

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 24th August, 1977

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

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Acts Amendment (Constitution) Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Premier), and read a first time.

2. Parks and Reserves Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mrs Craig (Minister for Lands and Forests), and read a first time.

3. Sex Discrimination Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr H. D. Evans and read a first time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR RUSHTON (Dale—Minister for Local Government) [5.18 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. This Bill proposes to amend the Local Government Act, 1960-1976.

The purpose of the Bill is to rectify an anomaly which was recently discovered in the Act. This anomaly has resulted in offices of members of municipal councils becoming vacant because of the provisions of section 37(1)(e) of the Local Government Act, which disqualified from membership of a council, a person who has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in an agreement to which the municipality is a party.

Two such instances occurred in connection with membership of the Council of the City of Perth and elections will shortly be held to fill the resultant vacancies.

There are a number of exemptions from disqualification in respect of section 37(1)(e) and these include a person who has the pecuniary interest as a member of an incorporated company which consists of at least 20 members and which is a party to the agreement, or as a director, manager or secretary of a company, he has the pecuniary interest so long as he discloses to the council the interest prior to his election.

It also includes a person who, in the ordinary course of business and in good faith, sells goods to, supplies services to, or does work for the municipality, or for any person who has entered into a contract with the municipality.

The members who have been found to have been disqualified are members of private companies having membership of less than 20 members and therefore the exemptions mentioned above are not applicable although the transactions in which they were involved were made in the ordinary course of business.

It is considered equitable that a member of a private company or of a partnership should have the same protection from disqualification as would apply to a single trader who, in the ordinary course of business, has a pecuniary interest in an agreement with the council.

It is emphasised that the amendment is designed to provide for exemption from disqualification which has always been thought to be applicable. It is designed to remove an anomaly and not to remove any safeguards to the integrity of local government.

Mr Jamieson: It seems to be opening it a little wide, to me.

Mr RUSHTON: Nor is there any additional scope for members to have a conflict of interest or to profit from the fact of their membership of a council.

They will still be restricted by the provisions of sections 174 and 174A from voting on, or discussing any matter in which they have an interest.

In the instances of disqualification arising from the present anomaly in the Act, there has been no suggestion whatsoever that the members concerned have acted reprehensively. Their probity is unquestioned and they have merely been unwilling victims of a legal technicality which this Bill is designed to rectify.

Because councillors affected by existing legislation have resigned and dates have been fixed for elections to fill the resultant vacancies, it is desirable that there should be no controversy after the elections as to who is the holder of these offices.

Provision has been made excluding from the application of the validating clause persons interested in an office for which an election date has been fixed to fill a vacancy.

However, under the provisions of the Bill these people will be deemed to have not committed an offence.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Carr.

CLOTHES AND FABRICS (LABELLING) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [5.23 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Clothes and Fabrics (Labelling) Act was first passed in 1973.

The need for legislation of this nature evolved from accidental happenings to persons, particularly young children, by being severely burned when items of nightwear caught on fire.

Over the years there had been a growing concern throughout the world that had led to demands for controls on flammability.

Commonwealth and State Ministers for Labour and Industry considered such matters at their regular conferences with a result that uniform legislation has been enacted in all the States. The only item made subject to the Act was children's nightclothes.

The Act empowers an article of clothing, textile or other fabric to be made subject to the Act and when so done to be—

- (a) Marked or labelled according to its flammability or other safety or protective purposes;
- (b) card labelled to show its suitability for particular methods of laundering; and
- (c) size labelled.

Standards set down by the Standards Association of Australia have been adopted.

The Standards Association of Australia has more recently published a series of new standards in the garment field. The standards have been discussed at the last two conferences of Ministers for Consumer Affairs and at the conference held on the 1st April, 1977, it was agreed that all States would incorporate the new standards in clothes and fabrics legislation.

Additionally, it was agreed that all States would amend their legislation to permit the banning from sale of children's nightclothes made of material having a surface burning time of less than 10 seconds as determined by the standard as 1176-1976. The authority to ban from sale has not previously been in the Act.

When changes are to be made which affect stocks held by suppliers and retailers, a sufficient period will be allowed before implementation so that current stocks, both locally manufactured or imported, can be phased out and also to meet the time stipulations for re-ordering of new stocks.

The Retail Traders' Association of Western Australia has intimated acceptance of the proposals as long as a sufficient time lag occurs before introduction.

The Commonwealth will control the imported nightwear under its legislation.

The regulations made under this Act contain reference to the particular Australian standards and consequential amendments to these regulations will have to be made to incorporate the new standards.

New South Wales and Victoria have already acted along the lines of the agreement reached by the States and have banned the sale of some flammable nightwear.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tonkin.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: NINTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 17th August, on the following motion by Mr Hassell—

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

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

MR YOUNG (Scarborough) [5.26 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, when the member for Subiaco made his contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate, he pointed out that you and he came into Parliament on the same day, and that you had gone as far as you could in the direction of the Chair and he as far as he could in the opposite direction.

As another member who came into Parliament on the same day—and, incidentally, who still stands on the fulcrum of that rather greasy political seesaw—I should like to add my congratulations to you on your elevation to the Speakership, and repeat the oft-stated phrase that we have no doubt whatever that you will make your mark as a Speaker, and be a worthy successor to those who have held the office before you.

I should also like to congratulate in particular the new Minister for Lands and Forests who I understand is only the second woman to become a Minister in any Government in Western Australia. When Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver was

first elevated to the Ministry, I believe she suggested she was being put there only to make the tea for the Cabinet. However, anyone who knows the Minister for Lands and Forests would realise she certainly would not aspire simply to make tea for the Cabinet.

Mr Jamieson: But she makes a good cup of tea, all the same.

Mr YOUNG: I should also like to congratulate the member for Gascoyne and the Hon. David Wordsworth on their elevation to the positions they now hold, and similarly, the member for Murray and the member for Karrinyup.

I also congratulate the newly elected Deputy Leader of the Opposition who I understand is the youngest man to hold that position.

Tonight I wish to concentrate my address principally on the rights of the individual. It seems to me that too often in our rather bureaucratic and over-governed world—particularly in his relationships to the law, the Government, the business sector and the professions—the individual has become regarded as simply a necessary cog in a rather large machine; too often he is treated as being of no more consequence than that.

I wish in particular to speak about the relationship of the individual to the law and the Government. John Stewart Mill, in his essay entitled *On Liberty*, in part, said—

The principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their members is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant, he cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it would be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wiser or even right.

I believe those words still hold true today. I admit those attitudes have been misinterpreted by individuals as often as they have been by the institutions to which I have referred; but basically I think they still hold good.

In exercising the rather awesome powers all Governments have in regard to their relationship to the community generally—and I have said this before and probably will do so again—the Government virtually acts in a position of a trustee. The law of the British has always recognised that a trustee has to

show more skill, care, and caution in the dealing of the trusteeship than does an ordinary person in regard to his own affairs, and that is because of the power and the position of trust he holds. It is incumbent upon him as a trustee therefore to show that extra bit of skill, care, and caution in dealing with the affairs of others.

It is my belief that Governments must act in that role not only in regard to the handling of public money, but also in regard to the handling of the affairs of the individual from day to day. A Government has to think and re-think its attitudes at all times before it ever acts to enforce its will on the individual. It also has to differentiate clearly between private actions and actions involving others and this is one of the problems of Government. There is so much work to be done and Ministers have so little time in which to stop and think about these matters that so often they do not have the time to differentiate clearly between the actions they might take in respect of an individual's actions which are private, and those actions with which the individual may engage himself which relate to and involve other people.

Many of the laws which impinge on personal liberty in this country are, in Mills' words, "designed to prevent harm to others", and in that respect, in intention certainly, they are quite proper.

There are a few categories. There is a category where there is a slight area of doubt and I give the example of, say seat-belt legislation, where, on the surface, it would appear that the Government might be impinging on someone's personal liberty to choose whether or not he wears a seat-belt; but when looked at deeply it is realised there are a lot more people involved in a crash than just the victim himself.

I refer of course to those involved voluntarily and by the work of their profession in hospitals, the Police Force, ambulances, paraplegic centres, and the like. Another example of the half-way case is the drug situation where on the surface some people say it is a matter of the person's individual choice and that he ought perhaps to be allowed to deal in and abuse drugs because he is damaging only himself. Once again I put that in the second category because I believe the user of drugs involves not only himself, but also many other people, many of whom are the same as those I mentioned in the first instance.

At the other end of the scale there are actions which are purely of a private nature into which I will go to some degree later on in the course of my speech. They would obviously include sexual practices between consenting adults in private. Laws which impinge on those sorts of things clearly have no validity in our legislation in my opinion. That is only one instance of many items, some of which I hope to cover, but it is one which obviously stands out.

Every year we place on the Statute book about 100 items of legislation and yet although we change the law so many times it does not seem to me that society is becoming any wiser about our laws, has any better concept of what they do, or is, in fact, better off as a result of them. In fact the average individual really has no conception of the multitude of Statutes which govern society's every-day existence.

Even a Supreme Court judge would possibly transgress the law on about five or six occasions every day, probably sometimes without realising he is doing so and certainly at other times because the transgressions would be arising out of matters that perhaps if ever they did have any validity, no longer have that validity within the law.

What I am saying is virtually that I believe we are over-legislated; that our Statute book is, in fact, something like a small boy's pocket or a grandmother's cupboard; that is, full of things which might be needed one day, but which are not of much use at the moment.

Most Governments introduce unnecessary legislation—and I hope it will be recognised I am speaking about Governments generally, naturally including the existing Government but also all other Governments—and most of the Ministers, instead of perhaps introducing a multitude of legislation from time to time would be better recognised for their contribution to society by their ability to retain society's respect, to run their departments according to the policies of their party, to exercise frugality with public money, and to achieve all this with the minimum of legislation. That would perhaps enable them to spend a bit more time thinking, which I know most of the Ministers have a lot of trouble doing. That may have been more happily phrased. I am referring of course to the lack of time available to Ministers to enable them to spend time thinking.

I will give some instances of situations which bedevil the individual in the community—matters which concern me, and I would hope, all members

of the Liberal Party whose policies rely very heavily on the rights of the individual, which I espouse.

The first would be to have a look at the criminal law in respect of the individual in society, and I want to make it quite clear that the things I am going to say in regard to the criminal law may, at first, sound like a bit of do-gooding; but anyone who cares to listen a little closer will realise I am making a plea for a more stringent attitude in the law in regard to transgressors on matters of a serious nature in order that we might bring about a little more dignity for criminals and at the same time perhaps a little more hard work and punishment for them so that they recognise where they stand in our society.

As a start I would like members to imagine a situation in which a person can be arrested late at night on a criminal charge the validity of which is confusing to the person involved. He would be taken to the central police station and charged. He may not be granted bail on his own surety because perhaps he might be travelling interstate, he may not be known to the police, or he may not know anyone he could ring to act as surety. On the other hand he may be loath to ring anyone at midnight or 1.00 a.m. It may be a Saturday night in which case he would possibly be confronted with two nights in the lockup unless, of course, he could arrange bail the next day.

His shoes, belt, and personal possessions are taken from him, and he is locked up. He has to contend with the noise of drunks, both happy and aggressive, the smell of vomit, and the stink of the bucket provided under those circumstances for toilet purposes. Although males and females are segregated they are expected to use these buckets in front of an open grill if they feel the urge. They must put up with the unsavoury bed with only a mattress and blanket. This becomes the world of these persons for the night.

I hope it will be remembered that I am talking about people who are not guilty, who at this stage have not been tried and therefore are not guilty. By the morning they would be beginning to wonder whether the year was really 1977.

The lack of sleep and the conditions that the person had to endure during the night, would hardly prepare him well for defending his case next day. In some country areas it could, in fact, be days before a person under those circumstances could be heard by a magistrate. If a person is on remand that situation could obtain for days and although I think it unlikely, it is possible, it could obtain even for weeks. If the trial went on

for a period of time, the individual could be subjected to such conditions each night of the trial.

The strange part is that if a person is found guilty his immediate physical situation improves because he would then be removed to Fremantle if, in fact, he is sentenced to gaol for any period of time. The conditions at Fremantle, although not utopian would certainly be an improvement on the lockups I have described. If a person was found not guilty he would be free to go, possibly never forgetting the experience, and without compensation for the indignities to which he had been subjected. His opinion of the law might become a little warped, but he would be free to go.

An even stranger situation occurs in country lockups. If a person is found guilty he is often returned to exactly the same lockup and lives in exactly the same circumstances he did before he was actually found guilty. In other words, the not guilty—that is, the untried—are as badly off, and in some cases worse off, than those who are found to be guilty.

Considering we have progressed to the later part of the 20th century that situation will have to change. I understand that Victoria is giving serious consideration to providing people who have been arrested, but not tried, with some basic form of motel-type accommodation so they—they will have some privacy, can get some sleep, can have a wash and clean up, and enjoy private toilet facilities. I realise that if we did something like that some assessment would have to be made at the lockup by either a justice of the peace on duty or an officer in charge to ensure some determination was made on the standard of accommodation a person would be allocated having regard to the state of his sobriety, his known past offences, and his state of antagonism. However, that assessment could be made reasonably and fairly.

The accused, the untried, the “not guilty under the law”, or whatever we like to call them are, after all, individuals within our society and do have certain rights until they are found guilty under the law.

I now want to turn to people who have been found guilty under the law. It has been talked about, and the Government has accepted the fact, that we need a new maximum security prison and I think the capital cost of such an institution would not be as enormous as some people think, although the cost would depend on the type of planning and engineering techniques used. The use of reinforced concrete, a steel mesh perimeter fence, and closed circuit television, combined with ray activated alarm systems would help to eliminate that massive wall—the huge thick type

of wall—most people seem to accept as an integral part of a prison.

Mr Coyne: You have not yet mentioned the German shepherd dogs.

Mr YOUNG: We will leave that for the member for Karrinyup.

The maximum security prison would have to be segregated from the lesser security prison, but perhaps attached to it in the same location, using the prison farm and work release systems as a third and fourth supplementary system. There should be a shift of the emphasis from the degradation of a person's dignity to punishment, because men and women in a prison should not have removed from them their right to some degree of privacy, their right to proper toilet and ablution facilities, and the like. They cannot become better and rehabilitated persons if they are not given those particular opportunities.

