

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 24 August 1988

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 2.15 pm, and read prayers.

## MOTION - MANNING, IVEN WEMYSS

### *Condolences*

MR PEARCE (Armadale - Leader of the House) [2.17 pm]: I move, without notice -

That this House records its sincere regret at the death of Iven Wemyss Manning and renders its deep sympathy to his widow Jill and members of his family in their bereavement.

Mr Iven Manning died at the age of 70 on 20 July 1988. He served in the State Parliament for 24 years from March 1950 to March 1974, and represented the Legislative Assembly seats of Harvey and Wellington. He was Chairman of Committees for three years between 1963 and 65; he was the Government Whip between 1965 and 71; and he was the Opposition Whip between 1971 and 74.

He served his country in World War II in the 2/28th Battalion of the 9th Division in North Africa. He took part in the siege of Tobruk and was seriously wounded in the battle of Ruin Ridge where he lost an arm.

Mr Manning was well known for his community work in the Harvey district. His major involvements were with the RSL, Legacy and Rotary. He was also a member of the Junior Farmer movement and Patron of the Bunbury and Districts Men's Hockey Association.

Mr Iven Manning will be greatly missed by all, and I tender my deepest sympathy to his widow, Jill, and his family on behalf of the Premier and the Government.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch - Leader of the Opposition) [2.19 pm]: The Opposition supports the condolence motion moved by the Leader of the House.

Iven Manning was a long term member of the Liberal Party, serving in this Parliament for 20-odd years. I always found Iven to be very sincere in his approach to all issues. He represented his electorate in a fashion which has not been equalled by many people in this Parliament. I think the true test of Iven Manning was that even after he retired from Parliament - and he retired at a relatively young age - he continued to support the Liberal Party for which he had fought and represented for so long.

He went to many functions, making sure that his point of view was still heard and that he was still representing the interests of his community, even though it was only in our party forum rather than in the Parliament. He left a widow, Jill, and a family whom I know reasonably well. I know they have mourned his loss as did many hundreds of people in Bunbury who attended his funeral. I know some members opposite also attended that funeral and I thank them personally for the tribute they paid to a man who represented not only the Liberal Party but also our State in a fine manner. The people of the south west can be justifiably proud of the contribution Iven Manning made to the people of Western Australia.

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [2.21 pm]: I would also like to pay tribute to the late Iven Manning.

Iven was the former member for my area; in fact, when I first went to Harvey he was the sitting member there. He was highly regarded in the district. He had lost an arm during the war but that handicap did not hold him back in any way. In fact, it did not seem to be a handicap at all. He played hockey and golf, and when I went to Harvey 20 years ago, when Iven was around 50, he was still playing hockey. That is quite commendable even for a person who is not handicapped, but for a person who had lost an arm, playing hockey at the age of 50 was remarkable. He was highly regarded in his community, and until his death he was still patron of many of the associations in the area, which he continued to patronise in the way an active member of Parliament would do. He was extremely highly regarded and his death is a great loss to the community of the south west.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [2.22 pm]: Personally, and on behalf of the National Party, I

support this condolence motion. Iven Manning was the Liberal Party Whip when I first entered this House in 1971. As such I had contact with him and always found him to be a fair and reasonable man to deal with. We recognise that he was a man who served his country well, not only in peace but also in war. We join with all members in this motion and send our condolences to all members of his family.

**MR D.L. SMITH (Mitchell)** [2.23 pm]: I join in this condolence motion to the wife and family of Iven Manning. My first experience with him was as a lad of about 12 years of age. I had taken an interest in hockey and was looking for extra practice. I went to Forrest Park in Bunbury during a carnival hoping to find that one of the teams was a man short. Unfortunately, the team with a man short was playing against Harvey and Iven Manning was in the goals. He is almost solely responsible for my conception of hockey goalies; that is, they are slightly mad. He came rushing out of goals and in a fashion wiped me out. However he took a great deal of interest in the injuries I received and thereafter, throughout my life, he kept an interest in my well being. I met him on many occasions in our public and private life.

I perhaps added to my esteem in his eyes when I married Tresslyn Demarte who was a resident of Bengier and at one time a member of the Junior Farmers Federation. Iven Manning was a special friend of hers and always greeted us with the great warmth he extended to everyone.

Iven Manning can only be described as one of those rare people in public life who conveyed a feeling of great warmth, good humour and great caring for everyone he met, together with a great concern for all issues which confronted the community. I believe he was a person whom members on both sides of this House could emulate in public life. I thought it noteworthy when I read through the death notices that he had as many death notices from this side of the House as from the other side. That was a tribute to the way he played his politics.

As mentioned, he was a member of the Rats of Tobruk having been in the Anti Tank Association of the 28th Battalion. He lost his arm at El Alamein but did not allow that to be a handicap during his later life. On leaving Parliament he continued an active role in all community associations of which he was a member. He was the State country vice president of the RSL; a member of the Harvey RSL, Legacy and a very active person in those capacities. At almost every RSL dinner I attended in my electorate he would be there taking an active interest in the welfare of all the veterans he knew. He was a patron of many associations but especially that of the Bunbury District Men's Hockey Association and was heavily involved in the Harvey Agricultural High School.

In mid life Iven Manning lost his first wife, Hope, and married his second wife, Jill, and raised a second family. He is survived by seven children and many grandchildren. I believe that he will be not only very fondly remembered by them but also by all people in the south west. I hope that the Harvey and south west communities will find some way to provide an appropriate memorial to record his life and the contribution he made to the development of our region.

**MR MENSAROS (Floreat)** [2.26 pm]: I wish to say a few words in support of this motion because I am not only one of the few who served with Iven Manning in this Parliament but also he was a close friend of mine from 1950 when I came to Australia. I met him at my first workplace where the manager was Iven Manning's brother in law. I remained close friends with Iven Manning as well as with another friend who also became a member of Parliament and one of your predecessors, Mr Speaker.

I recall vividly visiting the Manning family in Harvey where they would come together with the Guthrie family for a family cricket game with the children and other friends. After becoming a member of Parliament I sat for six years beside Iven; three years on the Government side and three years on the Opposition side, on the seat next to the Whip.

We often refer to deceased people as good men and I think there would be no-one more appropriate than Iven Manning who could be referred to in that way. I mean that in the sense that during the six years when I was daily associated with him I cannot recall a single comment made by Iven Manning which would have been detrimental about anyone - his colleagues, advisers, or anyone else. Very few people can go through life in that way; with an almost biblical goodwill. I feel privileged, as do all his friends, to have known him.

**MR WATT** (Albany) [2.29 pm]: I would like to add briefly to this condolence motion in respect of the late Iven Manning, not only on my own behalf but also on behalf of the Albany Branch of the Liberal Party, because for most of the time that I have been involved in politics and with the Liberal Party, that branch has been in the Forrest Division with which Iven Manning has also been associated.

I share the sentiments expressed by previous speakers about Iven Manning, the man. He possessed a great deal of natural wisdom - not necessarily academic achievement or learning. He was able to offer, and did so willingly, advice to anyone who sought it. That advice was always solid and of a practical nature. I recall in my early years as a member of Parliament that he would always ask how things were going and discuss any problems; whenever I sought his advice and got it I regarded it as good advice.

Notwithstanding his disability, he was able to achieve a great many things that many of us who have all our faculties would envy. In my view he possessed a quiet but sincere natural dignity and was, in every sense of the world, a gentleman. I am sure that this community is the poorer for his passing.

I join with others in expressing my deepest sympathy to his wife Jill and to all the members of his family.

Question passed, members standing.

### PETITION

#### *Conservation - Shark Bay*

**MR HASSELL** (Cottesloe) [2.32 pm]: I present a petition in the following terms -

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

We, the undersigned respectfully sheweth:

That following the Hon. Minister for Planning's promises, made at the public meeting at Shark Bay on 24 March 1988, in which he said "if the local people do not want Heritage Listing of the Hamelin Pool then the State Government will not proceed to nominate it and will oppose that Listing . . . in the most unequivocal terms that the State Government will oppose the total listing of Shark Bay for World Heritage at all . . .", that the people of Shark Bay and other citizens are deeply concerned that the Government has agreed that further consideration be given to World Heritage listing for Shark Bay, and

- (a) believe the special features of the region can be best protected through finalisation of the Shark Bay Plan in consultation with local people,
- (b) do not want transfer of control of the area to the Commonwealth or overseas influences,
- (c) calls on the State Government and Parliament to cease consideration of World Heritage listing,
- (d) calls on the State Government to oppose and fight against any World Heritage listing.

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

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

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

[See petition No 49.]

### BILLS (5) - INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

#### 1. Agricultural Legislation (Penalties) Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Grill (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.

2. Western Australian Greyhound Racing Authority Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mrs Beggs (Minister for Racing and Gaming), and read a first time.
3. State Engineering Works Repeal Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Troy (Minister for Works and Services), and read a first time.
4. Criminal Code Amendment Bill.
5. Mining Amendment Bill.  
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr House, and read a first time.

## SWAN RIVER TRUST BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 2 June.

**MR WATT** (Albany) [2.40 pm]: I am pleased that this Bill has at last come on for debate in the House. For the last two weeks of the last session of Parliament we were promised every day that this legislation would be first on the Notice Paper for the next day.

**Mr Pearce**: I told you that yesterday, and it was true.

**Mr WATT**: I guess eventually the Minister had to get it right, but I know that the Minister for Waterways and I share the same inconvenience. Having prepared for debate on this issue about three months ago, we now find that we have had to refresh our memories about the matter we had prepared. That is a bit annoying.

I thank the Minister for providing for a briefing from departmental officers for some of my colleagues and me before the Bill was introduced. That briefing was helpful. I thank him for opening the doors for dialogue with Dr Bruce Hamilton as occasion demanded.

It is significant that most capital cities in the world have been established as port cities or on rivers. An essential feature of so many cities in the world is that they have been built on a river, and Perth is no exception. In fact, Perth was originally called the Swan River Colony, which shows the significance of the river for the people who established the settlement here in 1826.

**Mr Thomas**: 1829.

**Mr WATT**: That is right.

**Mr Thomas**: You are getting mixed up with Albany.

**Mr WATT**: The member is quite right. Albany did have a head start on the rest of the State.

**Mr Thomas**: You got overtaken by events though.

**Mr WATT**: Regrettably, the member is right. He must have read the history of Albany.

The river has many uses and it is very much used. It is good that the waterway forms a focal part of our city and that it is so much used. The river is very important and needs to be carefully managed. It is used for a wide range of activities, including tourism which everybody enjoys. I am sure that every visitor who comes to Perth finds a trip to Kings Park an absolute priority. I am sure that none of us could imagine Perth without a view of the Swan River from Kings Park. It certainly is one of the most outstanding views of any city in the world. The views of the river from the city and from much of the real estate around the city are enhanced by the Swan River. Indeed, the river would be responsible for adding many millions of dollars to the value of real estate which enjoys river views. I guess that in turn has some spin off for local authorities which rate those properties.

The river has an active and a passive recreational role. The recent decision to build dual use cycle paths and walkways around the river has been a tremendous thing and has provided people with an opportunity for exercise and recreation which is very good in terms of health promotion. People like to participate in river trips and all sorts of other trips using the river. It is used for swimming, fishing, sailing, power boating, rowing, windsurfing, water skiing, and even parasailing. Thus a very varied range of activities take place on the river; there may be others that I have not mentioned.

The SPEAKER: Order! The level of background conversation is exceedingly high. I understand that some of you may have more important business to discuss. If that is the case and it is urgent, I would ask that you do it either much more quietly or somewhere else.

Mr WATT: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Swan River is without doubt the focal point of the City of Perth and the city's reputation amongst visitors as one of the most beautiful cities in the world is enhanced by the presence of the river. Those much older than I will have seen many changes to the river, not only to its physical nature, but also with respect to its management. The Perth shoreline, for example, has seen many changes. Those much older than I will recall such things as swimming baths that used to be dotted along the river. There were numerous jetties, rowing clubs, ferries and all sorts of activities right along the river. Indeed, I can only just remember seeing during the war time Caralinas moored, if that is the right word, in the bay at Crawley. That used to create quite a lot of interest.

Since then we have seen quite a lot of development on the river, including the development of the Narrows interchange and the building of the Narrows Bridge. Associated with the Narrows interchange has been a quite beautiful development of the parks and gardens surrounding the area. I am sure that some of us can recall the late Bessie Rischbieth who was one of the original protesters at development on the Swan River. Had Mrs Rischbieth been around today to see the development of the Swan River, I am sure she would have been pleased with the changes that have taken place. I do not believe that the river has lost anything by the development that has taken place.

Mr Clarko: Except the rebuilding of the old Swan Brewery.

Mr WATT: We might come to that a little later.

Prior to that development there were large areas of shallow water which were mosquito infested and which were neither useful nor ornamental, but all of that has changed. All of this has focused public attention on the river, its beauty and its amenity. In particular, it has focused attention on the need to conserve it and to manage it properly. Over the years there have been many changes in the management of the river. Yesterday I received in the mail a history of the Swan River management from The Western Australian National Parks and Reserves Association. I am indebted to it for that fairly lengthy history of the Swan River.

It was interesting to read of the changes that have taken place over the years. It was also interesting to see that in the 1950s and 1960s there was concern about parts of the river being used for sanitary land fill. As far back as the 1870s and the 1920s publicity and controversy surrounded the smell coming from the river and water pollution. Those sorts of issues have been with us for a long time. In 1943 the Swan River Reference Committee was established to advise the Minister for Works and in 1959 the Swan River Conservancy Board was established. In 1977, the Swan River Management Authority came into being after the Waterways Conservation Act was introduced in 1976.

Now, in 1988, we are to have the Swan River Trust. The area of management vested in the Swan River Management Authority related to the river only up to the high water mark. That, of course, meant that no land was included, and, inevitably, that caused not only confusion but also conflict between the various parties who wished to stake some sort of claim and certainly wished to be involved in decision making not only about river usage but also the use of land areas adjacent to the river.

In December 1986 Mr C.L. Zelestis was commissioned to review the relevance and effectiveness of legislation and administration arrangements concerning the protection and management of the Swan and Canning Rivers. He produced an excellent report from which I will quote during this debate. That report was presented in May 1987 and in it Mr Zelestis commented on the conflict between land use and water use saying in part at page 15 of his report -

... where the provisions of the Waterways Conservation Act are in conflict with the provisions of the Bushfires Act 1954, the Health Act 1911, The Land Act, any Act providing for the conservation of wildlife or indigenous flora, any Act related to the powers of a Port Authority insofar as such powers relate matters affecting navigation or the conduct and management of the port, or any Environmental Protection Act, the provisions of those Acts prevail over those of the Waterways Conservation Act. Thus

no power conferred by the Waterways Conservation Act may be exercised where there would be inconsistent with or would limit or restrict the exercise of a power under any of the other Acts mentioned...

In summing up that situation, it was very clear that there was a recipe for conflict.

Although the Waterways Conservation Act was established to protect the river environment, there was considerable conflict from time to time with other Acts which reduced its effectiveness. I think that perhaps the Mosman Park Tea Rooms was a very good example of that sort of conflict where nobody was quite sure who had what responsibility. I quote now from page 14 of Mr Zelestis' report, which states -

Management and protection of the foreshore of the river is inextricably bound up with management and protection of the rivers themselves.

So the whole thing is interrelated. I am sure we have all experienced this problem of interdepartmental authority, conflict, or rivalry. It quite often results in unnecessary delays while they sort out who is going to have the last say. In the process it often involves additional cost, usually unnecessary, and also inconvenience while the battle between the departments goes on.

I came across another quote that is quite unrelated to the issue but really sums up that departmental conflict very well. It appeared in *Paramatta District Council v Lutz* as reported in the *Australian Torts Reporter*. The court was presided over by Mr Justice Kirby, and the report is as follows -

What happened in the six months following the owner's failure to comply with the notice was described by the President of the Court as "ill-directed activity by numerous officials with overlapping functions operating within inefficient systems all too content with postponing decisions and delaying performance of their duties, apparently satisfied to substitute the preparation of still more memoranda for resolute action".

This, he said, was "a common problem of late 20th Century public administration".

I am sure that we can all relate to that.

Mr Hodge: It sounds like something out of *Yes Minister*.

Mr WATT: It does. It is a classic piece of gobbledegook, but sums up the situation very well. There are other conflicts between local authorities and the EPA, and one could probably throw in the State Planning Authority as well.

I think it is fair to say that river management had been shown to be less than perfect and that would have been the reason the Government commissioned Mr Zelestis to make his report. During the preparation of his report many submissions emphasised to Mr Zelestis the need for change. In summarising, he identified four main areas of inadequacy. They were: Overlapping responsibilities of various Government agencies; inadequate coordination of agencies, especially in relation to development applications; no effective means of assessing the overall impact of a proposal on the river environment; and, geographical limitations on certain statutory powers which tend to reduce the effectiveness of those powers.

Mr Zelestis therefore put forward two alternative proposals. The first was a Swan and Canning River Planning Council to be under the control of the State Planning Commission and to fill a coordinating role. Indeed, I think that proposal was actually put forward in a submission to Mr Zelestis by the State Planning Commission. It was, therefore, not particularly surprising when on 28 May 1988 it was reported in *The West Australian* that planners were opposed to the proposed Swan River Trust. That article stated -

The chairman of the WA division of the Australian Association of Planning Consultants, Mr Douglas Drake, said the association agreed the river system, including its foreshores, should be treated as a single entity for planning and management.

But taxpayers did not need another bureaucracy.

He said the re-allocation and co-ordination of the existing plethora of statutory authorities could be achieved without the creation of another one.

That was really the position that the Opposition held.

That was the matter we discussed during the briefing with Dr Hamilton and is, fundamentally, a view that the Opposition still holds. Notwithstanding that, the Opposition will not be opposing this Bill but just felt that perhaps the creation of yet another bureaucracy was unnecessary.

That view expressed by the planners was also conveyed to me in a letter from the Kalamunda Shire Council when I sought comments after the Bill was introduced. The letter states -

... Council is concerned about the prospect of another statutory body being given the power and authority to take over planning control over areas traditionally managed by the State Planning Commission and Local Authorities.

It is Council's opinion that the role of the Swan River Trust could simply be vested into the State Planning Commission rather than establish yet another government Agency, thereby further complicating the planning process.

Planning controls in the Metropolitan Region should be under the auspices of the State Planning Commission and not various statutory bodies, e.g. Waterways Commission and Environmental Protection Authority via their respective Acts. It would appear that planning controls and the statutory powers of the State Planning Commission have been slowly but surely eroded by such proposals.

The Government then chose to adopt the second of those proposals put forward by Mr Zelestis, which was for a single authority also having a coordinating role, but not to totally replace all the powers of those other agencies, which with the exception of the Swan River Management Authority will disappear.

During the process of developing this Bill I am happy to say that the Government had extensive consultation with local government and other authorities. Whereas initially I believe some quite strong opposition was expressed, by and large all those areas of conflict have pretty well been ironed out, and I have sought comment from all the local authorities to be affected by it. Most have contacted me indicating that, as a result of the consultation process followed, they are now in the main well satisfied with the Bill which has been presented.

Although the Opposition will be supporting this Bill, it has a number of queries which I would be grateful if the Minister could address during his reply. The first is what is to become of the Jetties Act? The Acts Amendment (Swan River Trust) Bill, which is to be debated immediately after this Bill, will give power to the Swan River Trust to give approvals for new jetties. What will become of existing jetties, the licensing, policing and concerns for safety of those jetties? Is this to become part of the responsibility of the Swan River Trust, or how is it to be handled?

My second query relates to local government boundaries. Most local government boundaries, where they have river frontages, follow the high water mark of the river, but there are two exceptions. Mr Zelestis referred to those two exceptions. The first appears on page 78 of the report relating to the City of Perth. It is important that I should read for inclusion in *Hansard* the section dealing with that subject under the heading, "City of Perth boundary, 11.2." It reads -

Three small areas of the rivers fall within the boundary of the City of Perth. Firstly, there is a very narrow strip running east of Barrack Square parallel to the edge of the rivers and including the waters between Heirisson Island and the western foreshore (ie the City side of the rivers) up to the northern alignment of the Causeway. Secondly, there is another narrow strip along the edge of the rivers to the west of Barrack Square and ending in the bay which lies between the Narrows Bridge and Barrack Square. Thirdly, the area of water where Crawley Baths originally stood opposite a section of Mounts Bay Road remains within the City of Perth.

He goes on to say -

It is understood that the first two areas were included in the City of Perth many years ago in anticipation of proposed road widening which ultimately did not proceed. The third area was included to enable the City to manage the baths.

The second area relates to East Fremantle. It might be in the Minister's electorate, I am not sure. In respect of that area, Mr Zelestis said this -

In about 1965 the boundary of the Town of East Fremantle was extended to the middle of the Swan River, apparently to enable the Town to finance and provide certain mooring facilities on the river.

It is interesting that he should have said that because, before I read that, somebody told me that the area had been included in the Town of East Fremantle so that it could rate the Oyster Beds. I would not know whether that is correct or not, but whatever the reason, on page 79 of his report, Mr Zelestis had this recommendation -

That there be a full examination of the present justification, if any, for the continued extension into the rivers of the boundaries of the City of Perth and the Town of East Fremantle.

That is something which needs to be considered while we are dealing with the whole subject of river management, reports being commissioned and everything. Since Mr Zelestis has made that recommendation we need to know what the Government is going to do. I believe it should bite the bullet, and if those areas are not to be used for the purposes proposed - I remember the controversy surrounding the widening of Mounts Bay Road by reclaiming some of the river which would have involved some beautiful palm trees and a whole range of arguments were used at the time - alternative plans should be adopted.

My next query relates to the Swan River Management Authority, which will disappear as a result of this Bill. Mr Zelestis makes this comment on page 114 of his report about the future role of the Waterways Commission -

Because the SRMA has strong statutory and administrative connections with the Waterways Commission, the proposal to dissolve the SRMA leads to a re-examination of the present statutory role of the Waterways Commission in relation to the rivers.

I ask the Minister to comment on the Waterways Commission in relation to the rivers.

My next query is why it is called a trust, and whether that has any special implications. Trusts are usually established for some particular purpose. I am curious to know whether this must comply in some special way with the Trustees Act, or what the implications of the trust are.

Mr Hodge: It will be a private trust so that people can leave moneys to it.

Mr WATT: I think the Minister mentioned that in the briefing or in his introductory speech, but it strikes me as odd. Can he imagine somebody leaving a bequest to the Metropolitan Transport Trust as it used to be, or something like that?

Mr Hodge: Not that, but I could imagine people leaving money to the management of the river.

Mr WATT: Mr Zelestis proposed the name "trust" in his report, but he said it was for the purpose of giving it a name only. He seemed to have no very strong views about it, but I thought I should raise the matter for clarification.

Some other concerns relate to the future of some of the riverside activities. I would be interested to know whether in the future, under the Swan River Trust, the Minister would have the power to control the construction of structures such as the Burswood Island Casino, and whether he would have power under this Act to control the erection of buildings, such as the replacement or refurbishing of the old Swan Brewery. The member for Karrinyup mentioned the old Swan Brewery a few moments ago, which highlights the concern the community has felt for the beauty and amenity of the river in that area.

I would be interested to know whether the Minister shares my view that the old Swan Brewery is amongst the largest ruins adjacent to the Swan River foreshore. It is an ugly eyesore on the views both of and from Kings Park. As was mentioned before, they are a very important part of the tourist amenities of Perth.

I would be interested if the Minister could tell the House the degree of involvement he might have had with plans for redeveloping that site, and whether, as Minister for Waterways, he



has been kept up to date with the proposed developments. I think we could assume from the publicity in the papers that there has been a plethora of different plans and proposals, because every time the Government announced it would take certain action with the old brewery, the heat came on and it would respond to that public criticism and modify its proposal.

I would be interested to know the extent to which the Minister was consulted on those matters in the past and whether it would be necessary for the area to be included in the management area. In order for the Minister to be consulted in the future I think it would be useful if we were to see a large scale plan. Although we saw a plan previously it consisted of several sheets. If a large scale plan were brought into Parliament members could acquaint themselves with it and I, for one, could refresh my memory.

Mr Hodge: What plan?

Mr WATT: The plan of the management area; the land areas which are to be included.

Mr Hodge: I gave the member for East Melville a detailed map at the end of last session.

Mr WATT: I am sorry; I was not aware of that. I think it would be good if members were to look at that plan, particularly those members who are not affected by it, because it is something about which we must all make decisions and we should know what we are deciding on.

There is concern in some quarters that the legislation vests too much power in the Minister for Waterways. Some people are not convinced that the mechanisms for resolving disputes and conflicts between the Minister and the Minister for Planning will be satisfactory. The Bill provides that where there is a dispute and the Minister cannot decide what to do a review committee will be appointed. Under the terms of the legislation, the review committee can be a committee of one. That seems a contradiction in terms, because in my view if the Minister for Waterways were to appoint a committee of one, it could be that he would appoint someone disposed to his point of view. I am not casting aspersions on the present Minister but in the future there will be other Ministers and as I said a future Minister wanting to decide an issue in a particular way could appoint someone disposed to his point of view. I think the old adage of safety in numbers is very true in this case, and it would be better if there were a minimum of two people on the committee. I intend to move an amendment to put just such a suggestion into effect.

I have also discussed this legislation with the Conservation Council, which has a number of concerns about it. I cannot remember the date on which I discussed the Bill with the council, but it was after the legislation was introduced. The council was somewhat critical that although it had written to the Minister on 9 November last year, at that stage it had not yet received a reply. I do not know whether there have been any later discussions with the Conservation Council. One particular concern of the council related to the membership of the proposed council; that is, that the membership does not adequately or accurately reflect the purposes of the Bill.

The long title of the Bill reads -

"AN ACT to establish a body with planning, protection and management functions in respect of the Swan and Canning Rivers . . ."

In respect of planning, there is a representative of the State Planning Commission on the board; there are representatives from local authorities and there are also representatives from the Department of Marine and Harbours. However, in the area of protection, nobody seems to have been appointed with that special expertise. There is no-one from the Environmental Protection Authority on the board; there are no representatives from the Department of Conservation and Land Management, and of course there is nobody from the Conservation Council, or from any other conservation group.

It is true it is possible for such people to be appointed from the two persons referred to in clause 12(1)(g), but the Conservation Council would much prefer, given the long title of the Bill including the word "protection", that somebody was appointed as a right rather than subject to the discretion of the Minister of the day. Max Hipkins is a member of the Swan River Management Authority -

Mr Hodge: Only at the discretion of the Minister of the day, and I appointed him.

Mr WATT: That is good but the fact remains - and this is the point I am making - that there is a person concerned with environmental protection on that authority. I would be interested to know whether that person's membership is to be transferred or whether he will be reappointed to the Swan River Trust; perhaps some other favoured son or daughter will be appointed to the new trust. Max Hipkins is certainly well respected in the area of conservation. I certainly would be more than happy to see him reappointed. Certainly I share the view of the Conservation Council that the legislation should require a member with a protection role, and while that may well happen in practice, it is not stated in the Bill.

The Conservation Council was also concerned about the trust membership being top heavy with Government representatives. I think we are all concerned about that, but I do not intend to debate it at any length. There is a difficulty in finding people with the appropriate expertise because quite often they are working in those management areas. I am always sensitive about these bodies being top heavy with Government appointments, but I do not wish to cast any aspersions on the integrity of the people who work in those areas. I am sure they contribute honestly and competently to the work they are asked to do.

Some dissatisfaction also has been expressed about local government representatives, but I will debate that during the Committee stage because the Liberal Opposition intends to move an amendment in respect of that matter. Suffice to say the trust appears to be somewhat top heavy with Government nominees; but local government must still provide a panel of three names, from which the Minister may select one of his choice. Therefore, the Local Government Association still does not necessarily get its preferred nominee onto the trust; in a sense the person to be selected from the panel of three, and recommended by the Local Government Association, is a de facto ministerial appointment.

The Opposition accepts the need for change and it commends the Government for its consultative approach and the nature of its preparations in respect of this Bill. I compliment Mr Zelestis for his thorough and comprehensive work.

I support the Bill.

**MR LEWIS** (East Melville) [3.19 pm]: From the outset I intend to take a stronger line than my colleague and say that I see this legislation as the creation of additional and unnecessary bureaucracy.

The legislation, in my opinion, has been put together to create a bureaucracy on the basis of a demarcation dispute centred around the controversial Mosman Park Tearooms. I believe it is a complete overreaction by the Government. The Government has prepared two separate pieces of legislation resulting in a bevy of regulations to resolve a problem which had existed in respect of the Mosman Park Tearooms, and which I saw as an argument between Government departments and the Ministers responsible for those departments, where strong government did not prevail. Consequently a decision was not made to put in place what should have happened, and we then must have this consensus or committee stage created. I believe it is not necessary to legislate to this extent. I believe the existing processes could have been refined or honed a little more to regulate the Swan, Canning, Avon and other rivers in the metropolitan region. The sad part is that the bureaucracy continues to grow. We all know that departments need to grow to justify their existence.

Mr Thomas: Not under this Government.

Mr LEWIS: The member for Welshpool can say that, but the facts prove different. The member can mark my words: In five years' time, if the incoming Liberal Government does not throw all of these instrumentalities out, the bureaucracy will continue to grow, and will continue to receive more and more funds from the Government at a greater cost to the community. And for what?

The problems with the Mosman Park Tea Rooms could not be solved because Ministers and departments were arguing among themselves. That is the reason that this Bill has been introduced. I believe the problems could have been resolved by the Government's acceptance of one of the options proposed. That option was that the existing procedures could have prevailed under a metropolitan rivers planning council. That could have operated with only minor amendments being made to the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act or to State planning legislation.

I believe that there should be better coordination of the development, planning and

management of the metropolitan rivers. However, I do not agree with the way the Government is proposing to solve a problem which I believe it thinks is far bigger than that which exists. Instead of putting in place another bureaucracy, it could have more easily and with a lot less expense refined the existing legislation. We now have 30 authorities - 20 local and 10 Government - controlling the management of the metropolitan rivers. The Government proposes that there be 31 authorities. However, there is a very subtle difference with this proposed authority. The Bill places absolute authority in the hands of the Minister for Environment.

The second reading speech suggests that the public will be able to comment on the management of the Swan River and the trust will have power to deliberate on those comments. The speech stated that the Minister will not be able to overturn the recommendations made by the trust unless his deliberations are considered by the trust. However, 10 clauses further on, the Bill places absolute power in the hands of the Minister to direct the trust. Notwithstanding input from the public or other relevant authorities, the Minister for Environment has power to direct the trust's decision making process. I am disappointed that the public has not been made aware of the fact that all the Bill does is make the councils redundant and vests all power in the Minister for Environment. At this time when we are trying to reduce Government costs and the burgeoning bureaucracy we should not be creating another Government instrumentality. We should be attempting to wind back and to make what exists already work better. We should not be attempting to create another bureaucracy which is a guise for placing ultimate power in the hands of the Minister to do what he likes with the rivers in the metropolitan region.

