

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 6th September, 1977

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

## BILLS (4): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Supply Bill.
2. Death Duty Assessment Act Amendment Bill.
3. Death Duty Act Amendment Bill.
4. Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill.

## ACTS AMENDMENT (CONSTITUTION) BILL

### *Second Reading*

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [5.01 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The Bill is designed to achieve three purposes. One is to emphasise the role of Her Majesty the Queen in the Parliament of Western Australia. Another is to protect and preserve the existence of both Houses of the State Parliament and to ensure their continued role as an integral and essential part of the law-making process.

The third purpose of the Bill is to confirm by Statute the office of Governor, and that appointments to the office of Governor and the instructions with which the Governor must comply in performing his duties are both made and issued by the Queen personally, as is the present case.

The Bill proposes to spell out clearly in our Constitution the fact that our Parliament consists of the Queen and the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly.

The Bill also proposes that any future Bill which would abolish either House of the Parliament, or which would reduce the numbers of the members of either House, or which would permit either House to be constituted by members not elected by the electors at large can become law only if it is passed by an absolute majority of both Houses of the Parliament and is approved of by all of the electors of the State voting at a referendum.

The same procedure would also apply to any Bill which would abolish or alter the office of Governor, abolish or alter the sole right of the Queen to issue instructions to the Governor as to the performance of his duties, or alter the requirement that every Bill must be presented to the Governor for assent before it may become law.

Mr Bryce: It is obvious the Government sees the writing on the wall.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The proposed Bill, in so far as it deals with the office, obligations, and powers of the Governor, makes no change in long-standing constitutional conventions and practices, but is intended to ensure that those long-standing conventions and practices cannot in the future be altered without the consent of a majority of the electors of the State.

A reference to the Governor includes any other person properly appointed to administer the Government or exercise any powers or authorities during his temporary absence.

The Government's policy statement for 1977-1980 clearly spelt out the Government's intentions in regard to entrenching in the Constitution provisions to protect the office of Governor and both Houses of Parliament. I refer members particularly to pages 24 and 25 of that statement where in the most unambiguous terms the Government set out its intentions in regard to this Bill. This was done quite deliberately—so that no-one could say that our action in introducing this Bill was unauthorised by the electorate or not fully declared prior to the last State general election.

I quote from that policy statement—page 24—as follows—

We will legislate to block any further attempt to damage or destroy the rights and status of the Parliament of Western Australia, without the consent of the people.

This policy stems from a series of Australian Labor Party moves culminating last year in a decision of the State A.L.P. conference that a future Labor Government would not appoint State Governors.

Quite rightly—then and now—we have interpreted this decision as part of the long-term Labor Party goal of destroying State Parliament in the interests of centralising all government in Canberra.

Mr Bryce: Humbug and rubbish! Empty jingoism.

Mr Jamieson: Where did you see that as an ALP statement?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The quote continues—

We accepted the challenge at the time of the A.L.P. decision to make this an election issue.

We therefore give notice that our intended legislation to block such moves without the people's consent is a policy proposal for which we seek a clear-cut mandate from electors.

Our proposed legislation will protect and preserve both Houses of our State Parliament, and with them the office of Governor.

We have reason to believe that attempts could be made to abolish either or both Houses of Parliament, reduce the numbers of the members of either House in an attempt to weaken them, or to by-pass the right of the electors at large to elect the members of either House.

Mr Bryce: You do not respect the electors at large.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The quote continues—

We also have reason to believe that attempts could be made to alter the office of Governor, to abolish or water down the right of the Queen to appoint the Governor, to by-pass the Governor's role in giving assent to every law, or to make the Governor a rubber stamp of the Government as part of the process of undermining our State Constitution and our Parliament.

Mr Bryce: You are the man responsible for a shameful gerrymander.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The quote continues—

To protect Parliament—our legislation will provide that no changes of the nature mentioned, can be made concerning either House of Parliament without the approval of a majority of the State's electors at a referendum.

To protect the position of Governor—there would have to be similar approval by referendum to any Bill which would abolish or alter the office of Governor, or the Queen's sole right to appoint the Governor or issue instructions with which the Governor must comply in performing his duties, or which would alter the requirement that the Governor's assent must be given to every Bill before it becomes law. This means that unless the people agree otherwise, the Governor's role will continue exactly as it is and will be protected from political manipulation.

Mr Tonkin: You should talk. What about when our Speaker died and you tried to get the Governor to interfere with our democratic process?

Mr Bryce: Just like Fraser.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the honourable member wants to discuss the particular incident to which he refers I will be happy to tell him the decision made by the then Governor will be very convenient to Governments on our side in future circumstances of that kind. If members of the Opposition reflected, they would realise the precedent they were creating.

Mr Jamieson: You are not game to.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The quote continues—

The major role of the Governor is to ensure that not even Parliament can exceed the authority the people give it. If Parliament does so, the Governor can send it back to the people, who have the ultimate authority.

Mr Bryce: Those words should stick in your craw.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I will be happy to repeat those words.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir CHARLES COURT: I think members opposite should listen to them because of certain action taken by their party in the Federal sphere. I repeat—

The major role of the Governor is to ensure that not even Parliament can exceed the authority the people give it. If Parliament does so, the Governor can send it back to the people, who have the ultimate authority.

We reject the misconception fostered by the A.L.P.—that the Governor has some kind of power over the people which he should not have. In fact, he merely has constitutional authority for and on behalf of the people. This authority has never been used, but the fact that it remains in reserve is a powerful safeguard against abuse by a Government of the rights of the people.

Mr Jamieson: It has been used. That is where you make a mistake.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Members will note that we sought—and obtained—a clear-cut mandate from the electors.

The Bill will do no more than its terms indicate. It will not affect the question of redistribution of electoral boundaries *per se*, or the

interrelationship of the two Houses. Nor will it affect the powers of either House. No referendum is required should any change be contemplated in respect of such matters.

Mr Tonkin: You would be scared to go to the people on electoral boundaries, would you not?

Sir CHARLES COURT: My Government believes that the time has come to ensure the continuation of the basic elements in our present system which has served the State well.

Mr Tonkin: You have done that with your gerrymander.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If any political party or group wants to change the basis of our Constitution then we believe it is right and proper that the people should first be consulted and given an opportunity to consent to or reject the proposals.

Mr Tonkin: Why did you not consult before you created six extra electorates last year?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I believe that the principles contained in this Bill are important for the people of the State who desire stability in government and security for their basic institutions.

Several members interjected.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I have never known anything to touch members opposite so much on the raw. I think we have gone deeper into the festering sore on their side than they ever thought we would.

I believe the Constitution will serve the State and its citizens well in its amended form.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

## **PARKS AND RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

MRS CRAIG (Wellington—Minister for Lands and Forests) [5.11 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The Parks and Reserves Act is a very old part of our State legislation. The provisions of this Act apply to the activities of instrumentalities such as the King's Park Board and Rottneest Island Board which are appointed in accordance with section 3 of the Act. Other reserves are controlled by local authorities under the Local Government Act, just as if they were boards under the Parks and Reserves Act.

Last year the King's Park Board approached the then Minister for Lands requesting statutory control to combat—

- (a) vandalism;
- (b) speeding and parking offences;
- (c) uncontrolled dogs;
- (d) littering; and
- (e) incendiarism of bush lands.

Unfortunately, these problems are not unique to King's Park, and a subsequent meeting was convened between the King's Park Board, the Rottneest Island Board, the Country Shire Councils' Association, and the Local Government Association to discuss the various issues involved. The result of that meeting was unanimous agreement that the existing powers and penalties were inadequate to deal with most cases.

Experience had shown that enforcement of the by-laws was both costly and difficult and frequently resulted in staff being threatened with violence. The employment of private security surveillance or alternatively closure of King's Park for certain hours presented practical difficulties and is, of course, expensive. The board however now employs two uniformed rangers for by-law enforcement and on-the-spot education of offenders in an endeavour to reduce the number of violations. For the information of members, vandalism in King's Park alone has been running to the tune of about \$30 000 annually.

However, inadequacies of the Act and, as a consequence, the by-laws, hinder the board in its efforts to combat the situation effectively. The Bill now before Parliament, if passed, would make provision for more efficient control of parks and reserves, and would not, in the main, create new offences but would facilitate the enforcement of the by-laws.

One particular aspect of this Bill concerns the liability of parents for acts done by their children. The defence provided for parents is consistent with the Child Welfare Act except that the onus of proof is reversed. It is worth noting that the Child Welfare Act provides, in certain circumstances, that an offence by a child can afford grounds for prosecution of the parent. Members will also note that the provision in clause 5 of this Bill is not in derogation of but in addition to the provisions of the Child Welfare Act.

Other provisions in the Bill seek to set out the powers of "authorised persons" and increase the maximum penalty a board may impose to a figure more in keeping with today's monetary values. Provision is also made for matters relating

to the ownership and control of animals and the imposition of penalties by way of infringement notices.

This Bill will go a long way towards streamlining the difficulties present boards are facing in combating a very serious problem in our society today, and I commend it to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Barnett.

## **VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**MR OLD** (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [5.15 p.m.]: 1 move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1960 regulates the practice of veterinary surgery in Western Australia in common with similar legislation in the other States of the Commonwealth. It does so with the basic intention of ensuring that the art and science of veterinary medicine and surgery meet an acceptable standard; both for the welfare of the animals requiring veterinary attention and in the interests of the owners of the animals.

The amending legislation seeks in general to update the existing Act and bring it into harmony with similar legislation in the other States.

Members will note that there is now a more precise definition of "veterinary surgery" and there are also new definitions in relation to what constitutes a veterinary clinic and a veterinary hospital. These definitions are similar to those adopted by the veterinary boards in the other Australian States.

A major change relates to the registration of veterinary surgeons and provision is made for the registration of persons whose qualifications—obtained either in Australia or overseas—are considered to meet the requirements for the persons to practise their profession in Western Australia.

Provision is made also for a person by reason of his prolonged absence from the practice of veterinary surgery to pass an examination conducted by the board before he is able to engage in practice.

Further, provision is made for a person to be provisionally registered, and this proviso will apply particularly to veterinary graduates who appear to be legally qualified enabling them to continue to practise until their qualifications are verified formally at the next board meeting. Provision has also been made to register veterinary graduates who may be involved in post graduate work at the Murdoch University Veterinary School.

The proposed legislation deletes reference to persons who may be in the categories of veterinary practitioners and permit holders. No persons in either category have been registered under this Act during the past 10 years, and it is not considered that there is a need to provide for such persons in the future since an adequate number of veterinarians to satisfy the needs of the community is now available following the establishment of the Murdoch University Veterinary School.

The amending legislation provides also for the board to act against a person who has been found guilty of unprofessional conduct by reprimanding him, ordering his suspension from registration, or removing his name from the register of veterinary surgeons. A person whose name is removed from the register may appeal to the board against that decision.

The amending legislation requires also the registration of veterinary clinics and veterinary hospitals to ensure that in the public interest the facilities provided are of an acceptable standard; and to ensure that the treatment and care given to sick animals on the premises are subject to control by a veterinary surgeon.

A number of new provisions in the Bill refer to veterinary practice and provide for penalties in respect of unqualified persons practising veterinary medicine and surgery. It is important to stress, however, that this proviso does not prohibit the performance by a person, whether or not for reward, who undertakes first aid for the purpose of saving the life of an animal or relieving pain suffered by an animal; or using humane methods of carrying out the operation of dehorning cattle, tailing or mulesing lambs, and castrating any animal not over the age of 12 months.

The Bill also permits lay persons to continue to treat animals in remote areas for reward whilst ensuring in this respect that limitations are able to be placed on the persons concerned where sophisticated medical or surgical techniques are involved.

The Bill recognises also the position of veterinary nurses; a person is able to be approved by the board to carry out the duties of a veterinary nurse if that person is of good character and is able to show that he or she has completed an approved course of study.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr H. D. Evans.

**LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL***Order Discharged*

**MR O'NEIL** (East Melville—Chief Secretary) [5.19 p.m.]: In view of a technicality which I have explained to the Leader of the Opposition and to the Clerk, I move—

That Order of the Day No. 4 be discharged from the notice paper.

Question put and passed.

Order discharged.

**METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY,  
SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE BOARD  
(VALIDATION) BILL**

*Second Reading*

**MR O'CONNOR** (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Water Supplies) [5.20 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. Certain sections of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, 1909-1976, have been misinterpreted at least since the board was reconstituted in 1964, leading to a number of administrative deficiencies. The sections concerned relate to the granting of approval by the Governor for the construction of works and the deficiencies arise in respect of the authorisation applying to two classes of work.

The first category is that of reticulation and minor works to which exemption has been granted, by order of the Governor, from the operation of the procedures, colloquially referred to as the "preliminaries to construction". These preliminaries include the deposit of plans, specifications, and certain statements at the office of the board. Following advertisement the procedure provides for the information to be available for inspection by interested persons.

It is now appreciated that while the legislation grants exemption from these procedures, this exemption does not override the requirement for the Governor's approval. To this extent a great number of extensions to the board's system of water supply, sewerage, and mains drainage services lack authorisation.

For the most part these services have been provided in response to the request of the ratepayers served. Clearly, strict observance would call for an unreasonable application of time to minor matters at Executive Council and within the board. Furthermore, as the Act now stands, any attempt at such observances would be difficult because the Act does not make clear by what procedure the Governor's approval is to be obtained.

The fact that this deficiency in the administration has passed unnoticed for all these years speaks for itself. It is unlikely that any persons or ratepayers have been disadvantaged, whereas benefits have accrued as a result of the more timely provision of services on request.

The second deficiency relates to works which are usually major and of benefit to the system as a whole, rather than to an identifiable group of prospective ratepayers. Typical examples are storage dams, service reservoirs, sewerage treatment plants and, in particular, the Jandakot groundwater scheme.

**Mr B. T. Burke:** In particular!

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Yes, I said that.

**Mr B. T. Burke:** This was the one where the writ was issued.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I will mention that also. This scheme has occasioned a legal challenge to the board's action, following which the Crown Law Department has examined the Act on behalf of the board.

Such works are joined patently into the whole metropolitan system, and so cannot be identified as servicing a particular group of people in isolation.

The Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, 1909-1976, derived from the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Act, 1904. The provisions in the two Acts are identical in relation to the following—

Preliminaries to Construction: Deposit of plans for public inspection, the procedures for the objection by persons interested to the construction of the works; and, with due adjustment to detail, the consideration of objections and normally for their course to the Governor for approval.

The 1904 Act expresses philosophies derived from the various Acts repealed by it on its enactment. These Acts were—

- (1) The Metropolitan Water Works Act, 1896, as amended.
- (2) The Water Works Act, 1899.
- (3) The Fremantle Water Supply Act, 1899, as amended.

In turn, the first of these related to the Water Works Act, 1889.

The emphasis in these Statutes relevant to the present problem has been a financial one. In fact, the Water Works Act, 1889, invokes the measures of the Municipal Institutions Act, 1876, which disallowed the entry of an undertaking

in a contract until approved by the ratepayers. An antecedent procedure of "preliminaries to construction" also applied. In our instance, the financial aspect is not of personal interest to ratepayers for these works which benefit the whole system.

The nature of such works has made it virtually impossible to give effect to some of the preliminaries to construction presently stipulated in the Act. Those preliminaries are a carry over from an earlier era. They have, understandably, given rise to deficiencies in past administration which can be corrected only by legislation, and that is the purpose of this Bill.

It is relevant also to note that the 1904 Act contained provision for the construction of works under the Public Works Act. This applied normally to major works and, once constructed, the works were passed over to the board by the Minister. It is important to observe that the Public Works Act has not included any provision for a "preliminaries to construction" procedure.

There is no counterpart legislation requiring the authorities in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, or Brisbane to undertake a "preliminaries to construction" procedure, or to obtain the approval of the Governor for works prior to their construction.

In Western Australia declaration of all underground water supply areas has been before this House under statutory procedures.

The Government will shortly be introducing a Bill suitably to amend the provisions of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, 1909-1976, which are clearly impractical of compliance, and also to review some other sections of the Act.

This Bill is commended for the consideration of the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr B. T. Burke.

## **COUNTRY AREAS WATER SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**MR. O'CONNOR** (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Water Supplies) [5.28 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Subsection (1) of section 65 of the Country Areas Water Supply Act, 1947-1976, provides that where the water rate computed on the estimated net annual value of a holding or, as the case may be, part of a holding, other than

a farmland holding, would be an amount less than \$2, the Minister may fix the water rate to be charged at the amount of \$2.

Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of that section provides in a similar manner for a minimum annual rate of \$4 for each farmland holding.

These provisions were incorporated in the Statute when it was enacted in 1947. Since then property valuations have increased considerably, and the existing minimums are no longer realistic. Collection costs have also increased in recent years so that ratepayers on the minimum rate contribute virtually nothing to the operation and maintenance of various water supplies.

Minimum rates in other States are prescribed each year and they have been adjusted progressively to the changing economic circumstances. Consequently, they are much higher than in this State.

Rather than set fixed minimum rates which will again become outdated, the Bill provides for the minimums to be as prescribed by the Minister. This will enable minimum rates to be kept at an appropriate level relative to property valuations from time to time.

The water rates for 1977-78 have already been struck so there will be no change in the minimum rates before the 1st July, 1978.

The Bill provides also for the removal of an obstacle to administrative efficiency by the proposed amendment to section 70 of the principal Act. This section currently requires that "water rates shall be payable within one month after notice of assessment in the prescribed form has been issued".

Preparation of rate notices is a function now being performed by automatic data processing methods, which render obsolete the use of a fully pre-printed form. The most economical and efficient way to collect water and sewerage rates is by the issue of a combined account, but this is difficult to achieve when the water rate must be on a form prescribed under the Country Areas Water Supply Act. No such prescribed form is required under the Country Towns Sewerage Act.

The Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act does not require a prescribed form for rates and in section 98 it assigns to the by-laws the power to determine when rates are payable. Under this Bill similar provisions are made for the country water supply areas.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr B. T. Burke.

## LAND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

**MR O'CONNOR** (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Water Supplies) [5.32 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. Section 90 of the Land Drainage Act, 1925-1972, provides that a minimum rate of \$2 may be levied on any ratable land.

This provision has remained unchanged since the Statute was enacted in 1925. Increases since then in property valuations and in the operating costs of the drainage schemes have been such that the minimum rate has become totally unrealistic. Collection costs now take a substantial portion of this small charge, and leave very little as a net revenue contribution to the ever-increasing costs of maintaining the system.

The Bill provides for the minimum rate to be prescribed from time to time. In this way it will be possible to make any adjustments warranted by increasing costs and thus preserve an appropriate relationship to increased property values.

The drainage rating year commenced on the 1st September; therefore no increase in the minimum rate is contemplated before the 1st September, 1978.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr B. T. Burke.

## COUNTRY TOWNS SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

**MR O'CONNOR** (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Water Supplies) [5.34 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. This Bill contains amendments similar to those I have mentioned in respect of the previous two Bills.

At present the Country Towns Sewerage Act empowers the Minister to make and levy a minimum rate not exceeding \$2.

This provision has remained unchanged since the Statute was enacted in 1948. Property valuations, however, have increased considerably in recent years, and the existing minimum is no longer realistic. Costs such as postage, printing and labour involved in preparation of accounts also have increased to the point where collection of such a small charge is of doubtful economic value.

Minimum rates in other States are prescribed each year and, in general, they are now at a much higher level than in this State.

The Bill provides for the Minister to prescribe the minimum rate from time to time, thus preserving its relativity to the level of property valuations.

Sewerage rates for 1977-78 have already been struck, so there will be no increase in minimum rates before the 1st July, 1978.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr B. T. Burke.

## WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr P. V. Jones (Minister for Education), read a first time.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: ELEVENTH DAY

### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from 25th August, on the following motion by Mr Hassell—

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

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

**MR SHALDERS** (Murray) [5.37 p.m.]: At the outset of my remarks I would like to add to the congratulations other members have offered to you, Mr Speaker, on your election to the position of Speaker of this House. In doing so, I know you will uphold your position with the same dignity and wisdom of your predecessor, and indeed all your predecessors. I would like also to add my congratulations to the member for Ascot on his election to the position of Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Also, I congratulate the member for Wellington on her promotion to the Ministry. In fact, I offer congratulations also to all new members on both sides of the House. I also thank the electors of the Murray electorate for the continued confidence they have shown in my representation of them in this House.

Mr Nanovich: They re-elected you because they were well represented.

Mr SHALDERS: I am not of the opinion that the vote was a personal one; rather, I think it is a reflection of the confidence of the people in the good government we have experienced during the past three years.

Mr Blaikie: And good representation, too.

Mr SHALDERS: Along with members on both sides of the House I am concerned about what I believe are two major difficulties facing young people in this State. I refer to the difficulties facing young people in respect of home ownership, and also the difficulties experienced by the many young people who are unemployed, and particularly those among them who are school leavers.

Mr H. D. Evans: The Premier was going to fix all that.

Mr SHALDERS: In fact, I differ from members of the Opposition in respect of the remedies that could be applied. The Premier is on record as having said that the number of unemployed people in this State is unacceptable. I will come back to that a little later, because the record of the present State Government in this respect is better than the record of any other State Government in Australia, and well members opposite know it.

One of the reasons that young school leavers are finding it difficult to gain employment today is the fact that an ever-increasing number of young women in the work force are not leaving their place of employment at the time they marry.

In my opinion, one of the major reasons for this evolution is the fact that young married couples with children are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the burden of repaying their home loans. Just as the Commonwealth and State Governments assist our senior citizens—or pensioners—so we should assist our young people at a time when they need it most. I refer of course to the time immediately after marriage, when they are faced with the dual burden of purchasing a home and raising a family.

Mr Skidmore interjected.

Mr SHALDERS: It is a shame I do not sit near the member for Swan any more, because I cannot hear what he is saying.

Mr Skidmore: How are they even going to get married? They cannot afford to because they are out of work.

Mr SHALDERS: If the member for Swan looked at the statistics, he would find that the rate of marriage is on the increase, so his interjection is superfluous.

The Commonwealth Government already has its home savings grant scheme in operation; I do not decry its value, because I believe it provides a real benefit to young couples. However, in my opinion more can be done than is being done at the moment and, in one instance, at no extra cost in the long run. I refer to the principle of capitalising family allowance payments.

I know members of the Opposition will say, "This is already being done in New Zealand", and they are quite right. However, the New Zealand scheme is very limited in its application; it certainly does not give anywhere near the value I have in mind. In New Zealand, parents can capitalise up to \$1.50 of the \$3 family allowance for one or more children, provided the child is between the ages of one and 16 years, and the total advanced is not less than \$400 or more than \$2 000.

The scheme is wage-means tested, to which I do not subscribe. To qualify, the maximum permissible weekly earnings for a family with one child is \$75, and that maximum increases by \$5 a week for each subsequent child. Based on the wage levels in this State, nobody would qualify for such a scheme.

I should like to refresh the memories of members on both sides of the House as to the family allowance scale for the first three children as it presently stands in Australia. I intend to refer only to the first three children, because my suggested scheme is based on that number. For the first child, an allowance of \$14 a month is paid, for a total of 16 years, making a total payment of \$2 912. For the second child, an allowance of \$20 a month is paid, giving a total of \$4 160 over the 16 years. The allowance for the third child is \$24 a month, or \$4 992 over the 16 years. The total payment for the three children over 16 years is \$12 064.

Inquiries I have made of the banks and building societies in this State reveal that the average home loan is \$25 000. Taken out through a bank over the maximum period of 25 years at current interest rates, such a loan would involve couples in a monthly payment of \$237. In my opinion, this is a tremendous impost on the family budget where there is only one wage earner and in fact it is virtually an impossibility for the low-wage, single-income family to support such a loan. Certainly, it is a distinct disincentive and a barrier to working wives leaving their employment to commence their families. I do not suggest for a minute that working wives should have to leave their employment, but I certainly believe there are a great many who would be only too



pleased to leave work once they commenced their families, if they could do so without placing an impossible strain on the family budget.

The scheme I have in mind certainly would do that, and I should like to give the House some details as to just how much capitalisation of family allowance payments would assist young couples. At the outset, I should say I believe there should be a proviso that the capital sum should be made available only to those parents who own a home built as a result of a recognised loan, and where repayment of that loan has not been completed, and that the full lump-sum payment must be used to reduce the outstanding balance of the loan.

Let us look at the practical effect of such a scheme. On an average loan of \$25 000, over 25 years and at current interest rates, monthly repayments are \$237. In my example, I have assumed that the wife works for three years before the first child is born. If the lump-sum of the family allowance were made available—I suggest it be rounded upwards from \$2 912 to \$3 000—and the loan were renegotiated at the reduced principal, but over the same term, the monthly repayment would be reduced by \$32 to \$205, giving a net benefit of \$18 a month over the normal family allowance payment of \$14 for one child.

Mr B. T. Burke: And \$300 in legal fees to renegotiate the mortgage.

Mr SHALDERS: Given that the honourable member is correct, and I have no doubt he is speaking from authority, we are still talking about reducing the loan by \$2 700; that would still be a significant benefit to the young couple.

Mr B. T. Burke: I realise that. I was only letting you have the figure because I renegotiated my mortgage the other day.

Mr SHALDERS: Assuming a second child is born some two years later, and the lump sum is rounded down to \$4 000, the monthly repayments would be reduced from \$205 to \$160, which represents a reduction of \$45 a month and a net benefit of \$25 over the present monthly family allowance of \$20 for the second child.

Assuming a third child is born two years later, and the capitalisation of the family allowance is rounded to \$5 000 and credited to the outstanding balance of the home loan, the new monthly payment would be \$93, a reduction of \$67 a month, and a net benefit of \$43 a month over the normal family allowance monthly payment of \$24 for the third child.

Mr B. T. Burke: There is just one thing: How do you take into account increases in the future? Do these people forego any increased family

allowance payments which may be made five or six years in the future?

Mr SHALDERS: Obviously, a number of difficulties could arise, and I will come to those later; I do not have all the answers. But surely to goodness sensible people must be able to work out a sensible arrangement to take into account the various problems which may arise. The figures I have just related to the House were supplied to me by a bank, so there is no doubt as to their accuracy.

I should like now to enumerate some of the many benefits which would flow from such a scheme. Firstly, I believe it would stimulate consumer spending. The example I have just provided would give a family a net benefit of \$86 a month over and above normal family allowance payments for three children. This benefit would represent more than \$1 000 a year in extra income, and there is no doubt in my mind that most of that money should show up in additional consumer spending, which must help to provide employment.

Of course, there will be critics in the community who will say the family allowance payment is supposed to be for the child, and not to help the parents buy a house. But if the scheme provides such a great cash benefit, surely the children will benefit also.

The second advantage I see in such a scheme is that it would take thousands of young married women out of the work force. I refer to those women who just do not want to be part of the work force, but would prefer to be home looking after their babies or their pre-school children. I am certain thousands of them would avail themselves of the opportunity to capitalise their family allowance and at the same time be better off for doing so.

At the present moment they cannot afford to give up working because of the burden of home loan repayments which cannot be sustained by their husband's wage alone.

With these thousands of young married woman out of the work force I believe there naturally would be created an equal number of employment opportunities for our young school leavers which normally they would have taken in past years. However, as I mentioned previously, these people are not leaving their employment now.

A further benefit would be an increase in the number of home loans that would become available from banks, building societies, and other lending institutions as the money they have available for lending would be turned around much

faster. Naturally, the stimulation of the building and associated industries would create further employment.

Another benefit would be the lessening reliance by low-income families on the Government for housing needs as home ownership would be brought within their reach. A great number of low-income earners rely on the Government for their housing needs and this in turn places a burden on the Government to provide money for housing. I see a lessening of the need for the Government to provide this housing finance.

Lastly, I see it as an opportunity to promote natural growth of population in this country and less reliance on the need for immigration for the long-term future population needs and the work force of this country. I would be disappointed if the Opposition saw this as my "knocking" immigrants. I certainly do not mean that at all as they have played an important role in the past for both this State and the nation and will continue to do so.

If members want further evidence of my regard for migrants let me inform them that my mother and my wife were migrants and my electorate office secretary also is a migrant.