Along with the emergence of personal dignity for the prisoner must be an acceptance by all lawmakers—including ourselves, judges, magistrates, and the like—that the element of punishment should not be pushed aside or removed from our penal system. It seems we have gone from a stance of sadism perhaps 50 years or more ago to one of masochism where the community seems to feel it is the guilty party. Whenever an act of violence occurs and perhaps punishment should properly be meted out to a much greater extent, the victim so often pays financially and physically while the aggressor may not himself pay so much. I will come to that in a moment when speaking about compensation.

I believe recognition of rehabilitation as an important process must be uppermost in the minds of all people connected with the law and correction but I do not believe it should exclude the right of society to expect serious transgressions will be met with serious penalties. We may have swung a little too far in favour of rehabilitation and what would appear on the surface to be an enlightened outlook but it is not a penal system at all.

A penal system is an unfortunate appendage to a civilised society. It stands apart from commercial and industrial matters. I therefore believe trade union officials should not be offended by my suggestion that hard labour ought to be a fact and not a myth and that prisoners whose sentences deserve it should be put to work on the buildings to which I have referred. Instead of pack rapists, bash artists, and brutal murderers being given more opportunity for leisure and study, perhaps we might reach the stage where society will swing back to acceptance of such

people spending at least a minimum time in hard labour under stringent conditions, applying themselves to the works to which I have referred.

Mr B. T. Burke: With chains around their legs.

Mr YOUNG: I would have thought the member for Balcatta was one of the few people who might agree with me, but he has a problem.

Mr B. T. Burke: What a silly thing to say—that there is too much emphasis on rehabilitation.

Mr Tonkin: There is practically no emphasis on rehabilitation.

Mr YOUNG: With due respect, I believe there is.

Mr Tonkin: Lip service is given to it.

Mr YOUNG: Perhaps the member for Morley, being infinitely more intelligent than the member for Balcatta, has hit the nail on the head, in that what we are doing is simply mucking around. We are doing neither one thing nor the other. That is the tenor of the speech I am making. We can forgive the member for Balcatta because he does not catch on very quickly.

Turning to lighter but still reasonably serious matters, I would like to speak about the individual and his property. As far as I am concerned, our resumption laws—to which the member for Clontarf referred only recently in his contribution to this debate—appear in regard to vital works to be reasonable and adequate, certainly on the surface. I think that is borne out in most instances by the fact that amicable arrangements are made in any negotiation with the Government. However, in some cases the resumption techniques used at the moment cannot possibly assess the value of a property.

I could give many examples but I would prefer to take a hypothetical one. If a freeway or a six-lane highway were going through properties where a number of people had made the greatest contribution they could to their community and made their houses their castles, as most of us do, some of them would accept the valuations placed upon their properties and come to reasonable arrangements with the Government.

But there will always be one who could never be compensated in any way. Because of the extra work he has put into his property—the extra tender, loving care, one might say—perhaps he should be paid a higher price and be given an additional very important consideration; that is, the Government should be able to bend a law or change a rule here and there to have that person re-established, even if it required rezoning or bringing in ahead of time an access road or something of that nature. The Government

should bend over backwards to provide that person with the easiest possible transposition from his old property into his new one because it is we, as a society, who are taking that man's house. I believe if the community cannot afford to pay that man his price and do what I have recommended, it cannot afford to build a freeway. That is a matter which must be sorted out as we go along.

I want to mention another point in regard to property; that is, the right of a property owner or tenant to enjoy as much reasonable peace as possible in his own home. Our laws are quite inadequate to protect people from noise pollution.

I do not know whether it was in your own electorate, Mr Speaker, but if not it was close to it that somebody had a loud speaker playing across the valley with, I understand, a decibel rating so great it could be heard clearly, word for word, up to 600 metres away. That man was not using the equipment for his own enjoyment. Unfortunately, he was the kind of individual with whom we as members of Parliament are confronted from time to time and with whom we cannot really believe we are dealing—a fellow who spends his life ensuring the fellow next door has as miserable an existence as possible.

Noise pollution goes further than that. In my electorate a piece of land behind the Nookanburra Hotel is owned partly by the Main Roads Department and partly by a company called Freeway Investments Pty. Ltd. On weekends, school holidays, and every other opportunity a bunch of children get down there on trail bikes and ride around and around, scarcely deviating from their course. The noise is ear-shattering. It is impossible to enjoy the privacy of one's own home because of the noise. Nothing can be done about it. The City of Stirling has done its best—

Mr Tonkin: Do you know that in 1974 your Government promised action on this, and that is one of the many promises it has broken? It said it would act on recreation vehicles but did nothing about them for three years.

Mr YOUNG: But the public was kept well informed in regard to that matter.

Mr Tonkin: People do not want information; they want quiet, you said.

Mr YOUNG: I agree, but the legislation to which the honourable member is referring ran into many difficulties with people who were in fact having their individual rights set aside by it to a great extent.

Mr Tonkin: You have accepted that individual rights—

Mr YOUNG: I realise that but I do not accept the premise that the legislation is over and done with. I believe the legislation will probably come forward in a different form.

Mr Tonkin: In a form that is toothless.

Mr YOUNG: I would not think so.

Mr Tonkin: I hope not.

Mr YOUNG: I, too, certainly hope not. I place great importance on the ecology, particularly the ecology of the beach sand dunes, but perhaps the noise problem causes more concern to the individual in the community. I would like it to be isolated from other legislation and dealt with as a specific issue. I think the honourable member was speaking about other aspects of off-road vehicles. Noise is another important aspect.

I do not believe the law should come down with such a heavy hand as to prevent an individual from reasonably enjoying his own property, but I believe it should come down fairly heavily where an individual is preventing someone else from doing the same thing. There is an old adage, "Your right of freedom extends to the end of my nose."

I would now like to touch on the subject of handicapped persons. The comments I am about to make are general comments; they refer to public attitudes rather than to Government attitudes. I would like to add that I believe our society has shouldered its responsibility towards physically and mentally handicapped people to the extent that this State not only leads Australia in the clinical rehabilitation of people in those circumstances but in many respects it also leads the world.

I think it is time we as a society, generally, returned to a very old threshold; that is, the acceptance of the mentally and physically handicapped in the ordinary day-to-day society in which we live. In other words, I believe the physically handicapped are not given enough opportunities to move around in society.

It was very refreshing to learn a tender is being put out for a very large ramp at the Superannuation Building to enable people who are paraplegics to get their wheel chairs into the building. The cost will be fairly high but I believe it will be worth it, and it will set an example to the rest of the community.

This is one aspect of the life of the handicapped which obviously needs a great deal of attention, and I hope the business sector will recognise it when planning works in the future.

As far as the mildly handicapped people are concerned, I understand it is the policy of the Government—a very laudable policy—to bring these people out of the institutions and into society by putting them in houses and flats where they can cope with day-to-day living. About 400 years ago, I think, it was decided to remove the mentally handicapped—however mildly or profoundly handicapped—from society. Such people were certainly kicked around, but so was a person who had red hair or a person who was left-handed. However, those people had a place in society which was removed hundreds of years ago and they were institutionalised. In the centuries since we have seen great strides in tolerance across the bridges of prejudice and ignorance. We have learnt a great deal as a result of rehabilitating and treating the mentally and physically disabled. But having increased our knowledge to this stage, we must now put that knowledge into effect.

I believe handicapped people must be allowed to contribute within society according to their ability—not to be put out of their depth but to be enabled to swim alongside the rest of us. It is to be hoped we will generally accept them into the community. I believe that from people who are in a situation where they have to try so much harder than we do, we can learn as much as if not more than they can learn from us. Even to tie a shoe lace, catch the right bus, remember the address of his home, or manage the small jobs we do with so much ease requires of a mildly mentally handicapped person a great deal of courage and dedication, and a greater sense of achievement attaches to that than to most of our activities. So the learning process would flow two ways.

I am glad the attitudes of people in the division for the mentally deficient are leading in this direction and I hope society, generally, will accept the handicapped as part and parcel of our everyday existence.

After all, getting back to the individuality of the situation, every single one of those people has a character; they are individualists; they have emotions, likes, and dislikes the same as we do and they ought to be entitled to be able to do their best, and do their best in society as our next-door neighbour and not in institutions.

Everything I have said about the handicapped, Mr Speaker, I hope will be accepted in the context in which I have offered it, and that is that the handicapped ought to be allowed into our society, and not thrust into our society;

they ought to be able to make their own pace and do so as our neighbours.

I wish now to speak about the rights of the businessman. In so doing, I would like to start with income tax. Since the introduction of Federal income tax in 1942 we have had socialist Governments in Canberra for 10 years and nonsocialistic Governments in Canberra for 25 years. Yet in that time, 35 years, we have seen progressive rate income tax rise from a level of 12 per cent on average earnings to over 22 per cent on average earnings.

Mr Tonkin: Do you think progressive income tax is socialistic?

Mr YOUNG: I believe it is, yes. As a matter of fact, the honourable member has just taken the next paragraph out of my mouth.

Mr Tonkin: Any time.

Mr YOUNG: Progressive rate income tax is the first toehold of socialism in the door.

Mr Tonkin: You do not believe in it then?

Mr YOUNG: No, I do not.

Mr Bryce: Morally and socially justified.

Mr YOUNG: The foot went in the door in 1942 and since then the Taxation Department has virtually moved in and set up house.

Mr Tonkin: Why 1942?

Mr YOUNG: That was when the Federal—

Mr Tonkin: There was progressive taxation before then.

Mr YOUNG: I am talking about Federal income tax.

Mr Tonkin: There was progressive income tax long before then.

Mr YOUNG: I do not want to go into State income tax. I am talking about uniform income tax because that happens to exist in the country at the moment. The taxation burden, as I see it, has in fact been eased under the Fraser Government with the introduction of tax indexation and with the recent changes contained in the Budget. I can see some serious attempt being made to level out these progressive steps, and possibly that could be interpreted from the fact that the Government is going to call the 32 per cent "standard rates" and the other rates "surcharges", it might be an indication that the Government aims to eliminate progressive rate income tax. I believe it ought to be the aim of the Commonwealth Government to eliminate progressive rate income tax down to a flat rate within the next five years.

Mr Bryce: Are you talking about individuals or companies?

Mr YOUNG: I am talking about individuals at the moment.

Mr Bryce: You are a reactionary then, aren't you?

Mr Tonkin: You are a reactionary. That is a shocking statement. Some people would believe that you were a small "I" Liberal.

Mr YOUNG: As far as I am concerned, the member for Morley can put any name on me he wishes.

Mr Tonkin: It is not the name that I put on you; it is what the people will be calling you.

Mr YOUNG: I have never used the term small "I" Liberal. I have never liked the term. I am a Liberal. I am a member of the Liberal Party.

Mr Tonkin: The conservative party.

Mr YOUNG: Do you want to read the platform and policies?

Mr Tonkin: The reactionary party.

Several members interjected.

Mr YOUNG: Mr Speaker, I am hearing an awful lot from the Opposition.

Let me just make a suggestion: Eventually someone at some stage is going to say, "How do you pay for this?" I put it to members that in 1904 the Commonwealth Administrative Service, the higher echelon of the Commonwealth service, doing only the work, and being responsible only for the areas provided for under the Constitution, had an administrative staff of approximately 30 people.

At that time we had a population in Australia of three million. Those 30 have now been transferred to the entire Canberra structure. I believe the answer could virtually be given by a four-year-old in his sleep.

Mr H. D. Evans: Could you clarify one point?

Mr YOUNG: I am not sure whether I can because I have only 10 minutes left.

Mr H. D. Evans: Do you believe income tax should be on a flat rate for everybody, without variation?

Mr YOUNG: I have made that point quite clear. Is the honourable member talking about income tax?

Mr H. D. Evans: Yes.

Mr YOUNG: On a flat rate?

Mr H. D. Evans: Everybody pays the same.

Mr B. T. Burke: Not a flat rate differing between levels of income.

Mr YOUNG: I hope the Government will work towards a flat rate of income tax within a specified period.

Mr B. T. Burke: Within five years.

Mr YOUNG: I would like to see that done within five years.

Mr H. D. Evans: You are incredible.

Mr B. T. Burke: I did not even realise you believed it.

Mr YOUNG: Another iniquitous field of taxation which I believe is a judgment on individual attitudes, of course, is the excise on cigarettes, beer, wine, and the like, and sales tax. They are all an imposition on a person's individual choice. Pay-roll tax is the most iniquitous of all. It is a tax on employment in the nation's second darkest hour as far as unemployment is concerned. It was handed over to the States as a growth tax; in fact, it is a barrier to growth. There is a phantom member on every employer's pay-roll; for every 20 people there is one phantom who is the Commissioner of State Taxation. That system was handed over to us by the Commonwealth to be used as a growth tax. Quite frankly, it is a tax which I hope to see disappear with a more equitable form of taxation at a later time.

The businessman, Mr Speaker, is hampered at every turn. The Corporate Affairs Office of Western Australia is virtually a profit-making concern. The millions of dollars it makes on registration fees, filing fees, search fees, penalties, and the like are incredible. As far as the businessman is concerned, himself a trader, he cannot trade at will. There are restrictions on when he may open his shop and when he may sell his wares. He needs a permit to trade; he needs a permit to operate his premises; he needs a permit to carry out special work; he needs a permit to register a business name. He must be a record keeper for the statistician; he has to be a book-keeper for the sales tax department; and he has to be a tax collector for the income tax department. If he has time to make any money between the Government and the trade union movement he is taxed at well over 50 per cent on his profits, in the main after paying a fortune to a private taxation consultant to try either to get him out of paying tax, or to tell him how much he has to pay.

The Taxation Department sees nothing immoral whatsoever in taxing a company year after

year on rather large profits and then when the company fails and loses millions of dollars in its year of failure, tax refunds on those millions of dollars are lost to the creditors, who are sometimes very small businessmen.

I have seen cases where so many small businessmen have lost a large amount of money as a result of a large company failure, where the creditors could in fact have received taxation back on millions of dollars of losses—money that the Taxation Department had received but on which it had not allowed any concession. There is no concession allowable under the law under those circumstances for the loss in the final years or year of default or failure of the company.

The businessman in our community is the most over-governed, over-regulated, over-taxed, and over-maligned member of the community, with the possible exception of the person who has to buy his products at a price resulting from all those things.