My colleague, the member for Albany, said that the planning consultants of Western Australia expressed their concern to the Minister about the changes being made to the normal convention and planning laws. This Bill overrides the planning conventions relating to the Swan River and the land contiguous to it. The House knows that the Swan River was previously controlled by the State Planning Commission and came under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act. This Bill removes its control from that legislation and from the jurisdiction of the State Planning Commission and vests that jurisdiction in the hands of the Minister for Environment. The sad thing is that our planning conventions have been refined over the last 70 or 80 years and have served this State very well.

With this Act we are fundamentally changing those conventions and Statutes to do with our planning process and a whole new ball game is being put in place under the authority of the Minister for Environment who, by the way, has no-one among his staff with planning expertise. He has little understanding - indeed, the staff who will administer the Act have very little understanding - of the planning process in this State. I fear that we might have a repeat of the incredible decision that was taken on environmental grounds to sterilise a parcel of land in City Beach or Reabold Hill when a person's property rights were taken away without that person being able to be compensated for loss of that right.

Mr Bertram: Who was it?

Mr LEWIS: It happened to be the Bond Corporation, but it does not matter to me who it was.

Mr Bertram: You came right into it.

Mr LEWIS: I am not ashamed to say who it was. If members opposite have to start discriminating against persons on the basis of a principle, where are they as a Government? I thought everyone in Western Australia should be treated equally. If the Government takes a nonsense decision because the Bond Corporation is involved, that is discrimination and it is wrong.

Mr Hodge: We were in its pocket yesterday, according to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr LEWIS: So this decision with respect to Reabold Hill was on the basis of the Government getting the publicity, so that it could say that it was not in the pocket of the Bond Corporation. Is that what the Minister is saying? Is that what the member for Balcatta is saying? That is what they are saying. If they are proud of that, if they are proud of discriminating for political purposes, be it on their shoulders as a Government, as a bent Government and one without a sense of propriety, a Government that takes away a person's property rights without any thought of compensation for those rights.

We are talking about the principle of someone's property rights being abrogated without any recompense by the Government for the loss to that person. It could be some little market gardener who has worked for 30 years on a parcel of land, grubbing out a living, who is affected by some idiotic decision by the Minister for Environment. He can then be told that he is no longer able to use the land according to its zoning and that it is too bad about his loss. He can be told to cop it.

Mr Thomas: Do you think the decision on Bold Park was idiotic?

Mr LEWIS: Is that fair? I ask the member for Welshpool whether it is fair.

Mr Thomas: I was asking you a question.

Mr LEWIS: The member for Welshpool knows it is not fair and he will not respond to the question.

Mr Hodge: What has Bold Park to do with the Swan River?

Mr LEWIS: I am suggesting that we are running in parallel. This legislation will give the Minister power to override people's property rights without any compensation.

Mr Bertram interjected.

Mr LEWIS: It might be wise now and again when the member for Balcatta wants to comment for him to get up and play a part in the debate. I have been in this Chamber for two and a half years and I do not think the member has ever made a speech.

Mr Carr: You have never made a sensible one.

Mr LEWIS: That might be the Minister's opinion, but he will get his in the next election. I understand the word is around the town that he does not care anyway. It is widely known that he will cop his pension after serving as a Minister and that he does not really care whether he gets defeated.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Gallop): Order! The member for East Melville was probably justifiably referring to this Bill when he referred to Reabold Park, but I think Geraldton is a little more distant from the Swan River. Perhaps he could address himself to the Bill.

Mr LEWIS: With the utmost respect, if the member for Geraldton wishes to interject with inane remarks -

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have made my point to the member for East Melville. If he could return to debate on the Swan River Trust Bill it would be appreciated.

Mr LEWIS: Mr Acting Speaker, I do so with some hesitation, notwithstanding the fact that if people interject they should take what comes from it.

The Minister's department, when working on the legislation, consulted widely with local authorities and Government departments, and I accept that. It is, however, unfortunate that it did not consult widely with the general public, with the property owners. The local authorities' requirements may have been satisfied, the Government departments' requirements may have been satisfied, but what about the poor little property owner? The proposals were kept secret. The Government went to the local authorities and asked them to keep the proposals very confidential. That is the basis on which the legislation was drawn up.

The unfortunate part about it is that individuals, the ordinary property owner, the ordinary people we are supposed to be looking after, have been passed over. We do not have to look after local government; we do not have to look after Government departments; it is our responsibility to look after the little people. They were not even spoken to. The matter was not discussed with them. They did not have a representative to talk to the Government about their desires with respect to what should go into the legislation.

Mr Thomas: How many little people own riverfront properties?

Mr LEWIS: Many, many thousands, including those owning properties contiguous to the riverfront.

Some of the measures within this legislation are draconian. Without any notice, there is within this legislation a schedule of the boundaries for this trust's jurisdiction. I suggest to the Minister that not one of those property owners has been advised that their property falls

within the trust's jurisdiction. The schedule of the Bill includes these people's properties and they can be fined \$20 000 with a \$2 000 a day ongoing cost if they happen to pull a shed down within the boundaries. They do not even know about it. They can dig a hole and according to the Bill that is development, it is excavation. They can dig a hole on their riverbank and shift a bit of dirt around in their backyard without knowing they are within the boundaries of the Swan River Trust. One of the inspectors can come along and say, "Well, you have broken the law. You can get fined \$20 000 or \$2 000 ongoing". Is that fair? They do not know about it. The Government did not consult anyone outside Government or local government and the little people's rights have not been protected.

Another fatal flaw in this legislation is that the Government can extend the boundaries by gazettal. That can be done merely by the Government consulting with local government. The Bill contains no requirement for the Government to ask the property owner whether he likes what is proposed and whether he agrees to it. The local authority will know and the Government will know, but the property owner will not have a clue. Since 1929 within the planning Statutes in Western Australia certain procedures have had to be followed before rezoning property; that is, town planning legislation prevailed before the intentions of the Government or local government could be promulgated. People had to be told what was happening; a 90 day period was allowed for submission of objections; the proposal went back to the local authority for further consideration; it then went to the State Planning Commission, to the Minister for Planning, and to the Governor in Executive Council. A nine-month process was involved before taking away a person's property rights. Under the secrecy of this bad legislation the Minister or the trust can gazette the Government's intentions and take away a property owner's rights; the only requirement is that it must notify the local authority, but not necessarily obtain its agreement. Is that a proper situation from a Labor Government's point of view or from this Parliament's point of view?

Mr Thomas: Are you going to vote for it?

Mr LEWIS: I will not because it is bad legislation.

Mr Thomas: Who is your party spokesman on this matter?

Mr LEWIS: I do not care. I am proud that as members of the Liberal Party we can have differences of opinion. Our members are not caucused about what they have to do. I am presenting my point of view for the people in the community.

Mr Thomas: The little people who live on the riverfront?

Mr LEWIS: I am not doing it for my party. I happen to live on the riverfront. Is that wrong?

Mr Hodge: It is just interesting.

Mr LEWIS: Mal Bryce lives on the riverfront.

Mr Thomas: Have you declared an interest?

Mr LEWIS: I am also disturbed about the fact that the plans are notional; that is, they contain no delineation, or specifics of dimension, but only red lines. On whose authority? The Minister's. In this State are authorised land surveyors and under the Statutes of this State they are able to specify the boundaries of people's properties - but not under the provisions of this legislation. The Minister decides where the red line is drawn, but if somebody wants to build a house or shed he cannot specifically be told that the boundary is marked by a red line. If the property owner wants to know exactly where the boundary is, should he ask the Minister? Will the Minister be able to tell him? Nothing in this legislation determines who adjudicates other than the Minister who makes a recommendation to the Governor. There is no independent authority or specialist. The public cannot go to the trust and ask it where the boundary is.

Section 42 of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act provides that at any time the public, on the payment of a prescribed fee, can go to the MRPA and be given a plan that delineates how their land is affected by the boundaries on that reservation. Nothing in the legislation before the House provides for the public to go to the Government for that information. How is the landowner supposed to know? The Minister is silent.

With regard to compensation this Bill will remove people's property rights because they will

not be able to do things within the trust's boundary which the trust or the Minister do not want to happen. If the land is reserved under the metropolitan region scheme, that is all right. I make the following point to the Minister and ask him to listen: This Bill gives rights to compensation in accordance with the metropolitan region scheme for land that is currently reserved. I understand after reading the Bill three times in an attempt to find this provision, that if a property is not currently included within the reservations of the metropolitan region scheme, the unfortunate owner has no right of compensation. Therefore, the person down the road whose boundaries are already in the reservation set aside can ask for compensation for injurious effect but the person outside the scheme has no rights to compensation. Is that fair? This legislation is half baked; it removes people's property rights; and it is discriminatory. As currently drafted the legislation has no equity and I am waiting with bated breath to hear the Minister's response to the very serious questions I have raised in this afternoon's debate.

This legislation results from a reaction to a minor problem that could have been solved by good government. It gives unlimited power to the Minister to do what he likes; it erodes longstanding planning principles; it creates another costly bureaucracy; and there is a better way without creating such an ongoing and burgeoning monster. It has draconian powers - \$20 000 fines with \$2 000 ongoing costs against people who could be doing things on their own land without knowing they are breaking the law because no-one has told them.

Mr Bertram: Is that the minimum fine?

Mr LEWIS: It is prescribed in the Bill. I thought that the member for Balcatta looked after and protected people's rights, and I respected him for that.

Mr Bertram: You are right again.

Mr LEWIS: Land is included in the provisions of this Bill without the owners being aware of it. The formulation of the legislation has been carried out in secret without any consultation with individuals. The Government has looked after itself and has not given a damn for property owners. The plan is authorised by the Minister, and the machinery to delineate how a person's land is affected is not specified in the Bill. No-one will have a clue. The Minister has only a red line on a 1:5 000 map to guide him. The terrible part is that people do not know it is happening. People living along the riverfront do not know about these actions and I ask the Minister to consider the points I have made.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Leader of the National Party) [3.40 pm]: The National party supports the legislation before the House. Quite clearly, it will not affect many of our members.

Mr Thomas: And none of your constituents.

Mr COWAN: One would hope that after the election perhaps it will affect some of our constituents. By that I do not mean that there will be another exodus from the country to the city. Nevertheless, I have some remarks that will indicate that the National Party supports this Bill.

As the Minister said in his second reading speech, this Bill is the culmination of two reports to the Government, one on the legislative processes that are already in place for the management or control of the Swan River area and the other, of course, the report which presents the draft management plan for the Swan River. I have read both of those documents and in both cases, as with most reports, there are a multiple number of recommendations which provide options for the Government to adopt plan A or plan B, particularly in the case of the legislative review.

That was quite clearly indicated by the person who conducted that review - that there were options available to the Government. The Government has decided that it will establish a Swan River Trust. The people to whom I have spoken and who have some relationship with or concern for the river have all indicated support in principle for this legislation. They then have various disagreements with parts of the Bill, whether it be the composition of the trust, the powers of the Minister, whether enough provisions are made for the environmentalists, or the general environmental management of the river. In the main, everybody to whom I have spoken acknowledges that the legislation is necessary and that it will make a very strong contribution to what is quite clearly the greatest feature of this city and, for that reason, one of the greatest features of this State. There are some questions that we have for the Minister

when we get to the Committee stage, and rather than deal with all of the matters raised with me by single interest groups, I prefer to deal with them when we go through Committee. However, I reiterate that the National Party certainly supports the principle behind this legislation.

It is appropriate that there be a single managing body to coordinate and bring together all of those bodies and people who at any one time are using the natural asset known as the Swan and Canning Rivers system. There is no question that the whole of Western Australia supports the principle behind this legislation and we have no difficulty in supporting the Government in this measure. However, as I have said previously, there are some areas about which we have questions that are more appropriate to be asked at the Committee stage.

We support the Bill.

MR CRANE (Moore) [3.54 pm]: I agree with a lot of what the Leader of the National Party just said about having one authority to control the river, which is our natural asset. I sound one word of warning: My experience and that of many people over the years is that there are authorities and there are authorities, and I think that members understand what I am saying here. Authorities can be very helpful and considerate, and can work towards a general plan that will be to the benefit of all residents of Western Australia. I am one person in this Parliament, and there may be others, who, as you know, Mr Deputy Speaker, owns a property and lives on the river. I suppose that I am blessed and very fortunate, but the only reason I have this property is that I bought it. It is a half acre in Maylands that runs right down to the river, so I can stand on my property with my toes in the water, and it is pleasant to do so.

I used to be at Tranby where I had a home unit, but because we needed a little more room to move we bought this nice property, which I have developed further to the betterment of Western Australia, I believe, and for my own pleasure and enjoyment. I do not deny others enjoying the aesthetics and beauty of what we do on the river for their benefit. It is a fact that we often look into our front yard to find a number of people fishing from our property. I do not mind that at all; I think it is lovely that people can do that, and I do not object. However, I get stirred up occasionally when they leave their empty stubby bottles behind and I have to pick them up, which I do.

I want to develop that property further, right down to the river. I mow it and keep it looking very attractive. It had a little boat landing on it which has deteriorated through the years and which needs repair. I am hopeful that with such an authority as the Minister envisages, and with the Minister's help, I will be given permission to repair at my cost that landing so that I may use it for my little yacht that I sail on the river and for people who may want to pull into that landing and have a picnic at the bottom of my property. If they want to do that, I do not mind, as long as they pick up their stubbies.

Mr Cowan: Are you going to sail your big yacht up the river?

Mr CRANE: The big yacht will not go up there because of the bridges. I would have to lay the masts on the tabernacle. There is sufficient depth of water for me to get that big yacht up there, but I would not normally do that. When I bought the property I went to see one of the authorities, I cannot remember which one, to discuss the possibility of building a jetty on the edge of the property. They showed me some jetty plans saying that they do build them. I am hopeful that I will be able to do this. Other people would be able to use such a jetty and could pull their boats alongside or sit on it and fish. I would not mind that.

What I am saying today is that I am afraid that when this authority is established it may not be long before it decides that not only is one not to be allowed to repair one's boat landing or put a jetty there, but also it may take 50 or 60 feet off the river frontage, which nobody can get to unless they come down my driveway.

Mr Taylor: Where do you live?

Mr CRANE: In Swanview Terrace, Maylands. I would be happy to show the Minister what I am talking about. I support one authority so long as it is reasonable and understanding because anything I do there, while it will be of benefit to me, will also be an enhancement to the river. It would not in any way be detrimental to what we have and would not destroy the environment.

Such an authority ought to encourage people to do this. I am not asking the Government to do anything but merely give me permission to do this for Western Australia and for myself, but to do it at a cost to myself. I do not want a bureaucracy telling me that I cannot do something and then taking it away from me. That is the warning that I sound here today. I suppose that I have an axe to grind as a person who owns such a property. However, if the Minister would care to come out some time and have a gin and tonic I will show him what I mean and I think he will understand. It is a lovely environment, but something not given to me - I paid for it. I am not asking anyone to do anything to make it even better, but I do not want to be hindered in what I want to do because the benefits will be not only for me but also for the State.

As the people go up the river on wine cruises they pass our place. They always seem to be in a better mood coming back than going up. Sometimes they return at 10 o'clock at night and roll out the barrel as they go past. It is lovely to see these people enjoying themselves, and they make comments as they go past.

We have a nice property there, but please, do not deny us the opportunity of keeping what we have bought and developing it further, not for commercial use but for the aesthetic appeal it will give to those who are privileged to go up and down the river. I am not asking very much; just sounding a word of warning that authorities can sometimes become too authoritative and prevent people from doing what they want to do. I do not want to build tea gardens on it or turn it into a commercial enterprise; I want to develop it, not very much, but keep it neat and tidy.

Mr Taylor: Do you want to plant wheat and farm it?

Mr CRANE: I do not want to plant wheat; it is not really big enough. Perhaps I will plant a mango tree or a coconut palm. It is unusual for me to speak in this vein, but I really mean what I say. We must guard against what these authorities can do. The word of warning I have given today is recorded in *Hansard* for us all to remember; this Parliament, in passing this legislation, was made aware of what can happen. I hope that it will take cognisance of what I have said and meet my request in the spirit in which I make it.

I invite you, Sir, to come out and see what I mean. There is nothing there which the department or the authority could use as a result of taking land off me. I want to keep it and develop it, so I sound that warning. It will not make much difference whether I support it. I would not oppose the idea of a single authority, but it needs to be a responsible authority; one which will not just take something away which some have because others do not happen to have the same.

MR THOMAS (Welshpool) [4.03 pm]: I support the Bill, and I do not think members will be surprised to learn that. It is interesting to reflect on the position adopted by Opposition speakers. The member for Albany indicated, on behalf of the Liberal Party at least, that it was supporting the legislation. The member for Moore indicated that he held views broadly similar to those advanced by the member for Albany. But the member for East Melville had a contrary view and made some interesting contributions with which I shall deal in a moment.

All speakers acknowledged the importance of the part played by the Swan-Canning River system, to give it its proper description, in the metropolitan area. It has very important recreational, scenic, conservation and other roles to play. It is necessary for that river system to be managed in a way consistent with those very important roles it plays in our community and the fact that we now have a city of over a million people, and it is growing. This fragile river system needs to be managed in such a way that it can perform its functions into the future, given that it is now subject to a lot of pressure which can only grow.

It is interesting to reflect on the role the river plays and how that has changed over the years. As the member for Albany said, the river was settled in 1829 - not 1826. At that stage, before the roads linking Perth, Fremantle and Guildford were constructed, the main function of the river was transport. Subsequently roads were built and the transport function of the river system declined, but for many years it continued to be a transport corridor within the metropolitan area.

That has left a legacy today within the legislative framework which governs activities on and about the river. The Department of Marine and Harbours still plays a very important role.



Until recently, traditionally the departments which had the main responsibility for the management of the river were located within the transport portfolio, under the Minister for Transport. In recent years the transport functions of the river have become almost negligible, either as a proportion of the functions of the river system or as a contribution to our total transport system.

As the road system extended and the railways were built, the transport functions of the river virtually disappeared. The river became an impediment to the construction of roads, houses and so on. If we look at the legacy of the period from the turn of the century until 1970, it would seem people in Perth regarded the river as a bit of a nuisance; something which got in the way. The land adjoining the river seemed to be regarded as wasteland which could be used for purposes one would not want to use other land for.

I am sure that does not reflect the view the citizens of Perth had of the importance of the river during that period. At that stage it was still a fairly small community, and there seemed to be a lot of river with virtually unlimited opportunities for recreation. That is no longer the case, but if we look at the legacy of that period when the Swan-Canning river system was largely an impediment to the growth of Perth, we have such legacies today. The Kwinana Freeway runs along what should be one of the prime pieces of river frontage in the metropolitan area. The riverfront was seen as the area where one could build roads, put rubbish tips and generally conduct the sort of activities one would not conduct in areas close to where people lived.

We have come very close to a repeat of that sort of saga in recent years. Earlier this year the Minister for Planning announced that Swan River Drive was being deleted from the metropolitan region scheme. Most people welcomed that decision. It had been incorporated in the metropolitan region scheme in the 1950s during the time when it was felt freeways ought to be properly located along the river foreshores because they were, in fact, waste space. I have no doubt Swan River Drive could never have been built; it would have been political suicide for any Government to seek to build a road along the alignment proposed for Swan River Drive up towards Guildford. It was simply an anachronism which remained in the scheme for too long, and the Government deserves to be congratulated for having removed that provision.

Mr Lightfoot: What about the brewery site?

Mr THOMAS: I believe the old Swan Brewery site is capable of restoration and should be restored. I am confident it will be regarded as a great asset for Perth. That is not what I am talking about now -

Several members interjected.

Mr THOMAS: I have not contradicted my argument; we can debate the Swan Brewery site on some other occasion; I do not have the time to explore it now.

Mr Lightfoot: Are you going to make it authentic with new bricks?

Mr THOMAS: We do not have the opportunity on this occasion to go into that argument. In addition to the various functions and the history of the river which I have dealt with up to this point, I think they were agreed to by most of the speakers on the other side of the House -

Mr Clarko: One other point: Your argument is that this area was not suitable for housing; it was left behind because it was not easy to build on. People filled it in, put racecourses and things on it.

Mr THOMAS: And rubbish tips. However, I think we are agreed on some of the points I have made. We could argue about some parts of the margins on another occasion. However, the member for East Melville, in his histrionic contribution to the debate, really took out of context the provisions of the Bill and what it seeks to do. The member for East Melville commenced by saying that the legislation would create a bureaucracy which would grow and would become in some sense an inefficient means of managing the river. I think that is a fair paraphrase of what he said, but it is simply not true. Bureaucracies do not inevitably grow; this Government, for example, has a very proud record of running Government departments and instrumentalities in an efficient manner and of savagely reducing the size of those departments and instrumentalities if that is warranted in the review of the functions they perform.

Quite deliberately in the case of this Bill and the trust it seeks to establish, it is intended to be a lean, efficient organisation which does not duplicate other Government departments and which will maximise the use of existing Government departments and instrumentalities, and the use of local government authorities. The latter have an important role to play in the administration of lands surrounding the rivers. They already play an important role in the management of foreshores and in the routine purposes of looking after them and so on. This Bill has deliberately and consciously rejected the suggestion made in a number of quarters when it was known that the management of the river system was being reviewed, that a new body should effectively take over the functions not only of local authorities but of the Department of Marine and Harbours and several other Government departments that have roles in the management of the river system. That approach has been rejected and we have instead the approach where an authority, which has power, is created but which is meant to be in terms of personnel, organisation and the like - a lean, efficient organisation using other authorities and, in a sense, calling the shots rather than actually firing them. I think that is appropriate and I do not think there is any suggestion whatsoever that there is likely to be an inexorable growth of some sort of authority, which the member for East Melville seemed to see as some sort of spectre haunting the Bill. That argument seems to have hit a favourable chord with the member for Murchison-Eyre, although he has not chosen to contribute to the debate.

The member for East Melville said that there was a lack of consultation in formulating the Bill between the Government, the public and people who may be affected by the legislation. Nothing could be further from the truth in this particular instance. In terms of the overall thrust of which this Bill is a part - the Swan River management strategy - a summarised, reduced, form has been widely distributed. It is in terms which anyone could understand and it has been available to anyone who wanted to look at it. Part of my electorate borders the Canning River and the booklets relating to that strategy were sufficiently small and available that I was able to letterbox them to everybody who lived within a couple of hundred metres of the river and who may well have an interest in it.

In respect of the legislation the Zelestis report, which gave the various options for managerial structure for the river system, was widely available for many months. I believe it was available for six months, although I may be corrected on that. That document was available for public comment over that time. In the circles I move in it was the subject of very intensive public comment. The Government received submissions; and as a result of the Zelestis report the legislation currently before the House to create the trust was drawn up. Nobody need be surprised by the legislation coming forward, but if that were not enough, the Minister quite clearly at the end of the last session said he was going to leave the Bill before the House for the recess so that its fine detail could be examined and anybody who had any suggestions to make could get back to him. We not only had the report, which led to the drafting of the Bill, but we have actually had the legislation itself available for quite some time to anyone who wanted to look at it. I do not think anyone could say this is a case of legislation being brought in without the public receiving adequate warning of it and without the members of the public affected by it having the opportunity to make a contribution and to have their views known.

Finally, the member for East Melville was not only 180 degrees wrong about those two points, but he then made the final point that it is likely to lead to a situation where people's properties will be acquired without compensation. I think the member for Balcatta put him in his place quite convincingly when he invited the member for East Melville to vote yes on the referendum on 3 September if he really believed that the Swan River Trust was likely to lead to owners of riverfront properties having their properties acquired by Government without having the opportunity to receive compensation for that loss. The member for East Melville and his party will have the opportunity to ensure that never happens by voting yes in the referendum on 3 September.

**MR COURT** (Nedlands - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.16 pm]: I want to take the opportunity available in this debate to pose a few concerns to the Minister. Hopefully he will be able to refer to them in summing up the second reading debate or during the Committee stage.

I have a very close interest in the river and its control, as well as the future direction that this will take. I was brought up close to the river; I have spent most of my life sailing on the

river, and for 10 years I made a living selling boats used on the river. One third of the boundaries of my current electorate border the river. For all of those reasons the river has been very dear to me. As a young child I can recall the river being in poor condition; it became quite dirty, and it was great to see over many years the different programs which cleaned up the river, particularly those which stopped effluent and industry waste flowing into it.

In recent years I believe the board looking after the river has done a good job. In future years the river will come under more pressure - not only the river but also the foreshore areas surrounding it. My concern is that the foreshore areas in my electorate - the area around Nedlands - will come under the jurisdiction of this legislation. In recent years a number of controversial proposals have been put up for the foreshore areas. At one stage the Nedlands City Council put up a scheme to change the landscaping, put different roads in and build a museum, and it needed a loan poll to get the funds to do it. At the time I was interested to know under whose jurisdiction the land really came. Two yacht clubs - the Nedlands Yacht Club and the Perth Flying Squadron - were in the middle of it. That particular proposal was voted out by the ratepayers of the City of Nedlands. I would appreciate the Minister explaining how he sees the role of local government fitting into the decision making process of that land under the new proposals put forward. Is it vested in the council as an "A"-class reserve? Does that mean that the new trust would still have jurisdiction over what the council does?

The Minister might recall that about seven or eight years ago another controversial proposal put forward by the former Government was what to do with the old Nedlands baths. Some people wanted them knocked down and others wanted some sort of commercial development such as a restaurant built on the site. Eventually a compromise was reached and the present restaurant was constructed. The problem then was not so much with the river about which there was agreement but with the parking facilities, sewage disposal and other matters. The area was controlled by two councils, the Subiaco City Council and the Nedlands City Council.

I attended a briefing on this legislation and had trouble understanding the changes that will be made to the current system. According to the map that I have seen, the old brewery site is outside the jurisdiction of the trust; the trust's boundaries run around the site. However, I believe it is fair to say that it has a direct relationship with the area because the brewery site is on the foreshore of the river and I am concerned that the Government has decided to go ahead with its proposal for the area. Members opposite know of the very strong campaign that has been mounted against the site's redevelopment because people see the tremendous value in using the river foreshore for passive recreation. They believe this should be particularly so with areas adjacent to Kings Park. However, once buildings are erected and parking areas, bars and restaurants constructed, they become almost impossible to remove. The public is then denied the opportunity of ever having a very popular part of the river returned to them for their use.

The ornamental lakes area around the freeway near Perth city also is affected by this legislation. Apparently the lakes will come under the jurisdiction of the trust. That is very interesting because I have been strongly opposed to the Government's plan to build the bus station at the proposed site. Instead of building this ugly bus station on the foreshore, the Government should be doing something more imaginative by expanding the ornamental lakes system and bringing the river closer to Perth. At the moment, new developments in St George's Terrace are directly tied in with the river. The current proposals are vandalism. One has only to drive past the bus station site and see the long, six foot high fence that has been constructed on the site to know that once a two or three storey bus station is erected, views of the river from that area will be blocked out completely. The building will be extremely ugly.

I have pleaded with the Government not to proceed with this proposal. I do not know whether it is too late, but I again ask it to rethink what it is doing in that regard. I do not mind if the bus station is built elsewhere, perhaps next to the existing bus station. People of all political persuasions have referred to the major planning mistakes that have occurred in our city. The most serious of these is that Perth's major attraction, the Swan River, is being denied to the people of Perth by the erection of this bus station. My pleas seem to fall on deaf ears, but it will be too late once the station is built. If it is constructed, we will block the

river off entirely instead of bringing it back to the city. The Government is proposing a 1950s solution to the transport problem and is destroying the concept of tying the city in with the river.

We also understand that this plan jeopardises the underground rail loop system. In the future our river will be put under more and more pressure and will become an even more valuable possession. I have applauded what has been done in the past to improve the quality of the river and the areas surrounding it. I believe that this legislation is not really necessary and would appreciate the Minister explaining to me under whose jurisdiction that large slab of the foreshore in Nedlands will fall.

As I said, Perth's main attraction is the river. We are vandalising it by building bus stations and other buildings on its foreshore. I urge the Government to forget about the bicentennial grant to build the bus station on that site and put it elsewhere. The Government is committing a major planning bungle by putting the bus station on that site.

**MR HODGE** (Melville - Minister for Waterways) [4.26 pm]: I have only a few minutes so I will not attempt to cover all of the points raised. I will do that at another time. Most of the speakers who joined in the debate today made very helpful and sensible contributions. We covered such subjects as the history of the river, Bold Park, and the likelihood of the member for Geraldton being re-elected. Obviously it is a comprehensive Bill that covers a whole range of subjects.

**Mr Cash:** Have you amended the legislation to enable the member for Geraldton to be re-elected?

**Mr HODGE:** I do not think it is necessary. I think he will be returned with a handsome margin. I was up there recently and came away with that very strong opinion.

Members generally supported the Bill. However, the member for East Melville indicated that he did not support it. The spokesman for the Opposition on these matters, the member for Albany, made a very constructive contribution into which he had put a considerable amount of research and study. He obviously spoke to people who might reasonably have been expected to have a specific interest in the legislation and welfare of the river. He spoke about the history of the river, the Zelestis report and a number of other interesting matters. I think, in general, he was happy with the consultation that the Government had had, particularly with local government. However, he expressed his concern about the fact that we appeared to be creating another bureaucracy. I think other speakers made that point also. Certainly, the member for East Melville raised that concern.

I deny that. We are not creating yet another bureaucracy. We are replacing one bureaucracy with another. The Swan River Management Authority is an existing bureaucracy that this Government inherited from its predecessor. We will replace the Swan River Management Authority with the Swan River Trust. Thus there will be no new bureaucracy and only a very moderate staff increase which would have been necessary in any case because of the increasing complexity of managing the Swan and Canning Rivers and the increasing pressure that is being put on the authority by the constant use of the rivers by the citizens of Western Australia. Thus there will not be a huge blossoming of the Public Service or people on the public payroll as a result of this legislation. No extra bureaucracy will be created. It will merely be the Swan River Authority in another guise - and a much more effective and efficient guise.

**Mr Watt:** The point I was trying to make was that it seemed it would have been easier to revamp the Swan River Management Authority and achieve what will be essentially achieved by this Bill without having to scrap it and establish a new bureaucracy. I didn't actually say there will be another one.

**Mr HODGE:** In reality, we are revamping the Swan River Management Authority. Zelestis found in his report that the existing Swan River Management Authority was not working as efficiently as was necessary to be able to control the increasingly complex matters that were coming before it and that there was a conflict between all the existing authorities, agencies and local governments with respect to the powers they had over the Swan and Canning Rivers.

Leave granted for speech to be continued at a later stage of the sitting.

Debate thus adjourned.

## GRIEVANCE

### *Holiday Accommodation - Rottnest Island*

**MR LIGHTFOOT (Murchison-Eyre)** [4.32 pm]: My grievance this afternoon is addressed to the Minister for Tourism. It concerns Rottnest Island or, more specifically, the applications for the limited amount of accommodation that there is on the island. I have no complaint about the limitation applied to accommodation. My grievance is with respect to the time it takes to return applications from the country, as opposed to the time it takes to return them from the city. Given that 73.5 per cent of the population of the State live in the metropolitan area, obviously there is a weighted bias towards city dwellers. In a political sense, it is expedient to see that people in the metropolitan area are catered for and looked after. However, on the basis of fairness, it is also incumbent on any organisation, not just the Government, to see that the people from the bush, from the country, have a fair go.