It is very easy for members to come up with grandiose schemes without regard for the public purse and the cost of implementation. I have done what I could to work out the costing of my scheme. In the long run it would cost no more because parents would not receive any more than they would over the 16 years. In fact, it provides \$3 000, \$4 000 and \$5 000 which amounts to a lump sum of \$12 000, and this is \$64 less than the present total of family allowance payments made monthly until each child is aged 16.

In the short term, based on my calculations from the 1976 number of live births and the position in the family of those children, the additional cost would not exceed \$7 million per annum in the initial stage. That is the total maximum this scheme could cost in addition to the present family allowance budget.

I believe that figure to be accurate. In reality it would be much less because not all parents would opt to go into the scheme nor would they all be eligible.

Mr Bryce: How much did you say it would cost?

Mr SHALDERS: It would cost \$69.3 million. I would like it to be clearly understood that this is only an alternative and in no way am I suggesting it should be compulsory. Parents should have the right to opt for one means or

the other. Family allowance payments for all additional children should be made by the normal method. My scheme covers only the first three children.

The member for Balcatta has already raised one question, but I realise queries can be raised and questions asked in regard to certain situations which would arise. One such aspect was mentioned previously by the member for Balcatta and there are others such as multiple births, infant deaths, divorces where children are involved, and unmarried mothers.

I do not have the time to go into all of those, but certainly, as I have said, sensible people should be able to work out some means whereby this scheme would work and these situations could be taken care of.

Mr B. T. Burke: I agree with you. It is a good idea.

Mr SHALDERS: Mr Speaker, you may be wondering why I am raising this matter in the State Parliament when it is really a matter for the Federal Government to decide. I have written to the Prime Minister outlining my scheme and I am hopeful the Premier will be prepared to back the scheme and promote the idea in future discussions with the Commonwealth. I believe the State could play a part perhaps by providing a grant for the third child in addition to that made by the capitalisation of the family allowance lump sum, even if it is only a token grant of \$500. This would significantly reduce the monthly repayments of many people because at that stage one is really getting down to the principal of a loan and not the interest.

Working on the number of live births in this State in 1976 and allowing for the same percentage increase in 1977 as there was between 1975 and 1976, such a grant for the third child would cost the State Government only \$1.5 million. It is my opinion this State would then be judged as that which not only adds to Commonwealth benefits in respect of senior citizens who have made their contribution to the future of Australia and Western Australia, but also to those in whose hands this State and this country's future lies.

At the outset of my remarks I mentioned that my re-election to this Parliament was, in my opinion, due to the fact that people of the Murray electorate recognised there had been three years of sound and good government. Instances where the State Government had recognised the needs of the people are as follows: the establishment of a second primary school in Mandurah; recognition of the right of the people in Pinjarra

and Mandurah to participate in the hills water supply connected to the South Dandalup Dam; the establishment of pre-primary centres at six of seven primary schools in my electorate; and recognition of the people in small towns, such as Dwellingup, by the re-establishment of the police station there and the construction of bitumen roads around forestry and mill homes.

One of the most pressing future needs I wish to draw to the Government's attention is the establishment of a high school at Mandurah. The Government has committed itself to open a high school there by no later than the opening of the school year in 1980. I sincerely ask the Government and the Minister for Education very carefully to consider advancing the opening date by one year. I believe if this is not done the number of children attending the Pinjarra High School will be virtually impossible for the school to accommodate. If it is not opened in 1979 there will be about 1 003 students at Pinjarra and it is impossible for the school to accommodate such a number, particularly those studying manual arts and home economics subjects.

If the school at Mandurah is opened in 1979 the enrolment at Pinjarra will drop to 870. The school could accommodate this number of students although accommodation would be stretched considerably. This figure should decrease over the following years and I do ask the Minister to bear that fact in mind.

Having been a member of this House for three years, it seems to me that the Opposition during that time has lived in a vacuum. I wish to tell the new members on this side of the House and, indeed, those on that side of the House that the more prominent members of the Opposition are trotting out the same old arguments now that they were trotting out three years ago. If they continue along that line I cannot see any future for them.

One of the points I should like to mention is unemployment. There is no doubt that the number of unemployed in this State has increased. The Premier has acknowledged that fact; he has said that it is unacceptable. Members on this side of the House are prepared to accept the fact that the number of unemployed has increased, and we have said that the situation is not good enough and must be improved. But members on the other side are not prepared to accept the fact that this Government has a better record with regard to employment than any other State Government in Australia.

Mr Harman: That is not true.

Mr SHALDERS: On a percentage basis the number of people who have gone into the work force during the past three years is far greater than in any other State.

Mr Harman: That is nonsense.

Mr SHALDERS: If the member for Maylands cannot understand that, I suggest he goes back to the drawing board and does his homework again.

Another point of which the Opposition has made much since the beginning of this session of Parliament is the situation regarding road funds. We have admitted that we are unhappy with the funds which have been allocated this year by the Commonwealth Government; there is no doubt about that. I think the former Minister for Police and Traffic summed up the situation very well when he said that it was really a disaster. But let us consider the disaster that the Whitlam Government inflicted upon us.

Mr H. D. Evans: It was not as bad as it is now.

Mr SHALDERS: The honourable member would be very interested in the figures to see whether the situation is as good. For the benefit of new members on this side of the House who may not know the full story, in 1973-74 the State Government received \$48 million from the Commonwealth Government for which it had to provide matching moneys of \$16.5 million—a ratio of virtually three to one. During the three-year Whitlam programme which commenced in 1974-75 the State Government's share was lifted from \$16.5 million to \$23 million, in return for which we received \$1 million extra from the Commonwealth Government. In 1975-76 our share jumped to \$28.5 million in return for another \$1 million from the Commonwealth, and in 1976-77 our share jumped to \$33 million in return for another \$1 million. In other words, our need for matching moneys jumped from \$16.5 million of State money to receive \$48 million of Commonwealth money to \$33 million of State money for \$51 million of Commonwealth money. That involved an increase by the State Government of 100 per cent in return for an increase of a fraction more than 6 per cent of Commonwealth moneys. As the Premier has outlined, the rot really set in before that, and he has traced the history of the matter; but certainly the apple in the barrel was never more rotten than at that time in terms of road finance.

Mr H. D. Evans: Why hasn't your lot over there changed the system if it is so unsatisfactory?

Mr SHALDERS: If I had my way I would devote all the money that is collected by way of fuel tax to road funds, but I do not think I could convince a Government of whatever political colour to do that, including a Labor Government; and I think the member for Warren knows that as well as I do.

This Government has acted with regard to pensioner concessions. It has been constructive. Unlike the Opposition it has not just talked about them; it has actually done things. We have seen the deferment and rebate of water and sewerage rates and a sliding scale rebate of the standard charge made by the State Energy Commission.

I am quite prepared to admit—and if members of the Opposition can read newspapers they would know this—that those concessions are not as great as I should have liked the Government to make them. I believe there should be a flat percentage rebate of the SEC standard charge to all eligible pensioners. The reason for that is that it would not only overcome the problem of the larger percentage increase to the low unit consumer but would also provide a slight measure of relief to those pensioners whose accounts, very often for no real fault of their own, are extremely high. I refer, of course, to the many pensioners who suffer the dreadful affliction of arthritis and are forced to stay indoors and to have a room heated constantly to overcome the pain. In country areas many people have a bore water supply and, therefore, have the added cost of providing that water.

However, I am prepared to recognise that the Government has done as much as it believes it possibly can do at this time, and I give it credit for what it has done. So in case any member of the Opposition suddenly believes that by moving an amendment or a motion he will hoist me on my own petard and force me to cross the floor, I tell the Opposition that that just will not work. I accept that the Government has done what it believes it can do at this time, and I hope that benefits might be increased in the future.

We have heard from the Opposition the perennial cry of one-vote-one-value. The member for Ascot and the member for Morley have talked of a gerrymander. It suits them to do so at this time, but members opposite did not always believe that a gerrymander existed, particularly when the Opposition held the seats in the north of this State. I do not support the ideal of one-vote-one-value in this State, and I shall enumerate my reasons. If the theory put forward by the member for Melville in his maiden speech were put into practice, all electorates would be created with equal numbers of people

in them and there would be a quota for each electorate in this State of 12 665 electors.

At present there are 459 995 electors in the metropolitan area and those electors return 27 members to this House.

Mr Jamieson: Are you going to oppose the Acts Amendment (Constitution) Bill, because that will confer one-vote-one-value?

Mr SHALDERS: If the Leader of the Opposition is patient he will find out my stance on that Bill at the appropriate time.

Based on this quota, the metropolitan area would have an increased entitlement of nine seats, so the number of members returned to represent the metropolitan area would rise from 27 to 36 and conversely the number of members elected to represent the country areas of this State would drop from 28 to 19. In other words, we would have 36 metropolitan seats and 19 country seats. So really what the Labor Party is saying is that it believes the metropolitan area should have twice the voice it is prepared to give country electors, despite the fact that the size of the metropolitan region is about that of a postage stamp compared with the rest of the State.

Although, certainly, the member for Melville has approximately 3 000 more people in his electorate than I have in mine—and I have only a small country electorate—the electorate of Murray is over 100 times the size of the electorate of the member for Melville. If my electorate were to have the quota number the member for Melville would like it to have, it would probably have to be increased to 200 times the size of his electorate.

Let us have a look at another example. Between them, the electorates of Kimberley, Gascoyne, and Murchison-Eyre would not have a quota of 12 665. Let us assume the Opposition is generous enough to allow those three electorates to make one quota and thus give them one member for the total area.

Mr Jamieson: You missed out the Pilbara right in the centre.

Mr SHALDERS: The Pilbara has about the required number of electors to make up a quota and that is why I missed it out. It has a quota and it is very adequately represented by the sitting member. He certainly made sure it did not become Marlborough country!

Mr Laurance: What has become of Mr Marlborough now?

Mr SHALDERS: The last I heard of him, he was having some trouble with the City of Stirling!

Assuming the Opposition was generous enough to allow one member to represent the combined three electorates of Kimberley, Gascoyne, and Murchison-Eyre, the size of that electorate would be just 66 103 times the size of the average metropolitan electorate. That is the story.

Mr Bryce: What has your party done about this in the Federal sphere in view of the size of the Federal seat of Kalgoorlie? What has your party done about changing that?

Mr SHALDERS: I believe that seat is far too big for one member to represent.

Mr Bryce: But the Federal Liberal Party supports it.

Mr SHALDERS: More could, and probably should, be done in that respect, but that is not the point at issue at the moment. I am talking about members representing metropolitan and country electorates in this Parliament.

Mr Jamieson: They should be representing people.

Mr SHALDERS: I can assure members that the proposal of the member for Melville—apparently supported by most members of the Opposition—would be bought only by them.

Mr Jamieson: This has been a remarkable debate. Nearly every member on your side has broken tradition and referred to the contents of maiden speeches. This has not been done before.

Mr SHALDERS: I have not made one criticism of the member for Melville.

Mr Jamieson: One too many.

Mr SHALDERS: I have not made one, so I cannot work out what the Leader of the Opposition is saying.

Mr Jamieson: You have been referring to him.

Mr SHALDERS: Only because he was the most recent Opposition member to flog this subject.

Mr Jamieson: It is sacrosanct not to make reference to the content of any maiden speech.

Mr Clarko: Some of your members did the same thing.

Mr SHALDERS: I remind the Leader of the Opposition that it is traditional not to tip a bucket over the Opposition or the Government in a maiden speech, but members on both sides broke that rule, and that did not reflect credit on any of them.

Mr Jamieson: Not to tip a bucket on whom?

Mr SHALDERS: I suggest the Leader of the Opposition should look at *Hansard*. Time is short and I do not want to be held up by him.

Mr Jamieson: You would need to look at *Hansard*.

Mr SHALDERS: The proposal advocated by the Opposition in respect of an alteration in the number of members representing country and metropolitan electorates in this State would be supported only by the most avid ALP followers, not by the average fair-minded person in the metropolitan area, and certainly not by residents in the country.

If the Opposition ever hopes to win office—and really I think it is resigned to being a professional Opposition—it is obvious it must win an increased number of seats in country areas; but while it continues to advocate that the representation of country people be reduced, it will have no chance. The member for Warren knows that is true, and so does the member for Geraldton.

Mr Jamieson: We do not need your advice.

Mr SHALDERS: The Opposition has flogged a dead horse, and it is still flogging it, and therefore it will remain in Opposition for years to come.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr SHALDERS: With those remarks I support the motion.

*Sitting suspended from 6.13 to 7.30 p.m.*

MR TAYLOR (Cockburn) [7.30 p.m.]: I rise tonight for the 10th occasion to speak to the Address-in-Reply. I have found that over the years my attitude towards the Address-in-Reply has changed quite dramatically; it has swung some 180 degrees.

When I made my maiden speech a few years ago I indicated I came into Parliament believing I would be able to change things—that I would be able to do things for my electorate. I firmly believed then that the Address-in-Reply was the vehicle by which I could do things for my electorate. It is stated in the Standing Orders that all members of Parliament have the right to address Parliament on matters which they feel are of concern and interest to their electorates.

On the first occasion I spoke in this House I addressed myself to the problems of the Cockburn-Kwinana area, and I thought I made out a very good case. In fact, I believe that over the years I have made a tremendous case for my electorate.

Mr Bertram: You certainly have.

Mr Old: I wonder what the electors say.

Mr TAYLOR: I have found, regrettably, that this institution which we all support, and of which we are all members, just has not lived up to my expectations. I have found that though I represent my electorate, my voice does not carry very much weight in this place. Matters which I have brought here have not received the recognition which they deserved.

I think the Minister for Industrial Development just clicked his tongue at that remark, and I am reminded by his interjection of a debate in this place some three or four years ago during which I compared the problems of the electors of Cockburn with those of the electors of Floreat. The latter area in comparison had no problems.

I can therefore understand why, when I spoke of my electorate, the member for Floreat would click his tongue in the way he did.

The Address-in-Reply seems to have lost all its meaning; it has no purpose in this Parliament. At one stage, many years ago, the Address-in-Reply presumably provided an opportunity for matters to be presented so that logical minds would attempt to grapple with them and attempt to find solutions. I am very sure those days have long since passed.

We have been debating the Address-in-Reply for four or five weeks and I now find myself in the position of following other members and speaking about my electorate simply because it is the done thing. I must say I hold no illusions. My comments tonight, though they will be modest and concern a request for just \$20 000 from the Treasurer, will not get very far. Instead of asking for the world, I intend to ask for a very small sum of money to be spent in a particular way. However, I do not feel honestly that will be so. It is unfortunate that the Address-in-Reply debate should have deteriorated in this manner, but that is the way things are.

One observation I would like to make with regard to the change which has occurred since the last election is the tremendous shift in the attitude of the Government to what might be called, "the political right". When I came into this place in 1948—I mean 1968; that shows how time has slipped by although it sometimes seems that I have been here since 1948—there seemed to be, perhaps, a socialist philosophy versus a small "I" liberal philosophy.

I saw in you, Mr Speaker, in the member for Scarborough, and later in the member for Karingup, and in the member for Vasse, and even more recently in the member for Gascoyne, that

there was something in this small "I" liberal philosophy. There was a time when I was able to discuss, in the corridors of this place, certain problems. We did not necessarily agree, but at least we were able to debate on common ground.

I find that in the short period since the last election that opportunity for discussion has gone. I see from the speeches by those in the back benches on the Government side, and particularly from the attitude of the Premier in his selection of Ministers that, in fact, the Government has turned hard right. From speeches made by members on the other side of this Chamber, I cannot find any common ground now. Perhaps I have moved to the left, but nevertheless I say there has been a dramatic change, and it worries me.

Mr Blaikie: Do you realise you are getting a little older?

Mr TAYLOR: Yes; in fact, I have been blaming myself for a long time, but no longer.

The selection of Cabinet was a disappointment to me. The Hon. Neil McNeill, who was dropped from the Ministry in the upper House, was a person to whom I could talk. I have the feeling that the honourable member who has taken his place, though very capable and able—and I do not denigrate him in any way at all—with his background in education and training in the economic situation, would be encouraged to have a particular conservative attitude to government. I see the same thing in the appointment of the Minister for Lands and Forests in this House, who is a very capable and able person; and I make no condemnation. Nonetheless, that appointment appears to me to be a bolstering of the conservative philosophy rather than the small "I" liberal philosophy.

I will say no more with regard to that matter because I have a lot to speak about, although I would like to be able to speak on the subject for longer.

I did see a change in the attitude of the member for Gascoyne which no doubt led to his appointment to his present position. Undoubtedly, his contribution to the debate on the motion regarding the State Government Insurance Office led to that appointment. During that debate I was asked to withdraw remarks on a couple of occasions when I said the member was misleading the House. I thought his speech was so far out it must have struck the right chord, and maybe he has been rewarded for it.

I saw a change in philosophy in the comments of the member for Roe which disappointed me; in fact, his comments on the unemployed appalled me. I think I saw it again tonight in

the speech by the member for Murray when he commented on electoral boundaries. It seems to be developing almost to the "bandwagon" stage of "Let us show the Opposition how militant we can be". I think the statements made by members opposite are becoming irrational—perhaps I have chosen the wrong word but the statements being made by back-bench members opposite now are just not in the interests of the State as a whole.

The comments from back-bench members opposite appear to be increasingly in the interests of their political party, and not in the long-term interests of the people of this State, generally.

Mr O'Connor: Are you talking about both sides?

Mr TAYLOR: If the same applies to my side I am prepared to take that; I am trying to take a particular view.

Mr Laurance: Would you tell us what has happened on your side?

Mr TAYLOR: I would say the statement by the member for Murray with regard to electoral reform is that far out it is not funny.

Your electorate, Mr Speaker, is within 10 miles of the Perth GPO. The bulk of my electorate is outside the 25-mile radius from the Perth GPO, yet the disparity in voting power is most apparent.

Secondly, the member for Murray classes himself as the voice of the rural areas. Nothing could be more misleading than that statement. He is the voice of a particular point of view in the metropolitan area.

Mr Shalders: That is nonsense.

Mr TAYLOR: He is the voice of economics in this place. If his electorate of Murray comprised one square mile and he represented only 10 people, his vote would be exactly the same as it is now; his voice would be the same as it is now and his representation of those outside the metropolitan area would not change one iota.

Mr Shalders: Do you realise it is 800 per cent?

Mr TAYLOR: There has never been a time when the country or non-metropolitan area has voted as a whole against the metropolitan area. There has never been a time when the metropolitan vote was unanimous. There has never been a mining vote. The idea of a metropolitan and rural vote is a myth, and so long as it is put forward we will not come anywhere near an understanding.

Mr Blaikie: You are embarrassing the member for Warren.

Mr TAYLOR: In no way.

Mr Shalders: What area do you represent?

Mr TAYLOR: I represent an area which has a higher average wool weight within a local government area than that within the electorates of most members on the other side of the House. Surely that carries some weight.

Mr Shalders: How many beef producers do you represent?

Mr TAYLOR: A few—not many more than you do, Mr Speaker.

Mr O'Neil: There is a lot of bull down there.

Mr TAYLOR: I want to talk about what I feel might be done in the industrial area of Kwinana. Coming back to the points I made earlier, I am not sure it will make any difference at all but I feel in all justice a case must be put for these people. In one sense I am encouraging the member for Whitford who, before the last election, put out a pamphlet which stated that during his time as a member there had been investment in his electorate of several million dollars, which demonstrated he was a worthy man who should be re-elected.

Mr Clarko: If ever a man created an electorate it is the member for Whitford.

Mr TAYLOR: That is what he said: millions of dollars have been spent in his electorate during the years he has been representing it and that was a reason for re-electing him. He was good enough to convey to some of my constituents that I, on the other hand, had done nothing in Parliament. We have on one hand the member for Whitford, who had had tremendous development in his electorate which he claims demonstrates why he should be re-elected, while I as a member of Parliament had done nothing. In his speech he could talk about quarter horses. I have a long way to go to catch up.

I want to deal with unemployment in the Kwinana area. The figures show that the rate of unemployment in the area is 9.5 per cent. I understand from research I have undertaken that in the Kwinana-Rockingham area the rate of unemployment was in fact 13.5 per cent in January this year and the lower rate is due to the fact that Mandurah is included. I do not know whether it means there are not so many unemployed people in Mandurah or that the member for Murray is not interested in the unemployed, but the figure given to me was an unemployment rate at that time of 13.5 per cent.

We had the comment from the member for Roe that there was a high proportion of dole bludgers and that certain changes should be made in the structure of unemployment benefits and

these people should be required to do some work. The part of his speech which intrigued me most was this—

These people are unemployable and are not contributing to the economy. In the words of a Chinese leader, it does not matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice. In many cases these people do not wish to catch any mice.

I want to talk about some of the people who I think want to catch mice and are not being given the opportunity to do so.

I would like to answer the member for Roe in one particular. He referred to the great contribution made by the rural areas, and I agree that is so; but in a speech I made on one occasion I pointed out that the alumina refinery in Kwinana contributes a higher value in export earnings than the timber, fruit, apiary, and small grains industries combined—excluding wheat and wool. One company producing alumina contributes greater export earnings than all those other industries put together. When we think of that we must concede the Kwinana area therefore should be looked at a little more carefully.

The area also provides the great bulk of the fertiliser for country areas. It produces almost all the cement for Western Australia and all the petroleum fuel, which is something else the Parliament should consider. In addition, it has two export abattoirs. When the contribution of the Kwinana electorate is considered, it should have six or seven members, not just one. The value of its export earnings and its contribution to the State are out of all proportion to the credit given to the area, which is being used by the State as a whole. The State—not just the Government—should be ashamed of itself for the way it treats that particular economic area.

Mr Old: From where does all the material come from which the money is made?

Mr TAYLOR: From where does it come in the rural areas?

Mr Old: In the country.

Mr TAYLOR: Does the farmer take the credit for the sun and the rain and the fertility of the soil? He puts so much effort into it in terms of calories or perspiration, and I would say the person who drags slag from the steel mill in Kwinana puts an effort into that work which is just as great, and in fact greater over a 12-month period. I am not in any way decrying the rural areas but I think some people should have a look at what happens in industry. It is certainly not the sinecure that has been suggested. This area has a great place in the

State and it has been neglected and bypassed by people who address themselves to the Address-in-Reply and look only at their own particular narrow ends.

Let me mention just one point. Last week about 180 workers at the Anchorage abattoir were stood down because there are not enough sheep coming through. Let us look at the expectation of members of the rural community on both sides of the House. As the spring lambs come in, or as a movement of stock to the abattoir appears, slaughtermen will be required. They will be wanted at the time the stock arrives, and if any problem occurs when the stock arrives those members will be the first to complain. At this moment they are expecting 180 men will sit at home doing nothing—dole bludgers, in the words of the member for Roe—

Mr Grewar: Do not twist it.

Mr TAYLOR: —waiting until they are called upon to perform their duty for the State. But until that time no-one is interested in them. When that stock comes forward, by which time these men will find themselves in debt with their homes and through trying to support their families for two or three months on unemployment cheques, they will ask for some remuneration for their effort in contributing to the State's wealth. The member for Roe implied that strikes in that particular area had caused damage to the rural community.

Mr Grewar: Do you deny it?

Mr TAYLOR: I do not deny it; but I ask the member for Roe, through you, Mr Speaker, whether he expects a man to work for six or nine months on what might be called a reasonable wage and carry on for the other three months without receiving remuneration for it. It must be recognised the worker must receive that average wage over the year. If it means he has to sit down for three months and live on unemployment benefits, he should not be blamed for demanding an extra return when he is in employment.

Mr Grewar: How much time have they had off in the last three years? Practically none.

Mr TAYLOR: If they had any time off at all it would be say one, two, or three weeks and if one averages that out over a year it would still amount to from \$5 to \$10 per week off their pay.

I am not attacking the rural community. I am asking members opposite to recognise this problem and, instead of making fatuous remarks about dole bludgers, try to analyse exactly what is happening.



Let us look at the next point as far as Kwinana is concerned, apart from the one I have mentioned over and over again which is the lack of work for young people and women; that is a speech in itself. Recently there was a standing down of workers at the Western Mining nickel refinery. The Premier said Western Mining was a very good company. In one sense of the definition of "good" that is right. However, I believe the management has changed dramatically and I am trying to place a little of the blame upon it. It is suggested that this company will announce a net profit of \$22 million this year. That is the highest profit it has ever made. I will not talk about the Kambalda area of Western Mining's operations. I want to make a comment about its operations at Kwinana.

On Thursday of last week this company stood down by telegram about 55 members of its staff and wages groups. One member of its staff had been with the company for 33 years. He was in England at the time on service leave visiting his family. He received a telegram in England containing the news that he did not have a job after 33 years with the company. Another man who previously had worked in what is called the drying shed, with the smell of ammonia, had suffered a heart attack and was in hospital. Members will be aware that people in the area have complained about the smell of ammonia in their homes. Imagine what the smell must be like in the plant. This man had a heart attack and was in hospital. He was not receiving workers' compensation. He suffered a heart attack when he was working in the drying shed. He received news of his telegram while in hospital.

Mr Tonkin: When they are worn out they are thrown on the scrap heap.

Mr TAYLOR: In fact that is exactly what happened overnight. The selection of workers that was made by the company appeared to be on the basis of the possible contribution these men would make to the company. Often it was the older men who were stood down. It was those who had a disability. It was the clerk with the withered arm. It was two men who had suffered heart attacks in the plant. In one instance a worker had suffered a heart attack in the drying room where there are ammonia fumes, and he was taken home. Subsequently he returned to work on special duties but was later moved from light duty onto the shovel, shovelling quantities of metal. He had another heart attack and he was the one who was in hospital when he received the telegram informing him that he was no longer employed. This occurred when other

employees were working overtime. They were working six shifts and yet the company stood people down. That is another story in itself.

The company chose those who were least able to find alternative employment and that is a point which the Government should take up. If someone would wake up the Minister for Labour and Industry maybe he would take some interest in the matter.

Mr Grayden: I am listening to you with very great interest.

Mr TAYLOR: I say again, it was largely people who were least able to find alternative employment who were put off by the company on that occasion in the Kwinana area. Western Mining stood these people down despite those who know anything at all about industrial relations—and I am talking about members on both sides of the House now—espousing a philosophy that a company should meet the general statistical balance of the community; that is, if 5 per cent of the community are handicapped in some way, then 5 per cent of the work force should be affected in the same way.

Despite the fact that these men were stood down there are signs that there is no intention of reducing production at the Kwinana refinery. The work force at the nickel refinery in Kwinana is to continue to produce the same amount. It means there will be three mechanics doing the work of four mechanics. There will be three men in the drying sheds doing the work of four men; or six men instead of eight. It appears there has been a shakeout. The old law of the jungle seems to be coming back in that it is now possible with an official unemployment figure in the Kwinana area of 9.5 per cent, to be able to say to workers, "Right, if you want your job, mate, spread yourself over this work. We have sacked a fitter. Now you three do the work of four." That is what is happening.

It is in this connection that I would ask the Premier and his Government to take cognisance of the situation, which is that the other industries in the area have taken note of what is occurring. They see Western Mining getting away with this move and there are suggestions in at least one plant that already the wheels are turning and there may be further sackings. Those who will be stood down live and work in an electorate which already has 9.5 per cent unemployment and which as an electorate is perhaps the greatest producer of wealth in the State. The Pilbara is the only area I would defer to; but in actual wealth produced, in terms of economic calculation, Kwinana or the Cockburn electorate would probably be second only to the Pilbara.

If the situation does arise we are going to have real problems. If unemployment continues we may have something like 10 to 15 per cent of the work force stood down, not because there is going to be less production—although that will be used as the reason—but in order to make those employed work harder. And I do expect that these men will work harder because there is that fear there already that one has to keep working to keep one's job. It will be a terrible day as far as this State is concerned, if the Government allows this sort of thing to occur.

Mr McIver: They will allow it to happen.

Mr TAYLOR: It is time to check with the four or five major companies in the area, all of which are producers of wealth and all of which have very high profit returns. They should be pressured by the Government to maintain their work force. This work force was good enough during boom periods and should be good enough now. There should be no move to put people off. I suspect that there will be further unemployment in the area and I should like to say this to the Government—I am choosing my words carefully; I have thought them out—if the unemployment rate in the Kwinana, Rockingham and Cockburn area rises to a higher level, and if we start to see the signs that are already there—and these were mentioned in debate here recently—of the results of unemployment, such as broken homes, no money, homes and cars repossessed, then the unemployed in that area, and many of those people who are working, will march.