The SPEAKER: The member has five minutes.

Mr YOUNG: There is one final area of individual rights with which I will weary the House, and that is the right to be unmolested; the right to be left alone by the shouters in our society who do not want to hear the other person's point of view; the right to hold views and express them either privately or publicly or with one's colleagues, without having to run the gamut of insults from those who take a different stance and will not even stop short of physical violence to make sure that their voices are heard and the other person's voice is silenced.

I do not care on which side the person stands, in this case I deplore the attitude and it must be one of the greatest obscenities to demand silence and acquiescence from individuals so that the silencer, and only he, may be heard.

I have only a few minutes remaining, and I have had to delete some of the matters I wished to deal with. However, I believe that I have ranged over a few matters affecting the individual in our society, from the weak to the strong and from the meek to the belligerent. I hope that in listening with the usual patience for which the members of this Chamber are famed, members have perhaps recognised a few of their constituents—if not themselves—among the ranks of the overgoverned. I support the motion.

MR BARNETT (Rockingham) [6.12 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, it is my unpleasant duty tonight to bring before the House evidence of quite incredible violence. There is unavoidable and indisputable evidence that violence of this kind has already

killed. I believe if we in this State allow ourselves to be exposed to it in the future many Western Australians will die unnecessarily. I intend to prove later in my speech that it has already claimed the life of at least one Western Australian and quite probably many more not as yet documented.

The violence has been cunningly contrived and perpetrated by the moguls of the modern nuclear technical era.

Sir Charles Court: Here we go!

Mr BARNETT: That is a surprise for you all, is it not? The violence has been contrived by men intent on making money and lining their pockets regardless of the cost to their fellow men. These men would stop at nothing to perpetrate the myth that unless a worker drops dead on the uranium processing line, the death was not caused by uranium. I intend to prove that myth is incorrect. The occupational hazards of uranium and nuclear technology are not manifested in immediate fatality but in long-term cancer. Only now, after many years in this industry, are the real figures beginning to emerge and they show the dire circumstances which people involved in the industry in the past have been subjected to.

Before I move on to the most important issues involved in this debate I want to go back to 1897 when the first fatalities with this type of radioactivity were experienced. Workers in Czechoslovakia in that year were subjected to uranium and radiothorium poison by licking the brushes in order to paint the radium on the dials of watches. This case was quoted in many textbooks even though the Minister for Health, on the 17th August, told the House that there is no convincing evidence that radiothorium causes cancer by ingestion. I can quote an example from at least one medical text book. It is from the *Oxford Medical Publications*, a textbook on the practice of medicine. I will not bore the House with all of it, but just the important part, which reads as follows—

At two factories, one in New Jersey and the other in Connecticut, 38 deaths occurred among factory girls, chemists and physicists. The paint used contained insoluble radium sulphate, mesothorium and radiothorium.

That is the substance, Mr Speaker, that the Minister for Health told the House does not kill and medical textbooks tell us it does kill.

I want to move forward now to 1944 when the next real evidence of radon poisoning was experienced throughout the world. This was at a place in West Germany called the Schneeberg mines where miners were exposed to excessively high levels of radon gas. Those miners died in

large numbers. In fact, 50 to 75 per cent of those Schneeberg miners have died of lung cancer. This instance is well documented and I would like now to refer to one documentation of it. It is contained in another medical textbook unfortunately, and it is edited by Dr W. M. Mann who is the physician to the Queen.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr BARNETT: Before the tea suspension I had made a very precise statement about the Schneeberg mines in Bavaria, and about a disaster which occurred there. I mentioned that between 50 per cent and 75 per cent of the Schneeberg miners had died of lung cancer in 1944. That fact was well known.

I wish to cast members' minds back only a few days, to the 11th August, when I asked the following question of the Premier—

Have people died as a result of their work as uranium miners and yellow cake processors?

The Premier had ample time to find evidence on which to base his answer, yet he replied as follows—

In the time available I have been unable to find evidence of any deaths or specially related sickness or disease as a result of mining uranium and producing yellow cake.

So well known in fact is the Schneeberg mining disaster that it is quoted in Conybeare's medical textbook, which is a standard text for all doctors and is edited by W. M. Mann, physician to the Queen and a man with impeccable references. I should like to quote to the House a section relating to carcinoma of the bronchus just to push the point home. It states as follows—

Certain occupations exposing the worker to ionizing radiation undoubtedly carry an increased risk of the disease. This was first confirmed at the Schneeberg mines in Bavaria where sulphides and arsenides of cobalt and arsenic are mined and the ore is radio-active. Uranium miners in Colorado and fluor spar miners in Newfoundland are exposed to a similar degree of radiation and also have a high death rate from lung cancer.

With the current controversy raging, it is interesting to note the following statement—

Other predisposing occupations are nickel refining,—

The evidence begins to mount up, yet it appears the Premier did not even take the time and trouble to check to see whether there was any evidence. Remember that in 1944 the fact was

well known that many miners died as a result of exposure to a radioactive substance, and radon gas.

I move now from Germany to Colorado, America, where in 1952, eight years after the Schneeberg mine disaster, it was found that the miners were still experiencing radon gas levels in excess of those found in the Schneeberg mines. To that point, no action had been taken by the United States Atomic Energy Commission or the US Government.

In 1957—13 years after the disaster of the Schneeberg mines—65 per cent of Colorado's mines were still experiencing levels of radon gas in excess of those found at Schneeberg. In spite of this, it was not until 1967 that the US Atomic Energy Commission and the US Government took action to alleviate the problem. The US Government introduced legislation to reduce the level of radon gas exposure to miners to 12 working level months a year, or 15 REM.

It was some time after that they found even that level was not satisfactory and it was reduced quite substantially about 1970-71 to its present level of four working level months, or five REM—one-third of its previous level. I intend to show later that even that figure will soon be reduced still further.

I have gone through that small sequence of dates because I wish to point out that between 1946 and 1968, due to the inactivity of the US Government, 6 000 uranium miners in America were needlessly exposed to excessively high levels of radon gas.

In 1969, C. C. Johnson, an official of the US Public Health Service, carried out a study of the precise issues I have raised tonight. His investigation revealed that 600 to 1 100 more miners than normally would be expected would die of lung cancer as a result of working in that group of mines. Obviously, this study posed the question: Were existing standards tough enough? They certainly were not.

The US Public Health Service recently updated that study, surveying some 3 366 uranium miners in the United States. Of those 3 366 miners, 745 have died, 144 as a result of lung cancer—even with the new restrictions in operation. That represents in excess of 400 per cent more than normally would be expected to die, and under present control levels. The same paper produced by the US Public Health Service said that if the level of four working level months continued, it was expected there would be a 45 per cent increase in the incidence of cancer in those miners involved in the region.

I said earlier that I have a specific case which would bring us closer to home, but before I refer to that case, I wish to quote to members a few more facts relating to the inactivity and the reluctance of uranium mining moguls and the US Atomic Energy Commission to take any action whatever to relieve the horrors to which these miners are being exposed.

In 1969 a man called Dr Gofman, then assistant director of the Biomedical Research Division, US Atomic Energy Commission conducted some research with a man called Tamplin. The research was carried out over a period of time into the number of diseases a uranium miner could be expected to incur. He quoted the results of their research to a symposium on nuclear science in 1969. It is interesting to note that the two main points of his address were that 20 times more deaths from lung cancer would occur than previously thought at the then levels and, genetic damage from radiation had been even more seriously underestimated.

What followed then was absolutely typical of what has happened in the past. Gofman and Tamplin were both subjected to pressures from outside which eventuated in their research budget being slashed. After releasing the results of his research, which were so unpalatable to the US Atomic Energy Commission and the uranium miners, Gofman was forced to resign. Subsequent to his resignation, he was joined by a number of scientists and even a Nobel laureate or two, and the resultant pressure forced the Government in 1972 to establish the BEIR committee to investigate the biological effects of ionising radiation.

When I came across this fact, there was no doubt in my mind—and I am sure there is no doubt in your mind, Mr Speaker—that the committee was set up specifically to dispute the figures put forward by Gofman and Tamplin. Surprisingly, the committee's findings were as follows: Gofman and Tamplin almost undoubtedly had been stating the effects of radiation exposure to the general population, not just to uranium miners, and the accepted radiation level for the general population was 170 millirem. The committee said—

Exposure to the population of the limit of 170 millirem could cause between 3 000 and 15 000 deaths annually.

One would think therefore that such a statement would be cause for concern. The committee's findings actually supported Gofman and Tamplin, who had been forced to resign from their positions for making "outlandish" statements. However, it was not cause for concern on the part of the

Atomic Energy Commission or the US Government as evidenced by their total lack of action.

It was not until 1975, only two years ago, that the US environmental protection agency, the EPA, released a paper recommending that the level of 170 millirem be reduced to .25 millirem. Members might think that would be sufficient to cause concern, and strike fear into the hearts of Americans. I do not want to die of lung cancer and I am sure they do not. But in fact it was not until January of this year that that level was legislated for, and became law.

Mr Watt: Do you smoke?

Mr BARNETT: I am not going to listen to ludicrous, inane interjections from the member for Albany. I have far more important things to talk about than irrelevancies such as that.

Mr Watt: It is not irrelevant.

Mr BARNETT: I have far more important things to discuss.

Mr Watt: You say you do not want to die of lung cancer, yet you still smoke.

Mr BARNETT: The level of 170 millirem originally laid down was inextricably tied to the four working level months to which the miners were being exposed, so I predict quite confidently that as the level has dropped to .25 millirem for public exposure, so it will drop for miners.

In the light of what I have said tonight—and there is a lot more to come—I wonder how those 16 men involved in experiments which were conducted in my electorate feel at this moment, knowing that quite probably they were exposed to levels of radiation which, while they may have been thought to be acceptable then, certainly are quite unacceptable now.

There are many instances throughout the world relating to problems experienced with uranium tailings, and I wish to refer to only a few to bring the point home to members. After hearing that severe problems were experienced at Grand Junction, Colorado, I rang the US Consulate to see whether they would either confirm or deny the story. Unfortunately, the very disturbing reports were confirmed.

The facts surrounding the Grand Junction, Colorado, problem are these: Uranium tailings from the Grand Junction mines have been utilised to make road beds, bricks for buildings, bases for buildings, etc., and have resulted in the following problems, as compiled for me by the US Consulate: Radioactive substances have caused detectable radiation levels at 5 300 sites in the community, in some cases exceeding health

standards. Bear in mind that this was before the required level was dropped.

On the 5th December, 1971, the Colorado Governor said that it would cost \$12 million to \$20 million to resolve the problem. In 1972 the United States Government—this is typical of its attitude to uranium mining and its problems—passed a Bill in which \$5 million was given to the State of Colorado to fix up this problem. The interesting and really sorry point about the whole matter is that evidence now shows that there are 50 per cent more birth defects in Colorado, and lung cancers in Grand Junction exceed the total of lung cancers experienced in the whole of the rest of the State of Colorado. One would think that we in Australia would learn from these problems that have been experienced in the rest of the world. But no. It is not "All the way with LBJ" any longer; it is "Cart it to Carter".

In Port Pirie in November of last year it was discovered that there were 60 acres of uranium mill tailings and radioactive waste, and a doctor in South Australia named Dr Helen Caldicott outlined to the public at that time precisely what the dangers were.

Mr Tonkin: She is a fifth columnist, according to the Premier.

Mr BARNETT: She told the public that the radioactive waste contained thorium, radium, radon, and radioactive lead in varying amounts. These are just lying about on top of the ground. Unless it is covered with a deeper layer of earth or bitumen it will continue lying on top of the ground giving off radon gas for tens of thousands of years. Another fifth columnist, as has already been said, according to the Premier!

Children have been actually playing on this stuff and using it as a cricket pitch. It was interesting to delve a little further into that problem and to see the front page of the *Adelaide Advertiser* of Tuesday, the 9th November.

Mr Tubby: What year?

Mr BARNETT: I have already told the House it was last year; now pay attention. I quote a section of the front page—

A report to the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr Hudson) last week showed that certain areas of the site had radioactivity levels "higher than the appropriate standards."

Later on the article refers to the Mayor of Port Pirie. He said—

We should have bloody well been told.

I should say we should have been told! It is interesting to note that the property was due to be auctioned on the 16th November, seven days after it was found to be highly radioactive. Mr Hudson, the Minister for Health, unlike our Ministers in this Parliament, said—

... radioactivity readings suggested exposure over a limited period would be all right. However, exposure for longer than half an hour a week would be a "hazard".

We must bear in mind that children have been playing cricket on that stuff. It would be a fast game of cricket if it could be completed in half an hour, although maybe not if one refers to the present Australia-England series.

We also face this problem, as members are well aware, in Rockingham. Fifty tonnes of this highly dangerous and toxic substance have been callously dumped in Baldivis only four miles from my residence and will continue to be there, unless the Government does something about it, for the next 800 000 years. In case members do not know precisely what a half-life is, the half-life of thorium, this most dangerous substance that has been dumped there, is 800 000 years. It is estimated it will take 800 000 years for that quantity of thorium to dissipate.

I shall give a couple more instances throughout Australia. In Bairnsdale, Victoria, it was found only four weeks after the Port Pirie incident that uranium experiments had been conducted in a school and the radioactive waste had been thrown under the school building. Everybody who had been in that building had been exposed to the danger of radioactivity. The Government in that State took action. It bulldozed out the problem and took it away. But this Government's lack of compassion and concern for the public of Western Australia is nothing short of astounding.

In June, 1970, there was yet another incident. A Senate Select Committee—hardly a left-wing organisation—brought down a report in June, 1970, which said the following—

One of the major pollution problems in the N.T. is that caused by copper and uranium mining at Rum Jungle. The strongly acidic effluent from the treatment plant flows via the East Finnis river into the Finnis river making the water unsuitable for either stock or human consumption for a distance of 20 miles. Vegetation on the river banks has been destroyed and it will be many years before this area can sustain growth.

Queensland Mines, the owners of the Nabarlek mine in Queensland, are quoted in *Nucleonics Week* in June, 1976, as saying this—

Without protective clothing a worker could stay in some areas of the mine for only one hour per week before receiving his maximum permissible dose of radiation.