Applications take longer to be returned from the bush. Station people, for example, may only have a mail once a week. If they miss out on that mail by a day it will be six or seven days before the next mail. Therefore, it could possibly take 13 days for them to receive an application. Some do not even get the newspapers in which the applications appear. I ask the Minister to consider seriously whether the time lapse between the country and the metropolitan areas can be narrowed so that all who wish to apply for and take up residence on an itinerant basis on Rottnest Island will get a fair go.

I have had many complaints from the bush and I would say that there is a far greater per capita rejection of applications of people from the bush than there are for those who live in the metropolitan area. The reason for the rejection would appear to be based solely on the fact that applications from people in the country take longer to be returned than those from people in the metropolitan area. That seems to me to be unfair.

**MRS BEGGS (Whitford - Minister for Tourism)** [4.34 pm]: The member for Murchison-Eyre has raised a point about the fairness of the system by which people secure accommodation on Rottnest Island. I think it particularly pertains to those peak periods when the greatest number of applications are received. The way the system works is that an advertisement is placed in the paper at a particular time. People then apply for the particular style of accommodation that they require, setting out the dates on which they want to holiday, or a series of dates. It is true that the cottages and other accommodation are allocated on a first come first served basis. Although there has been much investigation into whether a fairer system might be adopted, the Rottnest Island Board and the Rottnest Island Authority have said that this is a very fair system. However, I think there is some validity in what the member for Murchison-Eyre has said, particularly with respect to people in outlying country areas who may not get the paper for three or four days after the notices appear.

I would be concerned if country people were disadvantaged in any way in the allocation of the cottages on Rottnest because it is true that Rottnest Island is a holiday place for Western Australians. I would like to see it stay that way. I would resist any pressure to allocate so many cottages for interstate or international visitors in preference to Western Australians.

In just a few short weeks the Rottnest Island Authority will appoint its new chief executive. The first thing I will ask him is whether he can devise a system of allocating so much of the accommodation so that country people will not be disadvantaged in peak periods, particularly school holidays. Perhaps those in rural areas might not be so interested in school holiday times. They may prefer times when rural activity is not so important, perhaps when it is not harvest time. The chief executive will be asked to make sure that in the allocation of accommodation there is no disparity between metropolitan people and country people.

## GRIEVANCE

### *Power Supply - Pilbara*

**MRS BUCHANAN (Pilbara)** [4.37 pm]: I raise a grievance today on behalf of the residents of the towns of Roebourne, Wickham and Point Samson, a number of whom have complained to me recently about the increasing number and duration of power outages in this

area. Despite the fact that we are on the Pilbara grid these days, it appears to me there has been a problem in this area in maintaining continuity of supply in these towns.

The latest occasion was last weekend when there was an outage for a period from 2400 hours on Saturday to approximately 0700 hours on Sunday morning. The reason given in a circular letter sent out from the company Robe River Iron Associates was that the cessation of supply was necessary to enable the State Energy Commission to carry out maintenance on its switch yard. However, I have since learnt from the SEC that the work involved the installation of some new equipment. I hope that this is an indication that some action has already been taken to remedy the problems that have been experienced.

Although the installation of the new equipment took place overnight - which, of course, is the least inconvenient time for people in the area - the duration of the switch off caused considerable concern to residents and the constituents who contacted me about it wanted to know what was happening. They were mainly concerned about the contents of their freezers because of the length of time involved in the outage. Some also expressed similar concerns in terms of the food supplies in the local shopping centre. Fortunately, we did not have any problems with that. However, it was probably very lucky that this work was able to be carried out overnight and during the cooler months. Had it been necessary to do the work in summer, the problems experienced could have been rather more serious.

I guess it is true that we all tend to take for granted that electricity is simply there to be used at the flick of a switch and we cannot help feeling somewhat put out when things go wrong. At times when the power fails in these circumstances it certainly brings home just how dependent we are on this means of providing ourselves with the home comforts that we have come to expect. My constituents in the Roebourne area have been fairly tolerant, considering the number of times that the power has been off recently. As a resident of Wickham, I am personally aware of the problems that have been experienced. There have been times when outages have occurred which have caused considerable inconvenience. On some occasions the outages were planned for maintenance purposes and, therefore, prior notification was able to be given and that was much appreciated by local residents. At other times power failures have occurred unexpectedly leading to many complaints from residents coming into my office who felt that the reliability of the power supply in the area was somewhat inadequate.

I am aware that considerable efforts have been made and large sums of money have gone into improving the Pilbara power supply. That has been, I suppose one could say, one of the spin offs coming from the resource development that has taken place in the area. We have certainly come a long way from the days when small towns like Roebourne were characterised by the noise of their power stations thumping away in the background day and night or, as was the case with the small community of Port Samson, where until recent times they had no power at all.

I am sure that residents are thankful that they now have access to a power supply. It is, therefore, somewhat unfortunate that we do not appear to be able to overcome this trouble spot in this particular area. It seems to me that the problems we have been having with the power supply have been occurring on and off over a long period of two years or more and I know that they have occurred for a variety of reasons and it is not just simply one ongoing problem.

For instance, there are difficulties peculiar to that area. One example is salt contamination to power lines which has in the past caused a number of failures. The location in an area close to the coast with its associated mangroves and large swamp flats is a fact of life and means that this problem is likely to be with us always and will obviously require ongoing attention to ensure that power failures are kept to a minimum.

I am also aware that the supply of power in the area is heavily subsidised to enable Pilbara consumers to be charged at the same rate per unit of electricity as their counterparts in the city or any other part of the State under the uniform tariff arrangement. I understand that procedures are also in place to extend this to long term residents in caravan parks in the north west. These measures, along with the upgrading of the Pilbara power supply, are much appreciated and if the problems being experienced at present through power breakdowns can be sorted out I am sure that many of my constituents will be eternally grateful.

Given the climatic conditions of the Pilbara area, continuity of electricity supply is seen to be vital and at this point in time my constituents are seeking some sort of assurance that the inconvenience and worry of power outages will be alleviated in the near future. I would therefore appreciate it if the Deputy Premier, in his capacity as Minister responsible for the SEC, could give some indication of the extent of supply problems and, also, advise what measures have been and are to be taken to improve the reliability of supply to this area.

**MR PARKER** (Fremantle - Minister for Economic Development and Trade) [4.44 pm]: I thank the member for Pilbara for raising this matter with me. The issue of Pilbara power supplies is one which arises really because of the transitional nature of the arrangements for supplying or reticulating power to domestic consumers and to non iron ore industry within the Pilbara towns. As the member for Pilbara has said, historically, of course, the traditional towns in the Pilbara, for example Roebourne, had their own power supply generators, as some towns such as Carnarvon, Mt Magnet, Derby and others still do.

Those generating units used to supply the power, or in some cases there was no power other than self generated power for industry, as in Port Samson. With the advent of the iron ore industry those industries developed their own power resources for the purpose of supplying principally their own industrial operations, but also to supply their townships. In the area to which the member for Pilbara refers in her own electorate, two companies, Hamersley Iron and what was then Cliffs Robe River, both developed power stations, one at Dampier and one at Cape Lambert, in order to supply their industrial operations and Dampier and later Karratha in the case of Hamersley and the township of Wickham in the case of Robe River.

In fact, in the early days that supply was provided on the basis that the residents were actually customers or clients of the iron ore companies. They were company towns in the true sense of the word in that there was no State involvement and the SEC did not supply the power. It needs to be remembered that at that time a large number of local authorities were also the suppliers of power in their areas. The Kalgoorlie Town Council, for example, was such a supplier as were a whole host of towns. Many of those towns did not seek to move out of supplying electricity to their residents until the oil crisis hit and they suddenly got lumbered with huge bills for diesel oil or heavy fuel oil. They then sought to get out of their obligations and got the SEC involved.

Indeed, under what is known as the Country Towns Assistance Scheme the SEC has taken over all of the generating equipment around the State and is supplying power to every country town including Roebourne which was under the former scheme. When an SEC grid replaces an in-town generator, as happened in Kalgoorlie in 1984, that town ceases to be part of the Country Towns Assistance Program and becomes part of the normal SEC grid. Appropriate compensation arrangements are then entered into for any equipment or reticulating facilities that are acquired.

That is the background generally. Specifically, of course, in the case of the towns of Roebourne, Wickham and Karratha, arrangements have been entered into over the years whereby the SEC has taken over supplying power to them, still relying on the generation capacity and in many cases the transmission facilities owned, and to some degree operated, by the private companies. When, for example, we negotiated in 1984 or 1985 with Cliffs Robe River to supply them with gas from Dampier and the Burrup Peninsula and in return negotiated an off take of electricity contract into the SEC grid, all that happened was that what had formally been the Robe River power station remained as such but it sold so many kilowatt hours of electricity into the SEC grid, as it became, using the Robe River transmission line, provided power to Wickham and Roebourne, which had been joined on as well.

The problem was that the company had, as one would expect, tried to build and operate its electricity plants as cheaply as possible. Of course, its prime motivation in building those plants was its industrial activity rather than its activity as a supply authority to domestic consumers, so the quality of the equipment being used, and of the service, was nowhere near - and this is not in any way a criticism of the company - as good as the SEC or its consumers expect. Therefore, there has been a transition period in the past few years during which we have tried to fully integrate the grid. Of course, there has been a substantial additional load on those power stations as well because we used that same agreement with Robe River, as I pointed out, to extend the grid not only to the areas in the Nickol Bay region

but also to extend the grid up to Port Hedland to allow us to change the Redbank power station from a base load generator for the area to a facility for spinning reserve and peak loading.

That meant that there was a considerable extra load on the system. The transmission line that the State Energy Commission put in to connect Port Hedland with the southern system was substantial, and of equal quality with those elsewhere, but it had to interface with an inferior system which it took over with Robe River and, to a lesser degree, Hamersley.

Over the last few years the State Energy Commission of Western Australia has been carrying out various works to improve the reliability of the electricity supply, particularly to the towns of Roebourne, Wickham and Point Samson. Those initiatives include, firstly, the Wickham/Roebourne 33kv line which was reinsulated last year using live line methods to minimise disruption to supplies. The point the member for Pilbara made about the impact of cutting off electricity supplies is recognised and live line work which, of course, is more expensive, onerous and dangerous, is used in order to minimise disruption.

Secondly, on Sunday, 21 August 1988 the SEC installed and commissioned a new 33kv feeder at SECWA's Cape Lambert terminal to supply the towns. These are now independent from the Cape Lambert power station P9 main switchboard, and can be fed from either Cape Lambert power station, Dampier power station or even the Redbank power station at Port Hedland. Whereas before Wickham was entirely reliant on Cape Lambert power station, now, if there is a problem at Cape Lambert - which is still a privately operated power station - we can use either Dampier, which belongs to Hamersley or Redbank, which is ours.

Thirdly, SECWA carried out live line washing of the 33kv lines in the area to reduce the risk of outage caused by salt contamination. Fourthly, it has installed under-frequency load shedding throughout the system, which will help to maintain a healthy generation system. Fifthly, it has cooperated with Robe River to provide advice on methods to improve its generation reliability. This includes the running of Redbank power station when there is a known risk of losing base generation at the Cape Lambert power station.

We have planned a number of initiatives through SECWA to further improve reliability. Firstly, we are cooperating with Robe River to refurbish the original Wickham from Cape Lambert P9 board. This will provide a reliable alternative to the new feeder from SECWA's Cape Lambert terminal. Robe River is also planning to connect Pannawonica to the Cape Lambert power station which will provide greater integration. There are also continuing negotiations with Hamersley Iron for a long term parallel running agreement. This will bring in more generation sources and minimise the effect of the loss of a single operator. Finally, SECWA is considering alternatives for the base load operation of its own gas turbine at Dampier.

There have been three outages during the month of August in the area. The first one was on Friday, 12 August when the faulty insulator at Roebourne caused a half hour interruption to the town of Roebourne. The second was on Monday, 15 August when the loss of the Cape Lambert P9 main board occurred due to Robe River's contractor inadvertently operating the base zone protection. Most supplies were restored within an hour, although Robe River took one and a half hours to restore all supplies to the town of Wickham. On Sunday, 21 August there was a planned shutdown between midnight and 6.30 am to install the new feeder system to which I referred earlier. That is the feeder system which now enables the townships to be fed, if necessary, by the Redbank power station. Although that disruption of six and a half hours was, I acknowledge, a long one, given the small size of the generation sources in the area it was the only way of doing the work and, in the long term, it will certainly add to the security of supply.

I recognise the concerns of the residents in the area and of the member for Pilbara. I am grateful to her for raising this matter and can assure her that it is receiving the highest priority within the SEC.

## GRIEVANCE

### *Chemicals - Sodium Cyanide*

**MR WIESE (Narrogin) [4.54 pm]:** The grievance I wish to bring to the attention of the House this afternoon concerns the proposal, now nearing fruition, to transport liquid sodium cyanide from the plant which has almost finished being built at Kwinana to various mine



sites throughout the State. The proposal which concerns me is that of transporting liquid sodium cyanide from Kwinana to the mine sites at Boddington. This plant was originally proposed and submitted to the Environmental Protection Authority in May 1986 for the necessary approvals. Since that time the EPA has approved the construction of the plant, and it has now reached the stage where the plant will start manufacturing liquid sodium cyanide in October.

At the same time that the proposal was put to the EPA a recommendation was made as to the method by which the liquid sodium cyanide should be transported to the mine sites. It is important to note that the original proposal was that the liquid sodium cyanide would be transported by road. That proposal had the full support of the Western Australian Water Authority - it was put forward by the joint venturers, CSBP and its partners - and also that of the Mines Department, which is the authority closely involved in any transportation of dangerous goods throughout the State. Despite that support the EPA rejected the original proposal on the grounds that the liquid sodium cyanide would have to be transported through what it called defined areas of concern. The EPA was not satisfied about the safety of transporting by road through those defined areas of concern. The defined areas of concern are, first, an area within a radius of 50 kilometres of the Perth GPO and, secondly, any designated surface of the ground water catchment areas. Subsequently, CSBP and its partners put forward a new proposal for the transportation of liquid sodium cyanide from the factory to the mine sites. The new proposal was that it should be transported by rail through the defined areas of concern, and thence to the mine sites. In the case of Kalgoorlie, for instance, it would be transported by rail to Kalgoorlie then transshipped by road to the mine sites.

What concerns me is Boddington. The alternative proposal for Boddington was that this material would be put on the road, transshipped at Northam, taken by road through the towns of the upper great southern to Pingelly, then across by road to the mine site at Boddington. Understandably, all of the councils involved in that proposal were very upset. They saw no reason why their town sites and citizens should be put at risk by having liquid sodium cyanide transported by road through their town sites.

They objected very strongly. Subsequently and within a fairly short time the proposal was altered so that the material would be transported down to Pingelly by rail and then transshipped across to the mine site by road. Again, all of the councils whose areas that material was to be transported through were very upset. They believed it was unacceptable that it should go through their towns, endangering their inhabitants. They preferred either the original proposal or an alternative which was put to CSBP and the Environmental Protection Authority; namely, that the material be put on rail at Kwinana, taken to Forrestfield and then down to Pinjarra. In that way it would pass through none of the major towns in the great southern. It would be transshipped to Pinjarra and taken by road to the mine site via Dwellingup.

The other alternative, and probably the most sensible of all, which was put to the EPA most strongly and supported by all of the councils involved, was that the material be put on road at the factory in Kwinana and taken straight across to the South West Highway, then through South Dandalup, across to Dwellingup and by road to Boddington. It is the most direct and shortest route and that would have been acceptable to all. Again, the EPA overruled that proposal. What we have now is an even more ridiculous proposal; that is, that it go by rail to Narrogin, then be put on road at Narrogin and taken via Williams out to the mine site. So instead of seven councils being adamantly opposed to the proposal, we now have 11.

I ask that the EPA use a little commonsense and consider the use of the shortest, most direct route. It should allow the liquid sodium cyanide to be put on road at the factory and transported by the most direct route to the mine site at Boddington. We are talking about one isotainer of liquid sodium cyanide per day being transported through approximately 10 kilometres of that designated area of concern contained within the 50 kilometre radius and across a very short stretch of the other designated area of concern, the Peel ground water area. From there it would be out of any of the areas with which the EPA is concerned, if it were taken via South Dandalup, directly across to Dwellingup and up to the mine site.

All of the councils and the people in the 11 council areas concerned are adamantly and vociferously opposed to the present proposal. The EPA has taken a holier than thou attitude

by saying, "It is none of our business, we are really only concerned about the environment. It is CSBP's problem. They do not have to sell to the mines at Boddington; they can send all of their product up to the goldfields area and that will solve the problem." The EPA is adopting a completely unrealistic stance. We have already many dangerous materials being transported, some in bulk - and I refer to the large bulk containers of caustic soda and acid that are being transported by road at the moment to the Boddington mine site. I ask the EPA to reconsider the situation and take a commonsense attitude to it.

**MR HODGE** (Melville - Minister for Conservation and Land Management) [5.05 pm]: It is hard to know what the member for Narrogin expects from me. He would be aware, of course, that the Environmental Protection Authority is an independent statutory body and is not subject to direction by me or the Government, so it is not within my statutory authority to tell the EPA how it should run its affairs. Nevertheless, I am happy to pass on the member's remarks and concern to the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority, although I suspect he is already well and truly aware of the member's views and those of the shires in the areas mentioned.

**Mr Stephens**: We are looking for some ministerial influence.

**Mr HODGE**: That would be illegal, actually, under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act..

**Mr Stephens**: They could be directed - there is a difference.

**Mr HODGE**: I believe the EPA is being unfairly treated in this matter. Really this dispute has little to do with the EPA, which is being dragged into it and made to appear the villain of the piece. The matter should be settled by the suppliers of this product and the purchasers of it, the dangerous goods branch of the Mines Department, which has statutory responsibility for regulating the transportation of hazardous or dangerous goods, and the shires through which the dangerous goods are to be transported.

The EPA really does not care whether this company uses liquid sodium cyanide or not; it is no skin off its nose either way. The EPA's statutory responsibility is to ensure that if any dangerous goods, including liquid sodium cyanide, are transported, they are not transported in such a way that if an accident occurs they could impact on the ground water or the catchment area for our drinking water and our major inland waterways. It is true, as the member for Narrogin has stated, that the EPA has said through which areas it believes it is not environmentally responsible for this product to be transported. Apart from that it is open to the various players in this controversy to negotiate their own arrangements, and the EPA will not be drawn into becoming involved as some sort of arbitrator on this matter. I understand that point of view.

The member for Narrogin has put up a proposition that involves the material going via a different route and by different methods. What he is suggesting transports the problem from one town to another - to Pinjarra. I really do not see that that is much of an advance on the present controversy. It may be that if no solution can be found that suits all of the players in this game the mine in question might decide to stick with the pellet form of sodium cyanide.

I notice that the liquid sodium cyanide plant will manufacture only about one third of the State's total requirements for sodium cyanide. I notice also that the people of Kalgoorlie do not seem to have any concerns or fears about its transportation.

**Mr Lightfoot**: That is wrong. What rubbish you are talking. They will not use it.

**Mr Taylor**: They will be using it in the northern goldfields and it will have to go through Kalgoorlie to get there.

**Mr Lightfoot**: That remains to be seen. They will not tolerate it.

**Mr HODGE**: It may be that the people of Kalgoorlie also have a problem, but if they have it has not been brought to my attention.

**Mr Taylor**: It is about to be.

**Mr HODGE**: As I said in my opening remarks, I am not quite sure what the member for Narrogin expected of me. All I can do is pass on his comments and draw them to the attention of the EPA. I cannot direct the EPA; it is not in my power to tell that body what to do. The EPA has been attempting to give advice and guidance to all of the major players in

this controversy but it is not really up to the EPA; it is not the authority that has the final say on the transportation other than to warn the Government that this product should not be transported through those areas which it has designated, such as water catchment areas and catchment areas for inland waterways. Apart from that, it is up to the other major players I mentioned to come to a conclusion as to what route the product should take.

I undertake to the member for Narrogin that I will obtain the *Hansard* record of his comments and give them to the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority.

## GRIEVANCE

### *Crime Prevention - Government Programs*

**MR DONOVAN (Morley-Swan) [5.10 pm]:** My grievance this afternoon concerns the Government's programs for law and order in the community. I refer to those programs that have already been in place for some time, as well as those that are embraced within the "Working Together to Beat Crime" program and the "Crime Prevention Program". Particularly my grievance relates to the television public awareness campaign that the Government has been extending.

**Mr Bradshaw:** You are getting yourselves concerned with crime.

**Mr DONOVAN:** I am turning the Opposition's attention towards crime. It seems the Opposition is determined to turn people's attention away from it. A great deal of my electorate and, as far as I can read, most others, supports these programs currently being launched as well as those that have been in place for some time, such as Neighbourhood Watch, the property identification schemes, Blue Light Discos, and the Industry Watch scheme. I understand also a great deal of support exists in areas to the north and south where Neighbourhood Watch has been established and is already achieving significant results. Industry Watch has achieved quite dramatic results in the Maddington, Gosnells and Osborne Park areas.

The problem is that for these programs to succeed in the community they require unstintingly and unreservedly the maximum support and involvement of the community. The community needs to be accurately and comprehensively informed about what is involved in the crime prevention program. The only way we can do that in this modern community is through the medium of television. Given that over 95 per cent of households in the metropolitan area have at least one TV set, and given that conservative estimates suggest that the majority of people receive something like 65 to 70 per cent of their information about the world through the medium of television, it makes sense to address the community through that medium.

However, I have received a large number of complaints recently about the Opposition's criticism of the TV public awareness campaign. Many electorates find it frustrating, and many organisations actively involved in my electorate in promoting the Neighbourhood Watch program find this embarrassing. Many local authorities and councillors who are actively promoting Government programs find themselves compromised and some police officers involved in efforts to promote Neighbourhood Watch find themselves compromised as they read and listen to accusations by the Opposition that somehow or other the use of television is an inappropriate use of resources. That has been made worse in a way by the very effective use of the police commissioner in the television program; instead of that being acknowledged for the value that it has, the Opposition says that the police commissioner has been politicised.

**Mr Bradshaw:** A campaign for the Labor Party. You should be ashamed!

**Mr DONOVAN:** In my electorate, the police commissioner has a high profile and a high credibility rating. What is frustrating to people who call me is the way the Opposition is treating the commissioner. Complaints have been made and a good example of the way people feel occurred on 9 May when the Premier and I attended the launching of Neighbourhood Watch at Bassendean. Some 300 to 340 people attended that meeting. Most people to whom I spoke had been impressed by the television promotion of crime prevention. When the official speeches had finished, the first question asked was by a former Liberal candidate - and a candidate again for Maylands in the next State election, Mr Peter Blaxell - who asked the Premier, "What will you do about the TV promotion? It is a waste of taxpayers' funds and resources." This was met with jeers from the meeting but also a lot of

anger. Another person said, "All the people I know support Neighbourhood Watch but my fear is that it is being turned into a political football by the Opposition. I hope that will not jeopardise the scheme."

Mr Lewis: You people have turned it into a political football.

Mr DONOVAN: That is totally wrong. People ask me whether the schemes, which we support and which are effective, are worthwhile. I am asked whether the schemes will be compromised simply for the advantage of a political party building up to an election which it hopes to win. So they ask me if their safety and protection is to be made a political football. I think this is a great shame and it has serious implications for the success of the program and, more importantly, has serious implications for the credibility of the Police Force which is doing its best to make the program work.

MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie - Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [5.18 pm]: I thank the member for Morley-Swan for his comments which are absolutely spot on regarding the attitude of the Liberal Party to what has been achieved and what is under way in this State, and from the point of view of beating crime. The Liberal attitude has been a great disappointment, not only to me as Minister but also to the people throughout Western Australia. The Government has put forward a crime prevention strategy - in my mind, the best crime prevention strategy ever introduced by any State in Australia - which has made certain that the police have adequate resources to do what is considered necessary. The Liberal Party has not supported this program and - like the member for Karrinyup - thinks it a bit of a joke. The Opposition thinks it a bit of a joke that the Government should set out to attack this issue.

Several members interjected.

Mr TAYLOR: The attitudes of the member for Karrinyup, the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Murray-Wellington - who at least has the courage to speak out - can only give comfort to the criminal and lawless element in our society. Those members are soft on crime and soft in the head. They cannot see that their lack of willingness to get behind the crime prevention strategy allows the criminal elements in our society to say, "Don't worry about it; we can get away with this because as long as the politicians are fighting they are keeping away from us."

The Opposition should get behind our strategy and give credit where it is due. The Leader of the National Party had the courage to say that he believes the strategy could work and that it should be adopted on a non party political basis. The Leader of the National Party was prepared to appear on television and support that strategy. He had the courage to say that the matter was beyond politics. It really is a great pity to see one party in Western Australia which is usually out on a limb, degrading, criticising and not being prepared to be constructive in any way whatsoever; that is, the Liberal Party. I believe its actions can be attributed to its weak leadership in this State.

Members have only to look at the success of the campaign. The first booklet had a print run of 30 000 copies which were gone in no time. The second print run of 20 000 has almost gone. In relation to the second booklet, "Practical Ways to Beat Crime", which is a very well written and sensible booklet, the first print run of 100 000 copies has already gone and we are on to the second print run of 110 000 copies.

The Office of Crime Prevention which was set up by the Commissioner of Police has been an absolutely outstanding success. Representatives from that office have gone from meeting to meeting throughout Western Australia and have been supported by the community. It was not until the meeting which was held at Bassendean that the Liberal Party tried to make politics out of it. I am told that a similar thing happened at Stirling. Once again the Liberal Party tried to do the same thing and said that it was disgraceful that the Government was spending money on a crime prevention campaign. I understand that at that meeting members of the Liberal Party were jeered and the meeting told them that they did not want politics brought into this campaign and that they wanted to make sure that it worked.

The member for Karrinyup will perhaps tell me why politics should be brought into the issue of preventing crime in Western Australia.

Mr Clarko: The reason you bring politics into it is that politics is to do with anything dealing with government. Perhaps you meant to say partisan politics - do you know what partisan politics is?

Mr TAYLOR: I understand partisan politics and it does not have a place in crime in Western Australia. The member for Karrinyup is saying, "Let us have a crime prevention strategy that will be the best strategy ever seen in Australia, but we will not tell anyone about it. Let us not involve people in the crime prevention strategy." We must tell the people what we are doing and as the member for Morley-Swan said, the best way to do that is through the medium of television. If the people are not told what the Government is doing and that it wants them to work with it, a campaign like this will not work. The Government is asking the public to help beat crime and it has been shown throughout the length and breadth of this State that people, whether Labor or Liberal voters, are not prepared to sit by and let the Liberal Party play politics when it comes to crime prevention. The people in Western Australia believe that this campaign is beyond politics and the action taken by the Leader of the National Party in backing the Government's strategy is what should have happened with the Liberal Party. I have even received letters from some members of the Opposition saying that they believe it is a good strategy and they have asked for copies of some of the booklets to give to their constituents. I will not name those members in this House because I know the sort of vindictive Opposition we have. The fact is that some Opposition members have written to me supporting the campaign.

I refer now to the member for Murchison-Eyre who said, by way of interjection on the member for Morley-Swan, that the Commissioner of Police in Western Australia was a political appointee. His comments fit in well with what the member for Mt Lawley has been saying. He made a disgraceful and outrageous political attack on the Commissioner of Police knowing full well that not only could the commissioner not respond because of his position, but also that the commissioner was in the Eastern States and not close to home. It is typical of the member for Mt Lawley. Opposition members do not mind attacking the commissioner politically because they know he is not in a position to reply in a political way. Without any doubt the Commissioner of Police in Western Australia is the very best Commissioner of Police of any Police Force in this nation and the reason for that is that he is prepared to stand up and be counted on issues like this. He said from the beginning - probably before the Government became involved with the idea - that the answer to crime was to involve people in policing in the community. The campaign will work well because of the great support the Commissioner of Police has given it. It is disgraceful for members like the member for Murchison-Eyre, who we all know is on his way out, to make these comments. Members of his party will not find him a seat. That is how much time they have for him - no time whatsoever. The member for Mt Lawley will not be a director of one of his companies any more and he does not want to have anything more to do with the member for Murchison-Eyre. The fact is that members opposite make outrageous attacks on the Commissioner of Police. However, in the meantime, the Government will push this campaign and if television is the medium by which to get this message across to the people it will continue to use it because the overwhelming majority of Western Australians believe in getting behind community policing. It works and it will continue to work.

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

[Questions taken.]

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 pm*

## STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

### *Referendum Bill*

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [7.15 pm]: I move -

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the introduction without notice of a Bill for an "Act to Amend the Constitution Act 1889-1987" and for that Bill to pass through its remaining stages on the day it is introduced.

It is not my intention, nor do I feel it is necessary, to debate this particular part of the motion at length. The issue is quite clear, as is the need to suspend Standing Orders to enable the Bill to be handled through all its stages, or it should be when I have finished my few remarks.

However, I would like to give the House a brief outline of the need for some urgency on this matter, particularly as it has been introduced on private members' day. What normally happens on private members' day is that a Bill has its second reading and months later that second reading is debated. This matter deals with the referendum which is to be held on 3 September. I think it is important that this House makes a decision well before that date so the public of Western Australia is aware of the Parliament's decision on this matter.

As members are aware, local government is acknowledged under the Western Australian Constitution but at the moment that provision in respect of the Constitution can be withdrawn by a constitutional majority of both Houses of Parliament. The Bill which I hope to introduce as a result of this motion is a very simple matter. It seeks only to include in the Constitution a provision that before local government can be removed from the Constitution a Bill will be required to pass through both Houses and to be carried in a referendum of the people of Western Australia. The provision is very similar to provisions which are already in the Constitution and which relate to the removal of the position of Governor and to the removal of the Legislative Council. Those are just two of the provisions.

Irrespective of whether people support the referendum questions or oppose them, it is universally acknowledged that a yes vote will further strengthen Federal Government control of the Commonwealth to the detriment of the States and States' rights.

Mr Carr: It is not universally acknowledged at all.

Mr STEPHENS: It is universally acknowledged by impartial observers. We know that politics is a game of numbers and the numbers reside in Sydney and Melbourne. That being so, decisions made in Federal Parliament are largely made in the interests of Sydney and Melbourne and the further we reduce States' rights the further Western Australia becomes a colony of Sydney and Melbourne governed through Canberra.

The State Labor Government has claimed to share the concern about the need to protect States' rights. As recently as last week, the Minister for Education in reply to a question reasserted that the Government is very definitely concerned about the retention of States' rights. If the Government supports this motion it has the opportunity to give tangible evidence of its concern. The Government has an opportunity to take action to show that concern in addition to the words previously used in support of States' rights.

