. In view of the Magistrate's finding that the offence was "horseplay on the

defendant's part", he was reprimanded and notified that any questionable behaviour in future would result in dismissal.

AGRICULTURE: PESTICIDES

Farmers: Returns

1578. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will he be responsible for the banned pesticides being handed in by farmers?
- (2) If so, how will these pesticides be disposed of?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No. This question should be referred to the Minister for Agriculture.
- (2) See 1.

CHEMICALS: PHARMACEUTICALS

Manufacture: Graylands Hospital

1579. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the manufacturing of pharmaceuticals for Government Stores been transferred from Princess Margaret Hospital to Graylands Hospital?
- (2) If so, why?
- (3) Has any staff and equipment employed in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals been transferred from Princess Margaret Hospital?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes, a small number of agreed items were transferred in November 1986.
- (2) It was considered appropriate to manufacture the items at Graylands.
- (3) No.

HEALTH

Consumers: Phone-in

1580. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Did he organise the health care consumers phone-in?
- (2) What advertising and publicity was given for the event?
- (3) How many people phoned in?
- (4) What were the main complaints?
- (5) Will a summary be published?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) No. The phone-in was conducted on its own initiative by the Health Advisory Network, which is an organisation consisting of representatives of 180 health care agencies, set up to advise the Minister for Health on health care issues.

(2) The phone-in was advertised through the distribution of in excess of 6 000 posters sent out to over 300 health care provider and consumer agencies. There was a great deal of publicity given to it over the radio and in the newspapers prior to the event. A paid advertisement was placed in a Sunday paper.

(3) 630 people phoned in.

(4) Not all the callers made complaints. An analysis of all the responses is being made and this will indicate any areas of concern and commendation that people had.

(5) Yes, a summary of the phone-in will be published after the network has considered the report of the officers who organised the phone-in.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Annual Leave Loading: Policy

1586. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) What is the Government's current policy on the 17 and one half per cent annual leave loading?
- (2) For each of the last four years, how many persons employed under the Public Service Act have been dismissed on the ground of unsatisfactory performance?
- (3) What is the State Government's current policy on Commonwealth intervention in the form of uniform Aboriginal land rights?
- (4) What steps has the Government taken to improve the public accountability of appointments to senior Government positions that are outside the Public Service Act?
- (5) What steps has the Government taken to improve the public accountability of detailed information about -
 - (a) ministerial travel;
 - (b) Government travel?
- (6) Is the State Government's 1986 policy on privatisation still current?
- (7) How many applications for exemption from the Equal Opportunities Act have been lodged with the Equal Opportunities Commission since its establishment, and to whom have exemptions been granted?
- (8) (a) Does the Government have a policy on the granting of exemptions from the Equal Opportunity Act;
(b) if yes, what is it?

- (9) Is it Government policy to provide the Trades and Labor Council with a copy of each Government Bill before it is introduced into State Parliament?
- (10) Can he assure the House that, in future, no public money will be spent on "public awareness" campaigns or promotional material for any Government initiative until the initiative has received the necessary parliamentary approval?
- (11) (a) Are any State Government departments, authorities, or agencies practising or committed to practising so-called "affirmative action" -- that is, positive discrimination -- in the recruitment or promotion of personnel;
(b) if yes, which ones?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The member has asked a series of unrelated questions. I will obtain answers to each and advise the member in writing as soon as possible.

MOTOR VEHICLES: HIRE PURCHASE

Register: Legislation

1588. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Is it intended to introduce legislation in the current session of Parliament to provide a register of motor vehicles which are subject to hire purchase, bill of sale, or other financial encumbrance, to enable the purchasers of used vehicles to have some protection from purchasing vehicles which have been illegally sold while still under financial encumbrance?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

Yes.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL

Select Committee Recommendations

1589. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is it intended to introduce legislation in the current session of Parliament to implement any or all of the recommendations contained in the report of the Select Committee which inquired into the operations of the Small Claims Tribunal?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If so, what will be the nature of the changes proposed in the amending legislation?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) and (2) It is my intention to introduce such legislation.
- (3) This will be available in the normal course of parliamentary business.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Board Game: "Grass"

1590. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is he aware of criticisms by his Victorian counterpart of a board game named "Grass" which is based on the sale and use of marijuana?
- (2) Did he approve the sale and use of the game?
- (3) If not, what action has he taken to restrict or prevent it from being sold in Western Australia?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. The game was developed 10 years ago and has been on sale in this State for at least five years. I have no power to approve or disapprove the sale of such games.
- (3) I have referred the matter to the Minister for The Arts for consideration as a restricted publication.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Toy-nasties: Policy

1591. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Has the Government, through the Department of Consumer Affairs, adopted a policy relating to so-called "toy-nasties" to prevent their sale in Western Australia?
- (2) If so, what are the details of that policy?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Federal Minister for Consumer Affairs, Hon Peter Staples, has advised me that he has set up a committee to review and provide advice on the matter.