The people in this area have a feeling that no-one is really concerned about them; no-one really cares what might happen to them. This is the result of the unacceptably high level of unemployment at the moment and the Western Mining debacle. If the situation continues in this manner the people in that area will march.

Mr Coyne: Are you fostering that idea?

Mr TAYLOR: If unemployment rises, yes. I will give my reasons in a moment. This will happen unless the industries in that area support the work force. We all know that anyone can work harder, at least in the short term, if he needs to do so. There is a strong feeling within that area that the work force will be cut to the bone, and if that happens there will be trouble. I will certainly support it.

I come now to my small request to the Premier for \$20 000.

First of all I would like to outline what is likely to happen in the future. Kwinana was created by an Act of Parliament, and Parliament,

therefore, surely has some responsibility for what happens there. Over 50 per cent of the population are migrants; people who were invited here. Perhaps some members have short memories, but old advertisements can be produced to show that tradesmen were invited to this State. Migrants were told that there would be work for them if they came to Western Australia, and they were shown photographs of houses they could live in.

Mr Davies: The houses were being sold before these people left their own countries.

Mr TAYLOR: This happened in some instances. Jobs were available at that time, and migrants moved into the area in large numbers. The migrants found themselves in a "boom-and-bust" cycle. Initially there were very good years as Alcoa came into production. Then there was a downturn and for two or three years many people were battling, and some even had to leave the area.

The boom returned with the construction of the nickel refinery, and then during our term in Government we were able to initiate the Co-operative Bulk Handling project, and the Commonwealth Government was involved with the oil rig. However, again after a brief boom, the area suffered a downturn. It seems to me that it will be at least another three years before there is reasonable employment in the area again.

Mr McIver: When we are in Government!

Mr TAYLOR: As the member for Avon says, probably this will occur when we are again in Government.

When the North-West Shelf project commences, there will be a demand for structural work which will create employment in the Kwinana area. The men will be working 50 or 60 hours a week, and they will be well remunerated for their efforts. In the meantime, however, the workers have been condemned to two or three years of the chronic disability of unemployment.

People were invited to come to Western Australia, they established their homes here and attempted to be constructive citizens. Now many of them are left to vegetate on unemployment benefits and have been called dole bludgers. This state of affairs will persist until the system again calls them forth to make their contribution. Such a cycle is not good enough.

This area was created by Government, on land bought by Government, and with facilities provided by Government, and yet one finds here a unique phenomenon. The Kwinana Shire is the only shire within the metropolitan area where the greater proportion of the population is under 21. The same situation exists in only two other

shires in the State. It is interesting that the census figures for the area reveal that one-third of the population are aged between five and 14 years. This is significant in terms of what is happening now, and what will happen in the next few years. Members will realise that many of these young people will wish to enter the work force.

On making a further analysis of the figures, one finds that approximately 11 per cent of the population are aged between 45 and 64 years—a 20 year period. So based on present projections and the current situation, over the next 20 years 11 per cent of the available work force in the Kwinana area will retire. However, over this 20-year period, 51 per cent of the population will enter the work force. So that means 11 per cent of the population will leave the work force, but 51 per cent will endeavour to enter it, and these figures do not allow for any change in population at all.

This is a young community—young parents who often are working, and who have teenage children wishing to enter the work force. Members can see that with 11 per cent leaving the work force and 51 per cent entering it, the percentage of unemployed in the Kwinana area will rise dramatically because there is just no move for expansion of industry in the area.

Already expansion of the alumina refinery has taken place at Pinjarra, and it will later move on to Wagerup. I have no complaint about that; in fact, it is desirable. I cannot see that the nickel refinery will employ many more people than it is employing now. The same thing applies to the oil refinery. These are capital-intensive industries with a very small work force. The only industry where expansion is possible is that of Australian Iron and Steel.

Mr Mensaros: You have a \$20 million expansion.

Mr TAYLOR: The Minister has it wrong; I asked questions about this matter. The number of workers who will be employed because of these extra millions is negligible. These are all capital-intensive industries and probably the expansion of the oil plant will result in the employment of 50 men to stand and watch gauges or computers. There will be no work for women or young people.

Mr Jamieson: You mean there is not 100 000 jobs?

Mr TAYLOR: The only possibility for increased employment in the area is the AIS steel mill. However, if one looks at the latest figures for BHP, the steel industry in Australia has sustained a loss of approximately \$51 million. I

understand that the most uneconomic of the steel blast furnaces is the one at Kwinana.

Mr Laurance: Why?

Mr TAYLOR: There are four blast plants. There is one blast furnace at Woolongong, four at Port Kembla, two at Whyalla, and only one at Kwinana. The infrastructure is the same at each of the furnaces and the unit cost is higher where just one furnace is involved. Is the member satisfied?

Mr Laurance: Didn't Mr Whitlam's PJT fix it up?

Mr TAYLOR: I believe I have made my point; if the company has to cut down on production, the greatest saving could be incurred by cutting back at the one blast furnace at Kwinana.

Sir Charles Court: Are you trying to talk the company into this?

Mr TAYLOR: The Premier would have more proof of that than I have. The Premier cannot disagree with the points I have made.

Sir Charles Court: You know that particular blast furnace has been kept going on a very special basis.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes.

Sir Charles Court: Don't you give the Government any credit for that—and BHP?

Mr TAYLOR: Yes, I will give credit to the Government and to BHP, if I have to, and I do it unstintingly. But the Premier, by his interjection, has confirmed the point I made that the Kwinana furnace is the most uneconomic of the four plants operated by AIS.

Sir Charles Court: It has kept going when, if we accept your theory, it should have closed down three years ago.

Mr TAYLOR: The Premier is twisting things. My argument is that these industries are highly capital-intensive. I made the point, and the Premier confirmed it by his interjection, that if BHP is running at such a tremendous loss—

Sir Charles Court: Confirmed what?

Mr TAYLOR: —and if it comes to a crunch, the Kwinana furnace will be the one to go.

Sir Charles Court: Why not give the Government a bit of credit for what is being done to keep it going?

Mr TAYLOR: I am happy to see it going, but I can see no way at all that it will expand into a two, three, or four unit furnace, particularly in view of the plants in the other States.

Sir Charles Court: You are against the steel industry.

Mr TAYLOR: I am not. I know the Government has purchased land at Moore River and that it carried out a feasibility study for a new port there. There is every indication that any future activity in this industry will occur at Moore River. The point I am making is that within the next 20 years, without the injection of one single family into the area, the work force will double, and yet there is no sign and no guarantee of an industry that will create this extra employment, let alone do anything to help the 9 or 10 per cent of the population who are unemployed at present. My time precludes further elaboration on that point. How long do I have, Mr Speaker?

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has seven minutes.

Mr TAYLOR: I will use two minutes of my time to again request the \$20 000 for the purpose I referred to.

Well before the State election this year I was fascinated by an article which appeared in the Press. It referred to the electorate of Whitford, an area which I mentioned earlier because the member concerned has shown tremendous activity and has generated tremendous expenditure in the area.

The local authority of Whitford purchased an old vineyard and developed the land for industry. This was a very commendable project, and in an area where I believe local government should become involved.

Mr Rushton: The Government encouraged it.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes, I would like to see local government entering into such projects, and I have made this point very clearly to the Minister. I believe local government should have a great deal more authority than it has.

The article in the Press said that the development of this industrial area would create some 4 500 to 5 000 jobs, and that by buying this land and starting to plan, many people had come to seek lots even before the surveys had been carried out.

As soon as the developers had the roads in they were selling the land to service industries and light industries. In fact, the Premier was invited out there to open the site, and he did so with his usual aplomb. He made the usual remarks, all of which I agree with after reading his comments. This is indeed a worth-while development. It even has an area for a workers' canteen, a place where mothers can leave children, and facilities for the sick. It is a tremendous development.

The local authority was able to do this, and it only had to commence the development before orders started coming in for sites. Yet at Kwinana ample land is available, but industry is not going there. Of course, the reason for this is the system under which we exist in this country. I refer to something which I regard as economic centralism; that is, if we are going to have population moving to the northern corridor, then that is the place to provide employment for them, because that is where the work force will be, that is where the money will be, and that is where the customers will be. So it makes sense to establish service industries there.

However, I make this point to the Treasurer: In the Kwinana area the State has a tremendous amount of investment in land, in water facilities, in sewerage facilities, and in power facilities, but that investment is not drawing a return. I am ignoring for the moment the humanitarian argument in terms of the need to assist people, and I am looking to assist the Treasurer in the matter of economics. I am trying to point out why the State should take some cognisance of what is happening in that area. A great deal of resource investment has taken place in the area, and particularly in Cockburn Sound. However, I believe the Department of Industrial Development has senior officers who believe that the Kwinana area is for heavy industry, and they intend to leave the area as it is until the right type of industry comes along.

That type of thinking should go. The Government should reassess what should be happening in respect of Kwinana. In the past large industries have been offered concessions in respect of land, power, and bank facilities. I believe the Government should do the same for Kwinana. Unemployment in that area will be phenomenal in a few years' time unless something is done. It is no good saying there will be steel fabrication in the area, whether it be the building of oil rigs, the construction of service vessels, or other things of that nature; it is still all one occupation. Something must be done in this area. The Government owns land there, and it has the facilities on hand because of its ownership of power and water supplies in the area; so it is in a position to encourage further development there.

I believe the area should be declared a special zone, and the Premier should appoint an officer with a salary of about \$12 000 or \$13 000 a year.

The SPEAKER: The member has three minutes more.

Mr TAYLOR: Thank you, Sir. He should be a full-time officer who should be provided

with a typist, and his time should be spent in trying to persuade service industries to establish at Kwinana and provide employment. If this is not done there will be many problems. I know there are problems already, but we will have greater problems in the future. The State owes this much to the area. The Government invited people to go there and established the area by an Act of Parliament, and it has an obligation to see those people are looked after, because of the resources they bring to the State.

With about two minutes remaining, I would like to change the subject and address myself very briefly to problems I see in the area of education. I refer in particular to the area of pre-school education. It grieved me recently to see the introduction of a Bill to make some changes in pre-school education. I put discussion of the Bill aside at this stage because it has no place in this debate, but I did notice that the Minister, during his brief sojourn in that portfolio, does not appear to have held discussions with those affected by his actions.

Mr Speaker, will you warn me when there is one minute left?

Certainly it would appear in the area of pre-school education the Minister does not liaise with those who are likely to be affected by this legislation; and particularly in respect of local government, in which case there appears to have been no liaison at all.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is untrue.

Mr TAYLOR: In reply to a question asked recently the Minister said he consults with local authorities when he is prepared to take over their facilities, and that in the meantime there is no contact at all.

The SPEAKER: The member has one minute remaining.

Mr TAYLOR: Secondly, a large proportion of pre-school children are not well catered for and are likely to find there are no facilities at all for them, because no community has been set up. There is also the matter of several million dollars of Commonwealth funds that have not been utilised.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Therefore, I move the following amendment—

That the following words be added to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech:

However, we regret to inform Your Excellency that this House is not satisfied with your Government's performance in education because:

- (1) Its pre-school policy:
  - (a) is against the wishes of the great majority of the people directly involved in and concerned about pre-school education;
  - (b) is being proceeded with before many significant matters of detail have been negotiated between the Minister for Education, parent committees, teachers and local authorities, and
  - (c) makes an unnecessary and unjustified division between five-year-olds and younger children.
- (2) Its failure to utilise capital grants for education from the Federal Government at the time they became available has resulted in a substantial loss to W.A. in the last two years in capital funds.

The SPEAKER: Is there a seconder to the motion?

MR WILSON (Dianella) [8.17 p.m.]: I have much pleasure in seconding the amendment moved by the member for Cockburn.

#### *Point of Order*

Sir CHARLES COURT: Mr Speaker I ask for your guidance as to whether this amendment is in order in view of Order of the Day No. 11.

The SPEAKER: I have had a brief opportunity to look at that specific point, and I have made reference to Erskine May. It is clearly not possible for members to anticipate a debate on a matter which already appears in a superior form on the notice paper. I am prepared to accept this amendment, but I warn members that they may not anticipate debate on a matter which is in a superior form on the notice paper. Clearly the Bill to which the Premier has made reference seems to me to deal very closely with many of the items raised in this amendment. However, I am prepared to accept the amendment, but I warn members that I will ask them not to anticipate the debate that will follow when the Bill in question is ultimately debated.

#### *Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

Mr WILSON: I have pleasure in seconding the amendment because I believe in no other area of policy has more confusion been engendered in the community of Western Australia than has been engendered in the last three

or four years over the matter of the policies of the Government in respect of pre-school education.

Just after the Nott report was published and many of its recommendations were adopted in 1973, the Liberal Party announced that its policy would be one of free, noncompulsory pre-school education. Prior to the election in 1974 when the Liberal Party published its proposed education policy for that election campaign—

*Point of Order*

Mr P. V. JONES: Mr Speaker—

Mr Bryce: The Government is running for cover.

Mr P. V. JONES: As the seconder of the amendment, the member for Dianella is referring to item No. 1. However, all three items will be covered in the debate on the Education Act Amendment Bill.

Mr Bryce: That is your opinion.

Mr P. V. JONES: I will be covering it, even if the Opposition will not. The Bill before the House is superior to the amendment, so quite clearly the amendment cannot be dealt with at this time.

Mr Bryce: Rubbish!

The SPEAKER: Order! I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells in order to enable me to study closely this particular matter.

*Sitting suspended from 8.21 to 8.49 p.m.*

*Speaker's Ruling*

The SPEAKER: I have studied the situation and found that paragraph (2) of the motion is clearly acceptable as is paragraph (1) (c). Paragraphs (1) (a) and (1) (b) appear to cause trouble.

I am prepared to allow the debate to continue, but I point out to members that if the debate tends to enter the area covered by the Bill on the notice paper, then I will reserve the right to rule the amendment out of order.

I have had regard for the changed circumstances which apply concerning the introduction of Bills while the Address-in-Reply is still before the House. Until fairly recently a Bill could not proceed to the second reading stage until the completion of the Address-in-Reply debate. For the benefit of the House generally, the decision was taken to allow Bills to proceed to the second reading stage, and this has facilitated the proceedings of the House. However, it has probably inhibited members in regard to their raising issues which otherwise they would have been able to raise.

So having taken that and other matters into consideration, I am prepared to allow the debate to continue on the conditions I have already stated. The member for Dianella may proceed.

*Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

Mr WILSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to be able to continue.

Prior to the interruption I was making the point that no area of policy has engendered more confusion and dissension in the community in the last three or four years amongst those people who are concerned than has the Government's changes in policy regarding pre-primary education in Western Australia.

I was making the point that a number of changes had been made in the last three years. Before the present Government took office it had supported a policy which was in favour of free noncompulsory pre-primary education. Prior to the 1974 election the Government changed that policy to one of free compulsory pre-primary education.

Government members: That is not correct!

Mr WILSON: Following the Government's election to office in 1974, the then Minister for Education again changed the policy and reverted to the previous one of free noncompulsory pre-primary education for all five-year-olds.

Mr Clarko: That is not correct. At no stage was that stated in the policy.

Mr Bryce: What was meant by reducing to five the age of children entering school? To reduce that age meant compulsory pre-primary education.

Mr Clarko: No, that is incorrect.

Mr Tonkin: School is not compulsory, is it?

Mr WILSON: The result was dissension in the community.

The then Minister for Education suggested that certain principles should be followed in the Government's implementation of its policy at that stage. The principles he enunciated were as follows—

1. A senior officer of the Education Department would be sent interstate to gather relevant information.

2. A committee, consisting of local experts, parents, teachers and departmental officers, would be set up to advise the Minister.

3. Kindergarten voluntary committees and the Pre-School Education Board would "continue to have an important role in pre-school education."

4. Several pilot projects would come before any more extensive initiatives.

Following those suggestions, an advisory committee was established with Dr Mossenson as chairman, and with representatives from the Education Department, the University of Western Australia, the Pre-School Board, and the WA Council of State Schools Organisations. The interim report of that committee was published on the 31st July, 1974. The report stated that consensus of opinion had been reached on the following matters—

1. The educational programme should be essentially of the informal type.

2. The pre-primary buildings should conform to the standards of the Australian Pre-Schools Association.

3. "Existing school buildings should only be considered appropriate for conducting pre-primary centre programmes where they can be converted in such a way that the pre-primary centre:

(a) Can function as a self-contained unit, without interruption from other sections of the school; and

(b) Can have included the necessary facilities appropriate for this age group of children for both indoor and outdoor programmes."

4. A teacher should be accompanied by a trained adult aide.

5. A teacher and aide should have responsibility for not more than 25 children during any one session.

6. A teacher should have one fifth of the time for activities that do not involve contact with the children, such as interviews with parents.

The report also recommended that an evaluation committee should be established to study the progress of the pilot centre.

The new programme was implemented and by February, 1976, 12 school site centres were in operation. It appeared in 1976 that generally the conditions outlined by the Minister at that time with regard to pre-primary centre standards had been adhered to and no formal complaints were made.

However, future conditions have not lived up to the promises made at that time and the point I am making at this stage is that at that time any worth-while changes which were made in the implementation of the programme were made only as a result of a great deal of public dissension and discussion on the lack of information

available to the people. I emphasise that every point won and every concession made was won and made only after a great deal of public debate and public dissension.

Mr Clarko: And a great deal of distortion of the facts, too. The talk about a compulsory scheme was inaccurate.

Mr WILSON: Every point won was a concession to what had been intended under the original programme.

Mr Clarko: I know the original programme because I was a part of it, and that was before the policy of 1972. It was rejected by the then Minister who was from your party.

Mr Tonkin: You should be ashamed to admit it. Have you reduced the age of admission to schools? No, you have not.

Several members interjected.

Mr WILSON: I am speaking about the situation then because I want to relate it to a situation of great concern which exists at the moment and to the policy which was laid down prior to the last State election.

I would like to remind members opposite of that policy in case they have forgotten it. The Liberal Party policy on this subject reads as follows—

We believe every child has the right to attend a pre-primary school or kindergarten.

- We will continue to encourage pre-primary or kindergarten attendance on a non-compulsory basis for all children.
- The provision of the voluntary, free pre-primary year for all 5 year-olds in the State will be achieved over a period of 4 or 5 years. This provision will include children in country, city and isolated communities.
- As pre-primary centres are increasingly provided, existing kindergartens which now care for children in their fifth year will be able to provide for children in their fourth year as the older children transfer to the pre-primary centres.

Mr Clarko: Do you disagree with any of that?

Mr WILSON: To continue—

Access to 2 years of pre-school education will become available to a degree hitherto unknown in Western Australia.

Nowhere in that stated policy is there any mention at all of the policy that was announced in the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament. Nowhere in that policy statement is there

any mention at all of the new policy moves which were introduced by the Minister and announced in May this year.

Mr Tonkin: It was a confidence trick.

Mr WILSON: No foreknowledge was given to the electors prior to the election. Perhaps the Government had learnt its lesson. We remember that in 1974 the Government foolishly committed itself to a policy which it was not possible to implement, and subsequently the Government was forced by public dissension and public debate to renege on that policy and change it in line with community requirements. This time the Government did not make a statement; this time the Government made no announcement at all.

Mr Clarko: Do you agree with our policy speech?

Mr WILSON: The Government made no announcement at all of its intention. It made the electors aware several months after the election campaign had concluded and the Government had been returned to office. Only then did it announce its change of policy.

Mr Tonkin: It was a confidence trick.

Mr WILSON: That cannot be denied; it is a fact. As a result of that situation—because there has been as little thought and as little planning put into this move as was put into the previous one—we have present in the community a great deal of dissension and doubt as to exactly what are the intentions of the Government.

As an example of that doubt I will refer to a letter I received recently from the Yokine Pre-School Education Centre in which a number of doubts are enunciated. These are typical of the sorts of doubts that are being raised by committees everywhere, and by parents of pre-school children everywhere. The committee which wrote to me set out five points on which it requires a great deal more assurance than it has at the moment from the Minister or from the Government.

For instance, the committee is not convinced that what it calls community based pre-school centres will have a recognised and respected place in pre-school education. It is not convinced that under the proposed measure parents and other interested citizens will be guaranteed independence and security in their participation in the running of community-based centres. It is not convinced that the teachers who elect to remain in community-based centres will be guaranteed secure tenure in their employment and independence of functioning in their specialised area of professional competence. It is not convinced that community-based pre-school centres

will have adequate representation on any controlling body responsible for the administration of pre-school education in this State. It is not convinced that such representation will be democratically elected by representatives from community-based centres' committees.

Those doubts, expressed by the Yokine Pre-School Education Centre committee, are being repeated at all sorts of meetings throughout the State at the present time—both in the city and in country areas.

Recently I attended a meeting held in Claremont which was attended by over 100 people. The Minister for Education was invited but he declined to attend.

Mr Tonkin: He was scared.

Mr P. V. Jones: Why did he not attend?

Mr WILSON: The Minister said that he was sitting in Parliament.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is right; I was in Parliament.

Mr Tonkin: With a majority of 10 the Minister could have got a pair.

Mr WILSON: As far as I know there was no reason at all that the Minister could not have been at that meeting answering the real questions which the parents wished to put to him. He ran for cover and he hid behind the skirt of a departmental representative. When substantive questions were asked of the representative he declined to answer them because he said they were political questions.

Mr Clarko: Do you think he should have answered them?

Mr Tonkin: The Minister should have been present at the meeting.

Mr P. V. Jones: The Minister accepted his responsibility and was present where he should have been.

Mr WILSON: The representative could not answer questions because the Minister asked him not to answer political questions.

Mr Tonkin: Ashamed of the policy.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILSON: The Minister was asked a number of questions in relation to the plans which have been formulated at the present time. One question was in relation to an advisory committee which he proposed to set up in May to consider recommendations for the pre-school education and requirements of children under five years of age. The Minister had to admit to me that the committee still had not been set up. I think it was only yesterday that some sort of announcement



was made in the newspaper that the committee had been set up. Only one name was mentioned and as far as I am concerned I still am not aware as to whether or not anybody else has been appointed specifically to the committee. It is not public knowledge. It is now September, and the determination to appoint the advisory committee was made in May. If we were to have an announcement, we should have had it long before now.

Another question I asked last week which is of great concern to the people in the pre-school movement related to the proposal for the property in Hay Street, which has been used as the headquarters of the pre-school and kindergarten education movement since, I believe, 1922—and which I believe was originally a private bequest to the kindergarten movement in Western Australia. Last week I asked what were the implications of the Government appropriating the property which was a private bequest to the kindergarten movement. The Minister was unable to answer my question and sought more time to provide the answer.

It seems unbelievable to me that it has already been announced as part of Government policy that the property is to be appropriated and become the headquarters of the proposed new section of the Education Department. The fact that the matter still has not been decided upon is a reflection on the Government.

The SPEAKER: It appears to me that the member is getting dangerously close to transgressing the statement I made in regard to this debate. He is referring to something which appears to me to be consequential to the Bill which is before the House. At the commencement of his speech his remarks were, in a general way, about Government policy. He is now dealing with specific matters that relate to the Bill. The member for Dianella.

Mr WILSON: With due respect, Mr Speaker, when I refer to the property in Hay Street I refer to something which is dear to the hearts of the people who have been connected with the kindergarten and pre-school movement in this State for more than 50 years.

The SPEAKER: That is not doubted at all. The point is you are anticipating a debate which obviously will ensue when the Bill is debated in the House. The point being made by the member may well be made at that time, but not at this time.

Mr WILSON: I seek your guidance in this matter, Mr Speaker, because it has been made known to people at a public meeting. A state-

ment has been made by the Minister, or by his representative, to this effect at a public meeting convened by the Pre-School Board. I ask the Minister to deny that if it is not so. I really feel this is a matter which is of general public concern and it has been made known at a public meeting. Many people are airing anxiety about it.

This matter affects not only the parents of the five-year-olds, but also the parents of the four year-olds. After all, pre-school education relates to children under five years of age more so, perhaps, than it relates to children of five years.

On this point I will wind up what I have to say. I believe there would have been no need for this amendment to the Address-in-Reply if more planning and more consideration had been given to the matter before the announcement, and not after it. More specific and clear information should have been made available to the public beforehand. Had that been done we in the Opposition and people in the community, generally, would not have had to go to so much trouble in trying to elicit this information for the public, and particularly those concerned about the future of pre-school education, who feel very strongly about the matter at the present time.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [9.11 p.m.]: I would like to address myself to the second part of the amendment; that is—

... this House is not satisfied with your Government's performance in education because ...

(2) Its failure to utilise capital grants for education from the Federal Government at the time they became available has resulted in a substantial loss to W.A. in the last two years in capital funds.

Members will be aware that the president of the State School Teachers' Union (Mr Harry Bennett) alleged in the Press some three weeks ago that the State Government through its incompetence had missed out on some \$6 million of Federal Government money which was made available to the States.

Mr Watt: Do you believe that?

Mr PEARCE: Of course I do, and I shall prove it. Consequent upon that, the Opposition asked a series of questions in the Parliament seeking to resolve the situation. I hasten to say I at least had not raised the issue in an attempt to beat the Government over the head.

Some time ago an allegation was made to me with regard to the water supply at the Coca Cola plant at Kewdale. It was suggested the water

supply was unmetered and the Coca Cola company was getting its water on an unfair basis. I asked a question and the allegation was denied. I accepted that. Obviously, some people in the community make allegations without any basis, but when they come to the notice of members it is incumbent upon them to ask questions in the House.

So we asked questions of the Minister for Education and after receiving some evasive replies and denials, we let the matter go. Subsequently I looked at the Federal Budget papers in an attempt to sort out the truth of the matter, and since reading those papers—not just reading what Harry Bennett had to say in the newspapers—I have become convinced the State Government has missed out on over \$6 million of capital funds which were available to it for educational purposes over the last two years. In doing that I found there was a degree of conflict in what the Minister said in this House two weeks ago in answer to our questions and in what the Federal Budget papers had to say.

I refer first of all to Federal Budget Paper No. 7 for 1976-77. It contains a statement in terms of estimates and how much was to be made available to Government and non-Government schools in Western Australia. The 1976-77 estimate for capital expenditure was \$13.550 million, which was an increase of a little under \$3 million over the 1975-76 figure. That was the amount available to this State.

In the 1977-78 Budget paper a rather remarkable thing has happened. The estimated allocation for 1977-78 is \$14.066 million—a slight increase over 1976-77 from \$13.5 million to \$14 million, in round figures. The same kind of slight increase in capital funds was allocated to every other State. But, unlike every other State, a strange thing has happened in the allocations to Western Australia contained in the 1977-78 and 1976-77 Budget papers.

Those who have seen the Budget papers will be aware the estimated amount for the current financial year is preceded by the actual expenditure for the preceding years. What has happened is the estimated \$13.550 million allocated for 1976-77 has, in the 1977-78 Budget paper become an actual expenditure of \$6.990 million for 1976-1977. There has been no diminution in the allocations to the other States. In South Australia the allocation has gone from \$14.672 million in 1976-1977 to \$15.995 million in 1977-78—the same kind of increase in expenditure as for every other State. But in Western Australia that general slight increase has been preceded by a drop of almost \$7 million for the previous year.

If we add the figures for those two years together we find that instead of receiving \$27.5 million, in round figures, which we would have expected over the 1976-77 and 1977-78 period, in terms of the 1977-78 Budget there is in fact a little over \$20 million, which is a clear difference of something like \$7 million. Where has the \$7 million gone? That is a fair question.

The obvious answer seems to be the present Government and the Education Department have underspent the 1976-77 allocation by \$7 million, and the \$7 million has been carried over into the 1977-78 estimates. In reply to questions the Minister said we did not expect a decreased allocation for Western Australia for 1977-78 because of this particular state of affairs, and in that he was probably quite right. There has been no diminution of the Western Australian allocation; we have the same slight increase as the other States have. But it seems to me that slight increase precludes the \$7 million carried over.

To find out what the actual expenditure for Western Australia has been, we must add the figures for the two years together, and when we do that we do not get a figure of \$27.5 million; we get a figure of \$20 million. Perhaps the Minister can explain what has happened to the missing \$7 million, and I will be pleased if he does.