With those few remarks, indicating the necessity to handle this matter forthwith to allow a decision to be made well and truly prior to the Federal referendums and to ensure the people of Western Australia can be made aware of that decision, I trust that this motion will receive the support of the House.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [7.24 pm]: I support the arguments advanced by the member for Stirling on this motion. Today I received a letter, written on Monday, from the President of the Local Government Association of Western Australia, Mr Humphrey Park. The letter referred to my speaking at a luncheon of that association last Saturday and reads in part as follows -

It was my understanding that you said words to the effect "upon our return to Government we will entrench the system of Local Government in the Constitution Act of the State of Western Australia by providing that it (the system of Local Government) cannot be removed except by a referendum of the people".

LGA Executive Committee would be very pleased to have the assurances of yourself and the Leader of the Opposition on this matter.

I believe that the fact that I spoke in this style last Saturday at the association's annual conference - and they took it upon themselves to write on the first working day following the meeting to ask me and the Leader of the Opposition to state our position - illustrates that I am in line with the motion moved by the member for Stirling. Another letter dated 11 August 1988, sent to the Leader of the Opposition from the Acting Town Clerk of the Town of Mosman Park, and read by me today, says in part, although this is not the total view of my party -

I wish to advise that Council supports the Local Government Association's stance on the Federal Constitutional recognition of Local Government, but agrees that amendments to the State Constitution would be considered more appropriate.

They are two items of correspondence I have received over the last 24 hours. Over the last four months I have attended zone meetings of the Local Government Association throughout the metropolitan area.

Mr Pearce: If you are arguing the case for the no vote, you have not done very well.

Mr CLARKO: The Minister should not anticipate me. At those meetings I have put forward the no case on Federal constitutional recognition of local government. At the south metropolitan zone meeting at the East Fremantle Council Chambers on 30 May 1988 the chairman of that zone put to me, after my speech -

Mr Thomas: Who is that?

Mr CLARKO: Councillor Laurie Humphrey from the Cockburn Council - a very competent councillor in my judgment. He said to me that recognition in the Western Australian Constitution to which I had referred was insufficient in that at any time - perhaps overnight - a Bill could be passed through both Houses of Parliament to abolish certain sections of our Constitution that would delete local government from the State Constitution; it would no longer be formally recognised. I accepted that argument because question 3 involves the establishment and continuance of the system of local government. In this State we have the establishment and not the continuance of that system. On 31 May, the following day, I raised with my parliamentary Liberal Party the point that on our return to Government we should undertake to amend the Western Australian Constitution so that any proposal to abolish State constitutional recognition would require the approval of the people of Western Australia at a referendum. On the same day my party agreed to what in effect is the motion under debate.

At subsequent zone meetings of the Local Government Association which I attended I advised that that was my party's intention. I said the same last Saturday at the LGA luncheon, and at the Country Shire Councils Association conference on Monday this week. I was surprised when I was advised yesterday that the National Party was planning to introduce the legislation which has been put forward as a matter of urgency. As I have said, this is Liberal Party policy and has been so since 31 May this year. The Liberal Party supports the motion and argues that it should be dealt with immediately because it is a matter of great importance. On Monday when I spoke along the same lines to the CSCA which represents 112 of the 139 councils in Western Australia, and covered question 3 of the referendum, that association gave overwhelming support to the no vote.

Mr Carr: They did not.

Mr CLARKO: Is the Minister suggesting that the association did not overwhelmingly support the no vote?

Mr Carr: They voted against a campaign to support the yes vote and they reversed that yesterday morning. Yesterday morning a proposal was put to support the no vote and that was lost.

Mr CLARKO: They would not support the yes vote.

Mr Pearce: And they do not support the no vote.

Mr CLARKO: That is okay; if they do not support the yes vote -

Several members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: I think members are laughing prematurely. If the people of Australia do not support the yes vote, the Constitution will remain as it is and that is the way it should be.

Mr Pearce: They don't support a no case either.

Mr CLARKO: At a wedding, when the priest or minister asks whether I agree to take this woman as my lawful wedded wife and I do not say yes, the marriage is on pretty rocky ground from the start; in fact it is not recognised legally. Despite the efforts by various local government associations around Australia, the Country Shire Councils Association is not prepared to support the yes case. I thank the Minister for Local Government for making that clear to the House tonight.

That is one of the issues. We will deal with that question if this motion is successful. I believe that we should support the Deputy Leader of the National Party as it is a very important matter.

In 1979 the Liberal Party and the National Country Party put through this House, and through the Legislative Council, legislation which formally recognised local government in the Western Australian Constitution. In 1976, a Constitutional Convention was held in Hobart which I was privileged to attend. It decided that it could not support Federal recognition of local government and urged the various States to separately recognise it. That of course is what happened. The first State to do so was Victoria in 1979 followed shortly thereafter by this Parliament. South Australia and New South Wales have now followed so that four of the six States now recognise local government in their Constitutions. Two still do not but I understand that Tasmania and Queensland are in the process of giving local government constitutional recognition.

The Constitutional Commission subcommittee that dealt with the distribution of powers recommended that constitutional recognition of local government should not be included in the Federal Constitution, but that it should be included in the States' Constitutions. I do not want to go into that argument now. We will argue that point when the time comes.

I received a letter from the Local Government Association urging us to take the step foreshadowed by the member for Stirling. I agree with his argument that it is a very topical matter; it would not be possible to find a more topical matter, other than the other three questions in the referendum, than this one. It is one of the most critical and topical issues within this State, and, indeed, throughout Australia. That is the prime reason that we should take steps to allow this motion to proceed through this House. It is a very important matter and has tremendous support from people involved in local government, despite the central organisations that represent them trying to put another point of view; they have been unsuccessful because a meeting of 112 of the 139 local authorities in this State supported the no campaign.

The Liberal Party supports this motion to suspend Standing Orders.

**MR PEARCE** (Armadale - Leader of the House) [7.35 pm]: Private members' day is the day that all sorts of bizarre propositions are put before this House. In the history of this House, Wednesdays are probably the most bizarre days.

**Mr Cash**: Even when you were in Opposition?

**Mr PEARCE**: Yes, even when we were in Opposition. If we searched back through the records of Parliament, I doubt that we would find anything more bizarre than the proposition which is before us tonight. Two parties are campaigning throughout the State and telling people what a precious document the Constitution is and how we should be careful about amending it. They then come into this Parliament and ask us to amend the Western Australian Constitution on a single day, sight unseen. That is bizarre.

The State Government does not oppose State constitutional recognition of local government. However, we are not about to commit ourselves to a motion which would compel us to consider legislation to be introduced by the member for Stirling without our having it analysed to study its legal implications or before we consult all of the local government bodies about their views of a proposal to amend something that will affect them directly. We are being asked to do all of these things and to trust that the member's legal expertise is sufficient to convince us that this is the right course and that the member for Karrinyup has carried out the necessary consultations with local government associations. I would never have thought that so wise and cautious a soul as the member for Stirling in his dying days in the Parliament would put such a radical proposition before us if it were not for the fact that he and the member for Karrinyup are squirming like worms on the hook on this question of support for the local government question in the referendum.

Members know perfectly well that the Country Shire Councils Association is all over the place on the local government recognition question. It will not support a yes or no vote. It is a well attested fact by a range of academic studies that councils in country areas have, as their membership, 53 per cent who are members of the National Party. It is also true that the Leader of the National Party, the member for Merredin, has told country councillors that their commitment to the National Party should be greater than their commitment to local government in arguing for the constitutional referendum no case. Normally I hold the Leader of the National Party in very high esteem. However, I find his actions in this regard deplorable. He is trying to influence party councillors not to support the question that is so important to them and to follow the party line.



In order to get them out of the trouble they have got themselves into with country councillors, most of whom would support a yes vote, as would the majority of Liberal Party members support the yes case in the referendum, they have rushed into the Parliament with no consideration at all and attempted to move a constitutional amendment that will take the heat off them. The Western Australian Constitution is a far too precious document in the eyes of the Labor Party to be treated in such a cavalier manner by hypocrites. If they were concerned about local government they would want to see local government enshrined in the national Constitution.

I had the pleasure of reading the excellent speech made by the Liberal Party councillor, Peter Kyle, who is also President of the Australian Local Government Association, in which he tore shreds off the Western Australian Liberal Party and named the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Karrinyup for their hypocritical stance on this issue.

We are not about to become involved in this act of constitutional piracy. If the member for Stirling wishes to change the Western Australian Constitution, he should do it like anybody else and give notice of a Bill, introduce it, and give it a second reading. We will seek legal advice on such a weighty matter, consider it as a Government, and then make a decision. If that decision were to be of the kind that would include proper protection for local government in the Western Australian Constitution, the State Government would have no objection to it. The Government will not include in the Constitution words cobbled together in a couple of days by the member for Stirling. It could have a devastating effect on local government and could be removed from the Constitution only by a referendum of the people. This Government will take that action with the greatest of care and after full consideration. It is not an argument against enshrining the role of local government in the Western Australian Constitution. The State Government is sympathetic to that.

The process in which the National Party is asking the Government to indulge is a hypocritical process. It is not the way that the Opposition, if in Government, would have sought to amend the Constitution. I can only imagine what members opposite would have said if I had turned up in this House one day and said, "We want to amend the Constitution this afternoon."

Mr Stephens: If you check back through the records you will find you have done that. It may not have been to amend the Constitution.

Mr PEARCE: This Government has never moved to amend the Constitution on a single day.

Mr Stephens: It is obvious you do not want the truth because you are trying to talk me down.

Mr PEARCE: Occasionally, as Leader of this House, I have moved a motion to take a Bill through all its stages on a single day. I have done that only when I have satisfied myself that the Minister involved with the Bill has taken the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the National Party and any other members who are interested through the Bill with the Government advisers. However, the Leader of the National Party dumped this motion on my desk just after the Parliament sat this afternoon. It was to be introduced by Mr Stephens.

Mr Cowan: Slow down a little and get your facts right.

Mr PEARCE: It is in the form of a photocopy. He could not even organise to have it printed until such time as the Bill had its first reading in the House. We are being asked to amend the document that governs the lives of all citizens of Western Australia on the basis of these two tattered pieces of paper. We are being asked to do this at a time when the Opposition is advising Western Australians to be very careful about amendments to the Constitution. They are saying that we have a document that has stood us in good stead since 1901, we should not rush in and make changes to it, and people should vote no. I advise the member for Stirling that on this occasion the Government will play it safe and will vote no to the motion. If he wants to amend the Constitution he should introduce a Bill into the Parliament in the normal way and it will receive the consideration it deserves.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Leader of the National Party) [7.44 pm]: The National Party is disappointed with the Government's attitude. One would have thought that on the basis that it is so much in favour of giving some form of constitutional recognition to local government in a Constitution - which, I might add, happens to be something which separates the powers of the State and the powers of the Commonwealth and has nothing to do with local government - the Government would have done something about meeting the wishes of local

government in one of the two areas in which it has a degree of concern. One, of course, is a matter which relates to direct access to funding from the Commonwealth which this Government cannot do anything about and which, I hope, this Government would not support. The other is the issue of local government as a body which has a greater chance of remaining as a system of government or, as the Minister for Local Government is fond of saying, as a sphere of government. I thought the Government would have been prepared to accept this motion. There is no hidden agenda in this motion as there is in the Commonwealth constitutional referendum: It concerns a provision in the State's Constitution which ensures that before this Government, or any Government, decides to remove local government as a system -

Mr Pearce: We are not voting no to that proposition.

Mr COWAN: The Leader of the House is saying he wants more time to consider this motion. What a lot of rubbish. I remind him of the number of times he has come into this House with material that he has expected Opposition parties to give consideration and support to on one day.

Mr Pearce: Never without a briefing.

Mr COWAN: I would like the Leader of the House to pipe down for half a minute to give the Minister for Local Government an opportunity to answer this question: How much time did the Government give Opposition parties to consider a special Bill to validate something the Albany Town Council had done which was totally outside the Local Government Act?

Mr Carr: Quite a lot more time than this and there were detailed briefings by Government officers.

Several members interjected.

Mr COWAN: That was an action which was completely outside the Local Government Act, but the Government expected us to support legislation which gave validity to an action taken by the Albany Town Council.

Mr Carr: You had longer. You had briefings that went with it and the Bill was drafted by Parliamentary Counsel.

Mr COWAN: We did not need a briefing. We knew precisely what the Government was doing and the Government knows precisely what we intend to do on this occasion.

I want to respond to a comment made by the Leader of the House when he said that I have been saying to shire councils -

Mr Pearce: I said to individual councillors who are members of the National Party. You said that their allegiance to the National Party should be more important than their allegiance to local government.

Mr COWAN: I am pleased to hear the Leader of the House say that. It is absolutely incorrect. I have not told anyone that. In fact, a person who happens to be a candidate for the National Party was faced with a dilemma regarding this issue and I am on record as advising him that he had to exercise his conscience and if his conscience dictated to him that he should support question 3 of the referendum, so be it. The person happens to be the Mayor of the City of Cockburn. How does that sit with the allegation the Leader of the House has made, which is a repeat of an allegation made by the President of the Australian Local Government Association when he claimed I had spoken with someone from the Shire of Donnybrook and told him the same thing? I do not know who is on the Donnybrook Shire and yet the Leader of the House makes these stupid allegations.

Mr Pearce: You have to admit I did not make it up. That claim is widely known around the traps.

Mr COWAN: Had the Leader of the House retained his position as one of the debaters of the Western Australian Debating Society and advanced that case, what would the adjudicator have done?

Mr Pearce: Given me 100 per cent out of 100.

Mr COWAN: He would not have. I give the Leader of the House a little more credit than that because I think he would have checked it out. If he had any pride in what he was saying,

despite the fact that he has parliamentary privilege in this House, he would have verified what had been said and would have said it only if there were some truth to it. However, in this case he has not done that. What he has said is completely false.

Mr Pearce: Are you prepared to say that the President of the Australian Local Government Association is a liar?

Mr COWAN: I have not heard what he said. I have only asked the radio station on which he made those statements for a transcript of what he said. When I have received that transcript I will take up the issue with him. If he has said the things the Minister claims he has, I will take it to its fullest possible extent.

Mr Pearce: My source of the allegation is not Mr Kyle; it is elsewhere. That is the simple fact. You then denied it. The next thing you said was that it was being said by Mr Kyle. Mr Kyle certainly did not say that to me. I got it from elsewhere.

Mr COWAN: So the Minister got something second hand! All the Minister has done with that comment is verify what I am saying. Nine times out of 10, the Minister comes into this place with knowledge of the facts. On this occasion the Minister has not done so. He has just proved by his admission that he is prepared to repeat hearsay and take it as gospel truth. That is disgraceful.

Mr Pearce: You don't know what my source is.

Mr COWAN: I can say that I understand that the President of the Australian Local Government Association has made that claim on a commercial radio station. I will check it out. If the claim that the Minister has put to the House, and on which I have also made some comment, is correct, I will take up the issue with him and take whatever course is necessary, because it is totally untrue. I used the example to demonstrate to the Minister that I have never said that anybody owes some allegiance to the National Party of Australia in preference to his conscience. That would be totally alien to my view on how a political party should operate. The Minister, more than anybody in this Chamber, should know that.

The question before the House is that we should proceed with the motion for the suspension of Standing Orders. We do not expect the Government to take the proposed legislation through all its stages in one sitting.

Mr Pearce: You are; that is what the motion says. I said to your deputy leader, "If you bring this into the Parliament in the normal course, give us time to take legal advice, give us time to consult local government on this change; we might well support it; but we are not prepared to deal with it sight unseen or without any capacity to consult with local government." That is a perfectly fair position and one that you would normally support. I am sorry you have been hauled into the House by your deputy leader to shore up his failing case without having heard what was said here. That is our position. We may well support this legislation if it is dealt with in the proper way.

Mr COWAN: That is the Minister's second speech. He cannot make three in a row.

The fact is we have a motion to suspend Standing Orders to deal with this here and now. I would have thought that it was quite clear cut; it is quite a simple mechanism. There is no hidden agenda. It merely provides for a referendum to be conducted.

Mr Pearce: Is there a hidden agenda in the Federal Government's referendum?

Mr COWAN: Yes, there is.

Mr Pearce: The Federal Government says there is not. Why should we listen to you on this? You are a more honest person than to put this phoney case before the Parliament.

Mr COWAN: I have not heard one scintilla of evidence, certainly not objective evidence, that would indicate that the motion should not proceed. It disappoints me that the Labor Party or the Government has not seen fit to give some reassurance to local government of the esteem with which it holds that sphere of Government. We should support this motion. It would give a boost of confidence to local government. I am disappointed to hear the Leader of the House say that he and his troops will not support the motion.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

## Ayes (18)

Mr Cash	Mr Greig	Mr Mensaros	Mr Watt
Mr Clarko	Mr House	Mr Stephens	Mr Wiese
Mr Court	Mr Lewis	Mr Thompson	Mr Bradshaw ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Cowan	Mr Lightfoot	Mr Fred Tubby	
Mr Grayden	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Reg Tubby	

## Noes (23)

Dr Alexander	Mr Peter Dowding	Mr Marlborough	Mr Thomas
Mrs Beggs	Mr Evans	Mr Pearce	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bertram	Dr Gallop	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Carr	Mr Grill	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Cunningham	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Donovan	Dr Lawrence	Mr Taylor	

## Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Blaikie	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Schell	Mr P.J. Smith
Mr Trenorden	Mrs Henderson
Mr Maslen	Mr Parker
Mr Crane	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Williams	Mr Bridge
Mr Hassell	Mr Troy

Question thus negatived.

## FOREIGN STUDENTS

*Fraser High School Cadet Unit - Hamilton, New Zealand*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Barnett): Some members were concerned about recent events in the Pacific when our visitors walked into the Chamber this evening, so it is probably necessary to advise you who they are to relieve you of your concern. We have with us tonight the Fraser High School Cadet Unit from Hamilton in New Zealand. The unit is here on a reciprocal visit to Guildford Grammar School as a special bicentennial gesture. The unit is accompanied by its commanding officer, Captain May Tucker, QSM, and Major Ted Gray, of Guildford. I take the opportunity of welcoming you to Western Australia and hope that you enjoy your visit.

[Applause.]

GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESS  
(PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY) BILL*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 15 June.

**MR PETER DOWDING** (Maylands - Treasurer) [8.00 pm]: This Bill has been examined fairly carefully by the Government because there is absolutely no doubt that it supports the principles relating to many of the issues raised in the second reading speech. However, some points need to be made.

The Industry (Advances) Act contains sound financial principles for issuing guarantees and indemnities; they are adhered to by the Government, and they were adhered to by the previous Government and the Government before that. I am advised by Treasury that the same sound principles are adhered to in relation to assistance granted under the provisions of other Acts. All guarantees and indemnities issued by the Government are reported in the Treasury's annual statements.

Some problems are evident in the Bill and, in particular, it disregards the commercial sensitivity of many of the proposals put to the Government by the private sector. The

possibility that a contract entered into in good faith by the Government can be void and have no effect, as is set out in proposed section 4(2) of the Bill, is not commercially viable. The Bill would embrace the normal commercial activities of the R & I Bank; for example, the normal commercial loans to small business and big business. It would also relate to agricultural produce marketing bodies and their normal commercial activities. Under the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act when a grant or advance of money is made to a person for a specific purpose the Treasury may require the Auditor General to audit the accounts of that person to ascertain whether the moneys granted or advanced have been expended in accordance with the purpose of the grant or advance. That gives an accountability power through the audit function of the Auditor General.

In those circumstances, although the Government has given careful consideration to the matters contained in this Bill, it is not prepared to accept that these issues justify the legislation presented to the House and the Bill is opposed.

**MR COURT** (Nedlands - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [8.02 pm]: This Bill is a genuine attempt to improve the accountability of Governments, whether it be the current Government or any future Government. The Treasurer has raised the question of commercial sensitivity and the fact that this legislation would embrace the normal commercial activities of the R & I Bank. If there are technical problems with an organisation such as the R & I Bank, perhaps the legislation should be amended; however, the overall principle is extremely important. I will briefly repeat the proposals in the legislation.

It is proposed that when financial assistance as defined in the Bill, which includes guarantees, is given, details must be laid before the House at the first available opportunity within six sitting days. That financial assistance cannot be disallowed by this House but members will have an opportunity to debate it. However, if debate is not allowed within a certain time the agreement becomes void. It is a very good principle and, as the member for Floreat pointed out, it is designed to ensure that the Parliament is properly informed when different forms of financial assistance are given. It is designed to restore integrity to the commitments made by Governments of taxpayers' funds. This has become very topical of late with the dealings which have taken place involving WA Inc - the cobweb of arrangements between different organisations with which the Government and a few of its favoured friends are involved. Unfortunately there has not been proper accountability of those dealings to this Parliament and a great deal of secrecy has been involved. This has given Western Australia a bad reputation in financial circles. Even the man in the street is now very concerned about the financial dealings of this Government.

I can recall in the early days of this Government debating Exim in this Parliament and bringing its activities to the notice of the House. One example involved the Goldrock organisation, officers of which gave interest free loans with some other commitments to sell off to friends and relatives. It was only a small deal by the Government's standards, involving a couple of hundred thousand dollars, but it was a classic case in that, had the Opposition not brought it to the attention of the Parliament, it would have proceeded and nobody would have known about it. When dealing with taxpayers' funds it is important that these matters be carefully scrutinised.

The R & I Bank was also involved when Exim dealt with the marketing of Acremaster tractors. In one financial deal with Perpetual Finance Corp Ltd, which is a subsidiary of the R & I Bank, some floor plans were drawn up, financial arrangements made, and a verbal guarantee given on the transaction. Perpetual Finance wanted that guarantee in writing but Exim stated that it was a Government operation, that there was no need to worry, and that the company could take Exim's word. That deal went bad and the lawyers for Perpetual had prepared the papers for legal action. However, because it would have proved embarrassing for Exim, the matter was handled in a different way. The latest report from the WADC lists its contingent liabilities and states that bank and performance guarantees in the amount of \$3.1 million have been provided in the normal course of business. A claim has been lodged against the corporation for the return of a deposit of \$100 000 for a sale of land. However, the report contains no details of the guarantees it has given to different businesses. It is only right and proper that that sort of information be tabled in this House.

This legislation does not intend that this Parliament should have the power to stop any guarantees, but that the Parliament and the public in turn should be fully informed, and that

we should debate these matters in this Parliament. This will better inform the public and make the Government of the day more accountable. The Treasury report No 1 contains a list of all the guarantees currently in place under the Industries Assistance Commission Act and the different departments. When those reports are issued we know what guarantees are current and are able to ask questions. Because the Government is becoming involved in all sorts of financial commitments to certain organisations, it is only right that the details be presented in this Parliament at the first available opportunity so that they can be debated.

In recent times the Government has moved into the big league. It started with \$100 000 deals but in three recent deals, involving the Swan Building Society, Teachers Credit Society and Rothwells, certain guarantees and financial assistance have been provided by this Government. With these dealings in particular, and whatever is the forthcoming arrangement the Government finally decides to go into in relation to the petrochemical plant, we are very keen to have in place legislation such as that we are debating tonight so that we can have a better understanding, and the public can be better informed, of what the Government is up to. I appreciate the Treasurer's being here tonight and I hope that we can have a rational debate so I can put forward another point of view about how the Opposition thinks the Teachers Credit Society business should have been handled.

Mr Peter Dowding: How can the member say that is part of the debate on this Bill?

Mr COURT: The Treasurer asks how that can be part of the debate on this Bill; that is what this Bill is all about. It is designed to make the Government of the day, when it is giving financial assistance to an organisation, bring any financial assistance package to the Parliament within six sitting days. That is what this Bill is all about.

Mr Peter Dowding: One could argue then, on the issue of relevance, that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is saying that when a decision was taken in relation to asking the R & I Bank to take over the assets and liabilities of Teachers Credit Society that matter could have been debated within six days, but you cannot debate that issue in principle.

Mr COURT: I will explain that what has taken place and is currently taking place with Teachers Credit Society is the backbone of why we want this legislation introduced.

Mr Peter Dowding: How would you avoid it?

Mr COURT: If the Treasurer will let me continue, I will explain to him the very real difference between how a Liberal Government would handle this type of situation and how his Labor Government has handled it. There are two distinct issues at stake with the Teachers Credit Society. The first is: How did it get into trouble in the first place? It is not my intention to debate that at this moment.

Mr Peter Dowding: Largely because it would be out of order.

Mr COURT: Whether or not that is the case, I want to debate the second major issue that has arisen in relation to Teachers Credit Society; that is, how the Government has guaranteed the financial assistance package it has given since it made the decision to rescue Teachers Credit Society. We have seen a situation where the R & I Bank administrator who was handling that rescue came up with a figure of \$43 million that it would cost the taxpayer. We have seen that figure blossom to \$119 million. What should have happened - and we made this clear at the time - is that once the Government found itself in the situation where it had allowed that organisation to deteriorate financially, instead of giving a guarantee to the R & I Bank - a blank cheque that it could move in, be the administrator and sort out the problems there - the Government should have put that business out to tender. It should have put the loans that that organisation had -

Mr Peter Dowding: On what basis?

Mr COURT: This is a normal commercial procedure. When the receiver is called in for this type of situation he has either to make a decision to trade out or to make sure that losses are minimised for a particular organisation. He should make sure of that by putting it out to tender. The competing financial institutions would then have been able to have a look at the loans book and make their own assessment of that book. The Government would have found itself in the position where instead of waiting for five months it would have known very quickly what the losses were to be and how much it would cost.

Mr Peter Dowding: How does that arise under this Bill?

Mr COURT: The Treasurer asks how does it arise. How many times do I have to explain to him that we are talking in this legislation about when the Government gives a commitment in the form of financial assistance - whether a guarantee, or whatever - it should be brought before this House so that it can be debated?

Mr Peter Dowding: So we would have had months of investigation before people could put in a genuine tender, and there would have been delay because of a debate in the House that went on forever.

Mr COURT: We waited for five months to get a figure of \$43 million and eight months later they come up with a figure of \$119 million. If things had been done like any other commercial transaction, within the first five months the whole matter would have been finished. The Government, without the authorisation of this Parliament, has given a blank cheque to the R & I Bank to go in and sort out the problem. What incentive was there for the R & I Bank to sort out that problem in the cheapest way possible?

Mr Peter Dowding: What does the member think the incentive is? It is that this is a bank which has a particular responsibility to the people of Western Australia. There is no more incentive than paying somebody from a firm to do it.

Mr COURT: There is no end to the payout. If the Government were to choose the R & I Bank it should have the bank look at the loans book like any other commercial operation would have to do, and carry out its valuation on it. The bank came out with a figure of \$43 million. The Government could have said that it would back the bank for \$60 million and let it take the risk. That is the bank's business.

Mr Peter Dowding: The member lives in cloud cuckoo land if he thinks we could have done that with the state of that society.

Mr COURT: What does the Treasurer mean, "the state of the society"?

Mr Peter Dowding: The member knows what I mean.

Mr COURT: I know only too well what the Treasurer means. The Government has a banker, the member for Scarborough.

Mr Peter Dowding: The member has been invited to have a full briefing on this matter and he declined. He is not game to let the R & I Bank take him through the issue. He is so gutless he will not listen! He wants the freedom to say and do what he pleases out there, saying, "We don't actually know, so we will say whatever comes into our heads."

Mr COURT: We know more than the Treasurer ever will about this subject. His backbencher, the member for Scarborough, knows how the banking system works. He knows that what the Government did - to give a blank cheque to any bank - was absolutely uncommercial and irresponsible. I do not care whether it is the R & I Bank; if it wanted the job of rescuing Teachers Credit Society it should have made its estimate of the losses and the Government should have said it could have the job of rescuing the society but there was a limit to what it was going to spend. The Government should have said, "You have made the estimate on what is going to be spent."

The other alternative was to do what normally happens in such cases; one puts the loan book out to business for tender and allows the financial institutions to make their commercial judgment as to what they would do with those loans - as we have seen recently. We have seen Mr Connell buy the loans book amounting to \$350 million from Rothwells. That is not an uncommon situation. However, the taxpayers of this State want to know when it is going to end.

Mr Peter Dowding: What has that got to do with this Bill? The member is just using it as a platform for a debate about something else.

Mr COURT: It has a lot to do with this Bill, because the Treasurer does not want to debate this subject.

Mr Peter Dowding: I will debate the subject.

Mr COURT: The taxpayers woke up one morning to a figure of \$43 million; the next thing it was \$119 million. Under the legislation before the House the Government would have to bring its financial assistance package before the House where we would be able to have a

proper debate, and hopefully make this Government, or any other Government, more accountable in this situation.

Mr Burkett: Does the Deputy Leader of the Opposition believe that the Government should have isolated those five major borrowers, and if it could be proved that they trumped up bodgie balance sheets - and the member's dad knows how long it takes to foreclose on a loan from his experience with Kimberley Finance - should the Government have said, "Isolate the five borrowers. See whether they trumped up fraudulent balance sheets", and then proceeded with criminal charges against those five borrowers and then protected the other people whose money the credit society had lent over and above its lending powers?

Mr COURT: Mr Speaker, could we have a glass of water for the member for Scarborough?

Mr Burkett: I do not want a glass of water. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition only wants to hear what comes out of his own mouth.

Mr Bradshaw: Rubbish is coming out of yours.

Mr Burkett: No; it is not. You go back to Harvey, selling condoms.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Burkett: I have not yet had an answer.

Mr COURT: The member for Scarborough is a banker, and he understands what I am talking about. Banks, when they are handling these situations, are used to handling prime securities, first mortgages and the like. Merchant banks and finance companies are set up at levels which are different from those of banks, and they tend to deal in lesser securities when they are handling their financial transactions.

Mr Burkett: Obviously a lot less.

Mr COURT: Yes, and those people are more skilled and have more street sense about how to handle some of the types of deals with which the Teachers Credit Society was involved.

Mr Burkett: It is last resort lending.

Mr COURT: That is right, and these sorts of organisations, if given a chance to tender on that business, would view that loan portfolio quite differently from any bank. They would look at this cowboy financial institution and say, "We can see that we will get so much out of that loan portfolio." What I am saying is that by putting it out for tender, a number of financial institutions would have been given a chance to do it.

Mr Peter Dowding: What you would do in this situation, where the Teachers Credit Society books were in the chaos that you knew they were in, is get such a low return that somebody is gambling on it, and what you want is for one of your mates to get the results of that gambling. We have given it to the R & I Bank, and the R & I Bank will return that money to the taxpayers, not to one of your mates down on the Terrace.

Mr COURT: The Treasurer gambled that it was going to cost the State only \$43 million, but it was triple or nothing, and he lost. It has cost \$120 million. The Government has gambled with the taxpayers' funds.

Mr Peter Dowding: You know that the R & I Bank is a proper financial institution.

Mr COURT: The Treasurer would have known exactly what it was going to cost the taxpayers, and there would not have been a gamble. This Government has decided to gamble. After five months of deliberations, the Government came up with this \$43 million figure. It gambled, saying, "We will give a blank cheque to the R & I Bank. It is going to cost us only \$43 million." We are talking now about \$120 million, so before the Treasurer starts to talk about gambling, he should have a look at what he is doing.