HOSPITAL

Albany Regional: Nursing Establishment

1592. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the current nursing establishment at the Albany Regional Hospital?
- (2) How many nurses are currently employed?
- (3) If the number employed is less than the full establishment, are steps being taken to bring it up to its full strength?
- (4) When is it expected that the full nursing establishment will be reached?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) 162.4 including replacement for annual or sick leave.
- (2) 157.4 as at 10 September 1987.
- (3) Yes, recruitment proceeding for five staff.
- (4) It is expected that the five staff will be recruited in four weeks.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Construction Programme

1597. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When is it anticipated that the next building stage at the Leeming Senior High School will commence?
- (2) What components will be included in that building stage?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) During the 1987-88 financial year.
- (2) Year block, art-craft block, student services suite, science laboratories, manual arts extensions, and business education rooms.

EDUCATION: SCHOOLS

Public Awareness Programme: Parliamentary Staff

1598. Mr MacKINNON, to the Speaker:

- (1) How many schools have been visited to date this year by parliamentary staff in relation to the public awareness programme?
- (2) How many staff are involved in that programme?
- (3) Are members of Parliament involved in the programme?
- (4) On what basis is that involvement by members of Parliament?
- (5) Is it possible for schools to arrange for the programme without the involvement of a member of Parliament?

The SPEAKER replied:

- (1) Eighty three schools and 5 535 students.
- (2) Three.
- (3) Yes, in 1987 the members for Murray-Wellington, Whitford, Floreat, Moore, Clontarf, Melville, East Melville, Cockburn, Murchison-Eyre, Stirling, Albany, Narrogin, Katanning-Roe, Kalgoorlie, Esperance-Dundas, North East Metropolitan Province, and South East Province; in previous years, Rockingham, Mt Lawley, Greenough, Merredin, Northam, Vasse, Welshpool, Subiaco, Cottesloe, Collie, and Joondalup.

(4) Most members of Parliament who use the service participate in the lectures, which are aimed at providing a better working relationship between the students, their Parliament, and their members. The programme aims to provide a balanced coverage of topics such as, "Why have a Parliament?"; comparison of political systems, types of Governments possible within our political system, the importance of Supply, role of the Governor within our Parliament, the role of members of Parliament and the elector, etc. It also includes video tapes of Parliament. This service is provided to both city, and in particular, country children, who would be more unlikely to be able to have direct contact with their Parliament.

(5) In the majority of cases members are the originators of requests for parliamentary staff to attend schools. Where possible parliamentary staff try to give lectures in conjunction with members of Parliament because it adds to the depth of the presentation. However, it is possible that because of time constraints or unavailability of members because of other commitments, some schools have participated in the programme without the involvement of a member of Parliament.

MOTOR VEHICLES: GOVERNMENT

Trailer: Allocation

1600. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) To which Government agency is trailer licence number XQT 138 allocated?
- (2) For what purpose is the trailer used?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This question has been addressed incorrectly to the Premier. It has been directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and he will answer the question in writing.

MINERALS: ROYALTIES

Bradley Report: Cost

1601. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

- (1) What was the cost of preparing the Bradley report on royalties?
- (2) Would he provide me with a detailed breakdown of those costs?
- (3) Is it true that Mr Bradley will be coming back to present the report formally?
- (4) Bearing in mind the Government has rejected the report, why is this so?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) \$352 000 approximately.
- (2) Yes.

	\$
Appointment of director	11 500
Director's fees	185 000
Other consultancy fees	11 000
Travel, overseas and within Australia	42 000
Advertising	7 000
Report printing	9 500
Office - rental, equipment, maintenance and consumables	<u>86 000</u>
TOTAL	<u>352 000</u>

(3) and (4) Dr Bradley has been invited to return and present his recommendations to the public and interested organisations. The Government believes that, as the study was conducted as an independent inquiry with considerable industry input and represents a valuable information resource, it is appropriate that Dr Bradley be given the opportunity to present and discuss his findings.