However, when we put questions to him which gave him the opportunity to explain the deficiency—in the same way as my questions on the water supply for Coca Cola gave the Minister for Water Supplies an opportunity to explain an allegation against the company—the Minister for Education did not do so. Here are some of the questions we asked and the replies we received. On the 23rd August I asked the Minister—

- (1) Were funds allocated to Western Australia in last year's Budget as capital grants for Government and non-Government schools which were not spent last financial year included in the allocation to Western Australia in the same category in this year's Budget?
- (2) If so, how much was carried over in this way?

I was asking the Minister whether it was true there had been a carry-over from 1976-77 to 1977-78. He could have said, as the Minister for Water Supplies said in answer to my other question, "No, it is not true"; but he did not deny it. He lumped the two parts of my question together and gave a generalised statement regarding estimates. We understand there are estimates,

but estimates are not out by \$7 million in actual expenditure. So the Minister had a chance to deny it but he did not do so. He said—

No funds have been or can be lost to the Education Department.

I am prepared to accept that is true, if very misleading. The \$7 million was not lost to the Education Department; it was carried over in last year's Budget. No money was actually returned.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is not true.

Mr PEARCE: The Minister had his chance to explain two weeks ago when I asked the question. Had he given a straight answer then—

Mr Shalders: He told you no funds had been lost.

Mr PEARCE: I said I accept that is probably true, if in a misleading sense. No-one has come over from Canberra, on behalf of the Federal Government, and taken the \$7 million back. It has been carried over into the current year's allocation, but to do that it is necessary to cut the estimated allocation in half. When we add together the figures for the two years 1976-77 and 1977-78, we find Western Australia has missed out very badly in comparison with the other States.

The member for Murray is smiling; I will bet he has not read Budget Paper No. 7. I will lend it to him if he wants to enter into the debate. I would be only too pleased to hear a Government member enter into a debate for once.

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: Here is another reply which is rather interesting. Just before I asked the question to which I have referred, the member for Cockburn asked—

How much did the Federal Government allocate to Western Australia in last year's Budget in capital grants for Government and non-Government schools?

The answer to that question is as follows—

\$7 203 500 plus supplementation was allocated to Government schools for 1977.

The question was asked in terms of Government and non-Government schools, but the answer was \$7 203 500 for Government schools. Now if one looks, as I have just done, at the Budget papers for 1976-77, one will note how the Minister has evaded this question. He left out non-Government schools and talked about 1976-77 as a calendar year, whereas the Budget papers are presented for the financial year of 1976-77.

The answer the Minister gave was that just over \$7 million was allocated and yet, as I have indicated, the 1976-77 Budget paper showed \$13.550 million was allocated for that particular matter. Has not the Minister read the Budget paper? How come \$13.5 million has shrunk in his answer to just over \$7 million? What has happened there?

The gentlemen on the other side of the House claim that they are the great economic managers of this State; they are the people in whose firm hands this State is held. We can rest well at night because the financial administration of this State is in competent hands. But if the Federal Government in its own paper is giving out something over \$13.5 million for education capital expenditure and the State Government believes that just over \$7 million has been allocated for that same purpose then something is wrong somewhere. If the Commonwealth Government has beaten the State Government down from \$13.5 million to just over \$7 million then it should say so, but I would like to know why it has not been able to spend the amount of money allocated. Where has the money gone? If it was originally allocated why was it not spent? If the allocation was carried over into this year why has not this year's allocation vastly increased?

That seems to me to be an important question which deserves an answer. In my own electorate the Gosnells High School is waiting for the next stage of its development. Those responsible have been told they are not going to get stage 3 because the funds are not available or are not likely to be available, but obviously the funds are available or have been made available by the Federal Government, and simply they have not been used.

I have been interested to hear the Minister explain this particular and rather remarkable deficiency. I was somewhat amazed by the answers to those questions. Perhaps "puzzled" is truer than "amazed". The member for Cockburn, in consultation with other members of this party, attempted to clarify the matter at question time. He tried to get the Minister to add the 1976-77 figure to the 1977-78 figure so that we might be able to come to a true estimate of what has happened over the last two years. So the member for Cockburn asked the Minister to provide the figure for the combined total estimated amount available to Western Australia in capital grants for Government and non-Government schools from the 1976-77 and 1977-78 Federal Budget. One has only to do a sum to come up with the answer. One has only to take those two figures and add them together. I suppose

the member expected an answer that was just one figure and the figure should have been, if the Minister and the Government were correct in their public statements, an amount of something like \$27 million. However, the answer we received was—

The allocation of capital grants for 1977-78 has not yet been made. However, it is anticipated that the funding will be similar to that for 1976-77.

And he goes on to give details of where we may find those figures which his department was not prepared to look up and provide for the Parliament. It is not true to say that the Minister could not have given, by adding together the figures from the Budget papers I have quoted, the actual figures for 1976-77 plus the capital expenditure for 1977-78, and given the Parliament a statement of what was likely to be the expenditure for those two years.

Maybe I do not understand the Budget papers, but the Minister has had every opportunity to point out to me and to the member for Cockburn, and indeed to the House, exactly where we have been wrong. But on two successive days and in six successive questions he failed to take that opportunity. I wonder why he did that. What would be the point, for example, of leaving us to battle on in our ignorance, if indeed ignorant we were? It seems to me far more likely that what I have suggested throughout this speech is quite true—which is that the Government by its failure to spend the money at the time it was available has allowed the Federal Government to make a neat cut-back by carrying the missing \$7 million over to this year's allocation which enabled it to keep up this year's allocation to the expected level, cut back retrospectively on last year's allocation, and save this \$7 million overall.

One thing I can say about Mr Fraser and Mr Lynch is that they would be happy to save \$7 million. If they have done so I suppose we should congratulate them on their perspicacity in the matter. However it would be a matter of great regret for persons involved in education in this State where capital expenditure is definitely needed and where schools in my electorate and in many other areas are crying out for classrooms, laboratories, and gymnasiums, and have a desperate need for educational facilities. If in fact the State Government has lost \$7 million and has failed to take advantage of Federal Government allocations so that we have missed out to this degree, then it is a matter of culpable neglect on the part of the Government. For that reason, if for that reason only, this amendment ought to be carried.

**MR P. V. JONES** (Narrogin—Minister for Education) [9.25 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, in dealing with the amendment to the motion that has been moved, may I abide by your ruling and not refer in specific detail to certain of the aspects which were covered by the member for Dianella. I will certainly clarify what has been mentioned by the member for Gosnells. The member for Dianella indeed ran true to the form he has displayed over the last two or three years relating to pre-school education and he has displayed a woeful ignorance of exactly what has been done and the efforts that are being made to involve a considerable cross section of the people who are associated with pre-school and pre-primary education in order that the State and the children who will benefit from this policy may have the best advice and the best care that we are able to provide.

Mr Taylor: Does that include the under four-year-olds?

**MR P. V. JONES**: I do not wish to repeat some of the points which are in the second reading speech to the Bill and will be covered when we debate the Bill, but may I refer to some of the matters which were mentioned by the member for Dianella. At the present time we have a situation where the State is funding two pre-school systems and a decision was made to rationalise those systems in relation to five-year-olds, meaning the year in which children turn five, and separate them from those who are in the age groups from nought to four.

Mr Wilson: Why was it not in the party policy?

**MR P. V. JONES**: We are simply talking about two things: one is administration and the other is funding.

Mr Wilson: Why was it not in the policy of the party?

Mr O'Neil: Why don't you listen? You might learn something.

**MR P. V. JONES**: It has been manifestly difficult, following the State election when the effects of the Commonwealth decision on funding were made known, because the Commonwealth divided the five-year-olds for funding and administrative purposes from the remainder, and from those in the nought to four age group. This presented the State with something of a difficulty.

Mr Wilson: When did they do that?

**MR P. V. JONES**: The effects of this became manifest after the State election and the Bayly task force has been discussing this matter since that time. As a result, it was necessary to give attention to this matter and as some members

will be aware, this particular financial policy of the Commonwealth has caused considerable difficulty and there are certainly members on both sides of the House who are aware of the chaos which it has caused with independent kindergartens. At the present time the State must have consideration for the plight of independent kindergartens, but at the same time the situation that we were presented with did require some considerable change. That is not the only reason. It was also necessary to apply a far greater administrative efficiency to this area of activity, taking into account—

Mr Skidmore: Are you saying that the State was responsible for funding two administrations under the old kindergarten system? Is that what you are saying?

Mr P. V. JONES: I am saying, Mr Speaker, that the taxpayer was funding both systems; one in competition with the other.

Mr Taylor: Two administrations not two systems.

Mr Pearce: There was only one before your lot got going.

Mr P. V. JONES: The Government implemented the policy of relieving the parents of five-year-olds of any fees and levies.

Mr Bryce: What was the National Country Party policy at the time?

Mr P. V. JONES: It was to provide a year of pre-school education on a voluntary basis, and this has been done.

I discussed this matter with the board on a couple of occasions, and I wish to place on record here and now, that at the first meeting held by the Pre-School Board following my discussions with it on the 23rd May, it recorded its support for the rationalisation that is now under way.

Mr Bryce: What did you threaten them with if they did not do it?

Mr P. V. JONES: That was the motion passed by the board. Subsequently this recommendation has been reiterated to me by the board, and it is co-operating actively in the implementation of this policy.

Mr Bryce: It had no alternative.

Mr P. V. JONES: I cannot speak too highly of the co-operation we are receiving from the board.

Mr Bryce: What happens to them if they voice any opposition? They are sacked!

Mr P. V. JONES: I will continue to deal with some of the other points raised by the member for Dianella. One of the decisions made was that the changes would not be effective until 1978. I invited the co-operation of the board in regard to this decision, and it was given freely. The announcement was made in May of this year, so that a committee, made up of three members of the Pre-School Board and three members of the Education Department, could work together throughout the remainder of this year implementing the policy.

Mr Taylor: Towards one end; they had no alternative.

Mr P. V. JONES: That system is proceeding, and the member for Dianella is very well aware of some of the answers that have been given so far because he received from me a copy of the transcript of the meeting of parents called by the board on the 25th July. I attended this meeting.

Mr Wilson: The transcript included a number of questions that could not be answered.

Mr P. V. JONES: That is correct, and I gave the reason for this; the co-ordinating committee, the Pre-School Board, and the department, had not agreed finally on some matters.

Mr Wilson: Although legislation was before the Parliament.

Mr P. V. JONES: If the member will just remain quiet, he will receive an answer. As I recall, I answered 47 or 49 questions. If the member pursued the matter, and if he wants to be sincere and honest with the people involved with the Yokine Pre-School Centre—

#### *Point of Order*

Mr PEARCE: On a point of order, Sir, is the Minister reflecting on the honesty and integrity of the member for Dianella?

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

#### *Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed*

Mr P. V. JONES: The member quoted a letter from the Yokine Pre-School Centre, and he referred to five points. If he had wanted to be accurate and of some assistance to the people writing to him, he would have known that some of these points were covered in the transcript which I gave him.

Mr Wilson: Would the centre have received that transcript?

Mr P. V. JONES: Every pre-school centre in the State has received a copy of it, forwarded by the board.

Mr Wilson: So that letter was written with the parents knowing fully what you have said?

Mr P. V. JONES: I am unable to say what the recipients did with the letters. I cannot say that every parent has read it; in fact, I have no idea. Every centre received a copy of the transcript. I am not referring to that fact, but I am interested in what the honourable member did with his copy, because some of the points raised in the letter were covered at the meeting.

Mr Wilson: They are the anxieties which these people have.

Mr O'Neil: Why don't you satisfy them?

Mr P. V. JONES: So for nearly two months the honourable member knew that these questions had been covered adequately.

The member referred also to the formation of an advisory committee to cover children in the nought to four age group. In May I indicated that such a committee would be formed immediately. However, considerable difficulty was experienced in finalising the membership of the committee. Certain people approached by me did not want to participate because of other business activities, and other people declined for various reasons. I delayed the appointment of the committee further while we were awaiting financial decisions from the Commonwealth Government. I inform the member that the committee is now formed and it is in action, and for his enlightenment, certainly the membership of the committee was made public; in fact, a list of the membership was given to *The West Australian*.

Mr Harman: When?

Mr P. V. JONES: Unfortunately *The West Australian* has not published this list. If it is of concern to the honourable member, I will see that he receives a copy of the list as well as the terms of reference of the committee.

Mr Skidmore: Send one to the member for Swan, please.

Mr Old: Who is he?

Mr P. V. JONES: Clearly the committee is charged to do exactly what I said it would do, and is representative of exactly the same interests that I said it would be. Some of these people have been members of the Pre-School Board, and others represent community interests, parents, and play groups. On the committee is a nominee of the Minister for Community Welfare and a nominee of the Minister for Health. In order to anticipate an interjection which we heard earlier, the Secretary of the Local Government Association is a member of this committee, and quite rightly so, because local government provides the buildings in which most of the

activities of the nought to four age group children are conducted.

Not only is this committee discharging its duties as of now, but also, as I have indicated, by the end of this year we will be looking to this organisation for a report, and particularly a recommendation in regard to administrative arrangements that should prevail with children in this age group. Already a considerable number of departments and instrumentalities have activities and programmes for these children, and in view of the funding arrangements that prevail for pre-school centres, the committee has a considerable job before it.

The member for Dianella referred also to a meeting that I may not have attended. The situation is that the co-ordinating committee would provide persons to attend any meetings of groups held at local level. There have been several such meetings, and the co-ordinating committee allocated one of its members to attend such meetings. I was invited to the meeting to which the member referred, but the meeting was attended by the Director of Schools, the chairman of the co-ordinating committee, who was criticised grossly and unfairly by the people at the meeting, and again tonight by the member, for not answering what the Press referred to as political questions.

Mr Wilson: I did not criticise him; I criticised you.

Mr P. V. JONES: For what?

Mr Wilson: For putting him in that position.

Mr Watt: You criticised him tonight.

Mr Wilson: I criticised the Minister.

Mr P. V. JONES: Why is it wrong for a member of the committee which is making these arrangements to go to the meeting?

Mr Wilson: Most of the questions that concern the people could not be answered by him.

Mr P. V. JONES: That is right, and I could have a lot more to say about that meeting, the manner in which it was conducted, and the way in which Mr Quinn was treated. In fact, some of the people who attended the meeting apologised to me because of the way Mr Quinn had been treated.

Mr Barnett: If you had been there it would have been a different set of circumstances.

Mr Bryce: It is your responsibility to deal with the public and the community, not the responsibility of a departmental officer.

Sir Charles Court: His responsibility is here.

Mr P. V. JONES: I have attended the main meetings held in regard to this matter.

Sir Charles Court: It ill becomes the member for Dianella, the way he has handled this. He has caused a great deal of dissension in the movement, and he knows it.

Mr P. V. JONES: I attended the meeting of parents on the 25th July which was organised by the board. The member for Dianella was advised by me about this meeting, and he was given a transcript.

The Pre-School Teachers Union held a meeting on the 26th August. I attended that meeting, but prior to it I was asked 22 questions. When I arrived at the meeting I provided written answers to those questions, all of which have since been made public and have been made available to anybody who wants them.

Mr Pearce: That didn't satisfy those who asked them; or why are they still protesting?

Mr P. V. JONES: I can only say that those at the meeting indicated before I left that they were satisfied. What more can I do than attend a meeting organised by the Pre-School Teachers Union to answer any questions its members may wish to ask?

Mr Pearce: I have read the answers, and some of the members said they did not agree with what you said.

Mr P. V. JONES: What has the member for Gosnells read?

Mr Pearce: I have read both transcripts you sent to the member for Dianella.

Mr P. V. JONES: Has the member read the one I have in my hand?

Mr Pearce: No, I have not read that one.

Mr P. V. JONES: That is right; I have sent only one transcript to the member for Dianella.

Mr Wilson: I have the other one.

Mr P. V. JONES: Yes, because the member got it from someone else. The point I am making is that I have attended meetings organised by the major bodies such as the Pre-School Board or the Pre-School Teachers Union, and I have arranged that a member of the co-ordinating committee will attend local group meetings, and that is proceeding.

May I refer again to the Yokine letter, in respect of which the member for Dianella could very well have allayed the fears expressed to him about one of the points raised.

Mr Shalders: Why do you think he didn't?

Mr P. V. JONES: When the Bill is discussed, it will answer all the points he raised.

Mr Wilson: Of course it will; people are worried, because they haven't had the answers yet.

Mr P. V. JONES: What is the member for Dianella doing to allay their fears?

Mr Wilson: I share their fears.

Sir Charles Court: You are creating them; you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Mr P. V. JONES: What did the member for Dianella do about the matter of permanency of employment of pre-school teachers? Under this arrangement we have offered them permanency which they do not enjoy under the other arrangement.

Mr Skidmore: Rubbish! Of course they did. They had contracts with the Pre-School Board.

Mr P. V. JONES: What is the permanency of employment with that board?

Mr Skidmore: What permanency is there in any employment?

Mr P. V. JONES: Under the provisions of the Act, the permanency with the Pre-School Board is six weeks, whereas under the Education Act the permanency is such that it is virtually a career.

Mr Skidmore: Rubbish! That is not so.

Mr P. V. JONES: Then what is it?

Mr Skidmore: You tell me what it is all about.

Mr Old: He just did.

Mr P. V. JONES: I think, Sir, the shadow minister for education may care to reconsider his interjection about their being subject to appointment each year.

Mr Taylor: He has reconsidered it.

Mr P. V. JONES: Thank you very much.

Mr Pearce: It is not true to say that the permanency is six weeks.

Mr P. V. JONES: If the member for Gosnells cares to look into the matter he will see that under the Act pre-school teachers may be discharged with six weeks' notice. I do not wish to discuss the other points because I will abide by the Speaker's ruling that they are contained in the Bill.

Mr Pearce: None of these matters is in the Bill.

Mr P. V. JONES: None of which matters?

Mr Pearce: None of the matters you are talking about now.

Mr P. V. JONES: That is the reason I am talking about them; because they are not in the Bill.

Mr Pearce: You are trying to dodge around them. Tell us about permanency.

Mr P. V. JONES: I have explained the matter of permanency. I have pointed out that the Pre-School Teachers Union is delighted that its members will enjoy permanency conditions they do not enjoy at the moment.

Mr Wilson: If they are so happy about it, why did they put a full page advertisement in *The West Australian*?

Mr P. V. JONES: The member for Dianella also raised the question of the Hay Street property. If he refers to the transcript he will see that at the meeting I willingly indicated at the beginning of my speech that it was the intention of the Government to utilise the premises in Hay Street for early childhood education if there was no legal impediment to that. My delay in answering the question which the member put on notice simply relates to the fact that the Pre-School Board is still unable to provide me with the true situation regarding the vesting and control of all aspects of the property. Part of the property was bought as a result of a bequest, and a further part of the property, which used to be a kindergarten college, was built partly with public subscription and partly with Government funds.

When that information has been researched from the point of view of titles and so on, it will be provided to the honourable member. However, I repeat that it is still the intention of the Government that the property situated in Hay Street will continue to be quite properly associated with early childhood education, as it has been for a long time, and rightfully should continue to be. The member tried to drag in that matter as one which is causing emotion and unrest. It certainly is not causing emotion and unrest with the board.

Mr Wilson: It has been raised by many pre-school teachers.

Mr P. V. JONES: No pre-school teacher has brought the matter to my notice subsequent to my attending the meeting.

Mr Pearce: The chairman of the board mentioned this right at the beginning of the transcript and there was no suggestion afterwards that everyone was satisfied with your answers.

Mr P. V. JONES: At the beginning of what?

Mr Pearce: At the beginning of the transcript the chairman made a lengthy statement which talked about the whole business of property, and I see no quotes in the transcript which show they were happy in respect of that issue.

Mr P. V. JONES: Let me go back and explain the matter again. I indicated that it was the intention of the Government that the property would remain permanently for use for early childhood education, just as it is now, and as it rightly deserves to be, unless there is any legal impediment to its use for that purpose. I have made that matter quite clear right from the beginning, and I made it clear to Mrs Lefroy, with whom I discussed the matter as late as yesterday morning.

Mr Pearce: Why was that necessary if they are so happy about it?

Mr P. V. JONES: Of course they are happy about it. The board wants that property to remain in use for early childhood education.

Mr Pearce: They want it to remain for the Pre-School Board, which is to be abolished.

Mr P. V. JONES: What has that to do with it?

Mr Pearce: It is what it is all about.

Mr P. V. JONES: It is not about the property; it is about the education of children under the age of five.

Mr Pearce: It is about the continued existence of the board.

Mr P. V. JONES: I would like now to refer quickly to the rubbish produced by the member for Gosnells who continued with this business of capital funding. He seems completely unable to understand the fact that capital funds for education provided by the Commonwealth are allocated under three Acts, and in some instances they are provided in fiscal years and in another instance they are provided in calendar years. Also, the Budget paper No. 7 to which he referred—and he used the word "estimate"—is an estimate made by the Schools Commission of what capital funds will be drawn during a fiscal year.

Mr Pearce: Only for the current year. The previous statements are actually statements of experience.

Mr P. V. JONES: It is an estimate made by the Schools Commission of what funds will be drawn during a fiscal year, and I might add that the estimate is made without reference to the State. I also indicated in an answer to a question that the final figures for the current financial year were not known.

Mr Pearce: But you could have given the estimates. Why didn't you? You were too embarrassed to do so.

Mr P. V. JONES: The figures have not yet been finalised, and are still subject to the final recommendation of the Schools Commission.



Mr Pearce: If I can ascertain them, you ought to be able to do so.

Mr B. T. Burke: Don't overestimate his ability.

Mr P. V. JONES: He referred to a figure of some \$13 million-plus which appeared in Budget paper 7 and which would be drawn by the Government of Western Australia to expend on capital works for education. In answer to the questions and in a statement I made I indicated the funds had all been committed.

Let me now identify exactly where those funds are. During the year to which the honourable member has referred, 39 projects to a value of \$5.2 million were funded from Commonwealth sources, and were completed. A further 34 projects are at present nearing the completion of their construction to a total value of \$2.9 million. A further 84 projects to an estimated value of \$10.7 million are at present at tender or currently are in the early stages of being undertaken. So, instead of trying to explain away a shortfall of some millions, to which repeated reference has been made, I am indicating that capital funds from the Commonwealth were provided and committed to an extent of \$18.8 million.

Mr Pearce: It ought to be \$27 million.

Mr P. V. JONES: I am referring to the same \$13 million which it has been suggested we were some \$7 million short in committing.

Mr Pearce: On your latest figures, \$9 million.

Mr O'Neil: Oh, give him a blackboard and chalk!

Mr Watt: He would probably start throwing the chalk.

Mr P. V. JONES: To quote from the honourable member's own reference to the Budget paper, the Commonwealth estimated we would draw some \$13 million-plus.

Mr Pearce: It was \$27 million over the two years.

Mr P. V. JONES: I am not talking about two years; I am talking about only one year.

Mr Pearce: Start talking about two years! What happened last year?

Mr P. V. JONES: Mr Speaker, in case all that blathering has meant you have not heard, may I repeat: It was suggested by the Commonwealth and by the honourable member that during the fiscal year 1976-77 it was estimated in Budget paper 7 that we would draw some \$13 million-plus.

Mr Pearce: How much did you draw?

Mr P. V. JONES: We have taken and committed—committed, but not yet drawn the entire sum—\$18.8 million.

Mr Bryce: You have drawn but not committed.

Mr P. V. JONES: Let me make my last point: The honourable member concluded that the Government was carrying something forward when in fact it disappears from the next year's Budget. Something else is wrong: The honourable member referred to a question asked in this House. The figures for the 1977-78 year are not yet finalised.

Mr Pearce: I understand that.

Mr P. V. JONES: The honourable member quoted my reply where I indicated it was estimated the amount would be no less than for the previous year.

Mr Pearce: What is the total for the two years?

Mr P. V. JONES: When the Commonwealth receives the Schools Commission's report we anticipate the amount will be in excess of \$20 million—new money, new capital funds—for this fiscal year. This money has no relation to the \$18.8 million that has already been committed, and this certainly puts beyond doubt any suggestion that funds have been "lost". It is completely mischievous and misleading to suggest that funds made available by the Commonwealth have been lost to this State, because that is totally untrue. The amendment to the motion is misleading and mischievous, and deserves to be defeated as it inevitably will be defeated.

**MR BRYCE** (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.53 p.m.]: Members on this side of the House were dismayed to hear the Minister in his opening remarks attack the knowledge and understanding which the member for Dianella has of pre-school education. I would venture to suggest that the member for Dianella would have a greater command of the events and a deeper understanding of pre-school education than the collective knowledge of all members opposite.

Mr Sodeman: I suppose that is an unbiased opinion, is it?

Mr BRYCE: The member for Dianella has been involved with all developments in pre-school education in this State long before the present Minister became a Minister.

Mr P. V. Jones: I do not deny that.

Mr BRYCE: I think we should have a look at the circumstances by which this Minister became a Minister of such an important portfolio as Education. Before this Minister was a Minister of the Crown, he was a most active secretary of the Parliamentary Country Party. As

a newcomer to the Western Australian Parliament early in 1974 he felt very disturbed that there was a significant difference between Country Party policy and Liberal Party policy on the question of the age at which young pupils should enter primary school.

It would appear the Minister has done a great double take. When he was the Parliamentary Country Party's secretary he was involved up to his arm pits in the intervention and the dissension in the Parliamentary Country Party on this question of Country Party policy relating to the age at which youngsters would enter primary school.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is absolutely wrong.

Mr BRYCE: Let us establish for the record what did happen at that time. The Country Party in this State had gone to the people during the 1974 election with a policy which clearly enunciated its belief in the desirability of admitting youngsters to primary school in the year they turned six. That actual statement of policy has been presented to this House on numerous occasions.

At that same election the Liberal Party went to the people and stated that if it was returned to government, children would be admitted to State primary schools in the year in which they turned five; in other words, it proposed to reduce the existing age of entry by one year.

One never really finds out what sort of deals are done between coalition parties in this State when coalition Governments are established. Obviously some devious deal was done on this question. However, the cracks were not entirely plastered over because only a matter of months after the Government was formed we saw that one of the prime matters of concern to some members of the Parliamentary Country Party was this Liberal Party policy to compel five-year-olds to come into the primary school system. In addition, pressure was exerted in country towns and in metropolitan suburban communities to force the Government to alter its policy in this respect.

So we saw the man who presently is the Minister for Education at that time standing on his dig, helping to manipulate this split in the Country Party, because it was announced in the media and it was pursued in this Parliament that one of the issues upon which the solidarity of the Parliamentary Country Party foundered was this significant difference between the Country Party and the Liberal Party on the question of the age at which youngsters would enter primary school.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is absolute rubbish!

Mr BRYCE: It is a matter of record in the debates of this House, and those of us who were here during the course of the previous Parliament will recall it. Of course, the interesting point is that the then member for Narrogin, who was secretary to the Parliamentary National Country Party, finished up as a Minister of the Crown as a result of his manipulations of the political scene. This issue is one of the interesting issues that were manipulated, and quite ironically only three years later we find the same member of Parliament has become the Minister for Education and is no longer concerned with the National Country Party's commitment to entry to school at age six. He prefers to play at portfolios and perks before policies and principles.

Mr P. V. Jones: When do they enter primary school now?

Mr BRYCE: He was prepared to sell out that policy.

Mr P. V. Jones: When do they enter primary school now?

Mr BRYCE: It will be spelt out tonight—

Mr P. V. Jones: When do they enter primary school now?

Mr BRYCE: I am about to give the Minister his answer. It is only a matter of time before the Liberal Party's policy with regard to the admission of five-year-olds into schools will be implemented. Is the Minister going to say that the Government has jettisoned that aim and objective?

Mr P. V. Jones: I clearly indicated only last week after the Teachers' Union conference that there is no intention of lowering the school age to five, which is what was suggested.

Mr BRYCE: Yet all the suggestions around the community with regard to schools indicate that this is exactly where education enterprise is heading.

Mr P. V. Jones: What does that mean?

Mr BRYCE: That is quite right. One other aspect of the Minister's answer to the member for Dianella warrants some criticism; that is, his failure to attend that July meeting and the pathetic answer he gave to this Chamber. A fundamental principle is involved. A political leader, which is precisely what a Minister for Education is, has a responsibility to meet those elements of the community which are brought together to discuss important and controversial questions of interest to them. It is not his responsibility to despatch a civil servant to a meeting which the

Minister would most certainly have known was going to involve loaded political questions because, as the member for Dianella so ably pointed out at the beginning of this debate, no area of education policy in Western Australia since 1974 has been more confused in the minds of the public, the profession, and the Parliament than this question of pre-school education.