I will move on to another example in the time I have left, which is to do with the Rothwells petrochemical deal. Members can ask what the Rothwells deal has to do with this legislation. Again, a Government guarantee was given. That guarantee, because it was such a public guarantee and was worked out in a rush over two days, was at least brought by the Government into this House for public debate, so I will give the Government credit for that. That was one of the things we wanted to do with this legislation. We wanted to be able to debate whether an organisation should receive a Government guarantee. I find it interesting that in the Rothwells case, the Government was able to assess the loan portfolio of



Rothwells - some \$300 million - and make a decision within two days to guarantee the bank for \$150 million. The Government assessed that loan portfolio in two days. After five months I would have thought we would have had a pretty accurate figure out of the Teachers Credit Society.

Mr Peter Dowding: Are you criticising the R & I Bank and the administrator, or do you think I sit down and do it in the middle of the night? Do not be absurd.

Mr COURT: The Treasurer has been irresponsible in giving a blank cheque to any bank.

Mr Peter Dowding: Don't you think the R & I Bank has the responsibility to manage the State's affairs? Is that what you are saying?

Mr COURT: The Treasurer has gone red. I said he has given a blank cheque to a bank. I do not care whether it is the R & I Bank or any other bank.

Mr Peter Dowding: I cannot understand how you can say those things about the R & I Bank.

Mr COURT: The Government, as a responsible Government, should not have put an open cheque in front of the R & I Bank; it should have ensured there was a limit to what the payout would be.

Mr Peter Dowding: One of these days, when you are old enough to be in Government, the R & I Bank will try to serve you faithfully as well, so you should stop trying to shaft it every time. It does a great deal of good for Western Australia.

Mr COURT: The best the Treasurer can do when we are trying to have a rational debate about one of the most serious financial matters in this State is to use the tactic of the former Premier and to home in on a point, "You are having a go at the R & I Bank." I am having a go at the Treasurer's Government. The R & I Bank is on the good end of the deal. It does not have to worry too much about how it will go with the loss situation.

Mr Peter Dowding: But you are suggesting that it will not try.

Mr COURT: I am suggesting that human nature is such there is no need for the bank to put the maximum effort into it, and the taxpayers of this State have every right to know what it is going to cost them.

I want to continue with the Rothwells question, because I have only seven minutes left. The Government was able to assess a loan portfolio in only two days and to say that it thought the doubtful debts were going to be no more than \$30 million. I think there was provision in the accounts for \$4 million. We have then a situation where after some time, the Rothwells deal is running into problems. The interesting situation arose where the Deputy Premier admitted there was a connection between the Rothwells loans exercise and the Government's attempt to move into this funny paper shuffling exercise for the petrochemical deal. That was reported on 3 August. On the same day, in another newspaper, *The Australian*, the Premier said the exact opposite - there was no connection between the two deals.

I will not waste the time of the House by reading out those two conflicting points of view, but members will recall that during the debate on that subject it was made clear to us by the Deputy Premier that it was not a risky deal. A few months later, the Deputy Premier is trying to justify why the Government has run into problems with the Rothwells exercise and it has now to come up with this new proposal where the valuation of a petrochemical project has been inflated so that one way or another the Government can hide the \$150 million loss that is associated with the Rothwells rescue.

It is interesting that we are not getting from the Government any details about the deal. The Government is saying the deals are still being worked out. The Government has Mr Kevin Edwards and his team trying to work out how they can fool the public into thinking there is no link between the Rothwells deal and the petrochemical deal - when the Deputy Premier has already explained what the link is - and they are trying to do the old Indian trick of converting their debt into some form of equity, which they hope some time down the track is going to be worth something. The whole thing is a shabby deal.

These three exercises that I have mentioned have shown there is a tremendous amount of sloppy administration with this Government. I feel sorry for the Treasurer, who has inherited a number of these deals, but I do not feel sorry for the deals to which he, as the Treasurer, has committed the taxpayers of this State, because he knew only too well what he was getting into.

Mr Peter Dowding: Do you see what I got today? I got a merit award.

Mr COURT: What for?

Mr Peter Dowding: It was from the Padbury High School, for constant achievement in caring for the people of our State. Isn't that nice? I felt very chuffed by that. You see, there are some people who think kindly of what we are doing.

Mr COURT: I appreciate the opportunity we are having to debate this legislation in the House tonight. This debate is designed to make the Government of the day more accountable. The last two years of the activities of this Labor Government are going to go down in history as those two years where we saw cowboy Government when it came to the financial dealings of the State.

The Government was able to hide from the taxpayers for some years the type of activity in which it was involved. Now its actions are coming home to roost, and the public of Western Australia, the taxpayers, are demanding that the Government does not continue with these greedy arrangements. It must become more accountable. The public will not accept it when they wake up in the morning to find that they must fork out \$43 million, and the next morning it is \$119 million that they must fork out. This Government has got into the habit of talking about \$100 million as if it does not mean much; as if it is the pocket money one gives one's children. It rolls off the tongue quickly. When the Government talks about Rothwells, or the way it is bundling itself into the petrochemical project which we will be debating at another stage, and a number of other activities, we are justified in introducing this type of legislation. I support the Bill.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch - Leader of the Opposition) [8.31 pm]: Every time the Opposition brings a measure to this Parliament which will impose upon the Government a new discipline of accountability, the Government runs as fast and as quickly as it can from any such proposal. Since this Government has been in power not one measure has been brought to this Parliament to improve the process of government in terms of its accountability requirements. In fact everything that has happened has been in directly the opposite direction. Take the WADC, for example.

Mr Peter Dowding: What about the Financial Administration and Audit Act?

Mr MacKINNON: The Financial Administration and Audit Act is appropriate only for those agencies which are reporting to this Parliament. This Government has moved so many of them away from the gaze of Parliament that it defies description. The Treasurer is debating tonight what I think is one of the most important measures brought before the Parliament in recent times in terms of improving the accountability process, and he provides a three minute response.

First, that indicates the Treasurer's total lack of preparation. He read the whole of that three minute speech from his official document. Secondly, it shows exactly how the Treasurer of this State treats this Parliament, and that is with absolute contempt. Thirdly, it shows that this Government has absolutely no interest whatsoever in meeting the accountability process of Government. That will be one of the key differences between our two parties as we go into the next election.

Mr Peter Dowding: We are not getting any policy out of you, are we?

Mr MacKINNON: This party has put forward more policies this far out from a proposed election date than any party in the history of this State. For the Treasurer to make such an inane comment shows how ignorant he is. It shows that this Treasurer has as much credibility as Russell Hinze when he said he was going on a diet.

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: The purpose of this Bill has been outlined more than adequately by my colleague, the member for Floreat. It deals with Government guarantees and assistance to private business, and makes it mandatory that such guarantees should be made public. They should be brought to this Parliament so that the people of Western Australia know what is happening with their money. When the shadow Minister, the member for Floreat, brought this matter forward on 15 June, he mentioned the question of WA Incorporated. He said -

This is one of three private members' Bills the Opposition has introduced in order to

restore integrity into public life and to try to do away with the damaging facts, media reports and consequent public perception of corruption and particularly cronyism in "WA Incorporated" as our State is now known.

I am quite sure that even the member for Floreat did not anticipate that in that short time we would have had the astounding revelations we have had since then: The conversion of a guarantee in Rothwells into an investment yet to be specified in form or amount in a petrochemical plant, and the astounding revelations yesterday of the huge losses in the Teachers Credit Society.

Mr Peter Dowding: Are you saying now you would not have supported the small investors in the Teachers Credit Society?

Mr MacKINNON: How many of them? Were there 30 000 or 60 000? Has the Treasurer bothered to find out?

Mr Peter Dowding: You tell us whether you would have supported them.

Mr MacKINNON: This Treasurer has as much credibility as Russell Hinze when he said he was on a diet. I have repeated this over and over again. I am amazed the Treasurer's media monitoring service did not pick up my comments on Howard Sattler's program this morning. I said that when the Government took action on the Teachers Credit Society issue it had no option, but the Government should never have been put in that position. I have repeated that over and over again.

Mr Peter Dowding: Would you have?

Mr MacKINNON: We would never have let the Teachers Credit Society get into that position in the first place.

Mr Burkett: How would you have acted against balance sheets which were not true?

Mr MacKINNON: They caught an animal down there in Mandurah the other day which they named after the member. It was about as good looking.

Mr Burkett: You were called that yesterday. This is so weak.

Several members interjected.

Mr Burkett: Do you know anything about banking?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: The facts are -

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: This legislation is here tonight because this Government put this State into the most costly guarantee position.

Several members interjected.

Mr Peter Dowding: You introduced Peter Tilli to the Deputy Premier as a very good friend of yours. Be honest about it. Do not desert your mates just because they go down the chute.

Mr Burkett: He put on a big party.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MacKINNON: This State has entered into the most costly guarantee ever. The sum of \$150 million is guaranteed, and that has now been converted into an unspecified investment in a petrochemical plant in which this Government has invested at well above the price it is

agreed it should have. The facts in relation to the Rothwells guarantee bear repeating. A merchant bank got into difficulties; the Government was then pressured by that group and others to provide support for the rescue; the Opposition was being pressured to provide support both by the Government and by individuals involved. We refused, of course, for very good reason. This was a rescue, a rescue in which I bet this Treasurer and all his colleagues wish they had never become involved. I bet the private individuals who supported that rescue also wish they had never become involved in it.

Mr Evans: Some 60 000 people were involved.

Mr MacKINNON: If the member woke up, he would find that I am talking about Rothwells, not the Teachers Credit Society; he should go back to sleep.

On 25 October 1987 the then Treasurer, when announcing this rescue, had this to say - and I want members to listen very carefully to these words because in terms of this guarantee I think the statement is very important.

Mr Peter Dowding: When are you going to get to something new? You spent three months of the last session going over and over old stuff.

Mr MacKINNON: And everything we said came true.

Mr Peter Dowding: Well, haven't you got something to say? You haven't even conceded that it was the right thing to do to support the Teachers Credit Society.

Mr MacKINNON: The former Treasurer - and I am pretty sure the current Treasurer would agree with the statement made by his former colleague because he never made any statement publicly to disagree with it, until recently - said this when extending the guarantee -

The Government had also taken into account the action of Rothwells' principal, Mr L.R. Connell, in backing Rothwells with all his personal financial resources . . .

Members should note those words carefully - "all his personal financial resources". The statement continued -

. . . and the involvement of the Queensland Government through the provision of a facility by Suncorp, the Queensland Government's insurance corporation.

Those words are pretty clear. In October last year the Government extended a guarantee on a commitment or understanding. I would have thought it would be a part of that guarantee that it would be tabled in this Parliament and that we would see the detail. We have never seen the detail, nor had an explanation as to what authority the guarantee was extended on. All that should have been included in the guarantee - that the Government got an agreement that Mr Connell pledged all of his personal financial resources. But what did we find subsequently? What happened to that guarantee? Where are we now?

We found, and history shows, that in fact the Treasurer at the time said that the losses would be in the order of \$30 million on the Rothwells loan book. And what happened? About a month or six weeks ago most of the business people around town that I spoke to talked about the fact that Rothwells was in some sort of further difficulty, that its balance date, which was 31 July, was fast approaching, and that something was likely to occur to ensure that things were put right. In fact quite a few articles appeared in the newspaper speculating about that matter towards the end of July.

Mr Burkett: Was that Government guarantee ever drawn upon?

Mr MacKINNON: I am very pleased the member for Scarborough asked that question because what we subsequently saw in relation to that guarantee was an action taken by this Government to avoid that guarantee being called up. The member for Scarborough is strangely silent.

Mr Burkett: You can say it again and I will answer you.

Mr MacKINNON: What I said was that we saw in terms of the rescue of Rothwells the \$150 million guarantee retired by the taking up of the petrochemical investment and in fact the decision to invest in the petrochemical project had nothing to do with the viability of the petrochemical project but everything to do with the rescue of Rothwells and the retirement of that guarantee.

Mr Burkett: Was the guarantee ever drawn upon?

Mr MacKINNON: The member for Scarborough will not answer that question because he knows it happens to be true.

Mr Burkett: I don't.

Mr Hodge: What is the question?

Mr MacKINNON: I quote the words of the Deputy Premier which appeared in *The Australian Financial Review* on 4 August, as follows -

"I don't think there was any imminent danger of collapse but certainly we would have been hard pressed to retire half of the guarantee without endangering Rothwells," he said.

The Deputy Premier admitted publicly that that was the reason the investment was made; that had the Government not become involved in the petrochemical plant the guarantee would certainly have been called up.

Mr Hodge: That was only part of the reason.

Mr MacKINNON: What was the other part?

Mr Hodge: We wanted to see that good project get off the ground.

Mr MacKINNON: But the Minister admits that it was part of the reason?

Mr Hodge: You just quoted it.

Mr MacKINNON: Now we have another Minister in this Government admitting that the primary reason, the major reason -

Mr Hodge: No, I did not say that.

Mr MacKINNON: Well, what proportion would it have been?

Mr Hodge: I don't know about the proportion. It was an element under consideration, certainly.

Mr MacKINNON: We now know that in that Cabinet meeting on the Thursday just prior to the last possible day Rothwells had to make a determination because of its balance date the Cabinet of this State had as one of its primary considerations the fact that had it not taken the action the Rothwells guarantee would have been taken up. That is categoric and quite clear. The Deputy Premier admitted it, and another Minister here tonight who was, I presume, at that meeting also admits it.

That is what is wrong with this Government - with WA Inc. The decisions are not being made for the economic reason but for the political reason. The political reason was that the embarrassment would have been huge and it would have been very costly to this Government had it allowed that guarantee to be called up. They are the facts; that is what led to this Government's action. Had the details of that guarantee been tabled in this Parliament I venture to say that the Government would not have been so cavalier in its attitude to the whole question of the Rothwells guarantee and its subsequent action.

We have seen the taxpayers of this State being committed for an unspecified amount to a petrochemical project which, in the words of the developers themselves - the initial project promoters - did not need any Government involvement and would have got off the ground without a skerrick of Government support in equity terms and in loan terms. They are the words of the developers, not of the Opposition. The project would have got off the ground without the Government for a price, in the words of the Deputy Premier, in the order of \$700 million or \$750 million; but what did we see? We saw the involvement of the Government to save its guarantee.

Mr Peter Dowding: What has this to do with the Bill?

Mr MacKINNON: It has everything to do with it because it is central to that Rothwells guarantee. I want to remind all members, including the Premier, of what happened on 25 October 1987. The Government had also taken into account the action of Rothwells' principal, Mr L.R. Connell, in backing Rothwells with all of his personal financial resources. That was one of the conditions of the guarantee. But what happened as part of this intricate cobweb? I will quote from an article by Stephen Bartholomeusz in *The Age* on 29 July -

Laurie Connell, out of the goodness of his heart, was proposing to buy \$350 million of loans of doubtful quality from Rothwells at what was said to be their face value. That looked, for someone who was supposed to have ploughed the remnants of his fortune into rescuing Rothwells just after the sharemarket crash, an odd transaction.

It was odd, to say the least. Where does a man who had committed all of his fortune and money on 25 October 1987 get \$350 million from? He got it from the Government and the taxpayers of Western Australia.

Mr Peter Dowding: What a load of rubbish.

Mr MacKINNON: Where did he get it from?

Mr Court: Come on, tell us. You have gone silent.

Mr Peter Dowding: I am not Mr Connell - ask him.

Mr MacKINNON: That is like this Treasurer. He says that \$120 million for the Teachers Credit Society rescue will not affect the taxpayers of this State. Who does he think is paying the money? Mickey Mouse? The man in the moon? Has he dug it out of a wishing well? The money came from the taxpayers - the people of this State paid that money, and well the Premier knows it.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is not correct.

Mr MacKINNON: It is the taxpayers of Western Australia under the commitment of this man opposite and all of his colleagues who enabled Mr Laurie Connell to spend this \$350 million to ensure that the Government's guarantee could be retired.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is just nonsense.

Mr MacKINNON: It was done for political reasons, it had nothing to do with economic reasons.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is absolute nonsense.

Mr MacKINNON: Is the Treasurer saying that the petrochemical project would not have proceeded without the Government's involvement?

Mr Peter Dowding: I am saying to you that that is just absolute and arrant nonsense.

Mr MacKINNON: For a Government which is litigious and will slap a writ at the drop of a hat -

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: Has Mr Bartholomeusz had a writ from the Treasurer? No, of course he has not. Has Tim Treadgold received a writ from him?

Mr Peter Dowding: What are you saying?

Mr MacKINNON: I am saying that Tim Treadgold has basically said what I have said this evening -

Mr Peter Dowding: He called you silly. That is what he thinks of you.

Mr MacKINNON: Tim Treadgold can make whatever comment he wishes.

Mr Peter Dowding: I think he is right.

Mr MacKINNON: He can make whatever comments he likes but he also happened to write a series of articles about this matter without receiving one jot of denial from this Government.

Mr Court: Hang on, he still might get a writ.

Mr MacKINNON: He might get a writ; the Government has plenty of them.

The facts are crystal clear. The Premier may well have taken it up with Mr Bartholomeusz. In an article in *The Age* Mr Bartholomeusz wrote -

By linking the two transactions, -

That is, the guarantee and the petrochemical deal. The article continues -

- Mr Dowding is effectively admitting that the Government - or, rather, the WA

taxpayers and consumers - will absorb at least some of the losses for Mr Connell inherent in the purchase of the loans.

That is exactly what has happened. Bartholomeusz is accurate; he is right.

Mr Peter Dowding: He is wrong but he is not saying what you are saying. He is not saying that \$350 million is coming from the taxpayers; you cannot even quote him accurately.

Mr MacKINNON: The Treasurer can only prove that by telling me where Mr Connell got \$350 million. Where did he get it?

Mr Peter Dowding: You can't even quote your own sources accurately.

Mr MacKINNON: Where did he get \$350 million? He got it from the Government.

Mr Peter Dowding: Rubbish!

Mr MacKINNON: The Treasurer's own Minister has admitted what happened, as has the Deputy Premier - that is, that one of the primary considerations in making the decision on the petrochemical plant was the Rothwells guarantee. Does the Treasurer agree with that?

Mr Peter Dowding: Look at your own quote. Look at what he said.

Mr MacKINNON: Does the Minister for Conservation and Land Management admit that?

Mr Hodge: I said "one consideration".

Mr MacKINNON: Exactly. Does the Treasurer agree with that?

Mr Peter Dowding: I am just saying -

Mr MacKINNON: The Treasurer does not even agree with his own Minister. He is prepared to sell his Minister down the drain.

Mr Peter Dowding: You are pathetic.

Mr MacKINNON: Does the Treasurer agree? Was it one of the considerations?

Mr Lightfoot: Answer the question.

Mr MacKINNON: He cannot answer the question.

Mr Peter Dowding: The primary consideration for the State is that this is a good project and we do not want to see a situation where it does not get up because of problems relating to the ownership of it.

Mr MacKINNON: The only problem relating to ownership was the fact that the Rothwells guarantee might well have been called up. The Treasurer's own Minister admitted that in the Cabinet meeting on the Thursday that was one of the factors that influenced the decision. It influenced his; it influenced the Deputy Premier's.

Mr Peter Dowding: One of the good side effects is the ability to turn risk into real money.

Mr MacKINNON: Does the Treasurer deny that his own deputy said it was a primary consideration?

Mr Peter Dowding: I told you what I said.

Mr MacKINNON: Of course he did. It is an astounding situation that the Treasurer will not even support his deputy or his Minister.

Mr Peter Dowding: There is no division.

Mr MacKINNON: They are the facts in respect of this particular guarantee. This Government became directly involved with the petrochemical plant because it was going to be sorely embarrassed with a \$150 million guarantee which the Government had negotiated. Who knows under what terms and conditions it was negotiated? Clearly it was not under the terms and conditions that were stated publicly. The decision making process of this Government, as I have indicated previously, is being driven by totally political considerations because of the lack of accountability. The decision making process of this Government has been corrupted by this Treasurer's absolute obsession with retaining power at all costs and at the expense of taxpayers. The Treasurer was prepared to commit an unspecified amount of money - he still has not come clean and let us know what that amount is - to a petrochemical project because of totally political considerations. The Treasurer's own neck would have been at risk had he not done so.

The Government has yet again made the wrong decision. It made the wrong decision in getting involved in the first place; it showed its financial incompetence because any financially minded person of any quality would have known that to get involved in that sort of rescue operation under such pressure was foolish. We did not become involved and neither would we. All the Government did was to get on the merry-go-round and it is now having extreme difficulty getting off it. The taxpayers of Western Australia are driving that merry-go-round.

Mr Peter Dowding: You want to get in and criticise the R & I Bank; you want to cause it embarrassment in the commercial arena, and you want to let your deputy throw mud at it by suggesting it is not competent. There is no end to what you will do and say.

Mr MacKINNON: Before I sit down I will answer one of the Treasurer's inane interjections. The Treasurer said I sabotaged the R & I Bank's deal by making a statement on the Sunday after the Saturday edition of *The West Australian* reported that comment. I draw the Treasurer's attention to his own photograph - I am sure he reads all the stories about himself in the papers because he has an ego as high as the Eiffel Tower - in an article in *The Financial Australian* headed "The R & I takes on the dragon with \$75 million bid". This article gives the total lie to the Treasurer's inane interjection and it reads as follows -

However, the chairman of SBS, -

That is, the State Building Society of New South Wales. The article continues -

- Mr Paul Kearns, yesterday dismissed the R & I bid as "just too late" to be taken seriously.

"As far as I am concerned, everything is going as planned (for the merger of SBS and St George) and I think it's quite incredible they (the R & I) are making an offer at this particular time", he said.

"I knew they were a bit behind the times in Perth, but only by two hours."

Mr Peter Dowding: So why didn't you hold off until after the meeting?

Mr MacKINNON: They were the words of the chairman of that particular building society; they were not my words.

Mr Peter Dowding: Why didn't you wait until the meeting had been held?

Mr MacKINNON: To claim I had any influence over that decision at all is clearly ludicrous.

Mr Peter Dowding: Why didn't you wait until the meeting had been held?

Mr MacKINNON: I am entitled to make my comments on a published article and I will continue to do so.

Mr Peter Dowding: You are paid by the taxpayers to fulfil a role; not to sabotage the R & I Bank.

Mr MacKINNON: I oppose the R & I Bank's expansionary program, which the Government is fuelling and funding.

Mr Peter Dowding: David Fischer rang you on Friday to do you the courtesy of explaining what the bank was doing, and you were not even interested in finding out the reasons for it.

Mr MacKINNON: Mr Fischer phoned me on Friday on my car phone, just about near Serpentine, and advised me. I made no public comment until the article was published in *The West Australian* on Saturday.

Mr Stephens: If you used a car phone, how do you know it was not public?

Mr MacKINNON: Yes, I was probably making a public comment, but Mr Fischer was prepared to tell me that on the car phone. He said that he was just advising me and I told him that at that time I would make no public comment. I gave him fair warning that I did not think I would come out in favour of what he was doing. That is what I said then. The Treasurer can check it with him.

Mr Peter Dowding: It came out the day before the meeting in Sydney.

Mr MacKINNON: It was published on the Saturday, republished on Sunday and the chairman of SBS says he thought the R & I Bank was a bit late. I will not support the



R & I Bank's expansionary activities. It is not the role of Government in this State to fund a business expansion into New South Wales - "The bank that lives here". The R & I Bank is a bank designed to look after Western Australians.

Mr Peter Dowding: It is in New South Wales now; it was going to bring Eastern States' money into Western Australia.

Mr Court: It was going to take Western Australian money and put it in New South Wales.

Mr MacKINNON: Exactly. In terms of this case the facts are quite clear: The Government became involved in the petrochemical project after entering into that guarantee for a political consideration. The Deputy Premier admitted that; the Minister here also admitted it. That was the driving force. The former Treasurer had committed every asset to the rescue and found that money only because this Treasurer was prepared to do the funding. If the Treasurer disagrees, I challenge him to tell me where he found the \$350 million. The Treasurer has no credibility whatsoever in this matter. He runs away from any suggestion that the Government should be properly accountable for its actions. The SGIC does not want to be publicly accountable; the WADC does not want to be publicly accountable and neither does the Treasurer wish his WA Inc to be publicly accountable. That will be the significant difference between the two parties at the next election and which will inevitably sink WA Inc along with the Treasurer and the Government.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [9.01 pm]: The National Party supports this legislation and congratulates the member for Floreat on the very capable way he brought this Bill before the House.

I want to return to the principle involved without going into detail about the other issues debated this evening. The member for Floreat's second reading speech read in part -

This Bill requires that all instruments comprising or evidencing financial assistance to a business undertaking shall be laid before each House of Parliament within six sitting days of the execution of such instrument.

He continues -

It was not intended to jeopardise the Government's legitimate aim of assisting business, particularly small business, with loan guarantees. Nor was it intended that such guarantees should be held up with parliamentary procedures. What is intended is to keep the Government honest and to have all guarantees made public because, if there is no cronyism or untoward action involved, there is no reason for secrecy. When in Government, we never denied questions about Government guarantees.

That covers the important part of this legislation which is trying to return to Parliament its rightful role to scrutinise what the executive arm does; that is, what Cabinet does. I am prompted to make that comment by a statement made by the Leader of the House rejecting a piece of legislation that I had introduced which provided for Parliament to scrutinise the sale of Government assets in excess of \$250 000. Those sales would be valid only provided they were passed by both Houses of Parliament. That was a fair and reasonable suggestion in what we consider a democratic society but the Leader of the House would not support that piece of legislation. He did not want to have Government decisions scrutinised by Parliament. That was an amazing statement by a member who claimed to be a representative of a democratic institution. Unfortunately, the words used tonight by the Treasurer virtually indicated the same approach.

The National Party is very supportive of the principle involved in this Bill. I listened very closely to the Treasurer's remarks and he indicated the Government had doubts for legal reasons. That is not a reason to reject the second reading of this Bill. At the Committee stage we can discuss those problems, but whether they are real I am not in a position to say.

Mr Peter Dowding: Our advice from Treasury is that the problems are very real.

Mr STEPHENS: Treasury is not always right. When I was in Cabinet we obtained legal decisions that went one way; within a fortnight, no decision was made and we were then looking at another and opposite position which was supported legally as well.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is lawyers for you; they are never wrong.

Mr STEPHENS: We should examine the problems during the Committee stage and if

weaknesses appear amendments can be made. That is what this Parliament is all about. We should support the principles involved and not allow the Treasurer to support by his actions, if not his words, the statement of the Leader of the House about not having Parliament interfere with decisions of Cabinet. That is not the system we should have.

Mr Peter Dowding: I don't think he said that.

Mr STEPHENS: He did. I do not have the time at the moment but I can point to that in *Hansard*. As I have already indicated, the principles behind this Bill are very sound. We should support them if we profess to represent a democratic institution. I urge the Government to support the second reading of this Bill so that any problems, based on advice from Treasury, may be overcome.

The National Party strongly supports this legislation.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [9.07 pm]: Traditionally, Standing Orders allow the mover of a second reading to reply to arguments put during a debate at that stage. I am sorry that I will have little opportunity to reply to arguments because they were so few, apart from those put by the Treasurer during the minuscule time he spoke. I look forward to arguing with the Treasurer, although the opportunity does not often arise.

The member for Stirling was correct when he said that the Bill relates to principles, specifically the principle of more open government. The Government has accused the Opposition of having the bad habit of always accusing the Government of corruption without reason, and that in turn generates the public perception of WA Inc. If anything, this Bill represents exactly the opposite of that because it will give the Government the opportunity to embrace this principle of open government and of making public Government guarantees. The Bill gives the Government the opportunity to debate these matters in Parliament, and by so doing, indicate it has nothing to hide. The fact that the Government does the opposite cannot but indicate it has something to hide; that is the only possibility because if it had nothing to hide the Government would accept this Bill.

I will deal with the brief arguments which the Treasurer raised. I do not really have to deal with any arguments from this side of the House because they support the principles involved and gave examples of why the Bill is necessary.

The Treasurer first said that the Industries Assistance Act and other Acts - he did not name them and I do not know of any of them - set the guidelines for loan guarantees. I do not like to repeat myself, but because the Treasurer said that, I have to put the argument that that might have been so until 1971-72 or thereabouts as the then Governments gave loan guarantees based on the provisions of the Industries Assistance Act and the Rural and Industries Bank Act. The Rural and Industries Bank Act defines "industry" and the Industries Assistance Act specifies questions about guaranteeing a loan to industry as defined in the Rural and Industries Bank Act.

That question was taken very seriously by every Government of every political persuasion until the Tonkin Government. I will repeat the two examples I gave earlier because they illustrate the point I am attempting to make. Two Governments of that time - the McLarty Liberal Government and the Hawke Labor Government - could not give a Government guarantee other than by introducing a special Bill into Parliament because they contravened the guidelines mentioned by the Treasurer. The two examples were the Midland railway case and the Canterbury Court case. The Midland railway case was particularly important because it was one of public interest. It was the only means of transport, it needed financial assistance, and the Government wanted to provide that assistance through a loan guarantee. However, the Government could not provide the loan guarantee because the Midland railway did not come under the definition of an "industry". The Government passed a special Act of Parliament and provided the guarantee. The same thing happened in the Canterbury Court case which was not considered an "industry" and another special Act of Parliament to provide the loan guarantee was passed by the Parliament.

The Tonkin Government was keen to provide a loan guarantee to the Yunderup Canals development. I told Premier Tonkin that he could not do it without a special Act of Parliament because land development did not come within the definition of "industry" contained in the Rural and Industries Bank Act. That created a stalemate until the Treasury Department advised the then Premier, probably rightly, that we had always adhered to the

rules, but on the other hand there is no Statute in Western Australia which would deny the Treasurer of the day giving a guarantee to anyone. He is the Treasurer and it is his discretionary right. That advice was accepted by Mr Tonkin who subsequently gave a guarantee to the Yunderup Canal development which, by the way, was lost, but that is a different question. He did not adhere to the guidelines laid down in the two pieces of legislation.

Although for nine years the Court and O'Connor Governments did not use that discretionary right of the Government, we gave the guarantees - I was in direct charge for six years - under the provisions of the two Acts, one of which the Treasurer mentioned. Since the Burke Government was elected, it has ignored the provisions of the Acts and has given guarantees willy nilly to anyone who wants them. The Treasurer's argument, therefore, that the Industries Assistance Act gives sufficient guarantees is null and void. It gave guarantees to land developers, banking businesses and various other businesses which were far from the definition of "industry" and did not comply at all with the provisions of the Industries Assistance Act. The Treasurer's first argument, therefore, did not stand up. I would be very happy if somebody could argue these matters with me factually and tell me that there was something wrong with what I have said, although I am convinced there is nothing wrong with it.

The Treasurer's next argument concerned commercial sensitivity. Of course, that argument is always raised. However, if the argument is taken on its face value, the opposite is true, because when one considers the commercial sensitivity of a business which receives a guarantee from the Government, it does them good. If a business is on shaky ground and can prove that it received a Government guarantee, it then treads on firmer ground. There is no commercial sensitivity about it; on the contrary, it does good. Making the guarantee public by tabling it in the House under the provisions of this Bill would not involve any commercial sensitivity.