Dr Bradley will be in Perth next week, when he will make presentations to various interested parties, in industry, Academe, and Government.

MARINE AND HARBOURS DEPARTMENT

Staff: On Secondment

1602. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Works and Services:

- (1) How many persons employed within the Public Works Department or the Building Management Authority have been carrying out duties in the Marine and Harbours Department between 1 June 1986 and 30 June 1987?
- (2) For what purpose have they been employed by the Marine and Harbours Department?
- (3) Have these appointments been made through the Office of Redeployment and Retraining?
- (4) If not, how were the arrangements arrived at?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) to (4) None.

SEWERAGE

Brewtech Brewery: Plans

1603. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What planning is necessary, if any, for sewerage disposal from the proposed Brewtech-Old Swan Brewery development?
- (2) If any works are involved, what are the estimated costs of those works?
- (3) Who will be funding the cost of that work?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

No application from the developers in regard to any proposed Brewtech-Swan Brewery development has been received by the Water Authority of Western Australia, and accordingly I am not in a position to answer the member's question.

WATER RESOURCES: DAMS

Emergency: Water Transportation

1606. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What volume of water has been transported to emergency supply dams for each month over the last two years?
- (2) At what cost has this transportation been made?
- (3) Where were the emergency supply dams located?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

MONTH	LOCATION	VOLUME (CUBIC METRES)	COST \$
Jan 86	Mt Marshall	1 593	7 206
Feb 86	Mt Marshall	4 934	37 161
Feb 86	Lake Grace	510	3 101
Mar 86	Lake Grace	4 184.5	34 004
Mar 86	Westonia	506.4	4 193
Mar 86	Mt Marshall	1 020	4 687
Apr 86	Mt Marshall	2 280	17 680
Apr 86	Mukinbudin	350	3 083
Apr 86	Lake Grace	9 650	102 764
May 86	Mukinbudin	510	4 493
May 86	Mt Marshall	1 482	<u>11 605</u> 229 977
Jan 87	Mukinbudin	250	2 202
Feb 87	Mukinbudin	1 404	11 886
Feb 87	Mt Marshall	936	4 377
Feb 87	Westonia	802	6 661
Mar 87	Mukinbudin	2 991.5	21 787
Mar 87	Westonia	2 114.9	17 511
Mar 87	Mt Marshall	1 635	7 494
Mar 87	Kent	1 292	11 957
Apr 87	Mukinbudin	1 428	12 110
Apr 87	Mt Marshall	864	3 966
Apr 87	Kent	6 758	51 628
Apr 87	Westonia	3 104	25 701
Apr 87	Dumbleyung	2 016	16 652
May 87	Mukinbudin	2 315	19 361
May 87	Mt Marshall	1 674	16 268
May 87	Kent	10 950.5	89 557
May 87	Yilgarn	1 300	7 670
May 87	Westonia	3 051	25 262
May 87	Dumbleyung	2 968	<u>26 146</u> 378 196

\$608 173

GAMBLING: INSTANT LOTTERIES

Revenue

1608. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) How much money was raised from instant lotteries in Western Australia in the 1986-87 financial year?
- (2) How much of it was distributed?
- (3) To whom was it distributed?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) \$40.50 million.
- (2) and (3) \$24.3 million Prize money
\$6.0 million Sport and culture
\$3.7 million Hospital fund
\$1.3 million America's Cup -- CRF
\$5.2 million Administration, including agents' commission.

LIQUOR: LICENSED CLUBS

Sunday Closing Time

1609. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Is she aware of the dissatisfaction of country people with the earlier closing time of 8.00 pm on Sundays for clubs in country areas?
- (2) If so, does she propose to alter the Act in order that the time for Sunday closing for sporting clubs may be extended to 10.00 pm?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1) and (2) I am aware that the Association of Licensed Clubs has requested Sunday trading for clubs throughout the State to be extended to 10.00 pm on Sundays, and the Government will consider that request as part of the current review of the Liquor Act.

LAND RESERVES

Combustible Material: Fire Risk

1611. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) To what extent does the department confer with local Government authorities regarding the reduction of combustible material on reserves?
- (2) Are local governments always notified of controlled burning in their areas?
- (3) If so, what notice is required to be given?
- (4) In local government areas where there is no Conservation and Land Management office, is the responsibility for fire hazard control on reserves delegated?
- (5) If so, to whom and to what extent?