It was inevitable that at that type of meeting in Claremont questions would be raised which a bureaucrat could not answer. I have seen it happen; I have been at this type of meeting. A certain point is reached and the civil servant will say, "I am unable to answer that question because it involves Government policy or it is a political question." The Minister claims that he was unable to attend that meeting because of his responsibility in Parliament. We all know that this Minister has sat very silently during the first four weeks of this Parliament. His reply here—

Mr P. V. Jones: What other reason did I give?

Mr BRYCE: His reply here—

Mr P. V. Jones: What other reason did I give?

Mr BRYCE: The only reason he gave to this Parliament tonight by way of his contribution to the debate was that he had to be here in Parliament.

Mr P. V. Jones: I did not. I gave two. Give the other one!

Mr BRYCE: This Government has a majority of 10 and the Minister finds it impossible to travel three or four miles from this building to a meeting place in Claremont to attend a meeting which was called as a result of a controversial public decision made by the Minister and his department. There is no question in anybody's mind that this was another attempt by the Government, through its Minister, to avoid answering directly to the people who are involved.

Mr P. V. Jones: Absolute rubbish!

Mr BRYCE: The Minister has indicated that he has been to meetings which comprised teachers and other professionals involved.

Mr P. V. Jones: And parents.

Mr BRYCE: This one was probably the biggest involving parents.

Mr P. V. Jones: It was not.

Mr BRYCE: The biggest one that has been called.

Mr P. V. Jones: No, it was not. The biggest was 264.

Mr BRYCE: Without alluding to any of the matters contained in the Education Act Amendment Bill, I think it needs to be spelt out very

clearly that the Liberal and National Country Parties in Western Australia since 1974 have done pre-school education or early childhood education a very great disservice. One of Western Australia's proudest assets was its kindergarten system of education. In 1974 the Premier gave an undertaking to restructure completely pre-school and pre-primary education in Western Australia. As a result of the Education Department's attempts to implement his 1974 promise the State has seen unprecedented confusion and misunderstanding.

I wish to indicate quite clearly why I and many other people involved in pre-primary or pre-school education believe that the Liberal and National Country Parties have done these youngsters and this level of education a disservice. Every member of this Parliament knows that in the actual education process at the secondary and primary education levels there is a very disappointing—in fact disastrous—fall away in parental and community participation. We know that in many schools throughout the State parents and citizens' meetings are not held regularly because quorums simply cannot be secured.

Mr Davies: A lot of them meet only quarterly anyway.

Mr BRYCE: Many of them are now meeting quarterly. This is an indictment of the education system in our State.

Mr P. V. Jones: Why?

Mr BRYCE: It is an indictment because most serious educationalists will argue that the very best combination of factors to stimulate and to encourage youngsters in education—the very best educational environment that can be provided for youngsters so long as the fundamental facilities are present—is the highest degree of parental and community involvement as well as teacher involvement.

Mr P. V. Jones: We agree with that.

Mr BRYCE: I am pleased the Minister has indicated that he agrees. The tragedy for pre-school or early childhood education in Western Australia is that given that at secondary and primary levels of education there is this great void where parental and community involvement ought to be, many parents in the electorates which we represent seem to believe that their responsibility is to deliver their children to the edge of the tarmac and then allow the Education Department to take over the education of the children.

Mr Clarke: That is a fair point.

Mr BRYCE: I add that the Education Department and some of the teachers in the education system have been responsible for engendering this attitude. But the fact is that at the primary and secondary levels of education we have a disastrous lack of parental and community involvement.

Mr Clarko: Do you criticise parents for doing that? Do you criticise parents for not going along to P and C meetings?

Mr BRYCE: I criticise parents and community groups who do not.

Mr Clarko: I am not criticising you; I am asking you.

Mr BRYCE: I most certainly do. It is not just the Education Department's responsibility; it is partly the responsibility of the community.

Mr Clarko interjected.

Mr BRYCE: I have no intention of engaging in a discussion with the member for Karrinyup. Although there is this disastrous lack of parental and community involvement at the primary and secondary levels of education, traditionally in Western Australia we have enjoyed a very high degree of parental and community involvement in kindergarten or pre-school education.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is right.

Mr BRYCE: One of the most disturbing facts of life of which the Minister is by now most certainly aware is that the Education Department's takeover of kindergarten education means that the parents are no longer as involved as they were.

Mr Herzfeld: How does that follow?

Mr BRYCE: Might I indicate to the member for Mundaring that I have been very involved with pre-school education not only in my own community but also throughout the State, as I was the previous Opposition spokesman on education; and there seems to be an attitude abroad that once the Education Department takes over, there is no need for local groups to do the things they felt they had to do previously; and many of them are now inclined to sit back and do nothing.

Mr Herzfeld: But the Minister has already stated that he will—

Mr BRYCE: This fact alone clearly indicates that the Government has done a disservice to the pre-school education system throughout the State.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr BRYCE: It has done a disservice particularly to the youngsters, because, as I indicated

earlier, in an educational sense the very best form of stimulation for youngsters as they are beginning their education experience is a maximum degree of community and parental involvement, together with teacher and departmental involvement. So I say there is no question that these policies have created a situation in Western Australia's pre-school education system which means we will finish up with a second-class system of pre-school or early childhood education.

The member for Gosnells indicated to the House the concern which members of the Opposition and the Teachers' Union feel in respect of the Government's inability to spend the money made available to it by the Federal Government.

During the halcyon days of the Whitlam Government in the years 1972 to 1975 when money was made available for primary and secondary education by way of grants from Canberra on an unprecedented level and basis, we heard stories throughout Australia that for a whole variety of reasons various State education authorities were unable to spend the money being allocated to them in different ways. Some were so unaccustomed to receiving money that they did not know how to spend it when it actually arrived. However, after three years of the Whitlam Labor Government most States of Australia achieved the ability to use these resources.

In the last 12 to 18 months every State in Australia has been experiencing the effects of new federalism and Fraser's squeeze in practically every field of Government expenditure, and so every member of this House in some way has experienced difficulties as the result of a reduction of Federal funds received by departments. This applies, of course, to the Education Department as to all other departments, and those things which need to be done have been left undone because of the unavailability of funds.

We find in times of austere circumstances, when the Government claims it has no money to do so many of the things which need to be done, that the Government is sitting back and allowing the value and benefit of \$6 million to escape the education system in Western Australia.

If members opposite do not feel guilty about that, as members of the Government, then let me point out to them there is in my electorate a high school which ought to be bulldozed tomorrow, and with the \$6 million the Minister and his department were unable to spend we could build two high schools. However, the Minister kept on insisting that the money had been committed, but had not been drawn from the Commonwealth.

The member for Gosnells clearly illustrated, by comparing Western Australia's figures with those of other States, that Western Australia will not catch up. Those Government back-bench members, who sniggered when the honourable member called on the Minister to compare the figures for two years, had no justification for doing so. If they understood the figures they would know we are not talking about figures of one particular year, but about the effect of one year's figures on another year's figures. We were making interstate comparisons which clearly indicate that we would finish up \$6 million worse off.

Let me have a look at a number of other aspects, drawing on my own constituency for information. Some schools in my electorate are among the oldest in the State—certainly in the metropolitan area.

Mr Clarko: Which ones?

Mr BRYCE: The Bayswater and Rivervale Schools, for example.

Mr Blaikie: Are they in a bad condition?

Mr BRYCE: Some are in a very bad condition.

Mr Blaikie: Well, what the heck were you doing when you were in Government?

Mr BRYCE: Might I suggest to the member for Vasse that what we were doing while we were in Government was catching up on the backlog after 23 years—

Mr Blaikie: What a lot of rot!

Mr BRYCE: —of neglect by respective Federal and State Governments which always said the work could not be done, because the money could not be provided for education.

Mr Blaikie: If your schools are so bad and you could not convince your own colleagues, why come complaining to the present Government?

Mr BRYCE: The Menzies, McMahon, and Gorton Governments all said the money could not be found. However, since the dramatic increases in funds were raised by the Whitlam Government, members opposite and their political party did not have the gumption or temerity to withdraw that level of funding from education. They know they would go out of office tomorrow if they dared to reduce education funding in this nation to the level it was during the days of the Menzies, McMahon, and Gorton Governments.

The Whitlam Government made the transformation and it did not concentrate only on Labor electorates, might I indicate to the member for Vasse?

Mr P. V. Jones: Whitlam cut the funds in 1974-75.

Mr BRYCE: The Whitlam Government's policy was based on need throughout the State, and there is need for a number of schools in my electorate to be bulldozed and rebuilt. Consequently I feel absolutely astonished and disgusted that a Minister for Education has indicated to the Parliament on so many occasions that the money is not available to rebuild or redevelop these old schools in some of the older suburbs when in fact his Government has had this extra \$6 million at its disposal, but which it did not draw from the Commonwealth—which it did not spend in that 1976-77 year.

Mr P. V. Jones: Careful about your choice of words there.

Mr BRYCE: That situation amounts to an educational scandal when schools throughout the State are screaming for library-resource centres, when schools in some of the isolated communities and hotter areas of the State are urgently in need of air-conditioning, and when a whole range of capital projects are absolutely essential. Despite all this the Minister admits that his Education Department did not draw all this money from the Commonwealth and ensure that it was spent how, when, and where it should have been spent.

Therefore, I have a great deal of interest in supporting the amendment because it amounts to a censure of the Minister for Education. Surely at a time and in an age when Governments are telling members of Parliament and members of the community that there is no money to do all the things which need to be done, the Minister and his department deserve to be soundly condemned and criticised when they sit on \$6 million, thus failing to spend it and denying the education system the \$6 million it ought to have had.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [10.20 p.m.]: I rise to support the Minister for Education and his moves in the pre-school area.

Mr Pearce: Now we are to hear from the Government back-benchers.

Mr MacKINNON: The member for Gosnells will be happy to hear that the back-bench members on this side of the House do not get up to speak for the mere sake of hearing their own words. We get up to make constructive criticisms or constructive comments. I would like firstly to refer to paragraph (1) (a) of the amendment which states—

is against the wishes of the great majority of the people directly involved in and concerned about pre-school education,

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr MacKINNON: I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that most of the members of the Opposition have not even been to a pre-school meeting to find out if that is so. I have 12 pre-school centres in my electorate and I have been to every one. I have not yet had one pre-school which indicated to me that there was any major amount of concern.

Mr Bryce: That is typical.

Mr MacKINNON: Following discussions we have been able to clarify various points. Paragraph (1) (b) of the amendment states—

is being proceeded with before many significant matters of detail have been negotiated between the Minister for Education, parent committees, teachers and local authorities, and

Parent committees, as the member for Dianella is apparently unaware, have all received transcripts of and information on the Government's policy. A meeting was arranged by the Minister on the 23rd May which all pre-school committees were invited to attend. The Minister for Education has already announced to the House that he had a meeting with teachers on the 26th August. On leaving that meeting no teacher was dissatisfied, or at least none expressed dissatisfaction to the Minister at that time.

Paragraph (1) (c) of the amendment states—  
makes an unnecessary and unjustified division between five-year-olds and younger children.

I fail to see how this will make any difference between these children when we already have a pre-school board catering for 5-year-olds; and clearly we do have 5-year-olds already attending pre-primary centres and pre-school centres. In my electorate we have some 4-year-olds attending them.

Mr Pearce: They will be funded separately.

Mr MacKINNON: So that gives some idea of the substance of the amendment. The member for Dianella said there was some confusion in the community about the Government's policy on pre-schools and the proposed legislation coming forward. I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that there is no confusion; any confusion that exists is created by members of the Opposition.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr MacKINNON: I reiterate that I have been to every pre-school in my electorate and have spoken with the people involved, and I can assure members there is no confusion.

Mr Taylor: Have you been to Coolbellup?

Mr MacKINNON: I have been there on three different occasions.

Mr P. V. Jones: It will continue as it is now.

Mr MacKINNON: If the member for Cockburn would like, I will go with him to that school and meet the parents, as I have done previously.

Mr Taylor: Accepted.

Mr MacKINNON: I would like to know how many times the member for Cockburn has been there.

Mr Taylor: Quite a few times over the last 12 years.

Mr MacKINNON: The member for Dianella also spoke about the Yokine pre-school centre, and the member for Ascot referred to the Minister's failure to attend a meeting at Claremont whilst this House was in session. If I had to attend every meeting to which I was asked to go whilst this House was in session, I would never be here.

Mr Bryce: Who are you kidding?

Mr MacKINNON: We have too many problems in need of attention in this House to be able to attend all meetings to which we may be invited. The member for Gosnells made the comment that some members of the community make misleading statements. I suggest he has made a misleading comment tonight, but the Minister has answered him.

Mr Wilson: He has not.

Mr MacKINNON: The Opposition has said the Minister has failed to spend the money by the due date. I am confident that the Minister does not spend money irresponsibly; nor does the department. We have a responsible Minister and a responsible department.

Mr Pearce: You have not read the Budget paper.

Mr MacKINNON: I have read the Budget papers, I have been in touch with the Minister for Education, and I have attended a Teachers' Union meeting when this matter was discussed. Was the member for Gosnells there?

Mr Taylor: The member for Cockburn was.

Mr MacKINNON: In his address the member for Ascot implied that the member for Dianella has great wisdom on this subject because he has been studying it for some years.

Mr Bryce: He has been involved in it.

Mr MacKINNON: I put it to you, Mr Speaker, the fact that a member studies a subject for a long time does not mean he knows anything about it.

Mr Bryce: Do you consider yourself to be involved with parents?

Mr MacKINNON: The member for Ascot thinks he knows more than the Minister about National Country Party policies. Another point raised by the member for Ascot is that indicators show this Government is proceeding towards compulsory education for 5-year-olds. I would like to know what type of indicators. All the pre-schools and pre-primary centres in my electorate are separate entities. This Government is committed to noncompulsory education for all 5-year-olds in this State, and I support this policy.

A further point raised by the member for Ascot this evening was parent involvement. Parent involvement is part of the Government's policy and we support it at all levels of education.

Mr Bryce: You are destroying it.

Mr MacKINNON: If members opposite attended a few meetings they would find out what the level of parent involvement really is.

Mr B. T. Burke: Have you been to any meetings?

Mr MacKINNON: The pre-primary centres, pre-school centres, and primary schools in my electorate which I have attended all have outstanding parent support. Very rarely do I go to such places where the meetings are not attended by a good proportion of parents—perhaps 20 or 30 people. I often go to high school meetings where there are very few people present. So the point being made by the Opposition that somehow or other this Government's policy will make for less parent involvement is beyond me, because it is already occurring in pre-primary centres.

Mr Bryce: It is dwindling. You have not been in the House long.

Mr MacKINNON: I intend to be in this House for a lot longer than the member for Ascot will be. My concern is with the people who are involved with and are being affected by this legislation. Members of the Opposition are never speaking of how it will affect the children. I have a few facts which the member for Balcatta might like to hear. In the two years between 1975 and 1977 there has been an increase of 21 per cent in the number of pre-schools in Western Australia.

Between 1975 and 1977 there has been an increase in attendances at pre-schools and pre-primary centres in this State of 25 per cent. My concern—and it is also the concern of the Government—is that every child in the State has the

ability to attend a pre-school centre on a voluntary basis if he is five years of age. The proposed legislation will make that provision.

I will now refer to conditions. Pre-school centres have a choice as to whether or not they become pre-primary centres. That choice is available on a voluntary basis. I have discussed this matter with the schools in my area, and the Minister has assured me that the choice will be on a voluntary basis without any pressure being brought to bear by the Education Department.

Mr Bryce: What about the pressure which was brought to bear on the Pre-School Board to hand over?

Mr MacKINNON: Parent participation will be maintained in pre-primary centres. I have not had time as yet to read the latest correspondence which the Minister has passed on with respect to his meeting with the teachers on the 26th August. Teachers to whom I have spoken have been concerned with regard to transferring to pre-school centres. Where a pre-school centre transfers to a pre-primary centre the teacher will be assessed on a proper basis, and after one year of probation will become a permanent teacher. The Minister has given me his assurance on this matter, and I trust the Minister for Education.

Mr P. V. Jones: It is in the transcript; you are right.

Mr MacKINNON: I am concerned also that the teacher-child ratio will be maintained, and the Minister has given me an assurance that it will be maintained. He has given the assurance to the people concerned also.

Mr Wilson: What about the buildings?

Mr MacKINNON: The Minister has given an assurance on that matter also. Under the new legislation the buildings will be maintained as well as, if not better than, they are now.

Mr Pearce: That is not true. The APA standards have been varied already.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member to resume his seat. There are far too many interjections. I ask the member for Murdoch to continue his speech and direct his remarks to the Chair.

Mr MacKINNON: Another point which has been raised was that as a result of the new legislation the experience of the Pre-School Board will be lost. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Minister has already said that the Pre-School Board has supported such a move, and that the staff will be joined with the Education Department.

Mr P. V. Jones: They are involved.

Mr MacKINNON: Their experience will not be lost. The set-up cannot be anything but better. I reject the amendment and I support the Minister in his remarks.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [10.34 p.m.]: I am prompted to rise because of the remarks of the last member who spoke and who rather scathingly attacked those members who have spoken from this side of the House. I will defend myself and my opinion with regard to pre-school centres, now commonly referred to as pre-primary centres.

I want to make it quite clear to the member for Murdoch that if the people in his electorate are quite satisfied with the attitude of the Government, and the conditions with regard to community-based pre-school centres, I say jolly good luck to him. However, what he has said does not reflect the attitude of the parents involved in the community-based centres in my electorate; nor does it reflect the attitude of the Swan Shire Council, my own, or that of other members from this side who are interested in this question.

I have attended meetings at numerous centres in my electorate. The main point I want to refer to concerns paragraph (2) of the amendment. I have attended three meetings at the Koongamia Pre-School Centre in order to discuss this very issue. I have also visited the centre on many other occasions. The parents involved in that centre have expressed a great degree of concern. At the first meeting a representative of the shire and a representative of the Pre-School Board were present, and I attended as the parliamentary representative. The parents were not satisfied with what was being done, and a very pertinent question was asked with regard to funding. The parents were concerned as to whether there would be a downgrading of facilities or buildings, and whether they would be maintained at the present level.

At the meeting at Koongamia I mentioned that I had asked the Minister when the school oval, which has been in existence for 15 or 16 years, would be reticulated. I was told that no money was available. However, the Government has funds to upgrade community-based centres which have already been maintained by the community, the Swan Shire, and the people concerned. Those people have accepted their responsibilities but when the Education Department takes over the department will find the money which is necessary to continue maintaining the buildings. However, we cannot get a blasted oval reticulated after a period of 16 years! Is it

asking too much that funds should be directed where they are most needed in my electorate?

On occasions I have taken up the question with regard to the facilities which are nonexistent at the Swan View Primary School. There is room on the verandahs at that school for 150 children, but on rainy days those verandahs have to shelter 320 children and, of course, that does not work out. Yet, this Government is prepared to waste education funds to give children, below the age of five years, a place to go.

The parents in my electorate are doing a wonderful job. I have taken Koongamia as an example because it is a State Housing Commission area and reflects an economic level much lower than is normally found in a community. The centre is virtually isolated from surrounding areas. Each meeting is attended by 14 or 15 parents, and those people have expressed, in no uncertain terms, their view that they are not interested in their centre becoming a pre-primary centre. They want community involvement.

If the pre-school centre at Koongamia becomes a pre-primary centre the parent participation which exists at present will become almost nonexistent by virtue of the fact that the need will no longer be there. The children will suddenly become part and parcel of the education system at the tender age of five years.

I make it quite clear I am opposed to children under the age of five years having education of a formal nature. As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, that will become a part of the policy of this Government. The idea is to turn people out, one year younger, into the work force to look for jobs which are not available. As a result, those young people will go on the dole a year earlier than is the case at present. Is that what the Government wants?

Is there any need for the education of children to start at such a tender age? Of course, the Government considers there is a need. It is the economic necessity of the parents which makes it essential for them to use the system. Because of the economic struggle which parents have to face, it is essential for two people to bring in an income so it is necessary that someone should be available to look after the children. In order to create that situation the Government will provide day-care centres and pre-primary centres. That will make it easier for people to accept the principle of two-income families. Parents should look after their own children.

I am totally opposed to the principle of pre-primary centres. The Government should not



force the pre-school centres to change over. I know the Minister will say that it will be purely voluntary and that the children do not have to attend.

I am concerned that finance is being poured into a voluntary scheme, which is a child-minding scheme for parents who are forced by the economic disaster caused by this Government and the Federal Government to earn two incomes. Money is being spent in this way when I am unable to have any money spent on my school. I am unable to have done the things which should be done at my school, let alone to have children looked after.

Mr P. V. Jones: You are suggesting we do not support the pre-school pre-primary programme?

Mr SKIDMORE: I am suggesting the Government get its priorities right by leaving alone the community-based centres which are satisfied and not sending out smooth-talking salesmen from the Education Department to coerce people into accepting a scheme the fallacy of which they cannot see; that is, they have to pay double for it.

Mr P. V. Jones: How are they paying double for it?

Mr SKIDMORE: Because of the fact that at the present time the Swan Shire picks up the tab for all the community based centres in the shire. The electors and the ratepayers of the Swan Shire support it.

Mr P. V. Jones: Can you tell me one centre in your shire we have been to, since we started this, and coerced them to change over?

Mr SKIDMORE: Koongamia. I was there on the night in question.

Mr P. V. Jones: Did they change over?

Mr SKIDMORE: No.

Mr P. V. Jones: That is good.

Mr SKIDMORE: But they were fortunate enough to have a member who would not be coerced.

Mr P. V. Jones: How long ago was that?

Mr SKIDMORE: Approximately three or four months ago. On reflection, it might have been 12 months ago. I cannot be specific. I will find out and tell the Minister. I become concerned because of that aspect in my electorate. When I asked the Minister about other areas in my electorate, I was told they could wait. There is a school at High Wycombe that just wants some sand moved; the Education Department has erected buildings on the sports oval and the oval is no longer available to the school children.

I cannot get that done, apparently because there are no funds available. I cannot support a proposition to spend money where there is no need for it, to the detriment of areas where there is a need. Therefore, I certainly support paragraph (2) of the amendment.

Paragraph (1) (c) says—

(c) makes an unnecessary and unjustified division between five-year-olds and younger children.

I would take it further and say it equally makes an unjustified division between five-year-olds and older children because it places in the pre-school centre children of a similar age who cannot comprehend what takes place in a pre-primary centre as compared with what they must do when formal education begins. How long will it be before interference takes place in the education system and we find a degree of control is exercised over the five-year-old in the formal education scene? I therefore believe paragraph (1) (c) of the amendment is warranted.

Unfortunately, under your ruling, Mr Speaker, I am not able to refer to paragraphs (1) (a) and (1) (b), but I am concerned that we have a problem associated with an unexpended sum of \$6 million. The Minister said tonight some of the money had been allocated to 39 jobs costing \$5.2 million which had been completed, 34 projects costing \$2.9 million which were nearly completed, and 84 projects costing \$10.7 million which were at tender.

I hope some of those 84 projects are in my electorate because they are desperately needed in many instances. I know the project at Swan View High School stage 2 has just gone to tender. I had to take the previous Minister along to one school to convince him there were cracks 1½ inches wide running from the top to the bottom of 15-foot walls on two sides and across the ceiling of a schoolroom. He would not believe me until he had a look at it, and money was immediately allocated to upgrade that school. The parents had been trying to have the school upgraded for years.

We are spending money in this needless way on pre-primary centres and it is quite improper to do so. I add my protest. I believe my children and the children of the parents in my electorate are entitled to something better than this. I support the amendment. I believe the attack upon the Government is justified, because the Government has failed in its responsibility. As far as the Swan electorate is concerned the Government has failed dismally to accept its responsibilities in regard to the schools.

**MR CLARKO** (Karrinyup) [10.46 p.m.]: Nothing shows more clearly the complete misunderstanding of members of the Opposition than their remarks concerning the Government's policy in regard to pre-school education. One has only to go back just over three years to find that in Western Australia less than half the children in the group we call five-year-olds—children in their fifth year—were denied an opportunity on a State-wide basis to have some form of pre-school training. The figure quoted in the Nott inquiry was 49 per cent; less than half.

Mr Wilson: That is not correct.

**MR CLARKO**: In many of the newly developing areas—such as that represented by the member for Dianella and my own electorate, particularly the electorate I represented in the last Parliament—where young people with young children are coming in, did half the children have an opportunity to attend a pre-school centre? Did even a quarter of the children have that opportunity? It was then an extremely low percentage.

I do not question the genuine interest of the member for Dianella in pre-school education, but he has caused a great deal of disquiet in this State with many of his utterances and his support of people who tried to claim we were doing something which was unsuitable for the better care and education of children who are five.

Let us look at the record. In October, 1974, a question was asked in this Parliament as to how many children were in kindergartens and the like. The figure given in reply was 15 000 children, of whom 10 000 were in their fifth year and 5 000 in their fourth year. Today we find that number has been increased by 6 000 or 7 000 children who are now in Government pre-primary centres. So we find a movement in three years from 10 000 to 16 000 five-year-olds—an increase of 60 per cent.

At the time of the Nott inquiry the percentage of children in kindergartens was lower in Western Australia than in any other State, and at the same time we had about the highest age for entry to Government and private schools of any of the States. The reverse should have been the case, because as children in this State were entering school at a later age it would have been expected there would be a greater percentage of children in kindergartens; but Western Australia had the lowest percentage in Australia.

Under the policy adopted by the Liberal Party we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of children of this age receiving pre-school education. I invite the member for Dianella to look

at the policy statements of the Labor Party and the Liberal Party in 1974. While a great deal of noise is being made about our policy, he should have a look at his party's policy; when they are compared, I would say the ALP's policy was abysmal. Its education policy was a disgrace, and it has been admitted in this House that it was. I invite the member for Dianella to put the two policies together, and he will see our policy for the 1974 election was far superior to that of the Labor Party.

I ask the honourable member, as someone involved in education, to put the two policies of 1974 side by side. The policy of the Labor Party was deplorable in regard to the specific question of pre-school education. The Labor Party made two promises; it would halve the levy in the following year and remove it entirely in the next year.

Mr H. D. Evans: What about your high school proposition?

**MR CLARKO**: We are talking about pre-school education.

Mr H. D. Evans: Let us compare them.

**MR CLARKO**: In Western Australia then we had some 10 000 five-year-olds in pre-school, and yet the members of the Opposition have the cheek to criticise our policy. The member for Kalgoorlie—the Minister for Education at the time the report was published—stated the Government was not prepared to go ahead with the recommendations of the Nott inquiry. The Liberal Party was the first party in this State to adopt a serious policy in an endeavour to deal with the five-year-olds.

Mr H. D. Evans: What about the four-year-olds?

**MR CLARKO**: The old system of pre-school education was based on local government. The provision of a pre-school centre was decided by the fact that a local authority had a block of land left over from some subdivision, or a developer was prepared to give a block of land for this purpose. The location of pre-school centres was purely accidental.

I was on the Stirling City Council when the member for Dianella was supporting the provision of kindergartens. I played a part in endeavouring to ensure an increase in the number of kindergartens. If members look at the record, I was the person on that council who carried the argument in this regard. I put a great deal of work into this project and I took the lead in the council debates.

If members care to look at the record they will find that in the first four years I was a councillor, a kindergarten was built in my ward each year; that is, four in a row. Over this period the City of Stirling built about seven kindergartens, and four of them were in my area. I supported kindergartens, and I supported the transfer of money from the Federal Government.

Under the local government set-up, there was really no system. Money from the Federal Government later went into the building of more pre-primary centres, and I do not criticise that. However, that system was not perfect. An extension using Federal funds was approved for a kindergarten in the ward I represented, but not one single member of the kindergarten committee knew anything about it. The president of the kindergarten committee did not know that the kindergarten was to be extended, and in fact the committee did not want it extended. As I say, in many ways the provision of money by the Federal Government was a good thing, but there were weaknesses in the system.

Mr Wilson: Are you against local control?