The Treasurer went on in his very brief comments which, with due respect, I doubt he understood - perhaps his officers in the Treasury Department may have understood them better, but they are not here for me to argue with - and said that the commercial discretion of the Rural and Industries Bank and other instrumentalities could be violated. I accept that; it is not a bad argument. I explained why we included in this Bill not only "Government" but "Government instrumentalities" which admittedly embraces instrumentalities such as the Rural and Industries Bank and the SGIC. We did that because, if we think about the subject seriously and if we say that the aim is for open Government - the Government should publicise the guarantees it gives - we do not want the Government to find loopholes in the provision and say that henceforth, if the Bill is passed, the Government will not give a guarantee but will allow the Rural and Industries Bank to give all guarantees, or such bodies as the WADC or other business arms of the Government.

Mr Peter Dowding: Under the Financial Administration and Audit Act, the Under Treasurer has to produce reports of all the contingent liabilities of the State.

Mr MENSAROS: Yes.

Mr Peter Dowding: That includes the liabilities under the guarantee. The Leader of the Opposition is wrong - it is across the board.

Mr MENSAROS: Yes, although I do not think the Treasurer is right in regard to the State.

Mr Peter Dowding: Yes, I am.

Mr MENSAROS: Not of the State; a State Government department.

Mr Peter Dowding: No, it is not. It is the State. It is the contingent liabilities of the State.

Mr MENSAROS: If the Treasurer is saying that that includes the Rural and Industries Bank and its individual debtors -

Mr Peter Dowding: No, I am referring to the exposure of the State - the contingent liabilities of the State. In relation to the Teachers Credit Society, for instance, there will be an item relating to the audited contingent liabilities of the State. That is not a departmental liability.

Mr MENSAROS: All right. However, that is a different line to the line I am taking. I will give an example with the Teachers Credit Society. A lot of arguments were presented in this

place about that matter. The Teachers Credit Society had four or five major debtors. Many people have asked me whether the Government guaranteed these debtors' activities and whether those people could still madly borrow from the society. I am very interested in whether the business activities of Mr Tilli or any of the others have been guaranteed by the Government. However, we cannot obtain an answer to that. For instance, has Mr Tilli, who is one of the major debtors of the Teachers Credit Society, received a Government guarantee?

Mr Peter Dowding: Has his business been guaranteed?

Mr MENSAROS: Did he have a Government guarantee? I do not know whether he did.

Mr Peter Dowding: Why do you think he had a Government guarantee? Mr Camopeski had a Government guarantee for his Northern Lights development.

Mr Mensaros: That is right. Yet there is no cause and effect relationship here.

Mr Peter Dowding: It has to be reported on and that is the point I am making.

Mr MENSAROS: If the public knows that some people enjoyed undue credit from the TCS there is a connection between the Government's interest and the TCS.

Mr Peter Dowding: Mr Tilli is one of your mates, not one of our mates.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not know whose mate he is.

Mr Peter Dowding: He is the Leader of the Opposition's mate. The point is that Government guarantees have to be reported on under the Financial Administration and Audit Act. That is the advice the Under Treasurer has given me.

Mr MENSAROS: Is that the reason the Government will reject the Bill?

Mr Peter Dowding: I have given the reasons the Government will reject the Bill. You are wrong when you suggest that the liabilities of the State are not reported on. They are reported and they have to be reported and audited.

Mr MENSAROS: The point is that the Government has not advised this House of the names of those people who are receiving Government guarantees. The Bill seeks to ensure that individual loan guarantees are tabled in this Parliament and are made public. If there is any suspicion that they have not been granted in a proper manner it can be debated in the Parliament.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is what the Financial Administration and Audit Act does. When you were in power you shovelled money to Manjimup Canneries, Bunbury Foods, Albany Woollen Mills and others, but under that Act they have to be reported.

Mr MENSAROS: Why is it that when Opposition members ask questions in this Parliament about whether someone has received a Government guarantee the Government has not given an answer, but has said that the information is commercially confidential?

Mr Peter Dowding: I do not think that is what has been said. What has been said is that there are commercially confidential contracts and agreements, but the contingent liabilities of the State have to be reported.

Mr MENSAROS: The purpose of this Bill is not to obtain the total amount of these guarantees. What it sets out to do is ascertain whether the accusation of cronyism and corruption is true. The Government can defend itself if it wants.

Mr Peter Dowding: What is new? Why didn't you do it?

Mr MENSAROS: When in Government we did not avoid any questions regarding Government guarantees.

Mr Peter Dowding: You gave Mr Camopeski the ability to start up a chain of hotels by deals that were supported by the Government.

Mr MENSAROS: We did not deny it.

Mr Peter Dowding: You did not make it public and you did not lodge it in the Parliament.

Mr MENSAROS: There was no provision under which that should have been done. However, when we were in Government we gave the Opposition the information it requested.

Mr Peter Dowding: You never admitted it. It was the sort of thing you did all the time - shovelling money to your friends.

Mr MENSAROS: I was responsible for the Government guarantee relating to Bunbury Foods. We took a risk and I rang the Prime Minister of New Zealand and spoke to the Minister in Fiji. We took a risk.

Mr Peter Dowding: Why?

Mr MENSAROS: Because at that time we thought it was a reasonable risk.

Mr Peter Dowding: Why did you take a risk?

Mr MENSAROS: With every Government guarantee a risk is taken.

Mr Peter Dowding: Why would you take a risk with taxpayers' money?

Mr MENSAROS: Because we thought it was to the benefit of the State.

Mr Peter Dowding: Exactly. That is what I wanted you to say. You thought it was to the benefit of Bunbury.

Mr MENSAROS: We do not criticise members opposite for that. However, if the Government does not want to declare -

Mr Peter Dowding: What do you think the pipeline cost?

Mr Lightfoot: It was to the benefit of the nation.

Mr Court: You didn't knock the pipeline.

Mr Peter Dowding: Not only did it cost \$1 billion, but you gave it to the Koreans to put in.

Mr Court: It funds itself and the Deputy Premier has admitted that. You have too; you know that the pipeline pays for itself.

Mr Peter Dowding: You could have made it commercial.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thomas): Order!

Mr Peter Dowding: I am not knocking it.

Mr Court: Come off it.

Mr Peter Dowding: I am not knocking it. I am making the point that your Government took a huge risk with \$1 billion.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections across the Chamber. The member for Floreat has the floor and there is a conversation taking place between two members and the member for Murchison-Eyre is not in his seat.

Mr MENSAROS: The argument is simply that all the Opposition wants to do is ensure that individual loan guarantees are made public for the simple reason that any suspicion about the situation in Western Australia is wiped out. This Bill will be in addition to the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. Once the individual guarantees are made public and are able to be debated there will obviously be nothing sinister about them. If any arm of the Government attempted to undertake any sinister loan guarantees this Bill, if it were passed, would prevent that from occurring. It is as simple as that.

I come back to the argument raised by the Treasurer. If the Government does not give a guarantee, but the R & I Bank, as a banking organisation, gives a guarantee, the provisions of this Bill would apply. If the Government were seriously concerned about this matter I would have agreed to meet with it to reach a solution to exclude from the provisions of the Bill genuine banking operations between clients and the State owned bank, or alternatively, to provide for the Government only to make guarantees. Perhaps we could have found another solution.

The Government, with all its advisers, has said there is no solution to this question. Of course there is a solution. Unfortunately it appears that the Bill will not be passed and, therefore, the Opposition cannot be blamed if further accusations against the Government are made about cronyism and corruption in WA Inc. If the Government wanted to stop these accusations it would accept the legislation before the House and other legislation which is endeavouring to establish a financial corruption commission. Also, it would not have

dismissed the proposal which was put to the House for the Public Prosecutor's Office to be independent from the Attorney General's Office.

All I can say is that I am very sorry that the Government has not used this opportunity to move an amendment which, as the member for Stirling rightly said, I would have been happy to accommodate. I am also sorry that the Government has not used this opportunity to justify its statement that it is not the source of any corruption or cronyism. The Government wants to maintain the situation and to keep secret the information about Government guarantees and not publicise that information and, therefore, it must take the odium that it is a corrupt Government.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (18)			
Mr Blaikie	Mr Greig	Mr Mensaros	Mr Watt
Mr Cash	Mr House	Mr Stephens	Mr Wiese
Mr Court	Mr Lewis	Mr Thompson	Mr Bradshaw ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Cowan	Mr Lightfoot	Mr Fred Tubby	
Mr Grayden	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Reg Tubby	
Noes (24)			
Dr Alexander	Mr Cunningham	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith
Mrs Beggs	Mr Donovan	Dr Lawrence	Mr Taylor
Mr Bertram	Mr Peter Dowding	Mr Marlborough	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bridge	Mr Evans	Mr Pearce	Dr Watson
Mr Burnett	Dr Gallop	Mr Read	Mr Wilson
Mr Carr	Mr Grill	Mr Ripper	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )
Pairs			
Ayes		Noes	
Mr Clarko		Mr Tom Jones	
Mr Schell		Mr P.J. Smith	
Mr Trenorden		Mrs Henderson	
Mr Maslen		Mr Parker	
Mr Crane		Mr Gordon Hill	
Mr Hassell		Mr Troy	

Question thus negatived.

## ACTS AMENDMENT (TAXI-CARS) BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 23 June.

**MR PEARCE** (Armada - Minister for Transport) [9.33 pm]: The Government does not propose to support the legislation. It is not the first time the proposition has been put before the House in various forms. The previous shadow Minister for Transport and Deputy Leader of the Opposition put the proposition before the Parliament on three previous occasions. The proposal that we are being asked to consider basically is that the evasion of taxi fares ought to be made effectively a criminal offence rather than a matter to be dealt with under the civil law as currently is the case.

The proposal is superficially attractive. I have discussed it with quite a large number of taxi people with varying views about it. Some believe it would have the effect of diminishing the problem of assault of taxi drivers. Taxi drivers tell me that one of the most common occurrences leading to assault is an argument over a fare. Some drivers are of the view that if the collection of the fares could be reinforced by criminal sanctions rather than civil sanctions, their chances of collecting the fare and avoiding a situation that might lead to assault might be improved. The Government is not taking the matter lightly.

**Mr Lightfoot**: Do you think they are expendable?

Mr PEARCE: Taxi drivers?

Mr Lightfoot: There are assaults and this Bill could go a long way towards improving the situation.

Mr PEARCE: I am not sure that that is the case. That is precisely the point that I am putting to the House. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services and I have had a number of discussions with the taxi operators' associations, the Taxi Control Board and others about a range of measures which might be put in place to diminish the level of assaults on taxi drivers.

The measures include things like putting in place as a permanent fixture the moratorium which has been in place for taxi drivers so that they do not have to wear seat belts while driving. It will not be compulsory for taxi drivers to wear seat belts.

Mr Cash: Both day and night?

Mr PEARCE: Yes.

Mr Cash: Will you have insurance arranged so there will be no liability on taxi drivers?

Mr PEARCE: Absolutely.

Many taxi drivers believe that an assault starts when someone reaches from the back of the cab and pulls the sash tight around the driver's shoulders, which effectively pins the driver to the seat, before proceeding to steal his money or assault him in a worse way.

Mr Cash: Are you going to bring it in this session?

Mr PEARCE: I am not quite sure whether legislation is required for that. I am not sure of the mechanism by which these agreements are to be set in place, but we have agreed to that and I am in the process of informing the industry of the measures we have taken to avoid assaults on taxi drivers.

Mr Cash: You can't say whether it is coming in this session?

Mr PEARCE: If legislation is required it will be introduced this session.

Mr Cash: Either it is or it is not. You know they are waiting for an answer.

Mr PEARCE: The answer is that we will fix it up so that the current moratorium which we extended will be put permanently in place either by legislative or by administrative means so that taxi drivers will not have to wear seat belts at any time, day or night. As the member knows, that will be well received.

We have looked at a system of warning lights and alarm systems that can be used in taxis which will also have the effect of minimising assaults on drivers.

Mr Cash: Are you going to legislate for those?

Mr PEARCE: If necessary.

Mr Cash: When are you going to make a decision?

Mr PEARCE: We have made the decision to do these things. It does not require legislation to enable a taxi driver to have a flashing light on his taxi that can be a warning to other taxi drivers that that person is in some difficulty.

Mr Cash: So you are going to bring in a regulation to allow it, are you?

Mr PEARCE: It may not require a regulation. We have agreed to do these things and they will be set in train by the appropriate process. If it requires administrative action by way of regulation or legislation we will take that action. But in most cases these measures will not require that level of action or activity. Extra legislative activity will be required to increase penalties. It is certainly proposed to make penalties for assaults on taxi drivers greater than currently is the case and we are prepared to do that.

With regard to the Bill before the House in respect of the collection of fares, circumstances have changed somewhat since the former shadow Minister for Transport, the departed Mr Laurance -

Mr Lewis: A good member too, a very good member of Parliament, although you are a person who disparaged and pilloried him. You were one of the culprits.

Mr PEARCE: Would the member go so far as to say that I forced him out of Parliament?

Mr Lewis: An excellent member of Parliament.

Mr PEARCE: Why did he leave if he was doing such a good job?

Mr Cash: Why did Burke leave?

Mr PEARCE: He had five years as Premier. When he was elected Premier he said that he would stay for five years and he did.

Mr Lewis: He didn't tell the public of Western Australia.

Mr PEARCE: Yes, he did.

Mr Lewis: He did not.

Mr PEARCE: This is getting into a silly argument, but when Mr Burke became Premier he told everyone of his intention. It was public knowledge that he was going to stay for five years. The former Deputy Leader of the Opposition was trying to organise a takeover leadership within days of leaving the Parliament. He was not someone who had fulfilled his ambitions and who felt that he had served his State to the maximum of his capacity. He was roaring around the corridors of Parliament, knives in both hands - with the Leader of the Opposition's back as his target - when all of a sudden he was in an office next to me in St Georges Terrace in quite a different form of activity.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thomas): Order! The contributions of the member speaking and that of the member interjecting are straying far from the subject matter of the Bill.

Mr PEARCE: That is the absolute truth, Mr Acting Speaker.

One of the last things the former Deputy Leader of the Opposition did before he left was to bring this proposition into the Parliament. Since then my predecessor, the member for Mundaring, has introduced regulations which substantially increased the penalties for evasion of fares and made it much more difficult for people to evade fares. It did not go as far as this Bill would, but was a big step in the direction pointed to in part by the former Deputy Leader of the Opposition. In fact, that increase in the penalties has not had a huge effect.

Mr Lewis: You are pinching Opposition policies again. You do it all the time and yet you have the gall to say that we do not have policies. You have stolen half your policies from us.

Mr PEARCE: We discuss with people whether things are likely to be effective before we take a shot at them.

Mr Lewis: Rot, look at all the things you have pinched from us.

Mr PEARCE: One of the groups of people we discussed these matters with is the Police Force.

Mr Lewis: That is a classic one you pinched. It was the idea of the member for Mt Lawley.

Mr PEARCE: The Police Force has said that it is not in favour of the Bill introduced by the member for Mt Lawley because it believes a responsibility would be transferred to the force which it is not well placed to put into effect. It is not in favour of that Bill because it believes that the mechanisms already in place are effective and appropriate, and it does not believe that it is properly set up to take on this responsibility.

Mr Lewis: Do you pinch the Opposition's policies? Seriously, it is a fair question.

Mr PEARCE: It is a fair question. In 1961 when the Menzies Government came within two seats of defeat by the Opposition, led at the time by Arthur Calwell, it was widely reported that at a Cabinet meeting held not long after that near defeat, Menzies moved to implement almost all the policies on which Calwell had fought the election. I add that Calwell had won more than 50 per cent of the vote in that election. When one of the Cabinet Ministers objected saying, "Sir," - you understand that the hierarchy in the Liberal Party was well observed in those days - "surely we cannot continue to implement Labor Party policy in this way?" Menzies replied, "If it is good enough for half the people of Australia, it is good enough for you." The pinching of policies has been a one way drain for the most part from the Labor Party to the Liberal Party over many decades of Australian history. The Government is open minded; if the Opposition is able to come up with a policy that is fair



and reasonable, the Government is not ashamed to implement it. The Labor Party has not said that it has a monopoly of good ideas.

In this case the Opposition has a monopoly on this particularly bad idea. It is not supported generally, even among the taxi driving industry. It is certainly not supported by the police. The measures for increased penalties which the Government has put in place are reasonably effective. The available statistics show that of the cases of fare evasion reported to the Taxi Control Board more than 50 per cent are resolved through the present arrangements in place to collect through civil action, and enforcement of the regulations by the Taxi Control Board. With those cases which are not cleared up it is either because the person refusing to pay the fare or the taxi driver cannot be located. That situation would be no different if the responsibility lay with the Police Force or otherwise. The enforcement agency in place, the Taxi Control Board, using civil courts, is an effective means of enforcing the collection of fares when complaints are made. Nothing in the statistics suggests that if the responsibility were transferred through the Police Force to the criminal courts, prosecutions would be any more successful in bringing people to book for failing to pay fares.

The changes to the regulations introduced by the former Minister for Transport have not been given a fair time in which to assess their effectiveness. None of the cases before the courts to this date occurred after the introduction of the new penalties and regulations. The most important aspect from a taxi driver's point of view is not so much the evasion of fares but the events which could lead to a confrontation and result in assault. The measures being put into place, with the agreement of the Taxi Control Board, the WA Taxi Operators Association and the Police Force, face up directly to the assaults on taxi drivers and are likely to be successful in diminishing the problems of taxi drivers in this State in recent times. Therefore, the Government sees no need under those circumstances to agree to this Bill.

The Government is not closing its mind completely to this proposition because it is putting certain procedures in train and has gone some way towards the intent of this legislation. That was done before the member introduced the Bill in this House, so it could perhaps be argued that he has pinched the Government's policy. We want to see how these procedures work. If they are not as successful as we wish and, after reconsideration of the measures taken by the Government, we are advised that there might be some merit in trying the move outlined by the member for Mt Lawley, the Government would be prepared to reconsider it.

**MR CASH (Mt Lawley) [9.46 pm]:** I thank the Minister for his comments in respect of the Bill introduced in this Parliament some months ago. I express the disappointment not only of the Opposition, but also of those taxi drivers who drive their own or leased cars, both in the metropolitan and country areas, that once again the Government is not prepared to support them by allowing the Police Act to be amended so that police officers can take action in the case of taxi fare evasion. Quite clearly, anyone who listened to the comments of the Minister for Transport would recognise that he contradicted himself on numerous occasions. It is fair to say that when he mentioned the Western Australian Taxi Operators Association he implied that he had an ongoing liaison with its members and understood the problems of the taxi industry. However, my discussions with a number of members of that association clearly indicate that, although the Minister met members on a number of occasions, in their view he does not understand at all the problems of the taxi industry. Not only does he not understand, but also he takes a very negative view of the industry, and he is not prepared to amend the Police Act which would provide protection for taxi drivers while they are earning their income. That is a grossly unfair situation.

The Minister's reply clearly indicates that he does not have much time for or interest in the taxi industry in this State. I remind the Minister and other members of this House that in my view - a view that is supported by Opposition members - apart from the fact that taxi drivers are courteous, competent and convivial in the way they handle their business, they provide a very important service not only to those who live in Western Australia but also to tourists. I am very disappointed at the action of the Minister for Transport who again rejects the Liberal Party's proposition, which would unquestionably assist members of the taxi industry. It appears that unless the Liberal Opposition is prepared to raise matters and seek amendments in this House to protect those who work in the taxi industry, this Labor Government is not prepared to do anything for the industry.

I cannot understand why the Minister for Transport takes such a negative view of the

industry. He talked about increasing penalties in respect of the present operations under the Act which allow a taxi driver whose passenger has evaded paying the fare to go to the Taxi Control Board, report the offence, and ask the board to do something about it. The Minister claims that he has increased the penalties, and it is true the Opposition supported that move some months ago in this House. If the Minister had spent a little more time liaising with the industry he would know that the present system of claiming in respect of fare evasions is not working in a manner satisfactory to those in the industry.

The taxi industry is not asking for much; all it is asking is for the Government to recognise that its members go out and work hard for their money and on occasions find that a passenger will run off rather than pay his fare and rather than the taxi operator going down to the Taxi Control Board and making a report the following working day, again at great cost in so much as there is a loss of time for that taxi driver, what the drivers and operators want is to be able to report the offence to a police officer and have that officer take appropriate action. I do not think that is unreasonable.

It is interesting that one of the arguments used the last time this Bill was introduced into the House was that it would not work because there was not sufficient police manpower to allow it to work effectively. It just so happens that in the meantime the Minister has made some public announcements, published glossy magazines, and done all sorts of other things to try to convince the public that he is to increase the manpower in the Police Force, yet tonight he uses that same argument that there are insufficient police officers to deal with the situation. I put to the House that the Minister for Transport and the Labor Government generally have no interest in the welfare of taxi operators in this State, and that is indicated by the reply that the Minister has given in respect of the second reading speech.

Mr Wilson: It does not matter how hard you try to say that; the taxi industry knows the facts.

Mr CASH: The former Minister for Transport interjects, a person who failed in his job as Minister for Transport and who will go down as a failure. That is not just my opinion but is also the opinion of those in the taxi industry. I say again that it seems that the Labor Party has a negative attitude to the taxi industry. I think that that in itself is an unfortunate situation. I certainly want made very clear the fact that the Liberal Party is prepared to support those who work in the taxi industry and in due course, when we are in Government, I am sure that this matter will be raised again and we will be able to assist the taxi industry in what it wants; that is, an amendment to the Police Act that will enable police officers to take action in the case of fare evasion.

One of the other comments that the Minister made was that they were monitoring the situation; that whilst they had made some changes to the regulations which had increased penalties they would monitor the situation and come back to the House in due course. I put to the House again that since I have been in this Parliament it has without question been the Liberal Party that has stood up for the taxi industry on all occasions and on the very occasions that the Liberal Party has stood and represented the taxi industry we have found that the Labor Party, for reasons of its own, has taken a negative view of the proposition and knocked it back.

I just ask that the Labor Party change its view and recognise the fact that the taxi industry and those who work in it in this State provide a very necessary and essential duty; they provide more than a duty, they provide a very much needed, efficient and effective service to the community and I think that they deserve the support of the Government rather than the continual knocking they receive from this Australia Labor Party. It is with disappointment that I heard the reply of the Minister for Transport and I guess that the taxi industry will have to hope for the return of a Liberal Government before it will ever be supported in this House.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

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Ayes (18)

Mr Blaikie  
Mr Cash  
Mr Court  
Mr Cowan  
Mr Grayden

Mr Greig  
Mr House  
Mr Lewis  
Mr Lightfoot  
Mr MacKinnon

Mr Mensaros  
Mr Stephens  
Mr Thompson  
Mr Fred Tubby  
Mr Reg Tubby

Mr Watt  
Mr Wiese  
Mr Bradshaw  
(Teller)

## Noes (24)

Dr Alexander	Mr Cunningham	Dr Lawrence	Mr Taylor
Mrs Beggs	Mr Donovan	Mr Marlborough	Mr Troy
Mr Bertram	Mr Evans	Mr Pearce	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bridge	Dr Gallop	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Burkett	Mr Grill	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Carr	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )

## Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Schell	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Trenorden	Mrs Henderson
Mr Maslen	Mr Parker
Mr Crane	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Hassell	Mr Peter Dowding

Question thus negatived.

Mr Cash: Whenever you are ready, Bob, we will just wait for you, don't worry.

Mr Pearce: If I had been told yesterday what you were doing, I would have moved it.

Mr Cash: All right, it is not the Minister's fault, again, don't worry.

Mr Pearce: I will move the adjournment if you are not quiet.

Mr Cash: Then move it.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - ORDINARY

MR PEARCE (Armadale - Leader of the House) [9.58 pm]: I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr Cash: Don't expect any cooperation if you are going to play that game, my friend.

Mr Court: No, hang on.

Mr PEARCE: Mr Speaker, I suggest that, if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is countermanding his junior colleague, I will withdraw that motion.

Motion withdrawn.

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: I am not going to put up with that. I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

## Ayes (24)

Dr Alexander	Mr Cunningham	Dr Lawrence	Mr Taylor
Mrs Beggs	Mr Donovan	Mr Marlborough	Mr Troy
Mr Bertram	Mr Evans	Mr Pearce	Mrs Watkins
Mr Bridge	Dr Gallop	Mr Read	Dr Watson
Mr Burkett	Mr Grill	Mr Ripper	Mr Wilson
Mr Carr	Mr Hodge	Mr D.L. Smith	Mrs Buchanan ( <i>Teller</i> )

## Noes (18)

Mr Blaikie	Mr Greig	Mr Mensaros	Mr Watt
Mr Cash	Mr House	Mr Stephens	Mr Wiese
Mr Court	Mr Lewis	Mr Thompson	Mr Bradshaw
Mr Cowan	Mr Lightfoot	Mr Fred Tubb	( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr Grayden	Mr MacKinnon	Mr Reg Tubby	

## Pairs

## Ayes

Mr Tom Jones  
Mr P.J. Smith  
Mrs Henderson  
Mr Parker  
Mr Gordon Hill  
Mr Peter Dowding

## Noes

Mr Clarko  
Mr Schell  
Mr Trenorden  
Mr Maslen  
Mr Crane  
Mr Hassell

Question thus passed.

*House adjourned at 10.03 pm*

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# QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## NGUYEN, XUAN - CORPORATE AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF *Ammonia Assessment - Microfiche Machines*

840. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Did an officer, Xuan Nguyen, from the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare visit the Department of Corporate Affairs office on 3 August 1983 to assess the ammonia level generated from the microfiche duplicating machines?
- (2) Were recommendations made after this visit?
- (3) If yes to (2), have these recommendations been carried out?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3)-(4)

Recommendation 1 - where it was possible to retrofit the machines this was carried out; where it was not possible an improved connection of the ammonia cylinders was installed.

Recommendation 2 - was implemented.

Recommendation 3 - was not undertaken as it did not provide an effective solution.

## PROSTITUTION - BROTHEL OPERATORS *Containment Policy*

842. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Which brothel operators are permitted to break the law under the so-called "containment policy"?
- (2) Who determines which brothel operators are permitted to break the law?
- (3) What criteria are used to determine whether or not a person may operate a brothel?
- (4) (a) Is a person who wishes to operate a brothel and who satisfies all the criteria in (3) automatically allowed to operate within the containment policy; and  
(b) if not, on what grounds are they excluded?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) The current police policy of conditional toleration and containment of prostitution recognises that prostitution is not itself unlawful. It seeks to effectively control and contain, through the law, undesirable activities associated with prostitution. Under this policy a number of brothels operate in Perth and in Kalgoorlie. This number has decreased since 1976, when the Royal Commission into matters surrounding the administration of law relating to prostitution - the Norris inquiry - noted the number of premises then operating in this State. The containment policy was endorsed by the 1976 Royal Commission and by the Dixon report to the Minister for Police and Prisons in 1982. All current brothel operators are subject to the lawful exercise of police discretionary power in enforcing the law.
- (2) The Commissioner of Police has the lawful power to determine how and where his forces will be deployed in enforcing the law in this State. Under the current policy of containment, the police determine in what circumstances prosecutions for breaches of the criminal law in relation to prostitution are appropriate.

- (3) The policy of containment and control is designed to keep the area free of male involvement and management, criminal participation, venereal disease and drug abuse. The policy also aims to minimise public nuisance, prevent the exploitation of juveniles, and protect the female workers as far as possible.
- (4) (a) No;
- (b) the police may legally determine when prosecutions for breach of the criminal law in relation to prostitution should occur. The current policy of containment is aimed at maintaining or reducing the number of premises currently operating and is policed according to criteria set out in (3).

**TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION - EDUCATIONAL ADMISSION**  
*Personnel*

851. Mr WILLIAMS to the Minister assisting the Minister for Education with TAFE:

- (1) Would he identify and supply the most recent student enrolment figures for each of the three largest metropolitan technical colleges/colleges of TAFE?
- (2) Would he supply the most recent figures available for each of lecturing staff and support staff for each of these three colleges?
- (3) Would he indicate the salary levels paid to the principals of these three colleges?
- (4) Could he indicate any other benefits paid, or available, to the three principals, such as payment of personal telephone rentals, or use of a Government vehicle?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) 1987 student enrolments

	F/T	P/T	Total
Fremantle College of TAFE	1 097	5 662	6 759
Leederville College of TAFE	984	4 672	5 656
Perth Technical College	1 848	11 497	13 345

- (2) 1987 equivalent full time staff

	Teaching	Non-teaching
Fremantle College of TAFE	176	71
Leederville College of TAFE	132	47
Perth Technical College	248	77

- (3) Annual salary \$49 286.
- (4) The formal duty hours for TAFE principals is 30 hours per week, with 12 weeks' leave per year, and three months' long service leave after 10 years' service, or six months' leave after 15 years' service. Other entitlements are standard as per those for other public sector employees. There are no other benefits paid to principals other than standard Public Service mileage rates for the use of a private vehicle on work related business.

**PAPER PULP MILL - BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION**  
*Gwindinup Site - Kemerton Site*

859. Mr BLAIKIE to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Are the two most favoured sites for the construction of a paper pulp mill Gwindinup and Kemerton?
- (2) If a pulp mill is built will it be of a capacity of -
- (a) 250 000 tonnes of pulp; and
- (b) 400 000 tonnes of pulp?
- (3) Is the Gwindinup site less favoured than Kemerton because of the lack of a suitable water supply both in volume and quantity at Gwindinup?

- (4) If Kemerton is chosen as the site suitable for a pulp mill, where will the water supply be drawn from?
- (5) Would liquid effluent from the pulping process be disposed of in the sea by way of a pipeline extending six kilometres offshore?
- (6) Is it a fact that, as a result of chemical action, effluent produced from the pulping of eucalypts is discoloured?
- (7) If the sea is to be used as a sewer for the disposal of pulp mill waste, has the possibility that there could be a detrimental effect on commercial and recreational fishing been considered?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1)-(7)

I am not prepared to speculate on the probable location, size or environmental considerations relating to the proposed paper pulp mill until a feasibility study has been completed and a formal proposal received.

**PAPER PULP MILL - WOODCHIPS**  
*Western Australia*

860. Mr BLAIKIE to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) If a paper pulp mill is built in Western Australia, what volume of woodchips would be required for the production of -
  - (a) 250 000 tonnes of pulp; and
  - (b) 400 000 tonnes of pulp?
- (2) As existing Tasmanian bluegum plantations are small in area and young in age, where will wood stocks be drawn from in the next 10-15 years if a pulp mill of the sizes designated in (1) is built?
- (3) If a pulp mill is built, would the Government be obligated to guarantee the supply of wood stocks during the entire economic life of the mill?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) This would be dependent on the pulping process.
- (2) From a combination of bluegum plantations, sawmill waste and integrated sawlog operations.
- (3) No.