I ask: How on earth, if it goes into operation, will that company police men to wear their protective clothing at all times when they are in the mine? In support of that statement the Australian Atomic Energy Commission in its report to the Ranger Commission said—

Ideally miners should not be smokers.

Members should bear that in mind because a worker who is a smoker and who has to wear one of those little paper masks to protect him is quite likely to take it off to have a smoke and thus expose himself to those dangers. Later in the report the Australian Atomic Energy Commission said—

It is best not to pass regulations you feel are not going to be adhered to.

I wish to turn now to another mine that is actually in operation at the moment—the Mary Kathleen mine. At the Mary Kathleen mine I believe a number of problems have been experienced, not the least of them being the latest claim that certain workers on the plant in certain areas of the plant have become sterile.

When they become sterile by virtue of the radioactivity present they are moved to another section of the plant and when they are all right again they can go back if they want to. But most of them do not want to and they stay at the other section of the plant.

The main matter to which I have been leading up throughout this speech involves two process workers at Mary Kathleen. For reasons that will become painfully obvious later I shall not mention the names of the two men. I have the documents here and if any member wishes them to be tabled, they will be tabled but the names have been deleted. I am happy to show the original documents to the Speaker or the Premier afterwards in confidence. The first process worker at Mary Kathleen—Mr X, shall we say—after having returned, along with two other Mary Kathleen process workers, higher than normal readings in his urine samples, and after the union expressed concern for action to be taken on behalf of those workers, said that his high reading was caused because he had been smoking in the drier room although

respirators are supposed to be worn there to prevent operators inhaling floating yellow cake dust. Mr X's readings are almost back to normal since he stopped smoking on the job a few months ago. Mr X said—

The whole thing has been blown out of all proportion by the unions in Brisbane. I'd like to tar and feather the beggars or, better still, dip them in yellow cake. I work with it every day. I'm not worried, so why should they be?

That will help the Government's case, but that is a statement by a man who just does not know what he is talking about, which I intend to prove.

Fairly recently I spoke in my office to a gentleman whose problem is so serious—and this gentleman will of necessity have to be called Mr Y—that I decided at that time that I had to take a statutory declaration. It is an extremely long one and, because I do not wish to bore the House with some of the more intricate detail, I shall read those portions of it which I feel are most important. It begins by saying that the man applied for a job at Mary Kathleen and it goes on to say—

I began work on the 31st March 1976.

For the first two days I was put into "sorters" sorting the uranium ore. I was then put into the "dryer"—drying the yellow cake.

Members should bear in mind that all these cases about which I have previously spoken have evidenced that this man is likely to experience some sort of problem. But the Premier does not think so; he cannot find any evidence. But it was not difficult to find—there is so much of it. The man continued—

There was no resident doctor at Mary Kathleen. If anyone was sick they saw the resident sister, and if she felt a person needed medical attention she would call the doctor at the Inland Medical Services.

Later he told me that on the 31st January he felt sick. His wife called in the nursing sister who in turn called in a Doctor Harvey-Sutton from the Inland Medical Service who sent for another doctor. A young doctor arrived and diagnosed his illness as bronchitis verging on pneumonia. However, at that time the doctor felt that he was well enough to continue going to work. He said that he had seen three doctors since then from the Inland Medical Service who prescribed penicillin and cough medicine for his ailment and told him that

he was quite all right to work. He continued—

During the first few weeks of my sickness I lost weight—from 9 st. 5 lbs. to 8 st. 2 lbs. In February 1977 I decided I could not stay any longer at Mary Kathleen as I felt too ill, so I prepared to return to Western Australia.

He said that he had to apply for a termination medical examination and X-ray and at the date that he made this statutory declaration he was able to say that to date after returning to Western Australia he still had not received the results of his termination medical examination or X-ray but was passed as fit. After being back in Rockingham for some time he became so ill that on Monday, the 11th July, he was taken to the operating theatre at Royal Perth Hospital where tests were carried out. He said—

On Tuesday 12th July I was told I had cancer. The doctor said "I suppose you know what you have got". He explained that the cancer was on my lung and I would have to have cobalt treatment. On Thursday 14th July my wife was told that I had a malignant cancer.

This man had three months to live. The statement goes on to say—

My wife has tried to get my medical and X-Ray results from Mt. Isa and wrote to Dr. Harvey Sutton in early June 1977, but to date she has not even had the courtesy of a reply.

I interrupt there to say that I asked this morning and there has still been no reply. He continued—

She wrote again at the end of June and again no reply. My wife has spoken on the phone to a friend of hers who works at the medical centre at Mary Kathleen who is a relief sister. My wife's friend has told my wife that she cannot find any trace of me ever having been treated at all at the centre at Mary Kathleen.

Subsequent to that the illness was reported as being cancer. The man has now furnished his doctor with a medical report which passed him as being fit before he left this State. The termination medical also passed him as fit even though the man on his return journey to Perth had to sleep sitting up because it was too painful for him to lie down.

That in itself caused me extreme concern so I asked whether he would mind my talking to his doctor to determine whether, in fact, there was any correlation between his work with yellow cake, and his cancer. By this time I knew

that some dangers were involved. I will read a section of the letter from the doctor, as follows—

This man gives a history that in January/February, 1977, while in Queensland he had an episode of chest pain which lasted for about three weeks. At the time he was working with yellow cake.

Another extract from the letter reads—

... the fact that an X-ray of the chest in April showed no abnormality is of no significance as, in fact, subsequent X-rays in July of this year again showed no abnormality in a plain chest film.

I checked that statement because I wanted to find out whether Mary Kathleen was providing sufficient medical attention for its workers to determine whether, in fact, they did get cancer. Several doctors—not just one doctor—at the X-ray laboratory of the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital told me that X-rays quite often do not reveal cancer until the late stages.

The evidence to date shows that the operators at Mary Kathleen do not care a damn about the workers. If the workers get sick they are bundled out of the place so that no-one can claim they contracted cancer there. The records were usually destroyed to indicate that nobody became ill while working there. The letter goes on—

However, the conditions of this employment may well have aggravated the disease, in my opinion, and may have been an additional causative factor although this cannot be determined in an individual case.

I agree with that statement. The situation is serious and I have already produced sufficient evidence to show there is an amazing increase in lung cancer and leukemia cases throughout the world among people who work in the uranium industry. The case I have quoted is yet another in the long line of deaths which inactive Governments will allow to continue *ad infinitum*.

An interesting connection between the two people about whom I have been speaking I have left until now to mention. That point is that Mr X—who in November said that people did not know what they were talking about, and, “I would like to dip the beggar in yellow cake”—and Mr Y, now suffering from cancer with three months to live, are one and the same person.

Mr Tonkin: X equals Y.

Mr BARNETT: The man has said that if he knew then what he knows now about uranium mining he would not have gone near Mary Kathleen, let alone Kwinana.

Mr Bryce: The member for Bunbury seems to think it is a matter for levity.

Mr Sodeman: He is laughing at the member for Morley, not the member making the speech.

Mr Tonkin: He is a disgrace.

Mr BARNETT: It is interesting to note what those people who know precisely what they are talking about have to say about uranium mining. I will quote from *The National Times*, May 30-June 4, 1977. Professor Charles Kerr had been asked what he thought about uranium mining, and the report, in part, reads—

Asked if he or his colleagues—Mr Justice Russell Fox and Mr Graeme Kelleher—had at any time privately favoured the no uranium mining view, Kerr said:—

And this would be the only “Kerr” on our side, I might add. To continue—

—“All of us wish to hell that uranium had never been discovered. But the world is mindlessly going into energy consumption and the stuff is used, so that’s what we are faced with.

“It is a most risky substance. Waste problems are unresolved. No one can deny the possibility of a serious nuclear accident, and there is the great danger of proliferation and terrorism. Whatever the scientists say, technology has no answer to those things.”

I cannot be told that after two years of comprehensive study a man such as that does not know what he is talking about. When will members on the other side wake up and take notice of the experts? How many more people will die in this industry before members opposite get off their backsides and do something to stop it?

The SPEAKER: The member has four minutes remaining.

Sir Charles Court: You will not let us start, if you have your way.

Mr BARNETT: The Premier is dead right; he is very quick.

Sir Charles Court: It is the policy of your party.

Mr Tonkin: We put people before private enterprise.

Mr BARNETT: Professor Kerr goes on, with regard to the Ranger report, and says—

“It is perfectly obvious from the transcripts of evidence at the inquiry that the people who would not tell us what is being done or should be done were Government officials. This one class of person provided very unsatisfactory evidence.”

It is interesting to note the real contents of the Fox report when one delves into it. I will mention brief extracts from it, and also mention the page numbers on which they appear. They are as follows—

The nuclear power industry is unintentionally contributing to an increased risk of nuclear war. This is the most serious hazard associated with the industry (p. 185).

In return for these serious risks to Australians and people overseas, the commission calculated that the increase in Australia's national income generated by exports would be a trifling 0.5 per cent (p. 77).

It is in Australia's best interests to encourage and assist the world community to do whatever is practicable to avoid, or where unavoidable, to control, the development of inescapable reliance on nuclear power (p. 164).

I say now it is unavoidable.

Mr Laurance: What is?

Mr BARNETT: The comments I am stating. To continue—

Contracts have already been arranged to meet Japan's total uranium requirements up to 1985 (p. 66).

So, why go ahead now? The reserves of uranium would amount to about 5 per cent of the presently estimated fossil fuel reserves. That comment appears at page 39 of the Fox report.

At this stage I think I should move my amendment.

Amendment to Motion.

I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

This Parliament notifies His Excellency that we are totally opposed to any new projects for the purpose of mining, processing and export of uranium from Western Australia as we consider insufficient safeguards exist to protect the health of the people.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [8.10 p.m.]: I have much pleasure in seconding the amendment moved by the member for Rockingham who has done a great deal of research into this matter. He has shown he is dedicated, and he is concerned for the people of Western Australia. No concern was shown by members on the Government side of the House who seemed to think it was a joke when the member for Rockingham was talking about the life and death of a man. We saw members of the Government side jeering at some of the comments made by the member for Rockingham.

The attitude of Government members is unfair because this is one of the most important issues to come before this House. There is no question this is quite different. We know there is an inability on the part of the conservatives to grasp new concepts, and an inability to analyse the difference. It is quite different from other problems not only in quantity, but qualitatively.

I can recall Lang Hancock, at a public meeting, holding up a box of matches and saying it was just as dangerous as a nuclear reactor because if he struck one of those matches in a petroleum dump there would be a great explosion. There was great laughter from the people who were present. I asked Mr Hancock what was the half life of an oil fire. That was the whole point. In his ignorance he ignored the fact that the effect of an oil fire might last for an hour or two, or even days. It may even kill many people. But uranium is qualitatively different. Uranium just is not the same kind of substance. It goes on killing for thousands of years. Radioactivity cannot be smelt, it cannot be seen and it cannot be felt. There is no way of knowing without sophisticated monitoring, its deadly effect until it is too late. There is no solution once one has been struck down. What has been mentioned by the member for Rockingham can happen.

It is all very well to say that the miners want employment; they have not much choice. For years people working in the mining industry have been contracting leukemia and lung cancer, and the employers have tried to get rid of them out of the industry. They have tried to refuse the payment of workers' compensation. They have resisted attempts to amend the related Acts and improve conditions.

We heard the Minister for Labour and Industry the other day state that people are in trouble because of the way in which the Workers' Compensation Act is being applied. I agree with the Minister for Labour and Industry that workers' compensation in Western Australia is in a chaotic state. We agree on that point, but I have my doubts as to whether we agree on the reason for the chaotic condition of workers' compensation. There is a waiting period of eight months for workers' compensation in Western Australia, and this delay is being deliberately exploited by the insurance companies who openly admit—the case is an open and shut one—that within a period of inflation, a delay of eight months means the money paid in compensation will be worth that much less.

We have had a threat from this Government to attack workers' compensation and attempt to reduce the amount payable from 100 per cent to 85 per cent of weekly earnings. No wonder

this Government adopts the attitude of letting the miners go on being exploited, and allowing the loss of life and health to continue. The Government does not seem to worry; it seems to consider that anyone who is affected will be paid a few thousand dollars.

Mr Grayden: They have to wait for a period of up to two years in the other States.

Mr TONKIN: We are concerned with what has been happening in this State. It is a Faustian bargain. As Dr Weinberg said, "We nuclear people have made a Faustian bargain with society." He was once a leading proponent of nuclear power, but he has changed his mind. Of course, Faust entered into a bargain with Mephistopheles, and in return for the pleasures of the present he doomed his mortal soul. It was not only Faust who suffered, but many innocent people suffered also. That is the central part of this story; innocent people have been destroyed because of this alliance which Faust entered into with the devil.

We say the lives of many innocent people, and many miners—who cannot be blamed because they want employment—will be destroyed by this substance. We are aware that the question of dumping waste in Western Australia is relevant here. Last year I moved a motion in this House relating to the question of waste, and the Premier continually asked me whether we wanted Yeelirrie.

The Premier said, "Do you or do you not want Yeelirrie?" In other words, he told us that if we wanted Yeelirrie we have to be prepared to take the waste, and that is the proposal the Premier will force us into. That is what we will get; we will get interest back on our investment in the form of nuclear waste.

It is also relevant to look at the provisions of the Draconian Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act. If we look at subsection (2) of section 41 we find—

(2) Emergency regulations made under this Part of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything, whether express or implied, in any other Act or in any law, proclamation or regulation or in any judgment, award or order of any court or tribunal or in any contract or agreement whether oral or written or in any deed, document, security or writing whatsoever.

There we see the Government has to its hand an instrument which is legal, but an instrument which is immoral. It is a legal instrument to coerce the trade unionists, the workers, and the people of this country. These people will have to deal with this material whether or not they

like it and anyone who says, "I am too scared to touch it", or, "I do not want to have anything to do with it", can have this legislation used against him. People can be forced to deal with this material, to transport it, to enrich it, or to mine it, whether or not they like it.

In this same vicious piece of legislation, subsection (3) of section 49 goes on to say—

(3) A person who is guilty of an offence against this Part of this Act is liable, where no other penalty is expressly provided, to—

- (a) imprisonment for six months or a fine of five hundred dollars, or both such imprisonment and fine; or
- (b) in the case of a body corporate, a fine of such amount as the court thinks just . . .