Mr HODGE replied:

(1) The extent to which the department confers with local government authorities regarding prescribed burning on reserves is dependant on a number of factors -- e.g. the existence of a shire district fire plan, or the size of reserves, etc. However, local government authorities are always consulted in the planning phase when fire management plans and interim fire management guidelines are produced.

(2) Annual works programmes for prescribed burning are normally submitted to local government authorities for their information. Notification about a specific area immediately prior to a prescribed burn may or may not be given depending on circumstances.

(3) Nature reserves and national park areas to be burned are subject to normal permit requirements which are issued by a bush fire control officer under the provisions of the Bush Fires Act.

(4) Prescribed burning operations on some reserves may be carried out by agreement under a mutual aid arrangement.

(5) Bush fire brigades and neighbours are very helpful in assisting to burn reserves to a prescription provided by the department. The extent to which this help is used varies from reserve to reserve, from district to district, and even from season to season.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN: CORRESPONDENCE

Policy: Members of Parliament

1614. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:-

- (1) Do his Government Ministers have an identical policy as to replying to correspondence, particularly to fellow members of Parliament, even if they happen to sit on the opposite side of the House?
- (2) If so, is it the rule that a letter by a member of Parliament directed to the departmental or instrumentality head is replied to by the Minister, or is it that a letter by a member of Parliament directed to the Minister is replied to by the departmental or instrumentality head?
- (3) Whichever system as described in (2) above is the policy, does it apply equally or differently to members of the Government and Opposition?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) No.

(2) and (3) Not applicable.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Point of Order

Mr COWAN: I was going to ask the first question of the Deputy Premier, who is not here. I do not know if any of my colleagues have questions for him.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The policy we have followed is to ensure that no more than two Ministers are absent at question time. I had arranged to go to Canberra for

meetings next Friday. Some of those meetings also involved the Minister for Tourism, and were with John Brown, the Federal Minister. Mr Brown rang me this morning to ask me whether the meeting could be brought forward to Thursday. I have indicated to him that I will try to accommodate that request of his, which will mean that on Thursday next week there will be four Ministers missing rather than two.

Questions without Notice Resumed

WA EXIM CORPORATION

Board Members: Direction

247. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

Does the Premier recall that at the end of the 1986 session, in fact on 10 December, he wrote to me giving an undertaking that he would address the power of the Minister to direct members of the board of Exim Corporation? He stated it would be proper to consult with the board of Exim Corporation on this matter, and he gave an undertaking that he would amend the legislation to ensure that there was no ministerial power to direct members of the board of Exim Corporation.

The undertaking was to amend the legislation in the Autumn session. That has now concluded and we are into the Spring session. Can the Premier advise whether he has discussed the issue with the board of Exim Corporation.

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I have discussed the matter with the board of Exim Corporation. Their wish is that they be not subject to direction. That has always been their wish. The legislation providing for direction was as a result of calls for accountability by members of this Parliament wanting to have the capacity to put questions to me or to the Minister for Economic Development, who is now responsible for Exim. Without the direction, that accountability is not available.

As I indicated to the member, we will move to amend the legislation to remove that power to direct. I am sorry it has not been done up till now. To the best of my recollection I have issued the instructions. It has not come back to me but I will try to chase this up.

MINISTER FOR MINERALS AND ENERGY

Honeymoon: Public Funds

248. Mr THOMAS, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

(1) Is the Minister aware of allegations made by members of the Opposition inside this House concerning public funds being used by him on his recent honeymoon?

(2) Is there any truth in those allegations?

(3) If so, what is the cost?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) to (3) I thank the member for that question. I am aware of those allegations, but the first awareness I had of them was a comment made by the member for Murchison-Eyre in a Press conference on his return from China, when he said, "One of the

Ministers was married this year and has been on his honeymoon with his wife in the Riviera at taxpayers' expense." Last evening I was not here, but I believe both the member for East Melville and the member for Mt Lawley made the same comments. I have not seen the detail of the comments, but they were to similar effect.

Mr Cash: Go and check the details before you make stupid comments like that. Are you saying you have not used your imprest account improperly?

Mr PARKER: I will come to that. The member for Mt Lawley should not worry about that. I have seen the comments made by the member for East Melville in the brief time available, but I have not yet had a chance to check the member for Mt Lawley's comments.

Mr Lewis: I referred to you, did I? I referred to a member who had been on his honeymoon.

Mr Burkett: There was only one.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PARKER: I am the only Minister in this Parliament, to my knowledge, who has recently married, and I am certainly the only one who has recently been on a honeymoon. To the best of my knowledge no-one else fits that particular bill.