**PAPER PULP MILL - WATER AUTHORITY**  
*Water Supply - South West*

861. Mr BLAIKIE to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Has the Water Authority been approached regarding the availability of water for a paper pulp mill in the south west?
- (2)
  - (a) If yes, what volume per annum is envisaged to be required; and
  - (b) what studies have been undertaken?
- (3) Consequent to below average rainfall in recent years, parts of the south west area have been water deficient, and as it has been suggested that due to the probability of the greenhouse effect rainfall in this region may diminish further, is it believed that the water requirements of a pulp mill can be sustained without causing any detrimental effects or deficiency of supply to agricultural and urban users?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) Provision of water will be examined in consultation with the Water Authority during the feasibility study.
- (2)
  - (a) This will be dependent on the technology employed and the size of the mill;

- (b) preliminary water availability and conceptual scheme design studies for a range of locations are being considered as part of the feasibility study.
- (3) Yes. The supply would not be taken from sources currently supplying other users.

**HOSPITAL PATIENTS - ROYAL PERTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL**  
*Accommodation*

863. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

Adverting to question 358 on 26 May 1988, have appropriate arrangements now been finalised to accommodate the increase in the number of patients?

Mr WILSON replied:

The available beds at RP(R)H will be expanded to 254 - maximum capacity - by the opening of a previously closed ward. These beds will accommodate the increase in the number of patients.

**ELECTIVE SURGERY - TEACHING HOSPITALS**  
*Perth - Waiting Lists*

864. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Adverting to question 204 on 24 May 1988, has the Government now made its statement regarding the recommendations of the committee?
- (2) Has it now established the number of people waiting for elective surgery at the Perth teaching hospitals?
- (3) If so, how many people are waiting?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Yes. The Government released a document "Reducing Hospital Waiting Lists: A Health Policy Initiative for WA" at a news conference on 1 June 1988. This release, which is based on the recommendation of the committee, was accompanied by a Press release.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) As at 31 July 1988, 6 455 patients were awaiting admission to a teaching hospital under a surgical specialty.

**TEACHING HOSPITALS - HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT CHARTERS**

865. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are the hospital management charters for the teaching hospitals public?
- (2) If so, would he please make available these hospital management charters?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1)-(2) Yes.

**FUNCTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
*Recommendations*

866. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have the Functional Review Committee's findings been released as yet?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) Why have most of the recommendations not been approved?
- (4) Is it believed that the Functional Review Committee's recommendations were unworthy of implementation?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) No.



- (2) The Functional Review Committee report was a confidential report to Government.
- (3)-(4) The Government has chosen to take an alternative course of action involving the establishment of a task force to consult widely over possible changes to the health system.

**HOSPITALS, RURAL - AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION WA BRANCH**

*Consultations*

867. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health

- (1) Adverting to question 69 on 18 May 1988, has an arrangement now been arrived at with the Australian Dental Association WA Branch with regard to dentists using country hospitals?
- (2) Has consultation now been undertaken with the Australian Dental Association WA Branch?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) There has been no change in present arrangements as section 33B of the Hospital Act still applies.
- (2) I am to meet with the Australian Dental Association in the near future.

**NURSING HOMES - HANDICAPPED**

*Youth - Negotiations*

868. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Adverting to question 323 of 1988, have the negotiations and planning now been finalised to provide a nursing home for the young disabled people?
- (2) If yes, where will this nursing home be sited?
- (3) When will the nursing home be established?
- (4) How is the amount of money arrived at that would be required to set up a nursing home for young disabled people when no negotiations or possible buildings have been arranged for such a project?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) No - planning is continuing and several options are being examined.
- (2)-(3) See (1).
- (4) A final budget will be determined as part of the planning process.

**ENVIRONMENT - MURRAY DELTA WETLANDS**

*Study*

869. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Environment:

- (1) Adverting to question 2495 on 18 November 1987, has the study of the Murray delta wetlands now been released?
- (2) If no, is the study to be released?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The committee will report to Government in the near future.

**INLAND WATERWAYS - YUNDERUP CANALS**

*Dredging*

871. Mr BRADSHAW to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the dredging to the entrance to the Yunderup canals been completed?
- (2) If not, does he intend to fulfil his commitment to dredging the entrance to the Yunderup canals?

(3) If so, when?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) No. Dredging of the entrance to Yunderup canals has not yet commenced.

(2)-(3)

The Government has agreed to undertake dredging of the entrance, subject to agreement that the Shire of Murray will become responsible for all future maintenance costs. Agreement has not been reached. An alternative proposal put forward by the shire is currently being considered. Dredging will not commence until agreement has been reached.

#### STATE ENERGY COMMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT

##### *Electricity Charges - Street Lighting*

872. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

(1) Has the State Energy Commission recently increased its charges to local government for electricity for street lighting?

(2) If yes, by how much?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) As announced by the Premier, five per cent.

#### TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY - DIRECTORS

##### *Low Interest Housing Loans - R & I Bank*

873. Mr COWAN to the Premier:

(1) Were directors and executives of the Teachers Credit Society able to get low interest housing loans through the society?

(2) If yes, how much below normal market rates were these loans?

(3) Did the Rural and Industries Bank take over all these loans?

(4) Are the mortgagees still enjoying low interest housing loans through the R & I Bank?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Terms and conditions were determined by the General Manager.

(3) Yes.

(4) No.

#### CONTAINMENT POLICY - PROSTITUTES

##### *Male Homosexuals*

874. Mr COWAN to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Are there any male homosexual prostitutes operating within the so-called "containment policy"?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that there are no male homosexual prostitutes operating within the containment policy.

#### TRAFFIC SIGNALS - WESTERN AUSTRALIA

##### *Manufactured*

877. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Where are traffic signals used by the department in Western Australia manufactured?

(2) If they are manufactured overseas can he advise why imported traffic signals are used before those manufactured in Western Australia or Australia?

- (3) What are the economic or other benefits in purchasing traffic signals from overseas sources?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Components comprising the major portion of the cost of a traffic signal installation are manufactured in Australia. The Main Roads Department currently has only two supply contracts which involve equipment not fully manufactured in Western Australia or Australia. These relate to signal lanterns - which contain 27 per cent overseas content.
- (2) The Australian tenders did not fully comply with the Australian standard and/or the specifications prepared by the Main Roads Department.
- (3) The equipment purchased satisfies the requirements as stated in (2) at least cost. The benefit of the particular equipment being purchased is in one case superior optical performance and in the other longer lamp life which gives the best overall economy.

#### HOMEWEST *Maintenance Planners*

878. Mr CASH to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Does the position of maintenance planner still exist within Homeswest?
- (2) If yes, how many such positions form part of the establishment and where are these maintenance planners located throughout the State?
- (3) If no to (1), what position currently handles the former role of maintenance planner?
- (4) Where are these positions located throughout the State?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Two.
- (3) Positions are not occupied as the duties have been delegated to the maintenance staff located at regional offices.
- (4) Not applicable.

#### HOMEWEST - ALINJARRA COMMON

881. Mr CASH to the Minister for Housing:

Will she confirm that there is to be no Homeswest involvement in Alinjarra common east of the main north-south distributor road parallel to Alexander Drive and the extension of Mirrabooka Avenue?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

Homeswest will not build Homeswest rental properties in the area bounded by Marangaroo Drive (South), the extension of Mirrabooka Avenue (West), Hepburn Avenue (North) and Alexander Drive (East).

#### BUS SERVICES - YANCHEP-TWO ROCKS *City of Wanneroo*

882. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware that the present frequency of the Yanchep-Two Rocks bus service is considered to be unsatisfactory by residents in the Yanchep-Two Rocks area?
- (2) What action does he propose to take to increase the frequency of this bus service?
- (3) What financial arrangements have been made between Transperth and the City of Wanneroo for the 1988-89 financial year, and is this financial arrangement likely to mean a reduction in fares paid by commuters?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The frequency of service to the Yanchep-Two Rocks area, as with other areas, is commensurate with the patronage carried on the service.
- (2) None, unless there is a significant increase in patronage on the existing service.
- (3) No financial agreement has been reached between Transperth and the City of Wanneroo to provide the service for the 1988-89 year at this time. However, providing the same financial arrangement of previous years is agreed upon, the current fares paid by commuters would not change.

#### CURTIN UNIVERSITY - CENTRE OF ADDICTION STUDIES

##### *Budget - Duplication of Publications*

885. Mr CASH to the Minister for Health:

Referring to the Budget discussions on 10 December 1987 in *Hansard* - pages 7912 to 7916 - in which I drew attention to the duplication of advertising material produced by the Centre of Addiction Studies at Curtin University, and in view of the former Minister for Health's comments that the Government should be taking another look at the Centre of Addiction Studies' budget, what action has been taken on this matter?

Mr WILSON replied:

There is close cooperation between the Health Department and non governmental organisations in the area of alcohol and drug education and every effort is made to avoid duplication. There may, however, be occasions on which university authorities consider it appropriate to produce materials specifically targeted towards their students, in some instances with grants from the Commonwealth. This is a matter for the university to address.

#### CURTIN UNIVERSITY - CENTRE OF ADDICTION STUDIES

##### *Duplication of Publications*

886. Mr CASH to the Minister for Health:

Is it believed there is a duplication of publications and/or research on the use and/or abuse of alcohol by the Health Department and the Centre of Addiction Studies at Curtin University?

Mr WILSON replied:

No.

#### CURTIN UNIVERSITY - CENTRE OF ADDICTION STUDIES

##### *Activities - Budget Allocation*

887. Mr CASH to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What activities have been undertaken by the Centre of Addiction Studies at Curtin University during the 1988 academic year to date?
- (2) What budget has been allocated to the Centre for Addiction Studies for this academic year?
- (3) What budget has the Centre of Addiction Studies allocated to these activities?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

There is no Centre of Addiction Studies at Curtin University as referred to in your questions.

There is an Addiction Studies Unit involving some State Government funding at Curtin University and, in addition, a federally funded Centre for Research into Prevention of Drug Abuse.

The responses cover both of these activities.

Addiction Studies Unit (ASU)

- (1) The ASU's activities for 1988 are -

- 1.1 teaching at postgraduate level.
- 1.2 conducting research on projects funded by the Federal Government.
- 1.3 providing information and advice on training and educational programs to the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority and other agencies.
- 1.4 providing service and advice to the community.
- (2) Total budget for the 1988 academic year is \$215 000.
- (3) Budget allocation to the unit's activities is -
  - 3.1 18 per cent to teaching activities.
  - 3.2 60 per cent to research projects.
  - 3.3 20 per cent to training programs for Alcohol and Drug Authority and other organisations.
  - 3.4 Two per cent to service and advice to community groups.

**Centre for Research into the Prevention of Drug Abuse**

- (1) Research into prevention of drug abuse.
- (2) Budget is allocated on a fiscal basis. That for 1987-88 is \$542 871 from all sources.
- (3) The whole budget is expended on research activities carried out in terms agreed with the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health.

**CURTIN UNIVERSITY - CENTRE OF ADDICTION STUDIES**

*Government Assistance*

888. Mr CASH to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Government provide any funds for the Centre of Addiction Studies at Curtin University?
- (2) If yes, how much is provided in both funds and resources to the Centre of Addiction Studies?
- (3) Does the Government contribute to the salary or benefits of the director of the Centre of Addiction Studies at Curtin University?
- (4) If yes to (3), will she provide details of such support and funding?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

**Addiction Studies Unit (ASU)**

- (1) Yes, indirectly through the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority and through the Health Department of WA.
- (2) Funding provided will total \$85 000 for 1988.
- (3) Yes, the salary of the head of the ASU is paid indirectly through the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority.
- (4) The amount of support for 1988 will be approximately \$54 000 for salary.

**Centre for Research into the Prevention of Drug Abuse**

- (1) No, the State Government does not provide any funds to the Centre for Research into the Prevention of Drug Abuse.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.

## CURTIN UNIVERSITY - CENTRE OF ADDICTION STUDIES

*Hawks, Professor David - Survey*

889. Mr CASH to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of a survey currently being conducted by Professor David Hawks, Professor of Addiction Studies at Curtin University, which seeks the opinions and knowledge of bar attendants on the use and laws in relation to the sale of alcohol?
- (2) If yes, what is the estimated cost of this survey?
- (3) Does the department already have information or access to information in respect of a number of the questions included in the survey?
- (4) If yes to (3), does he believe that there is an unnecessary duplication of information being gathered by Curtin University?
- (5) Was his department approached to provide this information and, if not, can he ascertain the reasons why his department was not approached in view of the possible duplication of information and consequential cost to the taxpayer?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1)-(5)

The National Centre for Research into the Prevention of Drug Abuse is funded by the Commonwealth Government through the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse. I understand that the survey to which the member refers is part of a national exercise being conducted in each State at the request of the alcohol subcommittee of the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy. I am not aware of any duplication of effort between this centre and State Government bodies. Any specific questions about the centre should be directed to the Commonwealth Government.

## MARINE STORES ACT - SECOND HAND DEALERS ACT

*Review - Recommendations*

890. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Was a review of the Marine Stores Act and the Second Hand Dealers Act conducted by the police, the Department of Administrative Services, relevant dealers, and other relevant associations during 1984?
- (2) Did this working party make recommendations for legislative and administrative change to both the Marine Stores Act and the Second Hand Dealers Act?
- (3) What were the recommendations made?
- (4) As four years have now elapsed since the recommendations were made to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, why were the recommendations not acted on?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

Yes.

(3)-(4)

Due to the volume and complexity of the recommendations made, I propose to answer these questions in writing.

## FISHING RETURNS - SWAN-CANNING ESTUARY

*Licensed Professional Fishermen*

892. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Are all current licensed professional fishermen for the Swan-Canning estuary submitting monthly fishing returns as required under the Fisheries Act 1905-1975?
- (2) If not, how many are not submitting monthly fishing returns?

- (3) Have these licensed professional fishermen been charged with breaching the Act or regulations?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)-(2)

Yes, although some fishermen have not been timely in submitting monthly returns.

- (3) In relation to breaches for not submitting returns, no.

#### FISHING LICENCES - SWAN-CANNING ESTUARY

893. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) When reissuing Swan-Canning estuarine fishery professional fishing licences, does the licensing officer act in accordance with the criteria as specified in the Fisheries Act 1905-1975, section 17, paragraphs 1-10?
- (2) Are current professional fishing licences for the Swan-Canning estuary transferable?
- (3) Will the number of professional fishing licences to fish the Swan-Canning estuary be maintained at a figure of 12?
- (4) If no, will he explain any proposed changes?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes, except as explained in my answer to question 897 in relation to paragraph (7)(b) of the notice.
- (2) No.
- (3) Recommendation No 2 of the report of the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery working group proposed that vacant fishing positions be filled once the number of registered fishermen had fallen below 12 occupied positions to a maximum of 12 fishing positions. This recommendation was adopted and is the current policy.
- (4) See answer to (3).

#### FISHING LICENCES - SWAN-CANNING ESTUARY

##### *Professional Fishermen*

894. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) How many professional fishermen are currently licensed to fish the Swan-Canning estuary?
- (2) Are professional fishermen licensed to fish the Swan-Canning estuary permitted to hold other professional fishing licences or endorsements?
- (3) Are there any persons licensed as part owner fishermen for the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery?
- (4) Are there any employee fishermen licensed to operate with a Swan-Canning estuarine fishing unit at present?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Sixteen.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not to my knowledge.

#### FISHING LICENCES - SWAN-CANNING ESTUARY

##### *Licensing Officers - Fisheries Act 1905-1975*

895. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

Are the instructions to licensing officers contained in section 17 of the Fisheries Act 1905-1975 the current policy for granting and renewal of fishing licences for the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery?

Mr GRILL replied:

Yes, except as explained in my answer to question 897 in relation to paragraph 7(b) of the notice.

**FISHING - SWAN-CANNING ESTUARY**  
*Report Recommendations - Management Formula*

896. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Were all the recommendations of the report of the Swan-Canning estuary fishery working group accepted as the management formula for the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery?
- (2) If not, which recommendations were accepted as the management formula for the fishery?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9 were adopted.

In regard to recommendation 4, amateur net fishing has been allowed to continue until 30 June 1988.

Recommendation 5 was not adopted.

The proposal contained in recommendation 6 was examined by the Director of Fisheries and a decision was subsequently taken not to proceed.

The requirement for a management plan for the future use of the Swan-Canning estuary as contained in recommendation 10 was referred to the Waterways Commission.

**FISHING LICENCES - SWAN-CANNING ESTUARY**  
*Licensing Officer - Fisheries Act 1905-1975*

897. Mr CASH to the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) How does the licensing officer of the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery professional fishing licences determine -
  - (a) "major part of working time fishing"; and
  - (b) "earn a substantial part of their income from fishing"
 as per wording of paragraph 7(b) of instructions to licensing officers, Fisheries Act 1905-1975, section 17?
- (2) Since the acceptance of the recommendations of the Swan-Canning estuary fishery working group, have any licences been issued to employee or assistant fishermen for the fishery on any of the following bases -
  - (a) permanent;
  - (b) part time; and
  - (c) temporary?
- (3) For what reasons were employee or assistant fishermen licensed as described in question (2)?
- (4) Is he or his department aware that a number of licensed professional fishermen within the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery may not meet the licensing criteria of the Fisheries Act 1905-1975, section 17, instructions to licensing officers, paragraph 7(b)?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Since the adoption of most of the Swan-Canning estuarine fishery working group report recommendations, reductions in the number of licensed commercial fishermen have occurred by voluntary retirements.



The provisions of paragraph 7(b) of Instructions to Licensing Officers for the Swan-Canning estuary, which sets out a mechanism by which units and fishermen may be reduced, have not been applied since the report was released.

- (2) In accordance with advice I have received for question (2) -
- (a) No;
  - (b) no;
  - (c) yes.
- (3) To cover short term accidental/ill health problems experienced by fishermen.
- (4) If strictly applied, yes.

Please note

Departmental advice indicates that strict enforcement of this rule - i.e. 7(b) - to threaten the confiscation of professional fishermen's licences would lead to an undesirable, dramatic increase of fishing pressure in the estuary where there is already conflict between recreational and professional fishermen.

**PEDESTRIAN AREAS - LAKE MONGER**

*Footbridge*

898. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Further to his answer to question 1923 on Tuesday, 13 October 1987, what action has been taken since I last raised this matter in the Parliament by question on notice to him to prepare plans for additional overhead pedestrian access to Lake Monger from the Leederville area?
- (2) What is the current cost of a footbridge erected in the vicinity of the velodrome to Lake Monger?
- (3) Will the Government fund this footbridge and associated works to enable this footbridge to be erected immediately?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The City of Perth has been approached to contribute towards the cost of this footbridge.
- (2) \$500 000.
- (3) The matter is currently under review.

**ESPERANCE TANKER JETTY**

*Repairs - Government Assistance*

899. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware of the current condition of the Esperance tanker jetty?
- (2) If so, when did he first become aware that part of the jetty would have to be demolished?
- (3) Does he support urgent action to ensure the jetty is restored as a matter of priority?
- (4) What action has the Government taken to assist with funding to ensure this jetty is able to be repaired and restored to enable usage by the public and other user groups?
- (5) What is the estimated cost of the repair work?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) I am aware that the Esperance tanker jetty has not been used by commercial shipping for about 12 years. Over the past 10 years, the jetty has received limited maintenance out to pier 124 under a funding agreement negotiated between the State Government and the Shire of Esperance. The jetty structure

beyond pier 124 - including all of the jetty head - is not covered by the agreement and has received little maintenance since 1978.

- (2) Since I have been Minister for Transport, I have become aware of this maintenance agreement, and provisions which allow for the deteriorated timber structure beyond pier 124 to be demolished by the Esperance Port Authority when it becomes unsafe.
- (3) The existing maintenance agreement has recently expired. I support the need to negotiate a new arrangement which would allow the shire to have control of the jetty structure out to pier 143 and be responsible for its ongoing maintenance for recreation purposes. The remaining head section would stay under the control of the port authority until assessed to be a navigation hazard, when it would be removed.
- (4) The Government has not yet reached agreement with the shire on this matter, but I would be prepared to recommend an arrangement, similar to that adopted for the Busselton jetty, whereby the shire receives a financial grant in return for accepting control of the jetty structure out to pier 143.
- (5) It is estimated that an expenditure of \$150 000 would be required to restore the jetty structure out to pier 143.

#### STATESHIPS - FREIGHT RATES

##### *Minister's Comments*

900. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

With reference to his answer to question 560 of 14 June 1988, will he expand on his comments that "the ship and equipment at the disposal of Stateships and the trade route of the vessel are entirely different from the Conference and other lines which operate only between main ports"?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The Stateships vessel *Jon Sanders* calls at ports which the Conference vessels do not visit, e.g. Port Hedland, Ketapang, Pontianak. In this way expensive centralising costs are avoided and freight rates are correspondingly lower. *Jon Sanders* is also suited to the carriage of break bulk and small bulk cargoes which are normally not attractive to the Conference ships which favour full container configuration. It will also be evident to the most casual observer that due to its relatively small size and shallow draft *Jon Sanders* can access ports which are not suited to the larger Conference ships.

#### RAILWAY TRANSPORT - ASEA PTY LTD

##### *State Government - Offset Agreements*

901. Mr CASH to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Is the Swedish based company Asea Pty Ltd, which is to be involved in the electrifying of the Perth metropolitan rail system, or any of its associated companies or subsidiaries, involved in any offset agreements with the Government?
- (2) If yes, what are the relevant details?
- (3) What is the value of the counter trade?
- (4) What goods or services are to be provided by way of counter trade and what value applies to each of the goods or services?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) A counter trade agreement has been negotiated with Asea Brown Boveri (ABB).
- (2) ABB has agreed to fulfil counter trade obligations to the whole value of the electric rail car contract which is estimated to be between \$60 million and \$70 million.
- (3) See (2) above.

- (4) In meeting its counter trade obligations ABB has agreed to -
- investigate opportunities for additional exports from Western Australia across a broad spectrum, including the agricultural, mineral, manufacture and service sectors;
  - assist in the establishment of value added industries;
  - assist in technology transfer; and
  - develop further its own local manufacturing base aimed at international markets.

Additional products for export and the investment and manufacturing possibilities being considered by ABB are currently under negotiation.

**POLICE - PERSONNEL**  
*Changes*

902. Mr WATT to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Under the recently announced changes to staffing levels in the Police Force, will he advise -
- (a) which non-metropolitan stations are to receive an increase;
  - (b) by how many; and
  - (c) the new staffing establishment of each?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

Strategies to train and effectively deploy the substantial increase in police manpower are formulated by the commissioner, and I am not in a position to provide such information at this point in time.

**POLICE - PERSONNEL**  
*Albany Police Station*

903. Mr WATT to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) What is the present staffing level of the Albany Police Station?
- (2) What are the numbers in each of the following categories -
- (a) general duties;
  - (b) CIB;
  - (c) traffic;
  - (d) liquor and gaming;
  - (e) commissioned officers;
  - (f) police cadets;
  - (g) Aboriginal police aides;
  - (h) clerical; and
  - (i) other?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1)-(2)

- (a) 28;
- (b) 4;
- (c) 10;
- (d) 1;
- (e) 2;
- (f) 1;
- (g) 1;
- (h) 1; and
- (i) 1 (forensic officer).

# HOMESWEST - HOUSING CONSTRUCTION STATISTICS New Units

904. Mr WATT to the Minister for Housing:

How many new Homeswest housing units are to be built in the current financial year, and in which categories?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

Provisional commencement targets for 1988-89 dependent upon building are as follows -

Commonwealth/State: 1370 units -

Aged	656
Family	605
Single	109
	* 1370

Aboriginal Housing (Urban Construction): 99 units -

Aged	18
Family	81
	* 99

\* Includes spot purchase.

## GOVERNMENT BUDGETS - DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET VOTE Overexpenditure

905. Mr WATT to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Is he aware that for the year ending 30 June 1988 the departmental budget vote of \$58 186 000 was exceeded by \$7 million, or 12 per cent?
- (2) Who authorised the overexpenditure?
- (3) What reasons are given for the overexpenditure?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(3)

The overexpenditure came about for a variety of reasons, which included a higher level of commercial operations than budgeted for, the fighting of major bushfires last summer and the purchase of land for addition to the D'Entrecasteaux National Park. I endorsed the request for additional funds after carefully examining the basis for the request and the Minister for Budget Management subsequently approved the supplementary funds.

## EMUS - WILUNA FARM

906. Mr WATT to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) When was the emu farm at Wiluna established?
- (2) Who is it run by?
- (3) Was any State or Federal Government funding used to establish it?
- (4) How many breeding stock were held at its commencement?
- (5) What are the current breeding stock numbers?
- (6) How many emus can be produced per year?
- (7) Are young emus allowed to be taken from the wild by the emu farm owners?
- (8) Are young emus allowed to be taken from the wild by anyone else for commercial purposes?
- (9) What price is charged by the emu farm for young emus?

- (10) How is the price arrived at?
- (11) Is it a fact that there is an open season on emus?
- (12) Are emus regarded as vermin?
- (13) Is it possible for commercial shooters to kill emus for commercial gain?
- (14) If the answer to (13) is no, why not?
- (15) How does the killing of kangaroos for sale under a quota system differ from the killing of emus for commercial use?

Mr HODGE replied:

Given the detail required, the information will be conveyed in writing to the member.

**DOCTORS - ROYAL AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS**  
*Spinal Manipulation Course*

907. Mr WATT to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of a course to be run in Perth from 21 to 23 October 1988 under the auspices of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, on "Back Pain & Spinal Manipulation for Doctors"?
- (2) As it is understood that spinal manipulation has not been a specifically formalised course in the medical undergraduate handbook, what minimum standard qualification is specified in the area of manipulative therapists and medical doctors manipulating the spine for fee or reward?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Yes, an exemplary example of the continued updating of skills.
- (2) The medical course provides an adequate knowledge of the anatomy of the whole human body and associated pathology - qualification Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery.

It is presumed that the questioner means physiotherapists when he uses the term "manipulative therapist". The physiotherapy course provides adequate knowledge of anatomy with specific reference to the pathology of movement. Physiotherapy qualifications are Bachelor Applied Science (Physiotherapy).

**WASTE DISPOSAL - HAZARDOUS WASTES**  
*Integrated Unit - Proposals*

908. Mr WATT to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the current situation in relation to the proposal to construct an integrated hazardous waste disposal unit?
- (2) Where is the Government's preferred location?
- (3) What environmental obstacles stand in its way?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) The proposal is currently being evaluated by the EPA.
- (2) Mr Walton area, approximately 75 kilometres north east of Koolyanobbing.
- (3) If any, these will be outlined by the EPA's assessment report.

**HAZARDOUS WASTES - PCBs**  
*Western Australia - Storage Sites*

909. Mr WATT to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In how many different locations in Western Australia are PCBs stored?
- (2) In which towns or suburbs are they located?
- (3) In the absence of a suitable storage site for hazardous waste materials, what threat does the storage of PCBs pose to the environment?

- (4) What is the recommended method of disposing of PCBs?
- (5) What chemical reaction would occur if stored PCBs were accidentally burned in a fire of low heat intensity?
- (6) Does a safety plan exist to counter any possible effects of an accidental fire in a PCB storage site?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Approximately 10 major locations with many minor amounts stored elsewhere.
- (2) Perth - Welshpool, Hope Valley, Coogee, Kwinana. Mining centres in the north west. Minor amounts elsewhere.
- (3) At present little threat to the environment exists. However, potential for leakage will increase with time, and fire with toxic gas emission is always a possibility.
- (4) High temperature incineration.
- (5) Depending on temperatures numerous chemicals can be produced including highly toxic compounds such as dioxins and dibenzofurans.
- (6) General safety plans exist for the combat of chemical fires.

PARTY CONFERENCES - AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY  
*Lord Forrest Hotel - Great Southern Development Authority*

910. Mr WATT to the Minister for Regional Development:

- (1) Did any of the members and/or staff of the Great Southern Development Authority recently attend the Australian Labor Party Rural Conference at the Lord Forrest Hotel in Bunbury?
- (2) If so, who attended and in what capacity did they attend?
- (3) Were any expenses for aircraft charter or motor vehicle travel incurred, and if so, what are the details?
- (4) If an aircraft was chartered, were there any passengers other than GSDA members or staff?
- (5) Were any accommodation expenses incurred by any of the above, and if so, what are the details?
- (6) Were any registration fees, meals or any other expenses incurred, and if so, what are the details?
- (7) Why was it considered necessary for a delegation to attend a party political conference?
- (8) Is it to be Government policy for public servants and Government appointees to attend conferences of all political parties?

Mr CARR replied:

(1)-(8)

The Australian Labor Party Rural Conference for 1988 was held in Collie and no staff or members of the Great Southern Development Authority attended.

The seminar referred to at the Lord Forrest Hotel was a rural and regional seminar entitled "Pathway to the 1990s". This seminar, while organised by the Australian Labor Party, was open to the public and attended by a wide range of people, including Hon Mick Gayfer, MLC. The seminar was held to enable the broader rural community and agribusiness leaders to participate in discussion on rural and regional matters. The attendance of staff and members of the GSDA at such a seminar is appropriate and relevant to their work in a rural community. Any board member or staff who attend work related conferences or seminars are eligible to be reimbursed for expenses.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT - WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GRANTS COMMISSION**  
*1988-89 Allocations - Reductions*

911. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is it correct that the Western Australian Grants Commission has decided to reduce the 1988-89 allocations for metropolitan local government authorities, and has approved that that funding be redirected to country shires?
- (2) If so, what is the reason for that decision?

Mr CARR replied:

(1)-(2)

The Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission applied principles and methods in accordance with the Local Government Financial Assistance Act 1986 when it made recommendations for the allocations in 1988-89. The commission had available to it an increase of only 1.73 per cent in funds. The effect of the application of the principles and methods was a reduced allocation to most metropolitan local governments. The commission will concentrate on metropolitan councils in its program of public hearings this year.

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**  
*Western Australian Made Goods and Suppliers*

912. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Works and Services:

What steps has the Government taken in recent times to ensure that Western Australian made goods and suppliers are given every opportunity to successfully bid for Government contracts?

Mr TROY replied:

The Government has embarked on a program to modernise and improve public sector purchasing in this State. An integral part of this program is improving opportunities for Western Australian manufacturers and suppliers who do business with the Government. Steps have been taken to improve opportunities for Western Australian suppliers by providing a purchasing preference over imported products; increasing opportunities for suppliers to meet Government demand for goods in regional areas, and by improving communication and understanding of purchasing practices and the tender process.

The following are examples of how this is being achieved -

Application of a 10 per cent purchasing preference over imported products.

Improving the State's regional preference policy to increase opportunities for greater regional buying and assistance to regional manufacturers.

Participation in trade shows such as "Meet the Buyer" and "Small Business Week".

Publication of brochures such as "Towards Better Government Purchasing" and "Selling to Government".

These and other initiatives are being undertaken by the Government to ensure Western Australian made goods and suppliers are giving appropriate opportunities.

**LAND USE - BUNKER BAY**  
*Government Proposals*

913. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Does the Government have any proposals before it for the development of land in the Bunker Bay region?

- (2) If so, what are the details of those proposals?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The Government has no specific proposals for the development of land at Bunker Bay. However, a planning statement for the development of the Naturaliste area is likely to be released in the near future. This will assist in the planning of development in the Bunker Bay locality.
- (2) Not applicable.