The court can fine that body corporate any sum of money it likes. That provision appears in the Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act. The legislation is tailor-made for a nuclear situation; tailor-made to see that mining companies can make profits by selling uranium to whoever will buy it. Section 50 of the Act states—

50. (1) Emergency regulations made under this Part of this Act may confer upon any Minister of the Crown the power to make any order or give any direction for the purposes of the regulations.

So we find the Government has the power to coerce employees to work with this uranium whether or not they want to do so. It is bad enough to have the situation where employees undertake this kind of work under economic pressure, but if they refuse to take a job then of course they do not receive unemployment benefits. Perhaps because they do not know the dangers of the substance they will agree to work with it. However, the Government can go further and coerce them to work with it with this piece of legislation, and that is another matter again.

We have seen a vendetta carried on by this Government, and particularly by the Premier, against the environmentalists. Anyone who has dared to stand up against the Premier and to disagree with him on environmental matters is a fifth columnist, a traitor. In other words, throughout Australia the Premier apparently is the one true patriot, and anyone who disagrees with him is, *ipso facto*, a traitor and a fifth columnist.

We have seen the arrogance of this Government in the way it treats the Parliament. It says, "We believe in adequate safeguards." When asked to qualify this bland statement with the question "What are adequate safeguards?" the Premier has not deigned to enter into a discussion of what

these words mean. In other words, it is what the Premier says is adequate, and we know from his past record that he cannot be trusted.

Can we take it that the Premier knows more than the scientists who have been quoted in this House, and who have, throughout Australia, spoken about this problem? The other day we read that 200 scientists signed a statement recording their grave concern about uranium. However, the Premier believes that he knows more than the scientists.

It is the responsibility of this House to make decisions. The Premier says, "Leave it to the experts; what would we know about such technical matters?" If we are to leave it to the experts, let us leave it to them. Let us go home; let us stop wasting the taxpayers' money. Last year the Premier created six more politicians. It was not the will of the people or the will of this Parliament to have these extra politicians. The back-benchers on the other side sat and voted mindlessly for the proposition that the Premier put up. Not once did they question his proposition. So we have six extra politicians but these six extra politicians are not to earn their money. They sit back like so many parrots on the back bench, never to open their mouths except to interject when a more than telling point is made by an Opposition member.

These people say, "Leave it to the experts." Why do they not go home and do a useful job? It was the Liberal Party which coined the term "dole bludgers" and it should be ashamed for using that term because its members are parliamentary bludgers. They are not in fact deciding what is important; they are not making these decisions; they are saying, "We will leave it to the Premier." They are following what the Germans call *Fuehrer Prinzip*. This is what is known as the leadership principle; the ancient tribal idea that there should be a leader and that no-one shall question the leader. The leader is always right. It is the antithesis of democracy and we, on this side of the House, reject it.

When we talk about technical judgments, we want to say that although there is a great deal of technical expertise on this subject, more and more the experts are beginning to question the technical problems associated with it. We want to say also that the problem is not necessarily, primarily technical at all; it is a question of value judgments. The value judgment of a non-technical person is as valid as the value judgment of anyone else.

If the Premier wants experts he can have them: 2 200 scientists signed the Menton agreement. These 2 200 scientists expressed concern

about this subject. Hannes Alfren, a Nobel prize-winner in physics who endorsed nuclear fission in the past, now says that nuclear fission dictates safety requirements so stringent that no acts of God can be permitted. Perhaps I should explain to some members of the Parliament that what he is really saying is that we just cannot have this kind of power because we just could not permit an act of God, and of course, that is an impossible situation. We cannot ensure that there will never be an act of God; in other words, that there will never be an accident.

Mr Mensaros: Is he talking about mining or fission? Do you extend the amendment not to mine to not to use fission?

Mr TONKIN: I wonder whether the Minister realises what uranium will be used for; does he suppose it is to be buried overseas? It is related because this substance carries with it a moral responsibility. As I said the other day, power carries with it a moral responsibility. So of course, unless we believe that the only god is the dollar, that profits are always justified, and that all we have to do in this life is to make money and it does not matter at whose expense, whose lungs suffer, or whose livelihood suffers, we must accept that responsibility. Of course it is related, and the Minister will know we are dealing here with the raw material of fission production. This is related to the uranium we have in Australia.

Uranium is radioactive, and Alfren was talking about radioactivity. We saw Karl Hacevar, the senior safety expert with the Atomic Energy Commission in the United States, resign so that he could speak out. It is all very well for the person who is being paid to have a scientific opinion having that opinion, but when a man throws himself on the mercy of the world, gives up his job in order to speak out on a matter, then one must respect his conviction and believe that he is sincere. It does not mean to say he is right of course, but at least he is likely to be sincere.

The member for Rockingham spoke very well on this subject, and he mentioned the work of Doctors Tamplin and Goffman who have carried on a long campaign against the mining of uranium. They have been vilified the way the Premier vilifies environmentalists. They were criticised for being subversive, but in the end Tamplin and Goffman have been vindicated.

Probably we are on the threshold of knowledge of this subject. If the Minister wants to talk about uranium, then there is the problem of low level radiation and the very concept of a threshold being valid for low level radiation is

very much in doubt. Grave doubt has been expressed as to whether in fact such a concept is valid. Can we say in this area that there is a threshold, and above that threshold it is dangerous? Many scientists believe there is no evidence whatsoever to say whether or not a threshold phenomenon exists, or whether in fact any additional radiation can be harmful.

Why the veil of secrecy throughout the world as to the degree of leukemia amongst operatives? It is very difficult to obtain figures and the figures one can obtain are inconclusive. There is very strong resistance to giving information about leukemia amongst people in the mining industry, in enrichment plants, and in nuclear reprocessing industries. Of course leukemia is a form of cancer. Why the veil of secrecy right throughout the world on this subject? There should be a register of all nuclear and uranium workers. Medical histories are not being kept. In the United States there is a transuranium register which tries to follow through on the histories, but by and large we just do not have this information.

The member for Rockingham said that Mt. Isa Mines was glad to get rid of the man to whom he referred as quickly as it could to disclaim responsibility. The company made a profit out of him and he is finished. He has served his purpose—God's purpose as far as Mt. Isa Mines is concerned. That is where we differ all the time; we are not so concerned about the profit motive.

I remember McNeill, the head of BHP, who said it was not the job of a corporation or a company to be concerned with social responsibility. He said it was not the company's job to worry about society and where it is going, but it is the company's job to maximise profit. We reject that callous and un-Christian attitude towards people. People are regarded just as factors of production, in the same way as cattle are regarded in the field or coal in the ground. Coal can be turned into energy and it is expendable. We regret such an attitude extended to people.

One of the very serious aspects of this whole question is that of civil liberties. The Liberal Party has in its name the word "liberal", suggesting a concern for freedom of the individual. We know that when tremendous dangers are associated with any industry, as in wartime, individual liberties are curtailed.

I have read out to members that draconian piece of legislation passed by a previous Parliament. The Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act gives this Government power over the lives of people in this State. That is nothing compared with what

legislation we will need in order to protect nuclear establishments from terrorists and from people who will do anything to get hold of a gram of plutonium. Governments will need tremendous power to protect people in such situations. Further Draconian laws will need to be introduced. We will need a nuclear police force with powers of arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, because if the police do not have that power, they will not be able to act and terrorists will be able to seize the substances and use them. This is one of the most worrying aspects of the whole nuclear industry.

We know that the irradiated minerals are concentrated in the food chain and we know also that they are concentrated as we move along the food chain and generally speaking we know that man is situated towards the end.

Most would hope that the man would be right at the very end of the food chain, however although he is not always at the end he is usually situated towards the end. There is a geometric progression and so we get this enormous concentration of irradiated materials which can be a serious danger to the human race. Not only is it a serious danger to the human race today—to those who get lung cancer—but to the whole genetic future of the race because of the effect radiation has upon the genetic structure of animals.

Mr Speaker, I would suggest to the House that if we saw a motorist driving along at 40 miles an hour, approaching a red light, and he put his foot on the accelerator increasing his speed up to that red light because he felt that the light was sure to change to green before he arrived at the intersection, we would say that he was a fool. Most of us at least do not drive in that manner. Most of us would ease our foot off the accelerator until we were sure that the light had changed to green. However, this is what we are doing in this case. We do not know where we are going. The best available experts in the world are warning us at least of the unknown; many of them go further, of course, and talk about the known problems. But we are insisting on driving up to this red light as fast as we possibly can.

I know the veneration with which the members opposite regard the insurance industry. I am pleased to see that the member for Gascoyne is in the Chamber tonight because I know the veneration he holds for the insurance industry. After all, the insurance industry is profitable; it does have money as its god. The industry worships the almighty dollar. However, the insurance industry throughout the world will not touch radiological industries or the radiological effects of industries.

A special piece of legislation called the Price-Anderson Act was passed in the United States so that the people of America will have no choice in the matter; Congress is imposing this legislation upon them which will result in the subsidisation of the insurance industry in respect of radiological hazards.

In the United Kingdom we have the Nuclear Installations Act under which the Government once again has to subsidise and take over most of the burden of insurance, because there is one thing that can be said about the insurance industry: it is intelligent; it knows how to make money; it knows how to separate the people from their wealth. It is not going to touch the radiological industry because it knows of the dangers inherent in it. The insurance industry knows that the dangers are not calculable. The insurance industry operates on actuality and actuarial tables. It likes to be able to project into the future the possible trend in the death rate of a certain group of people. The insurance industry knows that in this case it is treading into the unknown and it will not touch this. The people, of course, who can always be used as mugs, have to take up this slack because the insurance companies will not; therefore special laws have been passed.

There are other alternatives. What we should do in this world of ours is use our income sources of power and not our capital. I suppose members of the Liberal Party and National Country Party will understand me when I say that a business man does not like to use up his capital; he likes to keep it and put it to work. He does not want to use it up. Instead he likes, if possible, to use his income and this is what the Government should develop. It should develop an income source of power such as solar power, at which we have hardly looked. I believe we have spent practically nothing on that form of energy. Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent on attempting to build a nuclear-propelled bomber in the United States. That plan was scrapped because it did not work. The problems of weight and heat were too great. What if those hundreds of millions of dollars had been spent—and that was several years ago; it would be more like three or four thousand million dollars today—on solar research? Where would we be today if we were a sane people and were looking at building a sane world for the future and for the future of our children?

So there are other alternatives and Opposition members believe that these should be explored to a greater extent. Not only are there

other alternatives of energy but there are also other alternatives of technology. At the present time we are using a hard technology that is absolutely greedy, profligate and wasteful of energy. There are other ways in which we can develop a soft technology. Do not think we are doing this kind of thing for the dispossessed of the world and for the poor.

In 1970 the United States, with 4 or 5 per cent of the world's population, used a third of the world's total energy. This trend will continue and increase. The gap between the energy-intensive countries and other countries is increasing. Therefore this power, which is regarded by some people as a solution, is not going to assist those who need energy most. It will simply widen the gap.

It has been suggested by the Prime Minister that by exporting uranium we are avoiding dependence upon the breeder reactor and the plutonium economy. That is like saying to a man, "You can either be hanged or you can be shot" and not giving him the other alternative which is that of walking away a free man. Mankind does have this third alternative. It is not just the uranium or the plutonium economy. It is not just a light water reactor or a breeder reactor. There is also another alternative, the alternative of a safe power source; the alternative of different kinds of technology.

Mr Blaikie: Such as?

Mr TONKIN: Well, Mr Speaker, I am not going to go into that.

Mr Blaikie: Come on; come on.

Mr TONKIN: I suggest to the member for Vasse, that instead of sitting on the back benches in that somnambulistic manner he visit the excellent parliamentary library where there are dozens and dozens of books on the subject. He might even like to move a motion, if he obtains permission from the Premier, on soft technology.

It is a whole new area. Suffice to say that hard technology very briefly means a centralised technology where there are a few big power stations which send out very wasteful power to all the homes with very high consumption, and power to all the factories. This may be compared with a decentralised power source which can be developed with more research into solar energy. In that way we will not have this enormous consumption of power and we will have alternative methods of producing power.

Mr Blaikie: How far away from solar energy are we?

Mr TONKIN: We are much further away from solar energy than we ought to be. I say this to people like the honourable member who has sat there and done nothing and accepted the status quo.

Mr Sibson: What have you done?

Mr TONKIN: I am trying to get some sense into the heads of members opposite. I am raising this matter in the House and the member for Bunbury is too dumb to understand what I am saying in plain English.

Mr Sibson: You have done nothing.

Mr TONKIN: So, Mr Speaker, I have raised this issue and the member for Bunbury is asking what I have done. I would remind the honourable member that his Government has the confidence of the people and what is it doing with that confidence? It is betraying that confidence. The Government has the power to do something about this situation and what do members opposite do? They sit there and follow exactly the instructions of the Premier. Members opposite have never thought for themselves.

Mr Sibson: What have you done?

Mr TONKIN: We have raised this question; we have given members opposite the opportunity to vote on this motion.

Mr Sodeman: In Opposition; not when you are in Government.

Mr TONKIN: That is not true.

Mr Sodeman: Is it not true? Tell us what you have done.

Mr TONKIN: That is not true at all. Mr Speaker, may I under the terms of this amendment—

The SPEAKER: No you are not permitted to do so under the terms of this amendment. We are dealing with this particular motion.

Mr TONKIN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought I should defer to you. The member for Pilbara, not understanding the Standing Orders, would say I was just waffling and heading for cover, if I had taken that position myself; but the fact of the matter is we are dealing with this particular motion. The Opposition is doing something. The member for Rockingham has done everything he can. He has raised the issue; he has suggested that each member of this House look at his own conscience to see how he would vote on this amendment. It is no good saying, "What have you done?" The principles of the Opposition are solid. We are

prepared to vote in the direction which our consciences dictate and it will be interesting to see whether members opposite are prepared to do the same. We do not have the power in this place. The Premier has the power, and members opposite will do exactly as he decides.

Sir Charles Court: You have your instructions from your own Caucus.

Mr TONKIN: And so, Mr Speaker, the Government does have the power to do something about this situation. It can do something about uranium. It can do something about solar power and it has had the opportunity many times. All the member for Bunbury does is bleat from the back benches, "Why don't you do something?" When we are using our votes; when we are using our intelligence; when we are using our—

Mr Sibson: You are using up time.