I want to state two points. The first is that I have never been to the Riviera at all, at any time. The second point is that on my recent honeymoon not one cent of taxpayers' funds, either directly or indirectly, either from my imprest account or otherwise, was used in respect of that holiday. In fact, I was absolutely scrupulous because I am aware of the activities of people like the members for Murchison-Eyre, East Melville, and Mt Lawley -- that triumvirate -- who try to ascribe illicit motives to people. As a result I have, not just on this occasion but generally speaking, adopted extremely scrupulous standards, above those one would normally expect, just to make absolutely clear nothing whatsoever can be seen to be wrong. In fact, I think I am one of the few members of this House who has not used his imprest account at all during the currency of this Parliament -- and by saying that I do not criticise those members who have. Indeed, I was informed today that the level of my imprest account is such that it indicates that I by no means used its entirety during the currency of the last Parliament, and I certainly have not used it either since February 1986 or at all in respect of any of my activities with my wife.

The time that I spent on leave, which, I might add, is the first substantial leave I have taken for some years, was spent entirely at the expense of my wife and myself; not only did it not come from any ministerial expenses or involvement but it did not come from an imprest account at all. Indeed, I am advised that the last occasion on which I drew from my imprest account was in December 1983.

TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

Mr Keith Simpson: Premier's Knowledge

249. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

How did the Premier know about the transactions of Mr Keith Simpson that he reported to the Parliament last evening?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

I think the Leader of the Opposition would be better occupied in addressing himself

to the truth or otherwise of the statement and to the motivation of Mr Simpson. It would be much more productive for the Leader of the Opposition to seek to ascertain whether or not his members are doing things without his knowledge, because it seems to me that the last person to hear about much of what the Opposition does is the Leader of the Opposition, and I think that applies to the Opposition both inside and outside the Parliament.

I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would not expect me to reveal to him confidential communications that I receive, in the same way, I am sure, that the Leader of the Opposition would not expect to be obliged to provide me with information about who talks to him or who provides him with information on which he bases claims. Even last night the member for Murchison-Eyre quoted an assistant auditor and said, "I won't name him." If I am to name everybody, he is, too.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Health Problems: Action

250. Mrs BUCHANAN, to the Minister for Health:

In view of this week being National Aboriginal Week, could the Minister give details of action being taken to address the health problems facing Aboriginal people in this State?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

I am pleased to give details. In this week, National Aboriginal Week, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Ernie Bridge, and I, together with the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Gerry Hand, have attempted to address in a quite specific way some of the health problems that face Aboriginal people in this State. We have come together to set up an Aboriginal health policy unit as part of the Health Department in Western Australia.

The main aim of that unit will be to advance the cause of Aboriginal health care in this State by looking at how we can spend funds more effectively and more efficiently, and also to determine how services can be better provided for Aboriginal people and what are the appropriate health services that should be provided to Aboriginal people throughout Western Australia.

The unit itself will be funded from existing resources in the Health Department by combining both State and Federal funding in the area of Aboriginal health care. Therefore we are looking at more money to undertake this exercise, but we are also looking at the funds we already have and asking how they can be better spent and directed towards improving Aboriginal health care.

This unit will have a number of specific objectives but more particularly will be providing policy advice to me, and through me to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, in relation to Aboriginal health matters. The unit will also act as a resource for the Health Department with regard to Aboriginal health needs.

When staff have been appointed to the unit, one of its special functions will be to liaise with other State Government departments -- the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Medical Service -- and other Aboriginal health agencies throughout the State to bring about what we hope will be a better result so far as Aboriginal health care in this State is concerned.

I think most members who have travelled through the State will agree that although there have been dramatic improvements in this field in recent times there is certainly

a long way to go before we can hold our heads up high from the point of view of Aboriginal health care in Western Australia. I do hope this Aboriginal health policy unit will lead us somewhere down the track towards improving Aboriginal health care.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Mr Keith Simpson: Investment

251. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

As the Minister responsible for the State Energy Commission, will he give an undertaking that the person or persons responsible for leaking confidential information in relation to an investment in the SEC by Mr Keith Simpson, as referred to in this House last night, will be punished according to section 72 of the Act?

Mr PARKER replied:

I am not aware of the leak of any such information.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you aware of a meeting of the management committee of the Liberal Party at the end of March?

Mr PARKER: No, I am not.

Mr Brian Burke: I will make you aware of it in due course.