BARTHOLOMAEUS, MR NEIL - OVERSEAS TRAVEL  
*Costs*

915. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Has the Director of the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare, Mr Neil Bartholomaeus, travelled overseas in the last 12 months?
- (2) If so, to which destinations?
- (3) Who accompanied the director on those journeys?
- (4) What were the purposes of those visits?
- (5) What was the total cost of each tour?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) Yes, in his capacity as Commissioner for Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare and Coordinator of Productivity Policy Unit.
- (2) Singapore, once.
- (3) In Singapore, Mr Bill Brown, Executive Director of the Confederation of Western Australian Industry.
- (4) Meetings with Singapore Government agencies -  
Industrial Safety;  
Industrial Health;  
Vocational and Industrial Training Board;  
National Productivity Board; and  
Construction Industry Training Centre.
- (5) \$4 330.

WA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - CANTERBURY COURT  
*Commonwealth Taxation Office - Relocation*

916. Mr MacKINNON to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Government, through the WADC, considering a redevelopment of the Canterbury Court area to include a relocation of the Commonwealth Taxation Office?
- (2) If so, when is it likely that this redevelopment will proceed?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1)-(2) WADC is considering redevelopment options for the Canterbury Court area and the timing is subject to site consolidation.

FIRES - WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL  
*Building Damage*

918. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Education:

- (1) On what date was the fire at the Warwick High School which destroyed facilities at the school?
- (2) What facilities were destroyed in the fire?
- (3) Has work yet been completed on the restoration of those facilities?
- (4) If so, when was the work commenced?



- (5) When is it expected that the work will be completed?
- (6) If the work has not yet commenced, when is it expected that it will be?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

- (1) 4 March 1988.
- (2) The photography room was destroyed and the adjacent staff room suffered considerable smoke damage, etc.
- (3) Work on the restoration of the staff room was completed during the school vacation in April.
- (4)-(5) Work on the restoration of the photography room commenced on 28 July and is scheduled for completion on 18 November.
- (6) Not applicable.

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE BILL

## *Promulgation*

920. Mr MacKINNON to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Has the Occupational Health, and Safety Bill yet been promulgated?
- (2) If so, on what date?
- (3) When is it expected that the regulations will be completed in compliance with this Bill?
- (4) Who has been consulted in the process of completing these regulations?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) No, the amendment Bill of 1987 has not been proclaimed.
- (2) Not relevant.
- (3) Drafting of the regulations by Parliamentary Counsel is expected to be completed shortly.
- (4) The following have been consulted -  
 the Confederation of WA Industry, industry groups - including the WA Farmers Federation - and nominated employer representatives;  
 the Trades and Labour Council of WA, unions and nominated employee representatives; and  
 Government agencies.

In addition, the public were advised of the regulation review associated with the Act and invited to comment through newspaper advertisements.

# MOTOR VEHICLES - RAILWAY CROSSING

## *Lord Street*

925. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware of the time that commercial vehicles and private motorists spend waiting at the railway crossing in Lord Street near Newcastle Street, Perth?
- (2) What positive action has he taken to ensure that alternative arrangements are made to allow uninterrupted crossing by vehicles at this location, prior to considerable amounts of taxpayers' money being used to electrify this section of the suburban rail system?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The delays to road traffic at the Lord Street railway crossing are of concern and they have been considered when planning rail works associated with electrification.

- (2) Several road plans are currently under consideration that allow for a road bridge at this location. Construction of such a bridge is a longer term matter and will not be provided until well after electrification of the suburban rail system.

**GYPSUM - WESTRAIL**  
*Road Transport*

926. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Further to my questions in which I asked him to review the current regulations which prevent the transport of gypsum from Yelbeni to Kwinana by road rather than by Westrail, what action has he taken to allow this mineral product to be transported by road?
- (2) Is he aware that his lack of action in deregulating this particular freight is preventing a substantial export order from being entered into?
- (3) Is it his Government's stated or unstated policy to force producers to use Westrail, even when the Westrail freight charges are clearly much higher than road transport, and when the higher Westrail charges are jeopardising export orders?
- (4) If not, will he explain his reluctance to take action in this matter?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1)-(4)

The transport of gypsum from Yelbeni to Kwinana remains regulated to rail at this time. It is in Westrail's interest to negotiate a rate which will allow for the maintenance or expansion of export markets, as its own traffic and revenue results would otherwise suffer. In past approaches in respect of the Yelbeni quarry, I am advised that Westrail has been able to match rates which would be available from road based alternatives. I am sure that if your source approaches Westrail with full details of his requirements, a suitable solution will be found.

**WA COASTAL SHIPPING COMMISSION - ISLANDS SUPPLY SYSTEM**  
*Meeting*

927. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware of a meeting held on the 3 August 1988 to discuss the joint islands supply system for the Indian Ocean territories which was attended by representatives of the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission?
- (2) If yes to (1), has his attention been drawn to the discussion paper on "The Principles of Island Supply" which notes at item 12 that the affairs of the component operators must be fully open to public scrutiny and provide a forum for public discussion?
- (3) Does he subscribe to this arrangement, and if so, will the operations of the WA Coastal Shipping Commission in respect of its acquisition of the contract to service Cocos Island and the acquisition of the vessel *Jon Sanders* be the subject of a public inquiry to settle allegations that the WA Coastal Shipping Commission received favoured treatment in the handling of this matter?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) I am informed that the administrative services section of the Federal Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories invited interested parties to a briefing earlier this month to discuss the various considerations associated with transport of goods and supplies to and from Cocos and Christmas Islands. This was attended by Stateships and others.
- (2)-(3) On any freight contract entered into, Stateships is subject to contract conditions and commercial arrangements in precisely the same way as transport operators in the private sector. The application of the principle

referred to by the member is to be taken in that context, and is more than satisfied in the commission's published reports and other literature. The existing contract to service Cocos Island has been secured by Stateships on a proper commercial tender and requires no further commentary other than to note that the member's questions and comments are persistently directed to undermine the interests of Western Australia and to create difficulties for Stateships in the marketplace.

### RAILWAY TRANSPORT

#### *City Rail Loop*

929. Mr CASH to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What action has been taken to investigate a city rail loop servicing the precincts generally bounded by the Causeway, the Esplanade, the Barracks, Northbridge and the central business district?
- (2) Do Government departments and instrumentalities consider the possibility of a future underground rail loop before approving new developments in the area described in (1)?
- (3) If not, is this lack of action likely to prejudice a future underground rail loop around the city and adjacent areas?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1)-(2)

Until a more detail plan for a future rail loop is available, it is difficult to see that Government departments and instrumentalities can do much to account for the possibility. With this in mind, the Chairman of Transperth and the Commissioner of Railways at my instruction, are currently reviewing the 1974 loop option identified as part of the Perth central city railway feasibility study, together with other loop alternatives.

- (3) While admiring the member's new found interest in the prospects for our suburban rail system, I can advise him that I am not aware of any opportunities for a rail loop being lost because of the present review.

### POLICE - WORKING HOURS

#### *Tour of Duty - Country Duty*

930. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) What is the current period of tour of duty a police officer is required to serve on country duty?
- (2) Is it intended that this period should be reduced?
- (3) If yes, for what reasons?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) As a general rule the expected tour of duty in country areas is -
  - (a) above 26° parallel - two years;
  - (b) below 26° parallel - three years.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.

### POLICE STATIONS - NEWMAN

#### *Manpower*

931. Mr CASH to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) What is the present complement at Newman Police Station?
- (2) Is it intended to increase the police staffing levels at Newman, and if so, when and by how many officers?
- (3) Is adequate housing of an acceptable standard available for these new officers?

- (4) Will he consider the installation of super six fences around country police residences to assist police families with greater privacy, and if not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Six police officers and a clerk/typist.
- (2) Yes. One police officer and one police aide are currently on transfer to Newman Police Station. The police officer is expected to take up residence on 27 August 1988, and the police aide in early October.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Under normal circumstances the provision of fencing to police occupied GEHA houses and police quarters is in accordance with GEHA standards; that is, of a standard similar to that of other houses of comparable age within the town and requirements of the respective shire and/or mining company. Applications from tenants for variation of these standards are considered on their merits.

#### STATE ENERGY COMMISSION - ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE AD ADMINISTRATION

##### *Pay*

932. Mr COURT to the Minister for Economic Development and Trade:

- (1) Has the salary for the Assistant Commissioner of Finance and Administration been determined within the SEC?
- (2) If yes, what is that salary?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1)-(2)

The salary for the assistant commissioner was determined following an extensive search throughout Australia for a highly experienced and qualified executive who could manage the financial affairs of Western Australia's largest business in the proper manner. The salary is in the lower quartile of the market level and was agreed to by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal and approved by EXCO.

#### NATURE RESERVES

##### *Review - "B" and "C" Classes*

933. Mr COURT to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Is he proposing to complete a review of the State's "B" and "C" class nature reserves for possible upgrading to "A" class reserves?
- (2) If yes, when will this review be completed?
- (3) When will the Government announce the intended changes?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The target completion date is the end of this year.
- (3) I will issue a statement when the project is completed. However, reclassifications will be processed progressively as the review of individual reserves is completed.

#### ROAD CONSTRUCTION - ST GEORGES TERRACE

##### *Road Tunnels - Underground Railway*

939. Mr COURT to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Government considering plans which allow the construction of road tunnels under St George's Terrace?
- (2) If yes, will this close the option of putting an underground railway under St George's Terrace?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The Government understands that a vehicular tunnel between the technical college site redevelopment and the David Jones site redevelopment is being actively considered by the developers and the Perth City Council. Neither the Government, nor any of its agencies, is involved at this stage, but will be if the proposal is pursued.
- (2) No such proposal has been put to the Government. The extent of any conflict with future options would be subject to detail.

### WATER CHARGES

#### *Increases*

940. Mr COURT to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Have water charges increased in 1988-89 for residential consumers using more than 350 kilolitres?
- (2) If yes, what is the increased charge for water in excess of 350 kilolitres?
- (3) Have water charges increased for commercial users?
- (4) If yes, what has been the increase?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

- (1) Metropolitan Yes.  
Country South Regions No, up to 400 kilolitres.  
Yes, thereafter.  
Country North Regions No, up to 600 kilolitres.  
Yes, thereafter.

(Country North Regions are above the 26th parallel of south latitudes.)

- (2) Percentage nominal increases in residential water bills at various consumption levels (%)

Kilolitres Consumed	Metropolitan	Country South	Country North
0	0	0	0
100	0	0	0
200	0	0	0
350	0	0	0
400	1.7	0	0
600	5.4	3.3	0
800	6.8	4.9	2.7
1200	9.9	8.0	7.0
Regional Average	(309.2 kl)	(339.8 kl)	(636.2 kl)

- (3) Yes.
- (4) Four per cent on average.

### ROAD SAFETY - GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY

#### *Flooding*

941. Mr COURT to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What action is the Government taking to remedy road flooding on Great Eastern Highway between the Causeway and the casino entrance?
- (2) Is he aware that this flooding is causing a major road hazard?
- (3) If yes, how long has his department been aware of this problem?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1)-(3)

The Main Roads Department has no recent information that flooding has occurred in the area suggested. The area is relatively flat and it is possible for

pooling of the stormwater to occur during periods of very high intensity rainfall. I have arranged for the Main Roads Department to inspect the area during the future periods of rainfall to confirm that the drainage system is functioning satisfactorily.

**HOMESWEST - SUBIACO**  
*Lodging House*

942. Mr COURT to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has Homeswest purchased a lodging house on the corner of Heytesbury Road and Kershaw Street, Subiaco?
- (2) If yes, how much was paid for this lodging house?
- (3) What does Homeswest propose to use these premises for?
- (4) If the premises are to be renovated what is the cost of these renovations?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) \$250 000.
- (3) Lodging house for 17 residents plus resident caretaker.
- (4) Current estimate \$155 000.

**GOLD REFINERIES - KALGOORLIE**  
*Costs*

943. Mr COURT to the Premier:

- (1) What is the cost of establishing the new Kalgoorlie gold refinery?
- (2) How has the cost been funded?
- (3) What is the cost of establishing the new gold refinery and adjacent facilities at the Perth International Airport site?
- (4) How has this refinery been funded?
- (5) What are the anticipated tonnages to be refined by each site?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) About \$4 million.
- (2) See answer to question (4).
- (3) About \$7 million.
- (4) The two new refineries are being financed by a Government loan, the internal resources of the Western Australia Mint and a gold loan.
- (5) On a single shift basis, the annual capacities of the Kalgoorlie and Perth refineries will be 30 tonnes and 75 tonnes of gold respectively.

**COAL FIRED POWER STATION - USSR**  
*Government Negotiations*

944. Mr COURT to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Is the Government involved in any negotiations for the Soviet Union to supply components to a new coal fired power station in Western Australia?
- (2) If yes, at what stage are these negotiations?

Mr PARKER replied:

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

**SARICH ENGINE PLANT**  
*Western Australia - Government Negotiations*

945. Mr COURT to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) At what stage are the Government's negotiations for the establishment of a Sarich engine plant in Western Australia?
- (2) Is the Government confident that such a plant will be built in this State?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) The Government's offer has been submitted to the Orbital Engine Company, the finer details of which are currently in the final stage of negotiation.
- (2) The Government is confident that its offer presents the best opportunity for manufacture within Australia.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**STATE GOVERNMENT - TEACHERS CREDIT SOCIETY**  
*Rescue Operation - Media Statements*

140. Mr MacKINNON to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is the Treasurer aware that in his predecessor's media statement of 22 August 1987, P87/179 relating to the Teachers Credit Society rescue, it indicated that -

The State Government mounted a rescue operation for the Teachers Credit Society because about 30 000 Western Australians would have lost access to their savings if it had been forced to close, the Premier and Treasurer, Mr Brian Burke, said today.

- (2) If so, how does he account for the statement he made yesterday, 23 August, which was as follows -

The Premier said that it was now clear that the 60 000 ordinary account holders would have lost almost all their savings had the Government not acted.

- (3) Has the number of depositors increased as have the losses, or is there some other explanation?

Mr Burkett: Would you have supported them?

Mr MacKINNON: The member for Scarborough is just a backbencher. I am addressing the question to the State's leader. The member for Scarborough's leader called him a backbencher yesterday.

Several members interjected.

Mr MacKINNON: To continue -

- (4) Can he assure me that this is the only error made in this statement of 23 August 1988?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(4)

In relation to the Leader of the Opposition's personal attempt to deprecate the member for Scarborough, I can say that if the Opposition's front bench were half as good as the Government's back bench, he would have some measure of comfort. I am sorry but I do not have a copy of the Press release from the former Premier.

Mr Cash: Tell us you are a statesman.

Mr PETER DOWDING: I hope one day that people will regard the work of our Government as statesmanlike. That will take a while, and I am not so immodest as not to wish someone to say that, perhaps after serving 10 or 15 years as Premier.

My understanding is that more than 100 000 accounts had relatively small sums of money in them. We have never asked for and I have not been given a list of those people or any information about them, but there were a large number of small account holders.

Mr MacKinnon: A figure of 30 000 a year ago and 60 000 today.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Does the Leader of the Opposition want me to answer the question or not? He has made his point and he will get an answer. I understand that approximately 60 000 accounts could be fairly described as small Western Australians' life savings type accounts, and that may well be 30 000 individuals or 60 000 individuals. The accounts of the sort I was talking about amounted to approximately 60 000. If that means everyone had one account or that some people had two or three accounts, I do not know. I have no way of inquiring into that, nor do I wish to. It is an irrelevancy because the question that has to be asked of the Opposition now is simply -

Mr MacKinnon: It is an irrelevancy is it? I would have thought it pertinent.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Why is it?

Mr MacKinnon: All we heard about yesterday was the 60 000 people's savings.

Mr PETER DOWDING: I did not say "people", I said "account holders". What does it matter if it is 30 000, 60 000 or 90 000? What difference does it make? What does it matter how many individuals are included in these figures?

Mr MacKinnon: Maybe the truth does not matter to the Government.

Mr PETER DOWDING: How could that information be obtained unless an audit were carried out on the nature of the people who held the accounts? Obviously that is not the issue. The issue is, firstly, should the State Government have taken the responsibility of ensuring that whatever the number of individuals, they did not lose their life savings. Should the Government have taken that responsibility? In answer to that question the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said the Government should have, and the Leader of the Opposition has refused to answer and continues to do so.

It is interesting to note the comment made today by Les McCarrey, a man who not only is a former Western Australian Treasury official, but also has been linked to an organisation which has a direct political role in the community in representing the economic dries in the Liberal Party. He said that the Government had to come to the rescue of the society's depositors and that the Government could afford the \$119 million cost of the society's collapse. He also said that the Government has about \$200 million in Treasury receipts and that the blowout in the cost will affect the Government's ability to offer meaningful tax relief in this year's State Budget.

Whatever view the Opposition takes of the issue - I can see the member for Cortesloe wanting all his spleen to come out as we have seen so often - the Leader of the Opposition, as the person who holds himself out as the alternative Premier, should have the gumption, guts, and strength to say whether or not the Opposition believes that the Government should have done what it did in ensuring that these small Western Australians did not lose their life savings. The Leader of the Opposition has never answered that question. At four o'clock this afternoon he issued a Press release in which he took the most irresponsible step I could imagine of drawing a figure out of his head and saying that the ultimate cost to the taxpayers could be \$300 million.

Mr MacKinnon: I took it from your Press release. Perhaps that is where I made a mistake.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Opposition has a role to play. The reason the taxpayers fund the Opposition and it is given advisers and resources is that it has a role in our community. But, that role carries responsibility and the Opposition does not have the right to irresponsibly heat up this sort of apprehension and concern unless it has some justification. I have invited Opposition members to a briefing from the R & I Bank.



Mr Court: We want to brief you.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition can brief me. If the Opposition wants a briefing from the R & I Bank or from the administrator of the -

Mr MacKinnon: You cannot get the numbers right.

Mr PETER DOWDING: How can the Opposition treat that so irresponsibly? I am offering it access to the people who have the answers so that the Opposition does not have to issue a Press release which is totally speculative. I am not interrupting the Leader of the Opposition's dinner or anything, am I?

Mr MacKinnon: No.

Mr PETER DOWDING: I am offering the Opposition the opportunity to get the information and it can then make a valid judgment about the performance of the people responsible. However, the Opposition does not want that briefing. I invite the people of Western Australia to compare this performance with the Opposition's performance on the weekend when it sabotaged the opportunity for Western Australians to bring Eastern States investments and profits into this State through the R & I Bank.

The SPEAKER: Before giving the call to the member for Joondalup I point out that the answer just given was fairly lengthy. In my view its length was directly attributable to the number of interjections. If that is what the Opposition wants, or what the Government wants when it is interjecting, I shall not interfere in any way. However, members cannot have it both ways, and I do not want them saying that only three answers have been given in half an hour.

LIBERAL PARTY - TELECONFERENCING  
*"MacKinnon at Eleven"*

141. Mrs WATKINS to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the Leader of the Opposition's recent teleconference on GWN entitled "MacKinnon at Eleven"?
- (2) If so, can he advise whether this was a paid party political telecast or free time?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(2)

I thank the member for that question. Having seen a little of this hour-long program, I assume it was paid for because no-one in his right mind would have run that as television without a considerable financial inducement. It is interesting to note that the Liberal Party did not give any indication to the viewers that it was paid political time. Members of the Liberal Party thought they were tricking people into believing that they were being invited to call in and ask questions to find out what they had been waiting to hear for months from the Liberal Party; and that is its policy on something - actually, its policy on anything, except capital punishment, which is the one thing about which it has made a policy. It was apparent that all those people who were asking questions were prominent Liberal Party members, and in some cases Liberal Party candidates in the next election. If the program had been free, I would have considered asking GWN for equal time - equal time for the Leader of the Opposition to do it again - because I think it gave a tremendous boost to the Labor Party's chances in the electorate covered by that television system.

STATE GOVERNMENT - PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT  
*Gofair Investments Ltd*

142. Mr COURT to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is the Government aware, as an equity participant in the petrochemical project, of the identity of the principals behind Gofair Investments Ltd, the

Hong Kong based company which was the original project manager of the proposed Kwinana petrochemical refinery?

- (2) If yes, who are those principals?
- (3) Is the Government aware of any fees which may already have been paid to Gofair Investments Ltd, and if so, how much?
- (4) Will Gofair Investments Ltd be receiving any money in compensation from Petrochemical Industries for Bond Corporation becoming the new project managers, and if so, how much?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(4)

I would normally leave it to the Deputy Premier to deal with this issue because it falls within his responsibility, but the question has been addressed to me, and I will give a short answer. The Government is not dealing with Gofair; it has no need to deal with Gofair. It is not paying any money to Gofair, and it has nothing to do with Gofair.

The Government believes the petrochemical project is a good one. We share the view of the Opposition that it is an excellent one. We believe it is terribly important for the State that the project should get up. The boy wonder's father invested \$1 000 million of taxpayers' money in the Dampier to Perth pipeline - which was never intended to earn any revenue, despite the fact it was a part of the project that could well have been done commercially -

Mr Parker: It was originally intended to be commercial.

Mr PETER DOWDING: Yes, it was originally intended to be commercial, I remind the Opposition, although that was changed by the Government. It took the Government equity and gave a total underwriting to at least the domestic phase by the take or pay contract, which we had to renegotiate - I think twice, if I am correct.

Despite all of that, it has to be seen as the sort of project which Western Australia wants and needs. It will be a good project for Western Australia. As stated by the *Sunday Times* article, the value can be expected to be \$1 billion, which will be good value for Western Australia.

#### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGETS - UNEMPLOYMENT *JET Program*

143. Mr RIPPER to the Premier:

To what extent is the job and employment training - JET - program announced by the Federal Government as a part of its Budget consistent with the Premier's views on long term unemployment?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

That is one aspect of the Federal Budget that is very important. We have been raising - perhaps as a voice in the wilderness in Australia over the last three years - the harsh reality of long term unemployment and the need that the long term unemployed have for a greater investment from the community in ensuring that they are able to enter the work force in a productive manner.

We have raised the issue continually since 1986, and I want to contrast our attitude with that of the Opposition. The best the Leader of the Opposition could come up with, when confronted with this issue at the local government conference on Saturday, was the tired old proposal of let us have work for the dole, the old, "let us kick a dole bludger" syndrome - bringing out one of the old chestnuts from their old supply of chestnuts. We did not hear any new policies, new ideas, or a willingness to take on the tough issues and come out with sensible ideas.

It is a great tribute to Western Australia, to Western Australian Government Ministers - and particularly the Minister for Employment and Training - and

to the Federal Government that they have at last started to understand the importance of this issue and introduced this new project called JET, which embraces the principle of giving people the opportunity for relevant education and training. That is entirely consistent with our view, and we believe it to be a great step forward for Australia.

**STATE GOVERNMENT - PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT**  
*Investment*

144. Mr COURT to the Treasurer:

- (1) What interest has the Government taken in the petrochemical project in Kwinana, be it equity or loan investment?
- (2) How much will this cost the Government?
- (3) From where will the funds come to finance the project?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1)-(3)

I am sorry that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not hear me. These questions should really be directed to the Deputy Premier.

Mr MacKinnon: Why? Do you not know?

Mr PETER DOWDING: But I bet if I did that, the Leader of the Opposition would say, "Do you not know?"; and on cue, he did.

Mr MacKinnon: You are the Treasurer.

Mr PETER DOWDING: The Leader of the Opposition can put up large posters around town to say how tough he is, but no-one believes it.

The answer to the question is the matter is still the subject of negotiation, and no final decision has been made.

**YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES - UNEMPLOYMENT**  
*Western Australia*

145. Mr READ to the Minister for Employment and Training:

Can the Minister report on the use of the youth employment schemes throughout the State?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question because the answer does go into some detail.

Several members interjected.

Mr GORDON HILL: I must say that members of the Opposition, by their display of bad humour today, are showing they have no interest in or concern for the young unemployed in this State. I think their laughter today is a reflection of the policies they have - policies which amount to zero, and which resulted, when we came into office in 1983, in a peak in teenage unemployment of 31.6 per cent. The same old, tired Liberal Party policies that led to 31.6 per cent unemployment are today again being espoused. As the Premier said a short time ago, our Government has a proud record in this area, as the Opposition knows. Members of the Opposition cannot laugh at the fact that last month the unemployment statistics revealed that teenage unemployment reached 13.6 per cent - a low for about a decade. The peak in teenage unemployment of 31.6 per cent, which resulted from the policies of the Opposition, has been more than halved.

Since its opening in July 1987, the YES shop has provided information or assistance to 10 000 people, and 4 500 people have accessed Career Mate, the computer assisted career guidance system. The popularity of Career Mate has prompted it to be extended on a permanent basis to a number of centres - Bunbury, Geraldton, and Manjimup - where there was a need to address this problem.

The service has now been extended to people in Perth over the age of 25 years because it was in demand by the mature age unemployed and it was a direction from this Government that it be extended to the mature age unemployed.

The mobile shop, which was the initiative of the former Minister for Employment and Training, the Premier, was established to service people in remote areas and has been a tremendous success. The mobile service began its operation in July this year. The numbers of young people seen by staff at the Youth Employment Service mobile shop in the north west of the State and who accessed either Career Mate or the counselling service are as follows -

Geraldton	142
Carnarvon	168
Exmouth	30
Paraburdoo	46
Tom Price	205
Karratha	220
Hedland	327
Broome	111
Derby	14
Fitzroy Crossing	11
Halls Creek	9
Wyndham	19
Kununurra	96

The most up to date figure, as at the end of last week, shows that 1 398 people throughout the remote areas of Western Australia have had access to the YES mobile shop, yet today we heard the Opposition ridicule the proposal to further extend the YES mobile shop to other parts of Western Australia, as we will do in the very near future.

The YES mobile shop's establishment cost was \$95 000, which was money well spent to take the youth employment scheme facility to parts of the State which otherwise would not have had access to it.

As I said at the outset, the Western Australian Government - the Dowding Labor Government - has a very proud record in addressing the question of youth and teenage unemployment, and indeed the public at large in Western Australia have endorsed and supported the proposals and schemes we have in the YES. The young unemployed have given support to the YES mobile shop, as is seen by the way in which they are accessing the Career Mate and the YES career services around the State.

#### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGETS - RURAL EDUCATION

##### *School Allowances - Isolated Children*

146. Mr STEPHENS to the Minister for Education:

What effect will the Federal Government's reduced allocation to isolated children's allowances as outlined in the Budget have upon the State Government's school boarding allowances?

Dr LAWRENCE replied:

The exact effects are still being estimated because obviously it is difficult to give an immediate answer to that. It is really related to assets, as I understand it, rather than to reducing the amount of money available.

Nonetheless, this provides me with an opportunity to say that in any case in this Budget members will see a more generous allowance for those people living in isolated areas for boarding purposes, both in terms of the amount of money to be made available and its extent. So to the extent that the Commonwealth withdraws the member may find that we are supplementing it. If the withdrawal is minor the total benefit will be an improvement in their circumstances.

## ROTTNEST ISLAND - GOVERNMENT POLICY

*Pendal, Hon P.G. - Financial Aspects*

147. Mrs BUCHANAN to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Has the Minister seen the claim by the Opposition spokesman for tourism, Hon Phil Pendal, that an urgent examination of Rottnest Island finances is needed because costs have risen as a result of Government policy?
- (2) Could the Minister please advise on the accuracy of this statement?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1)-(2)

I thank the member for Pilbara for the question. I have seen the article.

I am getting very concerned about the irresponsibility of the shadow spokesman for tourism. He seems to make one wild claim after another. My colleague, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, was calling the Leader of the Opposition "Think of a number and double it MacKinnon". I think the Opposition spokesman for tourism, who I know is a protege of the Leader of the Opposition, seems to have gone one further than that. He thinks of a number, doubles it, takes away his birth date and then thinks of the number he previously thought of, then throws it all away and comes up with another number altogether. His mode of operation has come to my attention not just on this occasion but on several occasions and it is creating some concern around the community. I think the Minister for The Arts would endorse that. The shadow spokesman for tourism matters uses a tactic which I think is quite repugnant. He knows the protocol about getting information -

Mr MacKinnon: He actually talks to the industry.

Mrs BEGGS: No, his method of operation is very serious. He knows the protocol for obtaining information from Government departments and he refuses to use it. What he does is embroil innocent public servants in his politicising of every single issue that I have ever seen and his procedure for obtaining that information is an issue which I feel the Leader of the Opposition should take up with him because I have received several complaints from several departments in my area of responsibility. He may think he is a super sleuth because of his journalistic background, but I am absolutely fed up with the way he operates. I do not have any difficulty at all with any other member of the Opposition in providing the information they want because they go about it in the right way, but I think this member is a disgrace to the Opposition.

His latest attack on Rottnest Island, without any basis whatsoever, is another example. He is just chasing headlines that have no foundation whatsoever. He stated that there was an increase in operating expenditure by the Rottnest Island Authority and that it could only have resulted in increased costs for holidaymakers. The fact is that the additional operating expenditure comes as a direct result of a 51 per cent increase in visitors to the island since 1982-83. This means increased revenue for the authority through greater utilisation of accommodation, bike hire, bus tours and so on. That revenue, thanks to this Government, is ploughed straight back into the facilities on the island and provides much better service than the previous Government was able to provide. It is part of the Government's commitment to maintaining Rottnest Island as an affordable holiday destination that has seen the dramatic increase in the number of visitors.

Hon Phillip Pendal, a member in another place, has accused me of having WA Inc on Rottnest Island because of the authority's desire to have more of the profits raised on the island by the people who actually use it ploughed back into improving the facilities. He has complained and bleated constantly about socialisation of the Rottnest bike hire, Tent-Land, and the laundry service. He is just a joke.

I want to give members an example of what his so-called socialisation means

to Rottnest Island. Prior to the takeover of the bike hire service - and everyone here at some time prior to when we did take over the bike hire service would have had the experience -

Mr Peter Dowding: They complained about it. Everyone I ever met complained about it.

Mrs BEGGS: Yes, and prior to that the Rottnest Island Board received annual lease payments in the order of \$150 000. In comparison the Rottnest Island Authority, since the takeover, now receives revenue of more than \$800 000 annually, and that \$800 000 goes back into the island.

Mr Bradshaw: They are ripping off the public.

Mrs BEGGS: They are not, they are giving the public the service they have never had before. The member knows it and that is why he is smiling. He knows exactly what is happening on Rottnest Island. The truth is that Rottnest Island has never been a better place to visit.

Mr Clarko: Rubbish! When was the first time you went there? How many times have you been there?

Mrs BEGGS: I have been going to Rottnest since I was five years old.

Mr Clarko: Yes, and I have done the same, which is twice as long as you, and more often. You just socialised the hire service.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs BEGGS: If and when this Opposition ever gets back to controlling what takes place on Rottnest Island, I really hope -

Mr Clarko: It was a great place because of our policies.

Mrs BEGGS: I honestly say to members that if they go back to the policy of privatising those services that directly service the people who go to the island, they should not go back to that policy where the profits, which rightly should go back into the management and improvement of facilities, instead go into the pockets of just a few friends.

Mr Clarko: Will the bakery be next?

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