Mr TONKIN: —eloquence; when we are using our research; when we are using our time to try to convince people that the State comes first and not the Government—not the security of the Government—we should be thinking about this matter. When the attack comes upon the miners—the attack that members opposite will launch shortly through their agent, the Minister for Labour and Industry—and the Minister moves to amend the Workers' Compensation Act, once again I suppose members opposite will say to the Opposition, "What are you doing about it?" We will be prepared to vote to defend the working man against an attack upon him by the insurance companies.

Mr Sodeman: What has the Workers' Compensation Act got to do with it? You were talking about Standing Orders a few minutes ago.

Mr TONKIN: It has everything to do with it. Cannot members opposite understand what uranium does to a man's lungs, and that a man who is in that situation will need workers' compensation? And that comes from the Member for Pilbara where there are more miners than anywhere else. Will not the miners in the Pilbara be pleased to hear that.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would remind the Member for Vasse that the person who is in charge of the debates in this House is the Speaker. There are far too many interjections and I would ask the Member for Morley to address his remarks to the Chair and confine them to the amendment before the House.

Mr TONKIN: I will be delighted to do so, Mr Speaker. I thank you for your guidance.

The fact of the matter is, of course, as the Member for Pilbara should know as he represents all those miners who were "conned" at the last election, the people who will be destroyed by the uranium industry and uranium mining will need workers' compensation; therefore, it is very relevant to this amendment.

Mr Sodeman: In your opinion they will be destroyed.

Mr TONKIN: So, Mr Speaker, we ask—

Mr Sodeman: The miners are not fools.

Mr TONKIN: —members opposite—or at least those members who are prepared to listen to their consciences—not to do what they usually do and bow to every whim of the Premier, but that they show their concern for the future of mankind; show their concern for the future of employees in the mining industry who will not have a great deal of choice in economic terms. These employees will also be very concerned to realise that there is legislation on the Statute book which can be used to coerce the miners into doing what they do not want to do; what their consciences dictate that they should not do. If ever there was a misnomer in this country it is of a Liberal Party that was the author of the most repressive and authoritarian piece of legislation that ever appeared on the Statute book of this State—I refer to the Fuel and Energy Act as amended in 1974.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat—Minister for Mines) [8.45 p.m.]: It was fairly difficult to follow the argument of the mover of the amendment. It was even more difficult to follow the logic concerning how he arrived at the amendment.

Mr B. T. Burke: Speak for yourself!

Mr MENSAROS: There were very few interjections when the member for Rockingham was speaking, but the member for Balcatta wants to become emotional.

Mr Barnett: We did not say the outlandish things that you say.

Mr MENSAROS: When moving his amendment the member for Rockingham tried to create fear. This was illustrated when he said that he wished the 16 men involved were here to listen when he was speaking generally about what he alleged were dangers associated with uranium mining. In most cases he did not even call it uranium. He referred more correctly to iron radiating mining generally.

Mr Barnett: Are not the two tied together?

Mr MENSAROS: He quoted out of context various citations supporting the argument he wants to submit. He referred to the Fox report, but only certain passages in it. Then the member for Morley spoke and his remarks had even less connection to the motion because in his rather unfortunate fashion he mainly attacked the Government and even single members of the Government. He talked about "value judgments".

When we consider what the member for Rockingham said about the dangers of mining, and some parts of the speech of the member for Morley, we must realise that the amendment is fairly illogical because it tries to induce the House to oppose new projects for the mining, processing, and export of uranium only. The member for Rockingham did not refer to gold-mining, coalmining, or to lead mining, but if he is so worried about uranium mining, he should have done so.

Mr Barnett: That is just not true.

Sir Charles Court: Why not listen? We listened to you.

Mr Barnett: You do not know anything about it as proved by your answers to questions in this House.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MENSAROS: If the mover of the amendment would like to connect this with a decision by Parliament, and ultimately the Government, to cease mining of uranium, he would be much more logical in moving that we should cease any underground mining. However, he wants us to cease only uranium mining and, for that matter, only new projects, not existing projects.

Mr Barnett: We have no existing projects in this State. Why not read the amendment?

Mr MENSAROS: The member for Rockingham did not speak only about this State. But there is an existing project —

Mr Barnett: Don't talk rubbish!

Mr MENSAROS: I will read the amendment again. It is as follows—

That this Parliament notifies His Excellency that we are totally opposed to any new projects for the purpose of mining, processing and export of uranium from Western Australia as we consider insufficient safeguards exist to protect the health of the people.

Mr Barnett: From Western Australia!

Mr MENSAROS: That would not be a new project. However, I do not want to follow this line of argument. Neither do I want to indulge in quotations which suit one particular side of an argument only.

Mr Barnett: We want the expert's advice.

Mr MENSAROS: Just be quiet.

Sir Charles Court: Have a bit of courtesy. We listened to you.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not want to say, as the Opposition said, that I am an expert on these highly scientific matters.

Mr B. T. Burke: That is obvious!

Mr MENSAROS: It would be wrong and fairly dangerous for lay people to pose as experts or to quote extracts which bolster up their own arguments.

Many issues are involved in this whole question and in relation to this motion it would be just as well to deal with some of them in an unemotional and quiet way.

The first question which has been raised in connection with this whole matter, and it is actually implied in the amendment, is that we need further debate on the whole question because we have not reached the stage where we know enough about it. I ask whether it is really debate, and particularly public debate, that we need. I quite agree that we need as much study as we can get from experts. I quite agree that we need as much information as we can gather as laymen. However, judging by the public debates held so far and all sorts of debates of which we know, I do not think many people try to consider the matter objectively; so that all we achieve is more polarisation of the whole situation. I do not believe that anyone who has one attitude will accept any argument submitted by someone with an opposite view. So all we achieve by more and more debate is a polarisation of the situation.

Mr Barnett: No. We increase our knowledge of the subject.

Mr MENSAROS: The whole argument is based on deductive thinking. It is based, in some cases, on exercising oratory as the member for Morley said, and it does not achieve what one would normally expect to achieve from a debate.

Instead, at public debate, as we have always advocated, we should encourage more knowledge on the subject. What could have been more appropriate than the judicial inquiry appointed by the previous Federal Government and continued by its successor? The person who conducted that inquiry was objective and had access to all the expertise available.

Mr Barnett: You mean Justice Fox?

Mr MENSAROS: Yes. I am referring to the Fox reports. Mr Justice Fox was charged to advise the Government, which comprises lay people; we cannot get away from that fact. He was charged with the responsibility of carrying out a proper inquiry to gather all the information available on the subject. Apparently the present Government and its predecessor believed that the inquiry would gather as many facts as could be gathered.

Mr Barnett: Have you read the Fox report?

Mr MENSAROS: I would not like to argue about these things because it is my job to read these reports.

Mr Barnett: Have you read it?

Mr MENSAROS: Yes, both.

Mr Barnett: What does it say? It draws the same conclusion which my amendment does.

Sir Charles Court: Just listen!

Mr MENSAROS: No, it draws exactly the opposite conclusion.

There is another issue which I think should be raised, because the Opposition in this House, and the opponents to the scheme are making a political issue of the matter and we should get away from this aspect. When we talk about a political issue, however, we cannot be silent about the fact that this Government was elected with the greatest majority in the history of this Parliament on a policy—

Mr Bryce: That is an untruth. The greatest majority in this Parliament was a Labor majority of 18. It is time you did your homework.

Mr MENSAROS: The second greatest then. It has been elected with a majority which necessitated the establishment of extra seats in the Parliament. It was elected on a policy which spelt out quite clearly that the Government, if elected, was in favour of mining uranium and processing it to yellow cake for export.

Mr Barnett: Not at all. Come on!

Mr MENSAROS: The policy implied that there would be even further beneficiation under proper safeguards, should it come our way.

Several members interjected.

Mr MENSAROS: Was that not so? That was in our policy speech.

Mr Barnett: What do you reckon the satisfactory safeguards are? Do you know them?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MENSAROS: I will come to those. The other point to consider is that over the years

public opinion polls have been held to gauge the opinion of the public on certain subjects. It is common knowledge to all members that the last two such polls resulted in a decision by the majority of people that they did not reject the idea of the mining, processing, and export of uranium.

I want to mention, as was mentioned perhaps rightly by the member for Morley, that we are talking about mining a material which is the basis of an energy resource, and we all know that the world is very short of energy. We are talking about coping with a demand which is growing faster and faster. I do not agree with the member for Morley that the demand grows only by the more energy-consuming countries. The demand comes from the countries which have a lower standard of living. These are the countries which will be more and more in need of further energy resources. This is a fact which cannot be denied. Within the next 10 to 50 years virtually the only readily available source of energy will be uranium which will provide nuclear energy for power generation.

Mr Barnett: What type of nuclear generation will be used?

Mr MENSAROS: The question is whether we should aid these people who cry out for more energy, or whether we should deny them that aid because there are certain hazards involved in the processing of the material.

We must also understand that most of the hazards about which the people who deal with this subject speak, are not encountered in the beginning of the cycle; that is, the mining and processing of uranium. The hazards are encountered more in the later cycle; that is, the enrichment of the uranium and the power generation. The hazards are not encountered to any great extent in the mining, processing, and exporting of uranium, with which this motion deals and which, for some considerable time, would be the only aspect to be considered by this Government or the Commonwealth Government. The hazards to be encountered in the first instance are similar to those encountered in the mining of many other substances.

Several members interjected.

Mr MENSAROS: Members opposite just cannot keep quiet. Is it not a fact that we had to legislate in regard to hazards in connection with the goldmining industry? Is it not a fact that members from the Kalgoorlie district dealt with this subject and stated that some protection had to be given in connection with those hazards? Is it also not a fact that no-one so far suggests we

should cease goldmining, coalmining, or lead mining, or any other underground mining? The Opposition would have been more logical had it said that we should stop mining altogether because it cannot be proved that any more hazards are involved in uranium mining than are involved in many other forms of underground mining.

In fact, it can be proved—I do not want to go into scientific citations—that there is less hazard in this than in many other kinds of mining. Some of the hazards simply must be accepted because we must decide whether in the future here and in other places we want to improve the quality of life, which is based on energy. We must consider how big the hazard is, and we have our preventive rules and regulations, to which I will refer in a moment.

If we decide in the affirmative, contrary to this motion, we will have achieved virtually two things. We will have enhanced our own economy and at the same time we will have done an altruistic deed by enhancing the standard of living of other people. Responsible Governments should look at the matter in this way.

It is interesting to note that when the argument in connection with the laboratory exercises of Western Mining started, members of the previous Tonkin Government suddenly said they did not know anything about it, presumably because the subject would be more interesting if it could be alleged the tests were carried out secretly. Much to their credit, even if they claim not knowing about it, forgetting about it, or leaving the administration to the Public Service, members of the previous Tonkin Government talked about it and bragged about it publicly. The member for Cockburn is reported in the paper as saying he did not know anything about it, but the Tonkin Government, of which he was a Minister, issued a progress report which was published by that Government when it was in office between 1971 and 1974, and page 36 of the report said—

Uranium: Yeelirrie Uranium Project (Western Mining Corporation Ltd.) Consultants are investigating water supply sources, and the company's pilot uranium processing plant is operating at Kwinana. Timing of production from the Yeelirrie deposit is dependent on an announcement of the Australian Government's policy on uranium exports.

Mr Taylor: May I correct the Minister slightly? It was I who pointed out to the reporter that that was in fact in the publication. So although I said I could not remember it, it took me just two or three minutes to remember it, and I

drew the attention of the pressman to it. Therefore your statement is not quite accurate.

Mr MENSAROS: I recall that the present Leader of the Opposition said he did not know anything about it. If the member for Cockburn did remember it, so much the better. I want to refute the allegation of secrecy by reminding the House that this report was published by the Tonkin Government. Not only does the report say the tests took place but it also obviously implies on other pages of the report that the Tonkin Government welcomed them and supported them. It is stated on page 32 of the report—

... the discovery and projected development of major deposits of uranium at Yeelirrie, has changed Western Australia from an energy-deficient economy to one with prospective abundant indigenous fuel resources.

Would a Government say that if it did not welcome and indeed encourage the ultimate generation of electricity from these uranium deposits? If so, it would not make sense, and I would not like to suggest the Tonkin Government was talking without making sense.

Mr Taylor: We believed it on the knowledge we then had.

Mr MENSAROS: So members of the Opposition have more knowledge now and they withdraw everything they said at that time. Furthermore, in connection with the Pilbara plan which they commissioned, they said the most significant achievement of the Labor Government was the publication of the Pilbara concept which envisaged among other things uranium enrichment—not only uranium mining, processing, and export but also uranium enrichment.

I will say a word or two more about the implication in the amendment that the whole laboratory exercise was secret. It was published in Western Mining Corporation's annual report, which I admit few people read; but some people read *The West Australian* newspaper and it was published in that newspaper on the 25th October, 1973.

Quite a few other issues need to be discussed in connection with this matter. Let me talk about the very important fact that the question whether or not Australia mines and exports uranium in a processed form would not in my opinion, and I think in the opinion of other people, have a great deal of influence in the world situation in regard to atomic weapon proliferation. If we look at a map of the world and

try to imagine Australia is not there, nuclear power generation and uranium mining and processing would go on just the same.

What we have is an economic advantage—and we have it only in the short term, I would guess for about 10 or 15 years—to utilise the much higher grade of ore which exists in Australia in the known reserves. By adhering to the market price we can develop our mines much quicker and sell the uranium, because, the ore is of a higher grade. But if we wait for, say, 15 years, the price will increase greatly. That is not crystal ball gazing; it is quite logical, taking into account supply and demand. The advantage from the high grade will entirely disappear. In other words, if we were to have a price of \$15-\$30 for uranium—it is already \$30—Australia would have a tremendous advantage; but when the price reaches \$50 or \$60 the advantage would entirely disappear.

It is important of course to look at the Government's policy. The safeguards have often been questioned. Unfortunately, I cannot ask for anything to be incorporated in *Hansard*, but I remind members that in his speech the Prime Minister has spelt out the safeguards under 11 headings, and they are much stricter than most of the safeguards existing throughout the world. They are spelt out in lay language, without citing scientific factors, and they state to whom the Commonwealth Government would sell uranium by export licence, the association to which those countries must belong, and what they must adhere to if they produce nuclear weapons and if they do not produce nuclear weapons.