Mr PARKER: I am aware of no such leak of information which relates to the State Energy Commission. I am not even sure whether the amount involved referred to the State Energy Commission or to the State Energy Commission Credit Union. I was not in the House at the time.

Mr Court: The Leader of the House will tell you. He quoted the interest rates.

Mr Cash: He could work something out about his honeymoon awfully quickly, though he was not in the House yesterday.

Mr PARKER: But that affects me. The member for Mt Lawley, the member for East Melville, and the member for Murchison-Eyre have been going around spreading these rumours for some weeks, so I have been in a position to assemble the information necessary.

Mr Cash: Read page 71 -- it does not refer to you at all, you fool.

Mr PARKER: But the member for East Melville did, and certainly the member for Murchison-Eyre did. I have been looking for an opportunity to debunk that situation. If the amount involved was related to the SEC Credit Union -- and, I do not know if it is that or the SEC -- then that bears no relationship whatsoever to the SEC other than that the credit union leases premises from the SEC. If the situation relates to the SEC, and if the Opposition would care to provide information about any leak of information from the SEC, then certainly I will look into the matter.

HEALTH

Drugs: Codeine Abuse

252. Mr DONOVAN, to the Minister for Health:

I refer the Minister to a report in this morning's newspaper regarding the abuse of codeine tablets in the Eastern States and New Zealand. Could the Minister advise us on the situation in this State?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

My department has supplied a report which states in part that stronger doses of codeine are obtainable only on prescription and usually consist of 30 milligrams of codeine either alone or combined with other analgesic substances.

Uncombined codeine tablets, which are the form commonly abused or converted to heroin, are subject to monitoring by the MODDS -- monitoring of drugs of dependence system. This is a computer system we share in Western Australia, put in place by the Health Department to monitor the use and sale of drugs from various pharmacies and prescriptions by doctors; and any excessive use by a particular patient or excessive prescribing by a particular doctor is rapidly identified and controlled if necessary.

There is no evidence of significant abuse of codeine in Western Australia at this time. In other States there have been cases where large amounts of the OTC analgesics have been purchased and the tiny amount of codeine in each is extracted and converted to heroin. No incidence of this in Western Australia has come to the Western Australian Health Department's attention. It can be controlled by action taken against any pharmacist who sells excessive amounts of these products to one particular person.

Having that particular system operating in this State is a significant advantage from the point of view of being able to pick up a trend before it becomes a problem. I am hopeful that the situation which pertains in Western Australia at the moment, relating to controls over the prescribing and sale of drugs through pharmacists, will continue.

STATE ENGINEERING WORKS

Sale: Announcement

253. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Works and Services:

(1) Is the Minister able to confirm that the Government expects to make an announcement concerning the sale of the State Engineering Works tomorrow?

(2) If the announcement is not planned for tomorrow, will the Minister indicate when it will be made?

(3) Can the Minister give this House an assurance that all potential litigation involved with the SEW has been satisfactorily overcome; and that the taxpayers of Western Australia face no possible threat of being asked to fund a damages suit running into millions of dollars a year.

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) Regarding the financial negotiations for the sale being concluded, I cannot give a specific answer. I was hoping last week we would be able to but there was litigation

in the Supreme Court where an injunction was ultimately discharged and the Government was free to proceed. The Government has been working long hours -- last night I was still dealing with some aspects of the negotiations. I am hopeful an announcement will be made today or tomorrow.

Mr MacKinnon: I was advised at breakfast the Government concluded discussions yesterday.

Mr PETER DOWDING: I would ask the member where he gets his information. It is not correct. Last night after dinner I was still being asked by one officer involved for a decision on one aspect of the matter.

Mr MacKinnon: The major decision as to whom the project is being sold has been made!

Mr PETER DOWDING: A whole range of difficult things are to be resolved before the final decision is clear. If the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting there is something else on the agenda, let him say so. I say there is not.

(2) I am unable to inform the House exactly when negotiations will be concluded, but I am very happy to say I believe it will be shortly.

Mr MacKinnon: Tomorrow in Bunbury!

Mr PETER DOWDING: If the decision is made tomorrow, I expect it to be announced tomorrow, but I am not in a position to say; I am waiting to hear.

Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition by interjection would like to say whether he would approve of the sale to the south west.

Mr Brian Burke: He is notoriously reluctant to say anything these days! Ask him what his name is!

Mr PETER DOWDING: He declines to make a comment.