Mr CLARKO: I am not against local control. The member for Ascot attempted to put forward the argument that the parents of five-year-olds would not take an interest in pre-primary centres.

Mr Bryce: I did not say that no parents would take an interest; I said there would be a reduction in the interest taken, and this has proved to be so.

Mr CLARKO: I refute that. I played a prime part in getting a pre-primary centre off the ground in Carine, and I had also helped in regard to a kindergarten at Hamersley. The parent involvement at Carine is as good as that at Hamersley, and one could not draw any distinction between the two. Perhaps I could say that the parents of the Carine children seem to be more interested in the project than the parents of the children at Hamersley. However that would be because my memory of the initial Hamersley committee has dimmed somewhat with time.

Mr Wilson: There is more central control.

Mr CLARKO: The people running the Carine centre are equally free as the people running the kindergarten at Hamersley. Members of the Opposition have never admitted that the weakness of the old system of local government involvement was that the provision of a kindergarten was one of pure luck.

The situation became worse when there was a Federal Labor Government in power. We had to move away from the local government situation where the provision of a kindergarten rested on the fact that a block of land was empty,

and also on whether or not the local authority concerned had any money. The City of Stirling was able to find the money for kindergartens because it covered a large area and had many ratepayers. However, if one lived in an impoverished shire, one's children would not be able to attend a kindergarten.

Mr Wilson: That was not a good reason to disband the Pre-School Board.

Mr CLARKO: The honourable member might want to develop that point, but I want to develop the weaknesses of the old system. Under that system the first necessity was a block of land, and this resulted in the fact that kindergartens could be built in unsuitable localities. The local authority concerned needed to be a wealthy one to be able to pay for the building. It was necessary also to have councillors who were interested in such a project and, of course, it was generally the parents of the children who were the catalysts in the first place. All these criteria were necessary before we could get a project off the ground. I am saying that such a system was full of faults.

We now have a pre-primary system where the centres are attached to primary schools. The schools are chosen on the actual need for pre-primary education, and this means that areas such as mine and that represented by the member for Dianella will be looked after. I doubt that we could find a better system than having pre-primary centres contiguous to schools.

There are all sorts of reasons that this contiguity is advisable. Firstly, children are able to move up and down. Under the kindergarten system, some teachers would take their pupils to visit the local primary school just before the end of the year and they would say to the children that this was where they would work the next year. When the pre-primary centre is contiguous to the primary school there is an opportunity for the children to move between the two, and more importantly, it gives equal opportunity to all. Equality of opportunity is the fundamental key to our policy. We want to provide a system which will give all children the opportunity to attend a pre-primary centre.

In a period of only three years, the whole system of levies has disappeared. We have found places for another 6 000 or 7 000 children, and in a short period of time pre-primary education will be provided for all who seek it. More places will also be found for four-year-olds, and this is what the parents of today want.

We must remember that prior to the 1974 Government which decided to pick up the tab

through the education vote, no political party in Western Australia had been prepared to agree to do so, and I gave an outstanding example of this. The member for Kalgoorlie was the Minister for Education when the Nott report was tabled, and his Government decided not to pick up the tab through the education vote. Financing of pre-school education was left to local government, and it then became a matter of luck. This led to a chaotic system in new areas such as mine, and we found that an overwhelming majority of the children could not be placed in pre-school centres, and there was no likelihood that we would ever reach the stage where every child had a place. I repeat what I said earlier: in new areas we were lucky if one in five pre-school children could attend pre-school centres.

It is all very well for members opposite to pick out a word here and there from our policy speech. However, they cannot deny that we have seen the most dramatic achievement the State has known in regard to pre-school education. Earlier tonight I interjected and asked the member for Dianella, "Do you agree with our 1977 pre-school policy?" He did not say anything. If he is a serious supporter of pre-school education, despite the fact he has been instrumental in instilling fear in the minds of many people about the new system, he will find no fault in our system. In future years we will look back on the years 1974-1977 as the major dramatic breakthrough in the care of these children.

I want to make two other points. The first is that already we have a situation in which there are 100 rural centres looking after children of the ages of five and four years. These are places which are so small that they have insufficient numbers for a kindergarten of the type which used to exist. Under the previous Minister, and it is being continued by the current Minister, we have 100 centres where these small children from farms and the like can go in small numbers to the local school and play an important part in the school. If members care to ask people in country areas whether they are pleased to have these centres, they will find the people are tremendously enthusiastic about them. This is a marvellous step forward, and it is just as important as what we are doing in the new regions of the metropolitan area.

So we have this dramatic step forward where since 1976 it has been a policy of the Government that every new school will have a pre-primary centre; it is a tremendous step forward which would never have been taken under the old system. We also have rural centres in places

where the numbers do not measure up. In addition, we have the School of the Air at Kalgoorlie which has already started a programme for children in this age group. I doubt such a programme would ever have been established if it were not for the fact that the Education Department was able to bring it into being under the present Government's policies.

Another very important area is that of isolated children. Material is being prepared for presentation to these children. So in every way the programme of better care and consideration of pre-primary school children began in 1974, and has continued with the present Government. The sun is high, and it will never set unless members opposite as a result of their attacks manage to weaken what is an excellent policy by promoting fear and creating situations which in the ultimate can only harm the small, weak, five-year-old children of this State.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

## Ayes 16

Mr Bertram	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bryce	Mr McIver
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Tonkin
Mr Grill	Dr Troy
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Jamieson	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

## Noes 26

Mr Blaikie	Mr Mensaros
Mr Clarko	Mr Nanovich
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Connor
Mr Coyne	Mr Old
Mrs Craig	Mr O'Neill
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewar	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Stephens
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Tubby
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Watt
Mr Laurance	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Shalders

(Teller)

## Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr Cowan
Mr Davies	Mr Sibson
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Young
Mr Harman	Mr Ridge
Mr Barnett	Mr McPharlin
Mr Pearce	Dr Dadour

Amendment thus negated.

*Debate (on motion) Resumed*

**MR SODEMAN** (Pilbara) [11.06 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, in accord with the etiquette of this House, I convey to you my personal congratulations on your appointment as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the term of the twenty-ninth Parliament. I trust you will have a very successful and fruitful term of office.

**Mr B. T. Burke**: That means nothing. Get on with your speech.

**Mr SODEMAN**: Regardless of the interjection of the member for Balcatta who, like the bagpipes, makes a continuous noise if squeezed, I also congratulate those people who find themselves members of Parliament for the very first time. In so doing, I wish them well in respect of the matters they undertake on an honest and genuine basis on behalf of their electors.

As the nature of the Address-in-Reply is that it is a reply to the Governor's Speech delivered at the opening of Parliament on the 28th July, it is appropriate that I comment in respect of the activities of our Governor in the north of our State since his appointment.

**Mr B. T. Burke**: Stop reading your speech.

**Mr SODEMAN**: The attention our Governor has paid to communities in the north is noteworthy and admirable. Obviously he appreciates the part they play in and the contribution they make to the economy of the State.

In June, 1976, Sir Wallace Kyle visited the Pilbara; in July, 1976, he went to the Kimberley; in September, 1976, he visited Exmouth and Geraldton; in June, 1977, he visited Carnarvon; in July, 1977, he visited the Pilbara-Murchison-Kimberley region, and in August, 1977, the Murchison-Greenough area. It is amazing that a person as busy as the Governor must be has been able to find the time and has the personal interest—

**Mr B. T. Burke**: He is up there more than you are. Do you still live in Karrinyup?

**Mr SODEMAN**: —to visit those northern areas. I might add that the aftermath of each of his excursions to the north is one of endearing hospitality and friendship to a person who is not only interested in what people are doing, but is also personally concerned about their future. That is more than I can say about the member for Balcatta.

Both Sir Wallace and Lady Kyle have left a lasting impression on those northern residents who have been fortunate to make their acquaintance during their visits to the north.

**Mr B. T. Burke**: At least he looks pretty to-night, with his purple shirt and lilac tie.

**Mr SODEMAN**: The topic I wish to discuss this evening is one that seems to have escaped the attention of members of the Opposition, and one on which I have not heard any of them speak since the event took place. I refer to the Mt. Newman strike in which something like 108 shifts were lost by employees.

**Mr Tonkin**: I referred to that. You ought to listen.

**Mr SODEMAN**: I should have said I did not hear anything of quality. Those 108 lost shifts represent lost production amounting to 3.5 million tonnes, and lost revenue in excess of \$40 million.

**Mr McIver**: Whose fault was that?

**Mr SODEMAN**: I will come to that, and the member will find that it was not the fault of the company, as he might think at this stage. Because of the hardship and pressure suffered by employees and their families as a result of that strike, I would like to devote the rest of my time this evening to that event.

Thus, it depicts certain matters which have been brought to my attention by some of those who are affected and who are deeply concerned with the encroachment on individual freedom and diminishing civil liberties.

**Mr Tonkin**: Did the men want to strike?

**Mr SODEMAN**: As a consequence of this strike there were serious and damaging effects on the community which relies heavily on the continued operation of the iron ore industry. There were adverse psychological effects on every man, woman and child. I had numerous phone calls from women who were in tears because of what was taking place, and they told me about the strictures that were placed on their family units and the pressures that their husbands were subjected to during the course of that strike. There was also a detrimental effect on most of the business operations the proprietors of which, like the individual employee, work on a weekly basis; they have weekly commitments to meet in order to remain solvent. And external to those effects on the local people who, of course, were the hardest hit, were the effects on those associated with the iron ore industry in Western Australia, Australia and the world. As most people are aware, when a situation such as this develops it is like dropping a pebble into a large calm pond; the disruption to the serenity of the surface is total.

There is disruption to industry in the metropolitan area; local industry and overseas industry; market availability and expansion; and ultimately

there is disruption to job opportunities for your children, Sir, and mine. The Opposition has made a great play on unemployment and the creation of jobs for people in this State. I have not heard one member opposite talk about the disruption unemployment causes during strike action such as this, and the ultimate effect on the economy of the State as a whole as a result of the bad reputation that develops. Later on I will quote—

Mr Tonkin: What about the unemployment caused by Western Mining at Kambalda?

Mr SODEMAN: —comments made by Mr Hawke to back up and support the situation that is developing in the Pilbara and throughout this State, and in actual fact the whole of the nation.

The most important factor, of course, is the underlying effect on the individual human being, particularly on his cherished freedoms and his way of life which at the moment are endangered.

Mr Tonkin: Who wrote this for you?

Mr SODEMAN: I did.

Mr Tonkin: Well you are not supposed to be reading your speech.

Mr SODEMAN: It is perhaps better than the speeches written for the Leader of the Opposition who, I am surprised, is not here at the present time.

Mr Tonkin: You know the Standing Orders as well as anyone. You should not be reading your speech.

Mr SODEMAN: I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition is not present to listen to what I have to say on a subject which is extremely important to the people of this State. The Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister—and I must admit the sun must be at the apex of the sky because the shadow is not very great—have shown little interest, even though this matter relates to the people in the north.

Mr Tonkin: What a lot of nonsense.

Mr SODEMAN: As members opposite were talking about the Minister for Education going out and looking at what is going on, they should be aware that he certainly does. They should do likewise instead of sitting in their offices.

Mr Tonkin: You live in Karrinyup. What do you know about the Pilbara?

Mr SODEMAN: At this stage one must ask: Which way Australia? Union activity has created a greater impact on the standard of living in Australia and on the social structure than any other single aspect of our administration. One

must also ask, "Unions along with private enterprise having transported Australia to where it is today, is it now going to turn on itself and become its own worse enemy, or are we as individuals going to stand up and do something to stem the tide?"

In the course of preparing my speech it was necessary for me to research the progress which has been made in unionism to date, and the current situation.

Mr Tonkin: You are not supposed to read your speech.

Mr SODEMAN: I borrowed a number of books from the library and most of them depicted the same theme. They talked in general terms about how unionism was embarked on; how politics became involved; how the unions themselves had been badly used by politicians and union leaders; and where this situation might lead us.

In reading various publications I could find no better reference than some comments which I located in the *Australian Encyclopedia* volume 9. I will refer to some of these very briefly. I believe the last reference points to the situation that we face today with the demise of the rank and file unionists not only in the Pilbara but in Australia generally. The origin of unionism as depicted in volume 9 of the *Australian Encyclopedia*—

Mr Pearce: Which edition? Which year is this?

Mr SODEMAN: I am sorry; I cannot give the honourable member the year.

Mr Pearce: It is fairly important, don't you think?

Mr SODEMAN: I will look into the matter and give him an answer later tomorrow.

Mr Pearce: I think we should have it tonight.

Mr Tonkin: It might be 1905 for all we know.

Mr Pearce: Surely it should be quoted now.

Mr SODEMAN: Yes, the honourable member is probably right, but I am sorry I do not have it here. Unfortunately I am not quite as perfect as he is and do not have the information available at the present time.

Mr Tonkin: You have read every word so far. You cannot even speak without reading.

Mr SODEMAN: Australian trade unionism recapitulates the general history of trade unionism.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr SODEMAN: I shall now read an extract from the *Australian Encyclopedia* volume 9 which is as follows—

It was long thought that the first Australian union benefit society was the Cabinet-makers and Upholsterers' Society, formed in Sydney in 1833 "to insure their tools from loss by fire and assist widows and orphans in distress"; but research has disclosed the existence of earlier societies. A small Shipwrights' United Friendly Society was formed in 1830.

So that is about when it started in Australia—in the year 1830. The extract continues—

Organization and Aims. There were two kinds of organization: the benevolent society, which paid unemployment relief and sick and funeral benefits to members, and the trade society, . . .

I will not continue to illustrate what its specific objectives were. However, initially the unions were nonpolitical.

Mr Tonkin: What nonsense.

Mr SODEMAN: I am quoting the extract and if the honourable member desires I will read it verbatim. The first union leaders were not political. The extract continues by mentioning how the situation developed. Another comment reads—

The first unions were nonpolitical, but their members were prominent in political organisations.

Only when the immediate economic interests of the union were affected, by issues such as the regulation of machinery, the length of the working day, and immigration, especially the influx of Chinese, did the unions bother about politics.

The reason I am quoting from the *Australian Encyclopedia* is so that members opposite will not say it is the opinion of a person who is right-wing or conservative because, of course, it is not. Continuing with the extract we come to a rather interesting comment which is the one on which I wish to hinge the majority of my comments this evening.

Mr Tonkin: You are unhinged.

Mr SODEMAN: The extract continues—

End of a Period. By the end of the 1880s trade unionism had become established in society.

And this is the interesting part of the run down on unions as depicted by the *Australian Encyclopedia*. Unionism had not yet been tested

in a period of rising prices and declining employment. To continue—

The first question was: could unionism resist the counter-attack in a period of economic crisis? Secondly, if such a crisis should be experienced, and unionism turned to challenge seriously the existing social structure, how could this challenge be reconciled with the traditions and structure of the previous period?

Of course that is what is happening today. Unions having fought for better conditions, having fought for what we have today, and having made tremendous contributions to achieve it—

Mr Tonkin: And fought by the conservatives every inch of the way.

Mr SODEMAN: —we have reached the situation where Governments and others in the community are under pressure to maintain it. In actual fact those with any conscience at all cannot revert, turn tail and resist fostering the continued progress and development of our living standards. But of course this is what is happening right at the moment. The extract goes on to say—

Thirdly, what in the two decades ahead would be the result of such changes? The decision of the union movement to form a political party, instead of merely supporting individual members of Parliament as in the past, and the decision to attack the system of private enterprise, instead of working within its limits, constituted a revolutionary break with previous methods and ideas.

Mr Acting Speaker, "ideas" that are extremely interesting because I feel—

Mr Tonkin: He is the Deputy Speaker not the Acting Speaker. Give him his right title.

Mr SODEMAN: It depicts a cycle which the trade union organisation has gone through. It commenced in 1833; it matured in 1880; and during its maturing stage it created a political party. I feel that is where the trade unions themselves took under their wings something that they could not control. Since that time it has been badly used by politicians and union officials and those who have had self-interest rather than the interests of the workers at heart. Part of this exploitation by officials, leaders and politicians has taken place in the Pilbara, right within this State.

It is my intention to give the House one or two examples. Firstly, we had Mr Hawke, with Mr Cook, and the ALP candidate for the Pilbara traipsing off to Japan to tell the Japanese people what they already knew and what they virtually

could have told them in a letter. This was indicated in a Press release by a union official, who felt a little apprehensive that these people were embarking on a costly exercise virtually to tell the people overseas what they already knew.

Mr Watt: That is what you call "teaching your grandmother to suck eggs".

Mr SODEMAN: It was suggested in the Press that Mr Hawke was embarking on a purely political exercise. Of course, Mr Peter Cook refuted this claim.

It is rather interesting to note that the only times Mr Hawke has been to the Pilbara was just before a Federal election, when he treated the people in the Pilbara towns virtually like mining trash. They did not respond very well to that treatment, and were not particularly interested in seeing him return to talk to them again.

Then, he embarked on his excursion to Japan, which was seen as nothing more than a political exercise, because he took the candidate for the Pilbara with him on the basis that it would give that candidate some standing when he returned and during the recapitulation of the trip. Mr Hawke and his companions returned to discuss their trip, and he said he would return after the election with some sort of solution to the industrial problems.

However, immediately after the election Mr Hawke did not return. As a matter of fact, he was programmed to return during the recent Mt. Newman strike but he decided not to come because he heard there was very little he could do to stop the chain reaction started by unionists in the Pilbara. I refer, of course, to that small group of people who started something they could not stop. A little later I will prove the dispute was started by that small group.

Mr Tonkin: Did the men want to go on strike, or was it just the union officials?

Mr SODEMAN: I will come to that in a moment. Mr Hawke did not return to the Pilbara at the programmed time. He then said he may return in August, but August has been and gone, and Mr Hawke has not arrived with his magical solution to the industrial problems in the Pilbara.

However, if we have an announcement of an early Federal election, I will guarantee we will hear Mr Hawke has once again programmed a visit to the Pilbara in order to reveal to the people his plan to solve industrial problems in the north.

So much for Mr Hawke's "peace trip" and his personal motivation and what he has or has not achieved for the people in the north of our State. To give credence to what I have just mentioned, and for the benefit of the shadow Minister, the member for Morley, I refer to an article in the *Sunday Independent* titled—I believe badly titled—"It's civil war for AMWU".

Mr Tonkin: That is a good, unbiased report, isn't it?

Mr SODEMAN: I rarely read this newspaper, but on this occasion I took note of the article, because it contained comments by officials of one of the biggest unions in the Pilbara. The article states—

SENIOR officials of one of the two biggest Pilbara unions are in revolt. They say their members are victims of a Communist take-over.

Three of them—the convenor, his deputy and the branch secretary—say an unsatisfactory voting system has allowed the Communist Party of Australia to win control of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union's Perth head office.

They say schools for teaching industrial procedure to shop stewards have been used for indoctrination, politicking and government bashing. The senior officials have also accused the union of using members' funds for a political campaign.

They say they have had enough of government interference and provocation in the Pilbara.

"We're tired of being the meat in the political sandwich," they said from Dampier last night.

I do not think even members opposite could say those people are members of the Liberal Party. They are unionists who feel the situation is reaching the stage where someone should speak out. The same article continues—

... a senior Perth union official, Mr Jack Marks used a mass meeting in Dampier as a vehicle for blatant politicking.

The men pulled him into line. The article continues—

Mr McInerney said branch members were disgusted to learn through the State administrative committee that an unsuccessful Labor candidate was assisted by union funds during his State election campaign in the Pilbara.

They came to Perth to attend a meeting, and stated that most of the problems were due to union apathy. They said that because of this



apathy, the communist influence was growing in the union leadership. They claimed about five officials in the Perth office of the AMWU, Australia's biggest union, were openly members of the Communist Party of Australia.

I should like to say it is not totally the fault of the rank and file, and it does not directly relate to apathy that such things are occurring; many other factors are involved. These people need assistance. Union officials are adopting methods, tactics, and techniques which are not available to the rank and file members, and some of these factors need to be pointed out and perhaps presented to these people in some form where they have reference to a better code of conduct and some rules and regulations by which the officials themselves are bound. I will give illustrations of those points as I go along.

An AWU shop steward on one of the line camps went to the trouble of going along to the meetings in Port Hedland and listening to the reasons advanced for the proposed strike on the 2nd June. On behalf of the employees he represented, he informed the officials that they did not want to become party to the strike.

In actual fact, he wrote several pages on the matter, copies of which he distributed to, I think, the member for Morley, myself, and other people in the State who are involved in company and union administration. He has even been to the Industrial Commissioner and has gone to great pains to illustrate how to his way of thinking AWU officials precipitated the strike situation.

By way of interjection a little earlier, the member for Morley asked, "How did it start?" The strike was started by a great number of people being collected together at an oval in a public meeting atmosphere, and a vote being taken. It was very hard to ascertain in that mass which unionists represented which unions. There was a complete imbalance of AWU workers at the meeting. The atmosphere was created whereby there was a mass response to what was being put forward. The way the officials conducted themselves at that meeting, and subsequent meetings, left a lot to be desired. That is not the forum whereby decisions to go on strike, which impinge on families, individuals, businesses, and communities should be taken.

Mr McIver: What was the subject matter of the strike? What were they going on strike over?

Mr SODEMAN: The subject matter was that there had been a number of items presented to the company to form an agreement, most of which had been agreed to.

Mr McIver: Was not one of those items super-annuation?

Mr SODEMAN: That is right.

Mr McIver: To which Hamersley Iron, Robe River, and the other companies in the Pilbara had already agreed?

Mr SODEMAN: There were a number of other items as well as the one relating to super-annuation.

Mr McIver: The company would not even talk to the union.

Mr SODEMAN: These items were being considered by the Industrial Commission.

Sir Charles Court: Who wanted the matter referred to the Industrial Commission?

Mr McIver: Hamersley Iron and the other companies had already agreed to the main item in dispute. Newman will never get around the table to talk about these matters. The company causes these strikes.

Mr SODEMAN: To put the matter straight, the company had discussed the matters around the table for a considerable time before the claims went to arbitration. Several matters were in dispute, one of which was the item mentioned by the honourable member. But there was no need for the union to call its men out on strike.

Mr Clark, a person who was prepared to stand up and be counted, did a tremendous amount of good work in conveying to me and others the tactics AWU officials were prepared to employ to achieve their ends. I will leave that matter aside.

In the column "Political Notes" of Thursday, the 14th July this year, the Leader of the Opposition made the following statement—

The most disgusting aspect of the campaign is that it is being waged by innuendo, smear and wild, unsubstantiated assertions . . .

I have a letter which was written to me by a union member. I will not quote directly from the letter, because members opposite will ask me to table it. The letter was written in response to the article by the Leader of the Opposition and, in effect, the unionist states, "In case Sir Charles Court and you do not have any substantiated evidence, herewith are some comments as to what is going on."

He was a concerned unionist who was prepared to write, in response to the Leader of the Opposition's statements, to substantiate the things that the Premier was claiming were taking place. I shall not go into them in detail, but I have received many other letters from concerned unionists highlighting that such things as exploitation, suppression, veiled threats, blackmail, and

personal antagonisms were going on during the Mt. Newman strike, and prior to it. I have examples of the exploitation of honest workers in the Pilbara by officials, and I am very disappointed that these people have to contend with such situations.

An example of suppression is that members of unions in the Pilbara receive no notice of meetings at which votes may be taken with regard to strike action. But the constitutions of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union and other unions state that there shall be 48 hours' notice of general meetings to be held by union branches. That is a courtesy which unions in the Pilbara do not extend to their rank and file members. Agendas are not supplied or not adhered to. The purpose of this is to allow officials the flexibility to manipulate meetings and circumstances to suit themselves. If a rank and file member brings up a topic he is squashed by whoever is chairing the meeting saying that it is not the reason for convening the meeting. Yet the members did not know what the purpose was in the first place.

An example of this occurring in the Pilbara is that 78 union members were gathered together to vote whether they should go on strike over a particular matter. The first vote resulted in 40 to 38 against strike action. The meeting broke up but a few minutes later another vote was called for which resulted in a vote of 39 to 39. The meeting broke up once again but a third vote was called for which resulted in a vote of 40 to 38 in favour of strike action. That is the sort of malpractice that is going on in union circles.

Another example of suppression concerns the Port Hedland Seamen's Union. At a meeting a vote was taken on a certain matter and a number of people voted against it. The person who was conducting the meeting then stated, "Brothers or comrades"—the normal terms—"let us now hear from one of the scabs". I add that the so-called scabs did not know the true intention of the meeting initially, had no previous advice that it was to be held, and when called on to speak had done no preparation. Consequently, nobody was able to offer a rebuttal. Accordingly, the remark was passed, "There you are, brothers, not one of them is prepared to stand up and talk against the motion".

Not only are union members in the Pilbara—and throughout Australia for that matter—threatened with blackmail and individual antagonism, but also if they vote against the majority they are threatened if not by the convenors or

officials, then by other individuals. If they conform they are termed "brothers" or "comrades" but if they do not conform they are called scabs.

I have heard a tremendous amount of talk in this House from the Opposition, who are supposed to be the brothers of the unions, about a derogatory term which is supposed to have been used by someone on this side of the House, that term being "dole bludger". I have never yet heard one member of the Opposition talk about the term "scab", which even they must admit is just as or even more obnoxious a title to be hung on a person. But that title is hung on people day after day. Within their work, family, and community situations these people are suppressed.

Mr Pearce: Have you lost your place?

Mr SODEMAN: No, I just do not talk quite as quickly as the honourable member. I take the occasional breath, if he does not mind. I should like to give an example of a specific threat made during the strike and how it was carried out by several members of the union, one of them in the guise of a welfare officer. I am told by one of the people who was threatened that the welfare officer indicated that it was in his best interests to assist the poor misinformed and misguided with regard to what they should do.

These comments were nothing short of outright industrial blackmail and personal antagonism. The comments were: "If you go back to work you will not get a job anywhere in the Commonwealth." That was followed by this statement: "Have you had any reprisals; that is, your doors kicked in or any bodily harm? No? Oh, I thought you would have had." There was a rumour circulating in Port Hedland for a while that there was a "violent dozen". I think the "violent dozen" was in fact these three people. Migrant workers have been terrified by them; and some individual unionists have telephoned me, because they did not know what to do next.

A further example is the utterances of Mr Marks. Five people indicated to me that he made the following remarks. He also made these comments in front of the Industrial Registrar, whom I telephoned and from whom I received confirmation.

Mr Tonkin: The Industrial Registrar confirmed that he said this?

Mr SODEMAN: The Industrial Registrar was present when Mr Marks made these comments.

Mr Tonkin: The Industrial Registrar said that he made these comments?

Mr SODEMAN: When I mentioned these comments to the Industrial Registrar he confirmed that he was there and that he heard Mr Marks say them. Incidentally, 150 people were present. He could hardly have said otherwise. He said, "You cannot protect your families 24 hours a day." He also said, "Don't do anything to the scabs during the day." These matters are referred to in the judgment of Commissioner Kelly brought down on the 25th August before the union applicants and the respondent, the Mt. Newman Mining Company, which I intend to deal with in more detail later in my speech.

When members opposite and the unions talk about democracy and majority votes, they are indulging in pure grandstanding. They do not believe in such things and they do not practice them. The example in the Pilbara which I mentioned earlier is an illustration of that fact. In that case the majority vote was against going on strike and until such time as a majority vote in favour of going on strike could be reached, the antagonism was kept up by the calling for votes. That is democracy? On another occasion when it looked as though the majority would not support a strike, a union official said that he would back up the minority who wished to strike. There is democracy again!

Mr Bateman: Are you just going to stand there for 45 minutes and rubbish the unions, or are you going to talk about your electorate or what? You have done nothing but tip the bucket over the unions.

Mr SODEMAN: I am pleased to see the member for Canning back in the Chamber.

Mr Bateman: I will get up and tip the bucket over you.

Mr SODEMAN: It is good to see the member for Canning here and it is good to see him paying attention. A classic example of the democracy of the Australian Labor Party and the unions was an action taken by Mr Bainbridge in Dampier. Certain individuals who had decided not to pay levies to unionists who were on strike illegally held out to the last man. Forty names were written on a blackboard, the inference being that they were scabs. The last person to hold out was in fact under threat of dismissal and had virtually been given a pink slip confirming his dismissal. I telephoned Mr Bainbridge and asked him whether an individual had a right to stand up for a principle. Mr Bainbridge called this individual unionist an idiot and a fool.