I must say, to be logical, that would not matter much because if the fear is that if Australia exports uranium an importing country will begin to manufacture nuclear weapons, I can assure the House—without being able to spell it out scientifically—there are simpler and cheaper methods of manufacturing nuclear weapons.

In other words, the uranium content—I think it is U235—in natural uranium is only 0.7 per cent. In the nuclear generating plants it is being refined to 3 per cent, and when it comes to nuclear weapons it has to be up to 90-plus per cent; but that can be achieved more cheaply and simply through processes other than electricity generating plants. It has been done in many places. India chose to do it through an electricity generating plant because that country had one and it was simpler.

Mr H. D. Evans: U235 and plutonium are virtually byproducts of enriched uranium.

Mr MENSAROS: That is right. I am trying to prove that whether or not we decide in the affirmative, taking everything into consideration it will not have a great deal of effect on nuclear weapons but it could have a tremendous effect on the well-being of the third world countries or the less developed countries which the very people who advocate not mining uranium would like to assist, as was quite obvious from a question recently asked by the member for Dianella, and I do not disagree with him.

One of the remaining important features is to exercise the domestic safeguards, particularly where the State and the State Government are concerned—because, after all, we are debating the question in the State Parliament. The safeguards relate to radiation safety, environmental safety, and the mining regulations—perhaps not in that sequence but they have been touched on by previous speakers.

Western Australia has a Radiation Safety Act—Act No. 44 of 1975—which deals with the handling, transport, and use of radioactive substances. It provides for a radiological council to advise the Minister for Health, and all aspects of radiation in society come under that Act. The legislation would undoubtedly need to be updated as further scientific information comes to hand but its existence proves that from the point of view of radiation safety we are not unprepared when we talk about the mining of uranium.

In relation to environmental protection, it is common knowledge that any mining project—be it uranium, salt, or a petroleum product—must be the subject of an environmental impact statement or a similar exercise, according to the laws of this State and lately also of the Commonwealth.

Rules apply to the making of an environmental impact statement for any project. An examination must be made to ascertain whether the environment will suffer unduly and whether or not the project should be allowed to proceed. Indeed, many people say open-cut mining of uranium and related minerals is less dangerous than with other minerals.

From the environmental point of view, if we think about nuclear electricity generation—which I admit we in Western Australia will not have to consider for a considerable time—there is no doubt that the generation of electricity from coal, which we have today, is far more polluting to the environment than generation through nuclear energy. I do not think there can be any argument about the fact that there is tremendous

pollution of the air even by petroleum-based electricity generation.

I now come to the mining regulations as the third area of domestic safeguards. Our mining regulations are fairly up to date. Only recently I introduced a Bill, which the Parliament will consider shortly, and which updates a step further the regulations dealing with health. The regulations relate to mining activities which are traditional in the State, and against which no motion has ever been moved in Parliament. Indeed, members of the Opposition are advocating more activity in that direction, especially members representing the eastern goldfields electorates, which today are mainly in the hands of the Opposition.

In this context, the kinds of danger can be spelt out. Radon gas and waste disposal are the dangers here. I attempted to tell the member for Murray yesterday that if one sat on top of a pond into which waste from the Western Mining Corporation had been channelled, one would contract less radiation than one would contract from natural sources by sitting somewhere else.

I pointed out in the answer to that question that a person in the Darling Range receives natural radiation three times greater than a person sitting in the tailings pond. When one goes to a dentist and has one's teeth X-rayed, or goes to a doctor to have one's chest X-rayed, one receives much more radiation than one would receive from that tailings pond. The same is the case when one flies in a jet airliner.

So rules and regulations already exist to monitor radiation and to prevent hazards arising. I suggest it is not responsible nor befitting for a member of Parliament to talk about a matter such as this and then—without proof—to relate it to something specific, such as a person dying of cancer as a result of having worked in a uranium mine.

If we were to stop every activity which enhances our economy, our standard of life, and our general well-being simply because we can see some obscure danger, we would never have made any progress. I have read somewhere—and I cannot vouch for the statistics—that had the automobile not been invented 70 million people would not have died on the roads this century. Does the member for Rockingham suggest that we should do away with the automobile? It is certain that in the remaining part of this century at least an equal number of people will die in this way, but we still get into our cars and drive them. We have traffic rules and regulations, and we try to educate people to drive safely so that they do not die on the roads.

With regard to uranium mining, it does not necessarily follow that a person who works in a uranium mine will get cancer. It is known—and I have read quite a deal about this—that certain minerals, and lead much more so than uranium, when mined underground are a cancer hazard, particularly in the case of people who smoke. At least that is so statistically; although no cause relationship has been established, and the member was not right in saying that.

I have read these articles quite objectively, and members opposite may say that I am arguing against myself; however, it is known that hazards do exist, and the State Government is here to see that those hazards are eliminated or safeguarded against. Therefore, we cannot accept this amendment.

I think I have given a short, but at least somewhat logical, resume of the issues involved, and upon which the Government has decided on its course of action. It went to the people before the election and said that it wanted to enhance the economy and to have progress because it wants directly and indirectly to help those people who will be employed in mining processes and in exporting the uranium resources of this State.

I oppose the amendment.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [9.19 p.m.]: I, like the Minister, profess to be no expert on this matter; but I have a number of fears about the policies that the Federal and State Governments intend to launch upon with even more indecent haste, I feel, on the part of the State Government than on the part of the Federal Government. I want to voice my protest and to say I cannot accept that the Minister has spelt out a case with any logicity in the last 40 minutes for which he has been speaking.

Again I express the pious hope that I might hear from members opposite on the back benches; that they might, in the fourth week of this parliamentary session, make some contribution to the debates. I would like to hear their voices, if only so that I can identify them on the telephone or say that I know more of them than just seeing their faces.

Mr Blaikie: Once the bell stops ringing you will hear us.

Mr PEARCE: That is all I hear from the member for Vasse; the sound of two flat feet.

It seems to me that when debating the subject of uranium, and considering this is an area of great technicality and complexity, we must turn to expert committees of inquiry which have made some investigations into the matter of safeguards in respect of uranium both at the mining

stage—although I do not propose to deal with that particularly tonight, because it has been competently dealt with by my colleagues, the members for Rockingham and Morley—and at the processing, exporting and usage stages.

It is my intention to look more at the safeguard aspects in respect of the disposal of wastes with a high level of radioactivity. This is an aspect which has barely entered the debate in Australia because I feel both State and Federal Governments seem to have the attitude that once uranium has left the country we can safely ignore what happens in respect of safeguards.

The Minister expressed a similar feeling when he said the hazards arise later than the mining stage and, therefore, he implied we need not worry about them too much because there is no immediate suggestion that nuclear reactors will be installed in Australia. On the other hand, I think the Premier said earlier in this session that maybe this State would be looking at nuclear reactors to provide power by the turn of the century.

A number of expert inquiries have been conducted in respect of uranium. The Australian inquiry is known as the Fox report, and I feel it is deficient in that the inquiry did not investigate the disposal of waste, apart from mentioning it in one chapter. In that chapter no significant recommendations are made in respect of the disposal of radioactive waste. The Fox report is aimed more at overcoming the problems of mining.

Professor Kerr, who was a member of the committee which compiled the Fox report, spoke on "This Day Tonight" last Monday. He was replying to a bland assurance given by the Leader of the National Country Party (Mr Anthony) in respect of safeguards. He gave the same sort of bland assurances about safeguards that the Minister has given tonight. Professor Kerr, one of the signatories to the Fox report, said that of the safeguard systems the committee investigated none was adequate; they were all totally inadequate. Here is a man who spent a great part of his time investigating safeguards, and he states they are all totally inadequate; yet, the Minister, with his admitted inexperience, and Mr Anthony, with his lack of expertise, can say that the safeguards are there. However, they did not spell out what are the safeguards.

We do not want bland assurances; we are entitled to know what experience there is on the matter.

The other significant report on this matter was brought down in Britain last year in the sixth report of the Royal Commission on environmental pollution under the chairmanship of Sir

Brian Flowers—known as the Flowers report. This Royal Commission was looking at a situation in Britain where there are reactors working which have been providing power since the 1950s. That country is much more deeply into nuclear power than we are, and it is considering environmental aspects. Recommendation 27 of that Royal Commission stated—

There should be no commitment to a large programme of nuclear fission power until it has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that a method exists to ensure the safe containment of long-lived, highly radioactive waste for the indefinite future.

In Britain, which has had nuclear reactors in operation for something like 20 years, it is evident there is still no way the authorities can be sure that highly radioactive waste can be dispensed with safely. Yet the Western Australian Government says it feels that 20 years of British experience is somehow inadequate and that its own experts—perhaps the silent majority over there—know better than the British experts. The British are working on systems of enclosing high level wastes by solidifying them in glass and enclosing them in stainless steel cylinders, and then somehow disposing of them.

Let us see how far British Nuclear Fuels Limited has got with its programme of actually solidifying the wastes. I quote from the Flowers report as follows—

BNFL plan to vitrify the wastes using a process whose development started at Harwell in the late 1950s, but it will not be in commercial operation until 1985.

That is to say if all goes well the system will not be operating for another eight years. I continue to quote—

The delay in bringing the vitrification process into commercial production stems from a long period of inactivity in the 1960s when no further development work was carried out.

Brian Flowers goes on to comment that it is strange there was that lack of initiative in the 1960s. Then he says—

On the assumption that the commercial-scale plant is in operation by 1985, BNFL plan to work through the back log by 1995...

In fact all they are doing at the moment is piling up waste in tanks and containers; they are hoping that at some time in the future a method will be found by which to dispose of the waste. They hope that if all goes well it may be possible to dispose of the waste in eight years' time when they will be able to use containers which will last

for the many thousands of years the waste must be stored, and that they will be able to bury or otherwise dispose of those containers. In its recommendations, the Royal Commission goes on to state—

There are two reasonable options for the permanent disposal of vitrified wastes; to geological formations on land and below the ocean bed. But neither of these has been sufficiently studied nor demonstrated as a feasible option.

I feel the Minister, and particularly the Premier by way of interjection, misstated Labor Party policy when they said that Labor was totally and completely forever opposed to uranium mining—perhaps they did not put it as strongly as that, but that was the clear implication. However, our policy is to place an indefinite moratorium on the mining of uranium until adequate safeguards can be established in respect of all stages of processing; that is, we do not want safeguards just in the mining stage, but also in the processing of uranium and its use in nuclear reactors, including the final disposal of highly radioactive nuclear waste. When the whole process can be shown to be safe, then I feel the Labor Party will be prepared to accept it, if the need for its use can be demonstrated.

I reject completely the analogy of the Minister—those who argue by analogy always do so because they cannot do so by logic—when he said many people have been killed by automobiles and, therefore, in all fairness anyone who drives a motorcar should not oppose the mining of uranium. He said we have to weigh the hazards involved in the mining of uranium against the need for a power resource. He said there is a very real need for automobiles in the community and we have to weigh that need against the dangers involved. However, in fact, the Government has not demonstrated the need to mine uranium and to sell it overseas. I quote from *The National Times* of the 22nd-27th August, 1977, from an article by John Edwards and Peter Freeman entitled "The Great Australian Energy Mirage", as follows—

We cannot count on either uranium exports or gas exports from the North-West Shelf to offset our oil-import bill. There is unlikely to be any substantial export income from uranium until well into the late 1980s. At best, the North-West Shelf will be netting \$250 million in foreign exchange by the mid-eighties. Together, both exports will be worth only half the present value of coal exports, or about one-fifth of the minimum import bill for oil next decade.

So to put uranium mining in its proper economic context, if it is added together with the North-West Shelf project—which I gather was announced yesterday—both products would be equal to only half of our coal exports. So in terms of supplying much-needed energy to a world which the Minister said is crying out for it, the export of uranium is simply not necessary when one looks at it in terms of our total export of coal.

I am sorry the member for Collie is not present to hear this, but in respect of coal one of the problems that has built up in the so-called energy crisis is the fact that Governments have turned away from the use of fossilised fuel in the form of coal and have rushed into using up the energy resource that is available from petroleum. The blunder made in respect of electricity generation in this State demonstrates that because the Government, after converting power stations to burn oil, now is forced to convert them back to coal.

One of the matters the Minister spoke about indicated that he seems to think energy is all in one form, and that it does not have diversified sources.

We all know that any oil conservation programme must have as one of its main stems the conservation of oil for transport purposes. We cannot use uranium or coal to drive cars under any sort of present or projected technology; oil clearly is the most necessary energy source in that regard. If in fact we save oil, where coal or other fossilised fuels will suffice, we will be making a great step forward in the conservation of our oil supplies.

The sale of uranium overseas is not tremendously economically significant to Australia; I believe we should weigh that small economic significance against the dangers involved. Many real questions must arise from the sale of uranium overseas, and the controls or lack of them which may be applied.

I wondered about the Minister's logic, when he talked about the two reasons to support the Government's argument for the sale of uranium. On the one hand we would be enhancing our economy and on the other, altruistically helping other nations which needed additional energy resources. What does the Minister understand the word "altruistic" to mean? As far as I am concerned, it means "for no return". In other words, we are giving the uranium away, out of the goodness of our hearts. But the first supporting reason was that we would be enhancing our economy. What sort of altruism is that? His use of the word "altruism" is as inaccurate as his use

of the word "enhance", because the sale of uranium would enhance our economy in only a very minor way.

Mr Watt: Did the Minister say that was the order of his priorities?

Mr PEARCE: That is the order in which he expressed them.

Mr Watt: He may have said it in that order, but that may not necessarily be the order of his priorities.

Mr PEARCE: The honourable member is suggesting the Minister expresses his order of priorities backwards.

Mr McIver: Irrespective of that, the Minister did not know what he was saying.

Mr PEARCE: The member for Albany may be able to understand it better when stated backwards.

Mr Watt: Oh, that was clever!

Mr PEARCE: There is much to be answered for in this entire nuclear energy debate. Many people hold very real fears about the massive dangers many reputable scientists have suggested may exist. I feel we cannot take the bold but brave approach the Minister would have us take. His attitude is that there are always some dangers in progress, but we must be prepared to face up to those dangers because if we did not, there would never be any progress. I would argue that the dangers may be so great that we must know exactly and specifically how great they are before we proceed, even if they turn out to be fears without foundation.