(3) As to the prospect of litigation about other aspects of the matter, an issue exists about the ownership of the hyperchrome technology which has been discussed widely. The Government has been advised legally that ownership of the hyperchrome technology rests with the State Engineering Works. For their own commercial ends, Peko-Wallsend made application for an injunction to hold up the matter for a period of days, but they failed.

Mr Williams: Only in one aspect.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Government was advised that Peko failed; but it was a commercial exercise on their part to put up a case for a number of days and incur the State in considerable expense, which I think in due course they will refund. I cannot say what commercial interests will do for their own commercial ends; they may well pursue a case that has no chance of success. However, my strong advice is that the State Engineering Works owns the hyperchrome technology, and I cannot give the House better information than that.

AUSTRALIA CARD

Opposition: Government Support

254. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment:

(1) Does the Minister support the ACTU Congress in its opposition to the national computerised ID card system?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) and (2) My understanding is that the ACTU Congress was debating the issue and did not give a final decision on the issue. I think there is a unanimous view within the ACTU that the Australia Card is an important mechanism for preventing the wholesale evasion of tax, and fraud in welfare areas and other areas.

The real issue is whether safeguards which the Federal Government has identified as being part of the package are regarded as sufficiently widespread to meet the concerns that have been expressed.

The Opposition seems to have abandoned the desire for progressing any mechanisms to deal with the issue of tax evasion or welfare fraud. The Opposition bleats about dole bludgers and welfare frauds, and yet when presented with a very sensible and important mechanism for controlling those issues -- being bereft of any reasonable concepts or policies themselves -- it attacks the Australia Card.

The very real and sensible issue to debate is the extent to which appropriate safeguards are built into legislation surrounding the Australia Card. It is regrettable that the Opposition chooses not to make an adult contribution towards that debate.

TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY

Bank Concern

255. Mr LEWIS, to the Premier:

(1) Did the Premier, accompanied by some of the members of his Cabinet, attend a meeting called by senior State management of the principal trading banks at the offices of the Commonwealth Bank in October or November 1986?

(2) Were the Premier and his ministerial colleagues informed at that time of the serious concerns the bankers had about the liquidity and prudent management of some of the building and credit societies, especially that of the Teachers Credit Society?

(3) What action did the Premier take on receipt of that advice?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) to (3) I do not have my diaries with me, but I do not think I have ever been to the Commonwealth Bank's offices. Certainly I do not have any knowledge of any meeting at which I was advised by bankers of their concern.

Mr MacKinnon: Are the senior bankers liars?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not saying they are liars. Gee, the Leader of the Opposition is a dill.

Mr MacKinnon: Why would a senior banker in this city tell us something that is not true?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not know whether he has or not, but perhaps he is mistaken.

Mr MacKinnon: I do not think he is mistaken.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: One does not need to be a liar. Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that I went to the Commonwealth Bank?

Mr MacKinnon: I am saying your memory is hazy and selective.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: All right, my memory might be, but is there any other Minister who went to the Commonwealth Bank and received that advice?

Ministers: No.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Well, we have a lot of hazy --

Mr MacKinnon: It was you who received the advice.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: But the member said there were other Ministers with me. All right, no other Minister was with me when I received the advice apparently. I am trying to say that I do not have any knowledge of the meeting the member is talking about. I am not so foolish as to stand up and say very quickly that I know I have bumped into every person whom the member might call a banker, etc, and they have never said anything to me. I cannot recall it at all, do not even know where their offices are, and have no knowledge of any briefing to which the member refers. I am not calling him a liar, I am not calling the Leader of the Opposition a liar, nor am I calling any Commonwealth Bank people a liar. I am simply saying that someone is mistaken. It is not me, and as far as I know none of the Ministers attended the meeting referred to.

Mr Lewis: You will be happy when we remind you?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am happy in the member's elevation at any time. I am fond of him.

EDUCATION

Agricultural Section: Disbandment

256. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the section responsible for agricultural education been disbanded, or is it proposed that it be disbanded?
- (2) If yes, how will its former functions be continued in our schools?
- (3) What disadvantages will result from such disbandment?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) and (2) All of the special interest sections in the Education Department have been disbanded, if the member wants to use that term, as a result of the rearrangement of the department as part of the Better Schools report. That will mean that schools will take the responsibility for the particular areas of special interest at school level.

Agricultural programmes, as with many other programmes, are not based in head office but in the schools. The schools basing of agricultural programmes is well advanced, as the member knows. It is a very decentralised area in terms of the way it operates in schools and special agricultural colleges.