I put to Mr Bainbridge that when Governments were elected on a democratic basis unionists reserved the right, for conscience reasons or

on a matter of principle, to reject the basis on which a Government was elected, but an individual did not have the right to stand up for a principle—in fact to do the same thing—within his own union.

I said to him, "Aren't you somewhat hypocritical?" His only comment was, "You have a rather pointed way of making a point. This individual did not deserve to be called a scab. He deserved to be retained."

Without going into all the details, I will indicate that he did in actual fact get his job back.

Mr B. T. Burke: Excuse me—

Mr SODEMAN: The ALP espouses the principle of democracy on the one hand, but on the other hand it does not like it to be practised by individuals. Individuals are not supposed to have a conscience.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SODEMAN: I would appreciate being able to continue my comments and so I will ignore the member for Balcatta who usually makes as many speeches from his seat as he does on his feet.

Mr Tonkin interjected.

Mr B. T. Burke: Answer the question.

Mr Tonkin interjected.

Mr SODEMAN: The point is—

Mr Tonkin interjected.

Mr SODEMAN: The point is that a loss of vote—

Mr Tonkin interjected.

Mr SODEMAN: The point is that a loss of vote should not mean a loss of the right to work or of a livelihood.

Mr Tonkin interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Morley has on about eight occasions made the same interjection.

Mr Tonkin: He has not answered.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is not required to answer and the honourable member is being grossly repetitious when he continues to ask a question which it is obvious the member for Pilbara does not intend to answer. The member for Morley must allow the member for Pilbara to continue his speech.

Mr B. T. Burke: He will not answer.

Mr SODEMAN: What was the question?

Mr B. T. Burke: The question is this: Did you say that the Industrial Registrar confirmed the remarks made by Mr Jack Marks at the meeting you attended?

Several members interjected.

Mr SODEMAN: No, I did not attend the meeting.

Mr B. T. Burke: Did he confirm them or not?

Mr SODEMAN: Just be quiet and I will explain, then the member for Balcatta can go back to sleep. What I stated was that Mr Marks made these comments and five or so people repeated them to me.

Mr Tonkin: Including the Industrial Registrar?

Mr SODEMAN: I stated that Mr Ellis was at the meeting with 150 people and I decided to ring him and put the comments to him. I asked him whether he was at the meeting and he said that he was. I said that a number of people had contacted me and had asked me whether Mr Marks had made the comments. He said, "Yes." In actual fact Mr Ellis, at the behest of the other 150-odd people at the meeting, asked Mr Marks to leave the venue because they were highly disturbed by his remarks. No other officials were able to make comments until he had left the premises. I hope that satisfies the member's query.

Mr B. T. Burke: We will check to see whether you are telling the truth.

Mr SODEMAN: We can carry on. All this leads me to one important factor. Incidentally, how much time do I have left, Sir?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Another seven minutes.

Mr SODEMAN: That is not many.

Mr Tonkin: How many more pages have you to read?

Mr SODEMAN: Several. Union leaders themselves are amoral. They incorrectly and dishonestly force their own political and personal ideologies on the masses, when they are actually elected to represent, not to dictate and govern.

Mr McIver: Does this apply to airline pilots?

Mr Tonkin: He has lost his place.

Mr Pearce: Duplicate your speech and pass it around and we will read it at our leisure.

Mr McIver: Does this apply to air controllers or only in the Pilbara?

Mr Tonkin: When are you going to obey Standing Orders and not read your speech?

Mr SODEMAN: Following a dispute in which the unions working for Mt. Newman Mining Company were the applicants and the company was the respondent, Commissioner Kelly issued a judgment on the 25th August depicting a number of malpractices. Because of these malpractices the judgment was quite revolutionary.

Under the heading "Union membership" was the following—

The existing agreements require that every worker shall become and remain a member of one or another of the unions having constitutional coverage in the industry, and confer other benefits on the unions.

Without reading the judgment in detail I will indicate that what the commissioner said in short was that because of the actions which took place and because of the rebuttal and contempt the unions had displayed of the commission's previous ruling he would uphold a recommendation by Mt. Newman Mining Company that the preference to union agreement clause be deleted. However, he did give the unions an opportunity to report back to indicate if in actual fact they had done this.

The basis on which the unions went back to work was that the notices sent to workers by the company were to be withdrawn unreservedly and that it would be clearly understood by all parties that there would be no recriminations whatever by the company against any worker who withdrew his labour, nor would there be any recriminations whatever by unions against any worker who returned to work after receipt of the company's communication.

The commissioner quoted a letter from Mr Bainbridge to a unionist who went back to work—written after the ruling to which all the unions had agreed as the basis on which they would return to work. The letter reads—

Dear Sir,

During the recent industrial dispute with Mt Newman Mining Co. in which members of all unions were on strike it was observed that you went through the picket line and worked. While the end result of that is unpleasant history my purpose in writing this letter is that I have been instructed by the management executive of this union to do so and express their disgust that a member of this union should place himself in a position to be branded forever more with a name which is the most unpleasant epithet that can be applied to a man in this country.

We never heard anything about scabs from those on the other side; only about dole bludgers. The letter continues—

Excuses which I have heard such as 'the union officials instructed the workers to return' are not valid.

Mr Clarke said they did instruct workers to return and a number of union officials—Butcher and Brown, and in particular Brown—said that

they were instructed to return; and yet that is contrary to what Mr Bainbridge said in his letter which continues—

No union official instructed anyone to return to work and in any case the majority decision of a meeting is the final word.

Your name, along with the others, will be recorded in our files and it is only because of the undertaking given to Commissioner Collier that you retain membership of this union.

Rest assured your future conduct will be under scrutiny. Your type we can do without.

So much for respect for the Industrial Commission; so much for respect of the law; so much for democracy; and so much for individual honour. I repeat that union leaders—particularly this type—are amoral.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member has only two more minutes.

Mr SODEMAN: That is unfortunate. The disappointing outcome was that Mt. Newman decided to withdraw that particular proposal and to go along with compulsory unionism, and I endorse Commissioner Kelly's remarks when he said that he deplored the company's attitude on the issue and that by changing its position the company had left the commission in an invidious position. After all this time the company itself has taken the backward step.

Something I should point out to members is that union officials talk about the honour or dishonour of enterprise and individual administrators. I would like to mention that in actual fact if we read through any management book we find that the principles espoused are concerned with humanity in industry. Industry might fail at times. It certainly might be imperfect; I would be the first to admit that. However, I wish to state that in a guide to shop stewards is the following—

**A Shop Steward Cannot be Neutral.**

... It is sometimes quite a convincing argument when the employer points out that the future employment and prosperity of employees is dependent on the future prosperity of the company. Shop Stewards under the influence of these concepts sometimes feel impelled to "see both sides" to "see the employers point of view" and "to be fair and unbiased".

A Shop Steward who is pushed into this position has lost his sense of direction...

Our Shop Steward must remember that he represents one side—the members side—the side that elected him and he must be biased,

prejudiced and one-eyed. He represents the A.M.W.U. members and no one else.

So much for the comments we hear about fair-minded negotiation. It is in their own instructions. There is no intention of being fair-minded or responsible so far as some union officials are concerned.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member's time has expired.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [11.50 p.m.]: At this very late hour I would like to congratulate the Speaker, in his temporary absence, on his appointment to the Chair. On a rather dismal note, I want to record in Parliament the great role played by a gentleman from the south-west whom many of us knew so well—the late Percy Payne. He was a former mayor of Bunbury, and met an untimely death earlier this year.

I think all those who were associated with Percy knew of his untiring energy and his love for the south-west. He was interested in many organisations. As I said, he was a former mayor of Bunbury, and president of a south-west development committee. His death meant a sad loss and I take this opportunity on behalf of the people of Collie, and the people generally in the south-west, of placing on record our gratitude for the great service he did for the State generally. He was a marvellous person, and even in his late years he retained his faculties and took part in the industrial expansion of Western Australia.

One of his main interests was the development of the Collie coalfields, and he supported the unions on many occasions. It is fortunate that he lived long enough to see the revival of the Collie coalfields before his unfortunate death. It is with pleasure that, as a representative of the people of the south-west, I place on record in this Parliament appreciation of the wonderful contribution made by Mr Percy Payne to the development of Western Australia and, in particular, to the south-west portion of the State.

As has already been mentioned, the Address-in-Reply provides members with an opportunity to raise various issues. I intend to refer to a number of matters which I consider should receive urgent attention from the Government. I will refer firstly to the development of the coalfields area. I do not intend to talk about coal tonight, because everyone is aware of the development that is taking place.

I intend to talk about housing, because it appears that with the change of Ministers there is also a change of attitude on the part of the Government. The development of housing in the

Collie district has caused quite a problem. The present Minister would be aware that a number of meetings have been convened at Collie involving the State Housing Commission, Westrail, the coalmining companies, and the State Energy Commission in order to determine the requirements of the town with regard to building blocks. A meeting took place in June, 1976, and it was generally agreed there was a need to open up State Housing Commission land and make it available to private developers. The General Manager of the State Housing Commission (Mr McKenna) went along with the proposition and he said that as far as he was concerned an area of land in the Cheetara district should be opened up for housing. However, there appears to be a change of attitude on the part of the Government. On the 10th August, I asked the Minister the following question—

Will he please advise to what extent negotiations have preceeded for the sale of additional State Housing Commission blocks at Collie?

The Minister replied—

There are still 9 lots available from the release in 1976. Sales since then have been very slow.

No further land releases are contemplated for the time being, in view of the apparently limited demand.

That is not the reason the blocks have not been sold. Without reflecting in any way on the Aboriginal people living in the area where the blocks are situated, there is a threat that a person buying one of those blocks is likely to have an Aboriginal family next door. I do not in any way reflect on the Aboriginal community. As the Minister is aware, we already have a new complex under construction, which I understand is the first in Western Australia. The Aboriginal people will live in a natural habitat, where nine homes are being constructed in a beautiful setting. The Aboriginal people will be living where they want to be, and I am sure the people of Western Australia will applaud the move.

As I have said, I do not want to reflect on the Aboriginal people, but the reason those nine blocks have not been sold for private development is their proximity to the Aboriginal community.

The prices asked for those blocks are not as high as prices for blocks in other areas, but they are too high as far as Collie is concerned. In 1960 a person was able to swap a pushbike for a quarter-acre block of land, but people are now asking \$9 600 for similar blocks. The Minister will realise that somebody is getting a rake-off

at the expense of our young people, and this is something which should not occur.

In consultation with the organisations I have mentioned, it was considered it would be a good idea to make land available in the Cheetara area. Sewerage connections are available, and the land should be opened up by the SHC and put on the market. However, from the answer given to my question it appears to me that the plan has been dropped. I wonder whether the Minister could advise me, by interjection, whether the plan is still under review, or has it been scrapped?

Mr O'Connor: If the member for Collie is referring to the high land on the hill, I did look at it. It is still under consideration.

The SPEAKER: Would the Minister speak up, please?

Mr T. H. JONES: Well, I am glad to hear the comment by the Minister. For the sake of the *Hansard* record the Minister has said the proposal is still under consideration. I hope it will receive urgent priority. As the Minister is aware, there is an urgent need for additional housing in the town because of the extensions at Muja. Many of the workers at Muja are housed in transportable accommodation, which is part of the development of the company concerned. The matter is especially urgent when one considers that the prices being asked for blocks of land range between \$8 000 and \$8 600. Those blocks were being given away in 1960, so there is a rake-off for some people.

I want to see the State Housing Commission land opened up and blocks made available at a reasonable price in an attempt to stop some people having a shot at the young persons who want to build homes. If additional land is opened up the price of the blocks already available will have to be reduced, and that will be of great advantage to the young people in the town. It is already hard enough for young people to get a start in life, and if we can make blocks available at a reasonable price we will be able to assist them.

I have made representations to the Minister on behalf of the Collie Shire. I have a letter from that shire which I do not intend to read tonight, because of the time factor. The letter expresses concern, and asks me to raise the matter in Parliament. I hope the Minister will take cognisance of what I have said. He did say he had inspected the area, and that urgent priority would be given to the release of the land in the Cheetara area.

While speaking on housing I want to refer to the housing needs of pensioners in the town of Collie. We have a large number of pensioners in Collie because the miners, unlike other people,

generally retire in the town in which they have worked.

We have an urgent demand for pensioner units at the moment. The present programme is to build only nine female units and five male units, a total of 14. In no way will this meet the needs of the town and I hope consideration will be given to additional housing being made available for pensioners in the Collie district.

Some years ago the Liberal Government announced it would embark on an upgrading programme of State Housing homes in Western Australia. So far as I am concerned, a number of hot water units and a number of electric and gas stoves have been installed, but little maintenance has been carried out. Many roofs are rusting and and inspection would reveal a terrible state of affairs. I was given to understand a programme of upgrading would be embarked upon.

Mr O'Connor: The money spent last year was the most ever spent. It was \$7 million against \$3 million previously. There was a general upgrading in maintenance in many areas.

Mr T. H. JONES: I accept the figures quoted by the Minister but would add that it was certainly not spent in my area. Many homes are a shocking disgrace and unless something is done we will have many problems confronting us. I urge the Government to honour the promise it made to attend to the substandard homes. People paying the rent should not have to put up with these conditions.

On the matter of drainage there is an immense problem in the Wilson Park State Housing area in the town. The sewerage main has not been extended. I have complained about the lack of sewerage money made available to Collie and I do so again tonight, although the Minister has made an announcement that some development is to take place in the North Collie and View Street area. However, the situation here in general is shocking and should be condemned. I go so far as to suggest that if this area were a private development the health inspectors would condemn it.

The drains put down are not coping and are not taking away effluent, and waste from toilets is running through the yards of some State Housing Commission homes. At the following locations I saw young girls and boys running around in effluent coming from the toilets and bathrooms—

- Lot 1722, 38 Bickerton Street.
- Lot 1731, 62 Porter Street.
- Lot 1787, 23 Telfer Crescent.
- Lot 1801, 20 Telfer Crescent.
- Lot 1511, 22 Atkinson Street.
- Lot 1561, 41 Atkinson Street.

As a matter of fact, I went along with the local health inspector to view the situation because it is just not good enough for people occupying State Housing Commission homes to be subjected to these conditions. Someone is not doing his job. Is it right for young children to be running around like this? I suggest it is not. The commission should rectify the defects I have mentioned and I hope some action will be taken as a result of my remarks tonight.

Mr Coyne: Do not the parents care?

Mr T. H. JONES: Yes, that is why they have had the health inspector and myself down to have a look at the situation. Does the member expect the parents to dig the drains themselves?

Mr Coyne: The children should not be running around in effluent.

Mr T. H. JONES: What would the member do? If he would like to come to Collie I will show him. If the honourable member doubts the situation or doubts my word, and over the years my word in this Chamber has always been accepted, he should get in touch with the local health inspector. I hope there will be no need for me to raise this subject in the House again, and I hope the Minister will have the matter investigated.

Another matter which is concerning me and no doubt concerns a number of members is the question of the cancellation of fringe benefits for pensioners in Western Australia. We all know their superannuation or pension schemes are being upgraded from time to time in line with costs of living, but whilst this is happening they are losing their fringe benefits, and their permissible amounts of earning above old age pensions have not been increased. I wrote to the Federal Minister (Senator Guilfoyle) in March this year and she replied, in part, as follows—

Nevertheless, the income limits on pensioner benefits and concessions are among the matters currently under examination by the Income Security Review Committee. This Committee is comprised of representatives from several Government Departments and is required to examine the income security system as a whole and make recommendations to the Government . . .

Further on she thanks me for bringing the matter to her attention. This was in March and it is time something was done. No doubt many pensioners known to members are in the same situation. They receive a slight rise in superannuation and old age pension which automatically is affected when their fringe benefits are cancelled.

I do hope the State Government, if it is concerned about pensioners as much as we on this

side of the House are, will urge its counterpart in Canberra to look at the idea of lifting permissible earnings and so enable pensioners to retain fringe benefits when they have an increase in superannuation or old age pension.

I do not think the Minister for Fuel and Energy would deny that the question of our future fuel supplies, not just for generation purposes but fuel oil generally, is causing concern not only in Western Australia but throughout the world. I imagine the Minister has a copy of the report I have here of a seminar which was held in Washington earlier this year. Countries represented at this seminar were the United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Mr Coyne: Was Australia not represented?

Mr T. H. JONES: No it was not. With all the major countries gathering together it is strange Australia was not there. The seminar was arranged to look at the question of a policy for future supplies of generation and power in view of the limited number of oil reserves in the world. The seminar reached some very good conclusions. It said that in its opinion—

... after 1985, the world supply of oil will no longer be sufficient to fill rising demand.

There is nothing new about this information. On page 6 of the report it says—

... coal will be the principal replacement for oil ...

Mr Coyne: They might go back to steam railways.

Mr T. H. JONES: I am not talking about that.

Mr Coyne: How will they use the coal?

Mr T. H. JONES: If the member for Murchison-Eyre had not nodded off to sleep he would be aware of what I am talking about. I had just mentioned the seminar was in relation to power generation policies to be adopted.

I was not talking about steam engines. If the member wishes to speak on that subject he can get on his feet and do so.

Mr Coyne: You said power generation. It is the same thing.

Mr T. H. JONES: The honourable member should know I would not suggest we should go back to using steam. If he knows anything about railway systems he would know the problems arising from the use of coal to run railway engines. There are many problems such as providing sufficient steam, problems involving

water, and many others. I might argue about dieselisation or the electrification of the rail system in Western Australia.

However, it is quite obvious what the energy authorities of the world consider will be the main fuel for power generation in the foreseeable future; that is, coal.

At this juncture I ask: What is the Government doing about finding additional coal reserves in Western Australia? I do not raise this matter by way of criticism; I raise it in the interests of Western Australia. I will be interested to know whether any programme is being undertaken at the moment to explore additional reserves—with the exception of the north. We know the history of the Collie field. Certain reserves were said to exist but the estimate was disproved by the Peabody survey which found there were many millions of tonnes of coal at Collie.

I urge the Government to explore the Collie coalfield. If an efficient grid system is introduced we will find greater reserves of coal than have already been proved to be available in the field. I gave an instance last year of a particular company which was expecting a fault in a certain area, but it subsequently found the fault was not there and it had to move the Collie river to explore the coal reserves. This occurred because of the system of putting down bores perhaps half a mile apart. I urge the Government to consider additional boring. Perhaps the amount of boring being done at the moment is sufficient, but in the future it may not be sufficient. We may have solar or nuclear energy in the future, but at the Washington seminar it was said coal will be the main fuel when the supply of oil diminishes in 1985.

On the 18th August I asked the Premier a question in relation to the proposed consortium which would provide funds for the extension of the Muja power station. In his reply the Premier said a submission was being prepared for Cabinet and that if the funds were not forthcoming the State Energy Commission's programme could be cancelled. Could the Premier indicate by interjection, for the benefit of the coal industry and other members, whether anything has transpired since I asked my question on the 18th August?

Sir Charles Court: What information do you want?

Mr T. H. JONES: Information about the consortium which would make funds available for the extension of the Muja power station.

Sir Charles Court: A lot of work has been done and is continuing to be done. Hopefully an announcement will be made in the near future.



Mr T. H. JONES: No firm decision has been made at this stage?

Sir Charles Court: I would not be prepared to pre-empt the decision at the moment because the matter is at a rather delicate stage.

Mr T. H. JONES: I cannot let the member for Greenough get off the hook. In his speech a couple of weeks ago, when I was temporarily absent from the Chamber, he said—

I am sorry the member for Collie is not present in the Chamber, as I would like to inform him that we have substantial reserves of coal; although perhaps they are not as easily accessible as the coal at Collie, it is very nice to know that the reserves are there to be called on if the Collie coal runs out.

He went on to say it may be a major field. In the interests of the State, I was pleased to know there are coal deposits outside the Collie field, but I had the matter checked out because I was not aware of the vast reserves referred to by the member for Greenough. On the 16th August I asked the following question, seeking clarification from the Minister—

Will he advise the proven reserves of coal that exist in Western Australia outside the Collie coalfield basin?

The Minister replied—

"Proven reserves" are taken as being equivalent to "measured reserves". Such reserves are those which have been proven to a stage where mining is possible without further work.

There is a small quantity of indicated or "probable" reserves within the State, i.e. Wilga 5 million tonnes, Eneabba 37 million tonnes, and Eradu 13 million tonnes. There is no proof at the present whether these reserves could be mined on a commercially viable basis.

I wish the honourable member well but for the sake of the record I thought I should clarify the situation.

Mr McIver: They have to have something. There is no wheat up there.

Mr T. H. JONES: That is probably what he was thinking about.

I now wish to refer a matter to the Minister for Fuel and Energy. The Minister will be aware that when Amalgamated Collieries left the Collie coalfield it surrendered its leases, and unfortunately it also left behind many danger spots. I am not reflecting on the Government or the Mines

Department, but on the old mine sites there are areas of carbonaceous shale which are on fire. The Minister was good enough to write to me on the 16th August outlining the programme to overcome the situation, and he also had the courtesy to ask me whether I had any comments to offer.

It is a difficult problem to overcome. The former mining leases have been surrendered and some areas have been worked out. The companies have left the area. Young children have gone out onto these areas and have sustained severe burns from the carbonaceous shale which is alight. The Mines Department has roped off the areas and placed danger signs there, but unfortunately they have not stopped the children going onto the areas. Recently I had occasion to refer to the Minister a case of severe burning. I think the Mining Act should be amended to provide that when leases are surrendered they must be left in a state which is satisfactory to the Mines Department.

Mr Mensaros: We do not need an amendment because today the conditions of leases contain such provisions. At the time those leases were originally let, questions of environment did not come into them. This is the experience with a lot of old leases. At Greenbushes the only way we could rehabilitate the area was that the company came to the Government recently when the road was rerouted and we were able to put a condition in the new lease to say the area must be rehabilitated. What you are suggesting is happening now.

Mr T. H. JONES: I am saying it should be a general requirement.

Mr Mensaros: It is.

Mr T. H. JONES: Amalgamated Collieries must have taken millions of pounds out of Collie, and it is not to the company's credit that it put little back. Admittedly it created employment, but the two companies which are operating there now are leaving their mark in the town and assisting in development. Amalgamated Collieries ripped the guts out of the coalmining industry and I think it came out with a reasonable profit, but it left its marks behind. Even when it was operating the co-operative area there were mining areas alight. The Minister will know the history of 1960. A check with the Mines Department will reveal I am right. A number of areas were already alight before Amalgamated Collieries disappeared from the scene early in 1961. I do not think this is good enough.

The Government should look at the Mining Act and make it a general requirement that when any company surrenders a lease it must

not leave these problems behind; otherwise there will be enormous repercussions. This is a large and serious problem and it will cost thousands of dollars to overcome it. Young children are inquisitive; they like going to old mine sites and climbing on old locomotives. I am afraid one day we will have a major tragedy in the town with a large number of children being burnt. I hope I do not ever see the day when there is a fatal burn.

This area is wide open. It is within three-quarters of a mile of the main town. Children only have to ride out there on their bikes and step off, and they are on heated coal. I am mindful of what the Government is doing but I think the Mining Act should be amended to cover this type of situation.

I hope the Minister will consider that proposition and is prepared to give some consideration to amending the Mining Act to ensure greater safety. This situation is apparent in Collie today, but it could arise in other areas tomorrow. I hope the Minister will give earnest consideration to my request.

Collie is one of the few areas in the south-west that is developing at present, and this is due to the return to the use of coal. The small town of Shotts, to the east of Collie, has been attempting to obtain a water supply for years. The residents of the town rely on wells for their water, and the wells are drying up. There are some good housing blocks in the town and people would welcome the opportunity to buy them if water were available. Shotts is very close to the Muja power house, the Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd.'s operation at Muja, the Western Mining Company's operation at Western No. 2, and the No. 5 open-cut mine.

The former Minister for Water Supplies knows that we were hopeful water would be made available by tapping the main line which services the Muja power house from the Wellington Dam. We were hopeful because Mr Permain of the Country Water Supply Department visited Collie, and we thought everything would be all right. Unfortunately, I have now received a letter from the Deputy Premier. This letter is dated the 28th July of this year, and it reads as follows—

My colleague the Minister for Works and Water Supplies has asked the Under Secretary for Works to investigate the possibility of obtaining an underground supply of water in the vicinity of Shotts and should this prove feasible, the matter will be given further consideration.

The Donnybrook Shire Council has written to me asking me to take the matter up and with your permission, Sir, I would like to read the

letter from the shire council. It is dated the 20th June, 1977, and it reads—

re: Donnybrook District Hospital

Thank you for your letter of the 11th ultimo and receipt of the Hon. Minister's letter regarding improvements at the Donnybrook Hospital. Council was somewhat disappointed with the advice and explanation given and questions whether expenditure of \$500,000 is too much to expect in view of the sub-standard facilities at the hospital and neglect over many years.

Improvements at the Hospital were discussed at a recent well attended meeting of electors and in support of Council it was resolved that every effort be made to upgrade the hospital on a realistic basis of cost.

For your information we have been fortunate at long last to attract a resident doctor to Donnybrook and there is no doubt that improved facilities at the Hospital would certainly help in retaining his services in the town.

Anything that you are able to do to ensure further action in this matter would be appreciated.

That is the view of the local authority.

Recently I asked a question in the House about this matter and the reply was that it was still under consideration. I was referred to the earlier letter of the Minister for Health which stated the cost was excessive and the plans were being redrawn.

On the 10th August I asked the Minister for Health the following question—

Will he kindly advise what stage the replanning for the construction of the Donnybrook Hospital has reached?

To which he replied—

As I advised the member on 7th July, 1977, officers of both the Public Works Department and the Medical Department are continuing to explore possible solutions to what is a very difficult problem.

It would not be a costly operation to provide this service, and I urge the Minister to give it his attention, particularly in view of the shortage of building blocks. Perhaps the Minister for Fuel and Energy can tell us whether it is possible to tap the main line supplying the Muja power house. This main line comes from the pipeline which extends to the great southern area. I believe a member in another place has raised

this matter already, and I hope something will be done for the people living in the Shotts area.

I wish to refer to another matter on behalf of the local authority. Anyone who has travelled on the road from the main Collie-Roelands Road to the Wellington Dam is aware that the road is in a bad state of repair. The Minister for Tourism would agree with me that this matter has become a football—not a political football, but rather a football kicked between departments. Who is to accept responsibility for the widening of this road? We have taken the matter up with the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Tourism, but neither Minister will accept responsibility for this narrow road. It carries a good volume of traffic, and two or three fatal accidents have occurred on it. Surely we do not need to wait for more fatal accidents to occur before we do something about it. At weekends the road is popular with people travelling over it on picnics or for recreational purposes, and in the spring and summer months particularly the traffic is heavy.

I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Tourism in this House to look into this matter in conjunction with the Minister for Transport to see whether a permanent solution can be arrived at.

The Minister for Works inspected this area during a visit to Collie on Friday, the 24th June, and so he is aware of the situation.

It is unfortunate that the Minister for Health is not present in the House tonight because I wish to talk about the Donnybrook Hospital. The need to rebuild the hospital has been apparent for many years, but now that the town has a permanent resident doctor, the matter is urgent. The existing hospital was used as a residence for many years and it is now badly overcrowded. I raised this matter with the Government some time ago but unfortunately, because of the cost involved, the programme was not proceeded with.

I wonder why the problem is so difficult. There is an urgent need to upgrade the hospital. This is not only my opinion, but it is also the opinion of the shire councillors, and the opinion of residents generally. This matter has been under consideration for far too long, and surely some permanent solution can be found to this very urgent problem.

Turning now to another matter, from Press reports it is obvious the Government has decided to close the Greenbushes Police Station. On the 27th July, a deputation waited on the Minister for Police. The deputation included the member for Warren, Mr A. A. Lewis—representative for

the Lower Central Province—representatives of the Bridgetown-Greenbushes Shire Council, and the President of the Shire Council (Mr Louis Tuia). A submission was made to the Minister, but unfortunately in his reply he advised that irrespective of our views, after giving them consideration, he believed no argument could be made for the retention of the Greenbushes Police Station.