Mr Clarko: It is causing worry.

Mr PEARCE: It should not be causing worry to people because in the last couple of years I have set up an agricultural education and training advisory council which is composed of senior people in agricultural education, and they coordinate because there was not a section in the Education Department which was doing a coordinating job across the whole of agricultural education.

Mr Clarko: There was a superintendent.

Mr PEARCE: That is right, and there still is and will be under the new arrangements a person with the position of consultant in agricultural education, and that person will work with the schools and provide any assistance necessary, and work with the agricultural education and training advisory council.

(3) In my view there will be no disadvantages as a result of the Better Schools programme. With schools having greater responsibility and greater resources for all their activities, including agricultural education, the delivery of education services to students will be better than ever before.

WA EXIM CORPORATION

Resort Hotel: Lake Argyle

257. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:

(1) Does the Minister recall answering questions on notice Nos 337 on 7 April, 447 on 28 April, and 885 on 19 May in relation to the Western Australian Exim Corporation and its efforts to promote the establishment of a resort hotel at Lake Argyle?

(2) Does he further recall that in answering each of the questions referred to the Minister said the role of Exim ended when it introduced the potential developer to a potential financier?

(3) Having regard to recent reports published in *The West Australian* newspaper in relation to documents which show that Exim advanced an interest-free loan of over \$5 000 to Mormac Corporation Pty Ltd in connection with funding arrangements for the Lake Argyle hotel project, would the Minister agree that the position is either that he deliberately misled the House, which I do not suggest is the case, or that he was deliberately misled by executives of Exim Corporation in preparing answers to written parliamentary questions in this House?

(4) If it was the latter case, does he agree that the actions of the executives of Exim Corporation are extremely serious and call for decisive public action by the Minister?

(5) What has the Minister done about the fact that this House was told untrue information in response to three written parliamentary questions?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) While I recall the generality of the questions and the issue I do not recall the specifics of the question, and I have had no notice of the question the member advanced.

(2) to (5) My understanding from conversations I have had since -- and I have not had a full report on this -- is that the article to which the member referred is not factual.

Mr Court: They have documentary evidence that they showed to officials of Exim.

Mr PARKER: Okay. My understanding of the matter from conversations is that no loan was made by Exim Corporation to the Mormac Corporation, let alone an interest free one.

Mr Court: You did not know about the Goldrock loans either.

Mr PARKER: I know a fair bit about them. I was not the Minister at the time, but I became involved in the debate and once I became involved I familiarised myself with the details of the arrangements. I have now sourced -- because no evidence has been presented to me, but on the basis of the newspaper article -- informal information which tells me that the basis of the newspaper article is not true. If the Opposition has any contrary evidence I would be interested to see it. Given that the member has asked the question without notice I invite him to place it on the Notice Paper for next Tuesday.

Mr Court: The senior officers of Exim went down to the newspaper and asked for the evidence. That was only last week.

Mr PARKER: As I understand it there is no record whatever in Exim of any such loan.

Mr Court: That does not surprise us.

Mr PARKER: The books are entirely in order; the auditors have certified to that. It may be that individuals lent money to Mormac -- I do not know about that, it is not my responsibility. Certainly, so far as I have been advised, Exim has not lent any money. If the member for Cottesloe wishes to place the matter on the Notice Paper I will give him a detailed response.

Mr Hassell: I am sure you will, but it is a serious matter when three parliamentary questions appear to have been incorrectly answered. I do not think I should have to put a question on notice to ask you to do something about it.

Mr PARKER: If it is the case that the questions have been incorrectly answered then, of course, the appropriate action will be taken. At the moment there is absolutely no evidence whatsoever for me to suggest that that is the case.

Mr Court: What is the appropriate action? Will the person involved be promoted?

Mr PARKER: That is a hypothetical question. There is no evidence to suggest that that is the case.

The member for Cottesloe has been kind enough in the past to comment on the fact that I answer questions fully and frankly; and if he puts the question on the Notice Paper I will provide the appropriate answer. If my answer reveals that anything is required to be done, I will do it.

The SPEAKER: Before calling on the Leader of the House, I thank members for their cooperation during question time.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Answers

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett): I have been approached by a number of members who have questions on notice on the Notice Paper today. The answers to some of those questions have not been received at Parliament House as is usually the course. I have left instructions that they will be deemed answers to today's proceedings, and the members who wish the answers can request them at the appropriate time from the Clerk of Papers.