On behalf of the Donnybrook Shire Council, I ask the Minister in the light of the decision to close the Greenbushes Police Station whether any consideration has been given to expanding the strength of the force at Donnybrook or Balingup?

Mr O'Neil: It is regarded as not being necessary at this stage, but the work load at both stations is being kept under review to see whether it may be necessary to increase the strength at one or the other.

Mr T. H. JONES: I find that hard to understand in view of the report that was tabled, and in view of the work load there. In company with people from the local authority, I went to the Donnybrook Police Station and found the staff are overworked and cannot cope with the work load now.

Mr O'Neil: They should report that to the district inspector who is stationed at Bunbury, and who will convey the message to the planning and research section.

Mr T. H. JONES: If the Minister looks at the report of the sergeant in charge of the police station he will find the sergeant did notify the authorities of this position. I am presenting a plea on behalf of the people of Donnybrook, because it is almost impossible for these police officers to service the area extending beyond Balingup.

I do not know what the member for Warren has to say about the work load at Bridgetown, but certainly it will be recalled that I submitted a four-page report to the Minister saying that the sergeant of police is also the clerk of courts and the bailiff, and most of his duties are clerical. I wonder when typists and clerical assistants will be available to police. This is long overdue.

In Donnybrook there are two police officers and one RTA officer. The majority of the time of the sergeant is spent on book work. He does not have time for supervision. Is it not time the Government realised it would be preferable to reduce the clerical and typing load of sergeants of police—who are usually not expert typists anyhow—by employing clerical assistants? This would enable police officers in towns such as

this to get on with the job they should be doing. I do not put forward this argument as a criticism, but as an idea which I think will work.

The Minister, and all other members, would well know that too much time is spent on clerical work and not enough on combating crime. In the case of the Donnybrook police sergeant, he is the prosecutor in the court, the town bailiff, the clerk of courts, the agent for the SGIO, and the agent for the Public Trustee. One can imagine the volume of book work entailed in those duties. The time is overdue when we should be employing clerical assistants so that police officers will have more time to perform the duties which they rightly should perform. I hope this matter will receive attention from the Minister for Police.

I hope also that early investigations will be made regarding the policemen at Donnybrook who are unable to cope with the additional duties placed upon them as a result of the closure of the Greenbushes Police Station. I assure the Minister I will take up this matter with him personally and lodge a complaint about the work load because this is a matter which is exercising the minds not only of the policemen concerned but also the townspeople and, in particular, the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.

I would like to refer to another matter that has been exercising not only my mind but that of the member for Warren also. This is an anomalous situation in respect of the purchase of pine. I would like to quote from a letter I received from Mr G. Parke of Donnybrook, as follows—

Recently I have tried to purchase a quantity of dressed pine from the Forests Department's Ludlow mill, as has been the practice in the past. I was told by their office to take my business to Cullity's or Bunnings as the Forests Department would put a 45 per cent surcharge on the price to bring it up to par and not compete with the private companies' business.

You may already be aware of the Forests Department's pricing practices, but I am not happy about the situation and feel that it is adding fuel to the galloping timber & building prices.

It has reinforced my personal opinion that the Forests Department is the servant and not the master of the private timber companies.

Then follows a footnote stating that he sent a copy of that letter to the member for Warren.

What did the Minister for Forests have to say? I do not blame her, because unfortunately she is new to the Ministry. She said that if a person is an old client he will get his timber cheaper than a new client from the same mill. For the benefit of the record, and with your permission Sir, I would like to record the Minister's letter in *Hansard*. It is dated the 26th July, 1977, and reads as follows—

Dear Mr Jones,—

Sir Charles Court: That is a nice courteous start.

Mr T. H. JONES: Does not one always start a letter like that?

The SPEAKER: The member has three minutes remaining.

Mr T. H. JONES: The Minister went on to say—

Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in replying to your inquiries regarding pricing of orders for small quantities of sawn pine timber on behalf of your constituents, Mr. G. Parke and Mr. J. Trotter.

I am advised that the Forests Department has been obliged to adopt a policy of sales on a wholesale basis through the merchant trade as it is not set up for custom trade due to limitations in staff and processing facilities. It is also not considered appropriate for the Department to deal directly in the retail market when appropriate outlets have been established.

Small cash sales disrupt normal production runs and result in financial loss considerably greater than that of the value of the individual order. Even for orders in excess of \$300 value, it is necessary to raise surcharges for supply of non-standard sizes and of additional services such as docking to set length.

Then, in the final paragraph, she had this to say—

Notwithstanding the commercial justification for a surcharge on small custom orders, I appreciate that it may be seen as an imposition on small clients. I have therefore arranged for the surcharge to be waived in respect of long standing clients, but regret that it will not be possible to supply any new clients on this basis.

So unfortunately the situation is that if a person has been trading with the Forests Department for a considerable time he does not have to worry

about the surcharge, but if a new client requires timber he must pay a surcharge of 45 per cent.

Sir Charles Court: You always look after your old friends, don't you?

Mr T. H. JONES: The Premier certainly has not done that. He did not look after the Collie people too well.

Mrs Craig: That applies to orders below a certain value.

Mr T. H. JONES: Yes, but the person concerned lives close to the mill, so why should there be a difference in price?

Mrs Craig: That person has been accommodated, anyhow.

Mr T. H. JONES: I am saying there should not be a policy for one person and another policy for another person. Surely they are all taxpayers.

Mr H. D. Evans: How does one become an accepted customer?

Mr T. H. JONES: Surely it should not be the situation that a person who has been a customer will receive timber at a cheaper price than a new customer. I hope the Minister will reconsider the matter.

I wanted to mention many other matters, but in view of the late hour I will leave them to a later date.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Stephens.

*House adjourned at 12.38 a.m. (Wednesday)*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### HEALTH

#### *Registration of Radiographers*

529. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have any approaches been made to his department by the Institute of Radiographers requesting legislation to register radiographers?
- (2) Is it a fact that the only requirement for X-ray machines is that they be licensed to a medical practitioner and that after that anyone can legally operate the machine with little or no training?
- (3) Is it a fact that legislation to require registration of radiographers already exists in—
  - (a) Tasmania;
  - (b) the Australian Capital Territory; and
  - (c) the Northern Territory?

(4) Does the Government propose to introduce legislation to require registration of radiologists?

- (5) (a) If "Yes" when;
- (b) if "No" why not?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) and (2) No.
- (3) (a) Yes;
- (b) not known;
- (c) yes.
- (4) No.
- (5) (a) Not applicable;
- (b) Radiologists are registered medical practitioners under the Medical Act.

### ABORIGINES

#### *Accommodation*

534. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) What stage has the Government reached in planning for the long term need for accommodation for homeless Aborigines in and around the metropolitan area?
- (2) Is Government policy in line with the suggestion of Archbishop Sambell for more permanent camping areas to be made available?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) A special task force has been set up within the Department for Community Welfare to deal specifically with the plight of the homeless Aborigines in the Swan/Guildford area.

The temporary camp site at Lockridge is a first step and I have directed that within 12 months a permanent solution to the problem must be developed.

At the same time another specialist unit with my department is working on the overall problem of homeless Aborigines in the total metropolitan area. This unit will have completed its main task by July of next year.

A solution to this chronic problem can only be achieved by combining the resources of a number of different Government departments and voluntary agencies, such as the State Housing Commission, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal Hostels Ltd., the Aboriginal Advancement Council, New Era Aboriginal Fellowship and the Department for Community Welfare.

One of the main tasks of the special units is to identify the specific housing needs of Aboriginal families and individuals and to facilitate these needs being met by the appropriate agency or department. Meetings have been held and different proposals are now being studied.

- (2) One of the possible solutions being examined by the task force is the provision of permanent camp sites within the metropolitan area available to those Aboriginals who prefer this style of life.

#### COLLIER PINE PLANTATION

##### *Australia-Italy Club Hall*

561. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Referring to question 455 of 1977 regarding a Crown grant for land, is she able to advise if the land and buildings have now changed ownership?
- (2) If so—
- (a) is the change in accordance with the terms of the grant;
  - (b) who is the new owner;
  - (c) what were the terms of the change of ownership?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) to (c) Canning Location 2046 being the whole of the land comprised in Certificate of Title Volume 474 Folio 144A was transferred and surrendered to the Crown by the Australian-Italian Association of Western Australia Incorporated, to the intent that the said land be made available to the Swan Cottage Homes Incorporated to be held in trust for the purpose of "Aged Persons Homes".
- On 13th August, 1975, a Crown grant for the land, now designated Canning Location 2628, was issued in the name of the Swan Cottage Homes Incorporated to be held in trust for the purpose of "Aged Persons Homes".

The change of ownership followed negotiations between the parties whereby the Swan Cottage Homes were required to discharge the Rural and Industries Bank Mortgage by the payment of \$7470.59

and a further payment in cash of \$2 000 to the Australian-Italian Association.

In addition to the clearance of the Rural and Industries Bank Loan and cash payment, the Australian-Italian Association benefited by:—

- (i) Free use of the hall for their association meetings.
- (ii) Retention of the name of "AIA" in relation to the hall when it is retained for the use of elderly people.
- (iii) Preference to elderly relatives of "AIA" founders and committee personnel for future accommodation in any new aged persons' housing to be developed on the site.

#### CROWN LAND

##### *Naval Base*

562. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Lands:

With respect to those lots at Naval Base owned by the Crown, leased as residential and upon which holiday homes have been built:

- (a) how many lots have been leased;
- (b) on what dates do the leases expire;
- (c) has consideration been given to extending some of the leases to a common expiry date;
- (d) will "notices to vacate" or other such notice be given to lessees; and
- (e) if "Yes" when?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (a) 96 leases are current at present at Naval Base.
- (b) 43 on 31st March, 1978,  
8 on 30th September, 1978,  
1 on 31st December, 1978,  
4 on 30th June, 1979,  
2 on 31st March, 1980,  
3 on 30th June, 1980,  
30 on 31st December, 1980,  
1 on 31st March, 1981,  
1 on 30th June, 1981,  
3 on 30th September, 1981.
- (c) This has been considered but not adopted.
- (d) Yes.
- (e) During this month.

## COCKBURN SOUND

*Small Boat Harbour*

563. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Works:  
Is it intended to commence work in Jervoise Bay, Cockburn Sound, on a new breakwater to establish a small boat harbour and fitting-out basin?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:  
No.

## STATE ENGINEERING WORKS

*Henderson Site*

564. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Works:  
With respect to the State Engineering Works:  
(a) is the establishment of new works at Henderson still under consideration;  
(b) if "Yes" when is it anticipated that work on the new site might commence?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:  
(a) and (b) No.

## CROWN LAW DEPARTMENT

*Articled Clerks*

565. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Attorney-General:  
In view of law degree graduates being unable to find positions as articled clerks, will the Attorney-General give consideration to allowing the Crown Law Department to employ more articled clerks?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

No. Seven is the maximum number authorised by the Act and it is as many articled clerks as can be adequately trained and catered for by the Crown Solicitor.

In order to assist in overcoming the situation application was made last year to the Treasurer to allow the department to accept its full quota of 7 in lieu of 5.

Seven clerks have been in articles since the Treasurer's authority was obtained.

## CROWN LAND

*Naval Base*

566. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Lands:  
With respect to those lots at Naval Base owned by the Crown, leased to residents and upon which holiday homes have been built:  
(a) how many leases are in the name of persons whose address is given as that of the lot at Naval Base which they lease;  
(b) how many leases are in the name of persons whose address is given as being within the metropolitan area;  
(c) how many leases are in the name of persons whose address is given as being outside the Perth metropolitan area?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (a) 33;  
(b) 58;  
(c) 5.

567. *This question was postponed.*

## PRE-PRIMARY CENTRE

*Manjimup*

568. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Education:  
Is it proposed to build a pre-school centre at Manjimup or east Manjimup in the 1977-78 year?  
Mr P. V. JONES replied:  
Yes. A single unit transportable pre-primary centre is proposed for East Manjimup primary school.

569. *This question was postponed.*

## HEALTH

*Sulphur Emissions in Kwinana Area*

570. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Health:  
(1) Has that section of his department which services the requirements of the Clean Air Act been contacted recently by residents of the Kwinana area regarding sulphur emissions?  
(2) If "Yes" were such emissions described as causing extreme irritation and nausea?

- (3) What action is being taken to—
  - (a) ascertain the source of the emissions;
  - (b) prevent future nuisance to the residents of the area?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) No, but on the 26th August, 1977, the member's secretary relayed a complaint of this nature to the clean air section.
- (2) The emission was described as causing extreme irritation and nausea.
- (3) The complaint is currently being investigated.

## HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL

### *Federal Funds*

571. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health: Referring to his answers to my questions 406 and 464 of 1977, since—

- (a) his answer to question 406 shows that there will be a reduction in Federal funds for the drug education programme after allowing for inflation;
- (b) his answer to 406 indicates some cutbacks in the programme may be necessary; and
- (c) his answer to question 464 indicates no specific programmes will be reduced or abandoned,

will he explain where the cutbacks will occur?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (a) to (c) This question repeats, in substance, question 464 of the 24th August, and, accordingly, the Leader of the Opposition is referred to the reply to that question.

## TOURISM

### *Federal Grants: Replacement*

572. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Referring to the Minister's answer to my question 468 of 1977, will the State Department of Tourism be able to find funds to replace completely the Federal matching grants?

- (2) If not, what tourist projects are expected to have to be abandoned or reduced in scale?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) It is not intended to fill the void resulting from the discontinuance of Commonwealth tourism grants, which were determined on different parameters to those applying to this State's allocations.

At this stage, it is only possible to be specific in respect of the private sector.

Commonwealth grants are applied to selected private projects calculated to increase overseas visitor spending whereas State funds are only available to municipalities and other public bodies.

As a result of the Commonwealth decision, Government grant funds are no longer available towards the cost of private tourism works.

## HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES

### *Construction Programme*

573. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Referring to his answer to my question 466 of 1977, since:

- (a) there has been a 61 per cent cut in Federal funds for hospital development; and

- (b) this cut is much bigger after allowing for inflation,

does the State Government intend to make up the entire shortfall in Federal funds from State sources so that the hospital development programme can be continued this financial year at least at the same level as last financial year?

- (2) If not, what planned developments will have to be reduced or abandoned?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) and (2) This question repeats in substance question 466 asked on the 24th August, 1977. In turn, I can only repeat that details of the proposed hospital works programme will be made available when the General Loan Fund budget is presented to Parliament.



# STATES GRANTS (PARA-MEDICAL SERVICES) ACT

## Qualification of Western Australia

574. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health:

Referring to his answer to my question 465 of 1977:

- (a) what are the other sources of funds which do not have the limitations of the States Grants (Para-Medical Services) Act;
- (b) why cannot the States Grants (Para-Medical Services) Act also be exploited to obtain the maximum amount of funds for Western Australia?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (a) (i) the community health programme;
- (ii) the State subsidy scheme for chiropody services in senior citizens centres;
- (iii) the hospital fund;
- (b) the Commonwealth is considering the recommendations of the Bailey Report and in the meantime has suspended action on all new applications for funding under the States Grants (Para-Medical Services) Act.

# WATER SUPPLIES

## Jandakot Water Reserve Area

575. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

With respect to the Cockburn lakes system:

- (1) How near to Bibra, North, Yangebup and Thompson lakes are bores of the Jandakot water reserve area expected to be put down?
- (2) Are such bores expected to tap the same aquifers as those supplying the above lakes?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The distances of these lakes from the proposed sites of production wells are as follows:—  
Bibra Lake, 2 500 metres from edge of lake to nearest well;  
North Lake, 3 700 metres;  
Yangebup Lake, 1 900 metres;  
Thompson Lake, 2 200 metres.
- (2) Yes.

# WATER SUPPLIES

## Jandakot Water Reserve Area

576. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

With respect to the Jandakot water reserve area, have any studies been carried out to ascertain the present perimeters, depths and degrees of purity of the Cockburn lakes system so that when pumping commences the lakes can be suitably monitored?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Yes.

# FEDERAL YOUTH AFFAIRS OFFICE

## Activities, and Liaison with State Office

577. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) What formal or informal liaison has been established between the office of youth affairs established by the Australian Government and the State Government?
- (2) In what way have the activities of the office become manifest in this State?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) There has been considerable liaison at officer level between the Office of Youth Affairs and the Community Recreation Council. The Director of the Council attended a meeting of all States and the Commonwealth in Melbourne on the 11th August to discuss the co-ordination of services with this newly formed office.
- (2) The activities of the office have not become manifest in Western Australia as yet.

# HIGH SCHOOL

## Kalamunda

578. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Education:

In regard to the Kalamunda High School, would he advise—

- (1) Was a grant made to the Kalamunda High School for the purpose of planting trees and for landscaping?
- (2) What was the amount of this grant, if it was made?

- (3) How many trees were planted?
- (4) What landscaping was done?
- (5) Could he give a break-down of the costs involved in the work undertaken?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (5) Total works to an estimated value of \$10 000 were included under the annual planting contract. This included paving and the planting of trees, shrubs and ground cover. Details of the individual arrangements made are not documented under this method.

#### RAYMOND JAMES YATES

##### *Court Proceedings Transcript*

579. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister representing the Attorney-General:

- (1) Is the Attorney-General aware that the Under Secretary for Law wrote to me on 3rd August refusing to provide me with a copy of the transcript of court proceedings regarding the death of Raymond James Yates, unless I paid an amount of \$18 for the transcript?
- (2) Is it normal that members of Parliament have to pay such a fee?
- (3) If the fee is normally charged, would he table the transcript of the proceedings in the House?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) No.

#### PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES AND CHILD CARE SERVICES

##### *Federal Funds*

580. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) In view of his apparent unawareness of the effects of a \$50 000 cut back in Federal Government funds paid direct to local government authorities, pre-schools and child care services, will he familiarise himself with this field as the cut backs are of major concern to people involved with pre-schools and child care services?

- (2) Will he give consideration to making up any shortfalls in Federal Government grants in this area by the use of State Government funds?
- (3) Will he also make himself aware of the problems resultant from this reduced allocation to Western Australia so that he is in a position to make representations to the Federal Government as a result of his increased knowledge in the matter?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) I refer to my answer to question 514 asked by the member on Thursday, the 25th August. The funds referred to are, I understand, for care and associated services for children of which day care (child minding) is the major component.

The funding to local authorities from this source does not affect the level of pre-school and child care services now administered through the Pre-School Board.

#### RECREATION

##### *Local Authority Leisure Facilities*

581. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Recreation:

Adverting to his answer to part (3) of my question 513 of 1977, can he advise why he is unable to give further details as to areas in which recreation programmes may have to be reduced or abandoned and could he also advise why he is unable to name those programmes?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Funds for capital assistance for leisure facilities flowing from the Commonwealth in 1976-77 and 1977-78 were the result of commitments made in 1975-76, and no new commitments have been made subsequently by the Commonwealth.

However, the increase in level of commitments to this area by the State has been such that no local government programmes should have to be reduced or abandoned because of reduction in funds from the Commonwealth.

## URBAN TRANSPORT

*Federal Funds*

582. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How much did Western Australia apply for from the Federal Government in the 1976-77 Federal Budget for urban transport assistance grants?
- (2) How much did the State intend to apply for in the 1977-78 Federal Budget for the same purpose?
- (3) Is it not correct that if Western Australia's allocation for urban transport assistance grants was not decreased by 25.5% in the 1977-78 Federal Budget but had been maintained at the same level in real terms, the amount of funds available for new projects under this allocation would have been far higher than Western Australia has received?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) \$6 179 000 (including new and previously approved projects).
- (2) \$4 612 000 (including new and previously approved projects).
- (3) No Commonwealth funds were forthcoming for new projects in 1976-77. However, \$300 000 would be available for new projects in 1977-78, thus there is no decrease in 1977-78 as against 1976-77.

## RECREATION

*Local Authority Leisure Facilities*

583. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Recreation:

As his answer to part (2) of my question 513 of 1977, appears to refer only to State Government activities in the field of recreation, will he provide further information of the effects on local government recreation programmes of a 90% reduction in Federal Budget grants to Western Australia for recreational purposes?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

See my answer to question 581.

## SCHOOL

*Mount Tarcoola*

584. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Education:

Further to his answer to question 545 of 1977, in which he indicated that the new Mt. Tarcoola primary school would not be completed until some time during the first term 1978, what arrangements are planned for the prospective students of the school from the commencement of the school year until the time that the school is completed?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

A number of alternatives are under consideration. However, no firm arrangements can be made until the occupation date for the new school becomes known. This will become more clear when the contract for the building has been finalised.

## CROWN LAW DEPARTMENT

*Representation of District Court Judge*

585. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Attorney-General:

Is the Attorney-General aware:

- (1) That the Crown Law Department is acting for and has lodged a memorandum of appearance on behalf of a District Court Judge presently being sued in a civil action in the Supreme Court?
- (2) Is this,
  - (a) the beginning; or
  - (b) the continuation
 of a policy for the Crown to act for all citizens generally in civil actions?
- (3) Is he concerned that the action of the kind described in question (1) above will cause the people to be concerned as to the independence of the courts and that it will give rise to allegations of bias towards the Crown especially in criminal proceedings?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) The Crown lodged a memorandum of appearance as an interim measure only, realising that there was

a policy question involved. On further consideration for the sake of consistency with previous rulings the Crown Solicitor has decided that the Crown should not continue to act.

## LIQUOR

### *Television Advertisements*

586. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

- (1) Is not the well publicised view recently expressed by the Very Reverend Vernon Cornish and supported by thousands of concerned parents and responsible citizens that a total ban should be placed on alcohol advertisements on television, diametrically opposed to the Court Government's policy?
- (2) If not—why?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) It is difficult to determine the reasons motivating the questions in this form, as the member would know that advertising on television does not come within the powers and responsibilities of a State Government.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### WAGE INDEXATION

#### *Government's Attitude*

1. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the Government's attitude when it opposed the application for wage indexation at the last two such hearings, would the Minister now state the reasons for the Government's change of attitude inasmuch as it has been reported in the Press that it is to amend the legislation to provide for mandatory wage indexation?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

There has been no change of attitude by the Government on the wage indexation system.

At the last two hearings by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, the Government submitted that there should not be any wage increase for the 1977 March and June quarters.

That approach was not inconsistent with principle No. 1 of the commission's eight principles of wage determination. Principle No. 1 reads—

1. The Commission will adjust its award wages and salaries each quarter in relation to the most recent movement of the six Capitals' CPI unless it is persuaded to the contrary by those seeking to oppose the adjustment.

The Government's submissions were unsuccessful but the commission's decisions were accepted in the spirit of the wage indexation principles.

Consideration is being given to enabling legislation to afford the WA Industrial Commission discretion whether or not to pass on wage indexation increases with or without the consent of the Trades and Labor Council.

The WA Industrial Commission did not conduct separate hearings for the 1977 March and June quarters but the Government did seek a reopening of the commission's decision of the 7th December, 1976, which granted automatic wage indexation for those quarters.

## MIDLAND TOWING SERVICE

### *Mines Department Tender*

2. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Mines:

In answer to my question 161 the Minister stated he had approved the payment of the total quoted price of \$1250 to Midland Towing Service.

Would the Minister now take steps to ensure that the company receives its cheque, as at this date it has not been forthcoming?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

As I recall the question, the answer to it is that I have assured the member for Swan that payment would be made. If the cheque has not arrived it is due probably to the necessary administrative steps. I can assure the member for Swan I will again ask the department the reason for the delay.

## P. E. MULLALLY

*Tresillian Hostel Property*

## 3. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Health:

I apologise to the Minister for the relatively short notice of my question, which is as follows—

(1) Who were the signatories to the writ seeking the injunction to prevent the then Minister for Health from disposing of the properties of Tresillian?

(2) If one signature is that of P. E. Mullally, is this the same Mullally who was employed by the SEC at the time the writ was issued?

Mr RIDGE replied:

(1) and (2) As the member said, notice of the question was not delivered to my office until late this afternoon. Unfortunately, I have not had time to research the matter and I request that the question be placed on the notice paper.

## P. E. MULLALLY

*Tresillian Hostel Controversy*

## 4. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

While this question is asked with relatively short notice, it probably does not require much more. I ask—

(1) Is the Minister aware that P. E. Mullally was one of those closely involved in the Tresillian Hostel controversy?

(2) Is the Minister aware that at the time Mr Mullally was employed by the State Energy Commission?

(3) If the Minister had this knowledge, did he in any way act upon it?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

(3) I cannot comprehend this part of the question.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

*Reprinting*

## 5. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is it a fact that the Local Government Act is out of print and, in fact, has not been available for something like six months?

(2) When is it proposed that a reprint of the Local Government Act will be made?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

(1) and (2) I did not receive any notice of the question, but my understanding is that the reprint is under way, and it will be available in the near future.

## P. E. MULLALLY

*Discussions between SEC and Minister*

## 6. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Despite the fact that this is the second time the Minister has evaded a question on this issue, I will rephrase it.

*Point of Order*

Mr MENSAROS: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I ask the honourable member to withdraw his remark because it offends me.

Mr Tonkin: The Minister evaded the question.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Davies: The member has not named anyone yet.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not regard the words used by the member for Balcatta as unparliamentary, and I do not direct a withdrawal.

*Questions (without notice) Resumed*

Mr B. T. BURKE: In view of the fact that the Minister has twice evaded the provision of information in respect of questions I have asked on this matter, I rephrase the question.

If the Minister was, as he states, aware that Mr P. E. Mullally was one of those closely involved in the Tresillian controversy, and further, if he was aware—as he states—that at the time a P. E. Mullally was employed by the SEC, did he take any action or make any inquiries as a result of that knowledge?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

As the question is phrased, the answer is, "No". I made inquiries at that time whether or not the named person was an employee of the SEC.

But, as the question was phrased, as a result of this knowledge I did not make any inquiries.

**P. E. MULLALLY**

*Discussions between SEC and Minister*

7. **Mr B. T. BURKE**, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Would the Minister outline to the House the reason he made inquiries, at that time, about the employment of Mr P. E. Mullally by the SEC?

**Mr MENSAROS** replied:

I simply made inquiries as to whether the named person was an employee of the SEC because I had knowledge that he was involved not only in the Tresillian affair but also in various other matters and I wanted to know whether the name was that of the same person.

**P. E. MULLALLY**

*Discussions between SEC and Minister*

8. **Mr B. T. BURKE**, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Did the Minister in answer to a previous question tonight say that despite having knowledge of the fact that Mr Mullally was involved in the Tresillian controversy, and that he was also an employee of the SEC, he did not take action as a result of that knowledge? Did the Minister not say also that he took action because he knew Mr Mullally was involved in the Tresillian controversy?

**The SPEAKER**: It seems that the member is asking the Minister for Fuel and Energy to restate something he has already stated. In my view, the question is inadmissible.

**MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

*Salary Increases*

9. **Mr CARR**, to the Premier:

- (1) Are Government members to take up the increase in salaries outlined in the report tabled today?
- (2) Will Government members now take up the salary increase previously granted, but which has been foregone up to this time?

**Sir CHARLES COURT** replied:

- (1) and (2) I appreciate the concern of the member for Geraldton for the members of the Government and those who support the Government. However, the decision as to whether members take the increase included in the determinations of the tribunal is entirely a matter for individual members.

I want to say I believe the action of Government members in refraining from taking the earlier rises, during the time of the prices and wages freeze, was very commendable indeed.

**Mr Tonkin**: They refrained because of their other income.

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: I believe the action taken by the Government members set an example to the rest of the community, and I would have been appreciative if Opposition members had done the same.

**Mr Bryce**: Government members did as they were told by the Premier.

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: That will be the day!

**PRIVATE LIVES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS**

*Ministerial Interference*

10. **Mr B. T. BURKE**, to the Premier:

Will the Premier outline to the House the attitude of his party towards the deliberate interference by Ministers in the private lives of civil servants, either directly or indirectly?

**Sir CHARLES COURT** replied:

As I have told the honourable member previously the Premier does not have to know the attitude of his party because it is not necessary to have a policy on something that does not happen.

**Mr B. T. Burke**: Then why not sit down?

**Sir CHARLES COURT**: I remind the honourable member that if he has a specific case—and I emphasise the words “a specific case”—he should put it on the notice paper and I will answer the question.

**Mr Tonkin**: You will appoint a Select Committee with a majority of your members on it.