One of the most frightening facts I read about the development of nuclear energy was that when the first atomic bomb was exploded some scientists said it could set the atmosphere on fire. We know with the benefit of hindsight that fear turned out to be groundless; however, at the time the bomb was actually exploded, it was not known whether or not the scientists were correct.

The men who set off the first atomic bomb did so in the Minister's spirit of facing up to the dangers for the sake of progress. They took the calculated risk of setting the world's atmosphere on fire. I was not even alive at the time, so for obvious reasons my opinion was not sought, but had that decision been left to me I would not have taken that risk because, quite simply, the risk was too great. I would have postponed the programme and held it up until I received answers to the various theories and objections being put forward.

That is my contribution to the debate. I feel there are too many unanswered questions in this nuclear debate for our Governments to be rushing to sell uranium overseas. I believe our Governments have only sordid commercial motivations for their decision. They want to sell the uranium "altruistically", for as much money as they can get so that it may "enhance our economy" as the Minister said. I believe the dangers to the world are too great simply to go ahead at this time. If we were to sell our uranium overseas, we would be contributing to a problem which would not only blight our generation—some of us would not be around long enough to see the full effects of that blight—but would also blight many generations to come.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [9.34 p.m.]: I listened very carefully to the Minister's reply to the arguments presented by the member for Rockingham. He suggested the Government was conscious of its responsibilities towards safe-guarding the use of uranium; I was pleased to hear him say so. In the past, I have used the term "cruel deception" which is the closest I can get to saying that people have told lies. I believe that a cruel deception has been played on this occasion, because the Federal Government has already announced that the Yeelirrie deposits will be mined and processed.

I believe the suggested shortage of energy resources is a scare tactic on the part of Governments around the world. I have heard a lot of people talking about the alleged shortage, and how our resources are running down, and that we should mine our uranium and sell it because the demand was so great. I cannot for a moment believe this is true, and I should like to quote from documentation to support my contention. I refer first to a media release put out by the Rt. Hon. J. D. Anthony, Acting Prime Minister and Leader of the National Country Party. It states—

"In the Northern Territory the Labor Party has got the political message and is trying to play down the question of uranium. In fact, it is the most significant issue in the election campaign", Mr Anthony said in Darwin today.

That is the sort of diatribe I expect from Mr Anthony in regard to a responsible issue like uranium. He immediately tries to gain political capital out of the policy of the Australian Labor Party. Yet in the recent elections the Australian Labor Party was returned to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly with seven seats where

previously it had none. If we take the analysis put forward by Mr Anthony, if its policy was wrong, it has proved to be right. The media release continues—

"A.L.P. supporters claim it is a non-issue as if it is just going to fade away. They say that the demand for uranium is falling off, that the need for uranium is declining", Mr Anthony said.

One would presume that statement to have at least some substance and truth in it, coming as it does from the Deputy Prime Minister—unless, however, one looks at the amount of Australian resources which are being sold overseas at bargain prices. Talk about Woolworths! It is nothing on what the Federal Government is doing with the resources of this country.

Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd. has just announced the conclusion of negotiations with Japanese steelworks for the sale over a 15-year period of 27 million tonnes of coal from its new Gregory coal project in Queensland. Mr Anthony says that is good news for Australia. Yet we are supposed to have an energy crisis which necessitates the urgent mining and sale overseas of our energy resources and uranium. I cannot see the logic in that. One must wonder whether Mr Anthony is in full possession of the facts relating to the supposed shortage of energy resources.

I wish to quote from an article, and I am not afraid to identify the source—unlike some Ministers who feel they can bring out all sorts of figures without identifying their source. I refer to an article produced by the US Information Agency in Washington DC. Its title is *Economic Impact* and is a quarterly review. As a preamble, it is stated that the opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the US Government. What does it have to say in regard to energy reserves? I quote—

A new reserve of natural gas?

Prodded by the rising price of oil and the scarcity of natural gas, U.S. energy experts are showing interest in an energy source that heretofore has been too costly to exploit—huge reservoirs of natural gas dissolved under pressure in hot saltwater deep under the surface of the Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coast region. Estimates of the amount of gas in the reservoirs vary, but even the more conservative indicate supplies of staggering magnitude. In 1975 the U.S. Geological Survey studied the region and said that geopressurized saltwater in onshore reservoirs

alone may contain enough gas within normal drilling range to produce 24 000 quads of energy.

The article goes on to explain exactly what is a quad. It states—

A quad is an energy unit equal to one quadrillion.

Put another way, one thousand million million BTUs of energy is available from one quad—a staggering amount of energy reserves. There are 24 000 quads of energy available in this field, which is yet to be tapped by the Americans. America uses about 80 quads of energy a year. So even without exploiting the natural resources of other countries, and without taking into account their own supplies of oil and coal, the United States has sufficient resources to sustain its energy needs for the next 300 years. Therefore there is no need for this sense of urgency to mine our uranium, which may jeopardise not only my future but also the future of my children's children. We should be looking towards protecting our own resources, and not seeking an immediate monetary gain. The impression given by the Minister is that the world energy situation is so critical that we must mine our uranium and get rid of it. The only motivation for the Government's decision is profit; it has no concern for the human suffering which will be the ultimate result of its decision.

Mr Mensaros: This motivation also includes trying to provide jobs, about which you so often complain.

Mr SKIDMORE: Mr Minister, if every project got off the ground in the foreseeable future, the total work force required would be no more than 1 000. Let the Minister prove me wrong.

Mr Rushton: Of course you are wrong.

Mr SKIDMORE: How many were employed at the Mary Kathleen mine? Can the Minister tell me? Very few were employed there. We have over 26 000 people unemployed in Western Australia, so it is a specious argument to say we are mining uranium to provide employment, as if uranium is the great panacea for our unemployment situation.

The next quote is the clincher—

Even more of the gas is believed to be available at greater depths and in offshore areas . . . the total energy contained in this form throughout the region may be over 100,000 quads—a quantity greater than that contained in the country's vast coal fields, which up to now have been considered the major U.S. energy reserve.

I said that 24 000 quads would provide the US with enough energy to last it 300 years. Yet the region is believed to contain over 100 000 quads, enough for the next 1 200 years without taking into account America's own resources of oil and coal. Who is kidding whom about an energy resource crisis? This article was produced by the official organ of the US Government; it was sent to me by the US Embassy. It continues—

The U.S. government now has under way a relatively small research program to identify potential drilling sites and to test some existing oil and gas wells in the region.

I do not wish to go over the matters so adequately covered by other speakers. However, there are a few items to which I should briefly refer. What can radiation do to people? It is accepted by most of the medical profession not only in Australia but also around the world that radiation causes cancer. The member for Rockingham very adequately supported his case in this respect with facts and figures. Dr Helen Caldicott, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, who graduated as a pediatrician from the Adelaide University in 1962 was so concerned about the question that she has specialised in the treatment of cystic fibrosis.

All the problems outlined by Dr Helen Caldicott's article should be known to the Minister and I do not wish to dwell on them.

There is one other matter I should like to deal with. I said that I would show the duplicity of not only the State Government but also the Federal Government with regard to ensuring the protection of workers who mine uranium. I said that I would prove beyond a shadow of doubt that the Federal Government has already made an official announcement in favour of the mining of ore at Yeelirrie. My source of information is a media release by Mr Anthony, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Resources and Overseas Trade. He said—

Pending the outcome of the inquiry, the Government wishes to indicate certain areas of review which should enable companies to undertake conditional arrangements should they so desire.

That was on the 1st February, 1976. On the 2nd August, 1976, he said—

Much of this work, of course, has been associated with the Ranger Environmental Inquiry under Mr Justice Fox. The Inquiry is scheduled to present an interim report to the Government by the end of August, and no decisions will be made before the report is considered.

I wish members to bear well in mind that the Acting Prime Minister and Minister for National Resources stated without equivocation on the 2nd August, 1976, that, "no decisions will be made before the report is considered". Yet in the *Australian Year Book* for 1975-76, which is recognised as the official documentation of the Federal Government because of the preface by R. J. Cameron, Australian statistician, this is what appears under the heading of uranium. It is a damning indictment of the Government's inconsiderate attitude to uranium mining and the deception it has practised on the people of Australia. It deals with exploration and development work at Alligator River in the Northern Territory and major deposits at Nabarlek, Koongarra, Ranger and Jabiluka. It mentions also the deposit at Beverley in South Australia and Yeelirrie in Western Australia. The Minister said that his Government is going to look at the environmental impact of the mining of uranium, but his Federal counterparts have said—

A pilot plant for uranium oxide production will be constructed by 1978 using ore from Yeelirrie. The company hopes to be in full commercial production in 1980-81.

So already the decision has been made by the Federal Government. So much for the environmental protection that is going to be offered! The Minister may laugh. That is all the concern he exhibits for the people of this State and Australia, which I so dearly love.

Neither the Minister nor I will die of cancer because of uranium mining. I can be subjected to a great deal of radiation and I will not suffer any ill-effects. But the reason that workers associated with the mining of uranium get cancer is their continual association with it.

I find it very strange that the Government of this State can mislead us by saying that it will undertake environmental impact studies and look at the human suffering that ensues when already the Federal Government has said it is going ahead with uranium mining. So much for the assurances of this Government. I have always thought they were suspect. I wish to close with two quotations from a publication titled *Atom*, which covers the technological problems of nuclear safety. The article concerns a debate in the House of Lords in 1976. The quotations I wish to use are more or less a summation of the House of Lords debate on the question of uranium mining and the reprocessing of nuclear waste. The first states—

This debate has provided a valuable opportunity for noble Lords to explore the

scope and intention of the Council's resolution and the Government's attitude to it; I am grateful, as we must all be, to the noble Earl for initiating it. Our objectives in this field are clear. They are to secure for all our people the benefits of nuclear power while ensuring that their health and safety are fully protected.

I believe the member for Rockingham can be placed in the same category because he has brought to the attention of the people of Australia the dangers which are inherent in the mining of uranium.

I quote now the opening remarks of Sir George Porter when he chaired a public debate about the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel. As reported in the Magazine *Atom*, he said—and it is true—

In the whole of man's history, it has probably never fallen to a politician to have to make a decision as irrevocable as the one we are to consider this afternoon. It is a truism that politicians seldom hold office long enough to answer for all their actions, but never before have those consequences lasted 25 000 years. I feel that this terrible responsibility is a cause of real concern to our elected representatives...

As a person who always seeks to show that our environment is in danger and that what people say about that danger is not just emotional talk, I say in all sincerity that I too am concerned. I shall not be here, naturally, in 25 000 years' time, but I worry about the results of what people in this century may perpetuate upon those people who will be here 25 000 years from now. I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment moved by the member for Rockingham and I commend him for the tremendous dedication he has shown in bringing this matter before the people of Western Australia.

MR McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [9.52 p.m.]: I should like to remind the member who has just resumed his seat and other speakers on that side of the House who have spoken to this amendment that every one of us is concerned about the development of nuclear power and the mining, milling, and processing of uranium. In the development of the nuclear power industry throughout the world responsible people have accepted the challenge and have done everything to safeguard those who work in the industry. I shall quote some figures later which will illustrate the responsibility that has been shown by people in the industry in other countries.

Criticism has been levelled at the Leader of the National Country Party in the Federal Parliament for a speech which he made. I have a report of another speech which he made. He was referring to the mining and selling of uranium by Australia. I shall not go into lengthy detail but I wish to refer to some extracts from that speech. One of the points he made was—

The importance of uranium in the world scene is well recognised. It is already important to the economies of many industrialised countries and it is being recognised by developing countries as vital to their prospects for economic growth.

Already over 180 nuclear reactors are in operation, another 300 are under construction and on order, plus nearly 300 more are in the planning stages. A total of nearly 800.

Mr Barnett: Do you know how many have been postponed?

Mr McPHARLIN: Very few have been postponed.

Mr Barnett: I suggest you check.

Mr McPHARLIN: I have checked.

Mr Barnett: I do not think you have.

Mr McPHARLIN: I suggest that the member for Rockingham has done very little study and reading on this subject. That is evident from the way he presented his speech to the House this evening. He has set himself up as the spokesman for the Opposition and in a very limited time has picked up a few publications and set himself up as some sort of authority. Many people have offered constructive and valuable criticism in the other direction.

Uranium in the Alligator Rivers area amounts to nearly 20 per cent of the world's known low cost uranium reserves. Criticism has been levelled at the State and Federal Governments as to where they stand on this issue. Reference was made in this speech by Mr Anthony to where the Labor Party stands on the issue. Mr Anthony said that the Leader of the Opposition, who was then the Prime Minister, in an address to the United Nations reminded the world that the quest for resources was the oldest of all the causes of war.

Reference has been made on numerous occasions by Opposition members to the Fox report. This again shows how little reading they have done, because there are two Fox reports. I suggest that members of the Opposition do more reading because there were a number of findings and recommendations in the first Fox report and the member for Rockingham spoke about only one.

There are 15 recommendations in the first report and approximately 90 in the second report. Yet one Opposition member speaks about only one recommendation. How narrow-minded can they be? We must all study the subject in a great deal more depth.

Another matter referred to by the Leader of the National Country Party in the Federal Parliament is the visit by the then Deputy Prime Minister, the member for Lalor, to Iran in company with the then Minister for Agriculture, (Senator Wriedt). At the end of their visit they released a joint statement with the Iranians which included the following—

The Australian Ministers agree that Iran would be given access to supplies of uranium from Australia under favourable conditions.

There they were agreeing to allow the mining and sale of uranium to Iran.

We have heard considerable comment about the dangers associated with the mining and processing of radioactive material and reactors. Nobody denies that this is an area which causes considerable concern to the people engaged in generating power in this manner. I should like to refer to the dangers that exist in other areas. I have a revealing document here concerned with the risks involved in the coalmining industry. This particular section is headed, "Loss in Production" and it states—

In mining the coal needed to produce one billion kwh of electricity, no less than 1 060 coal miners lose their lives—1 000 by black lung disease, the rest by accidents. In mining the uranium to produce the same amount of power in presently used nuclear plants, 20 miners lose their lives, and if the power were produced by breeders (which use far less uranium), that number would be further reduced to 0.07—an unparalleled opportunity of increasing safety and saving human lives.

Yet these figures refer only to mining. The difference is truly staggering when transportation, air pollution, and the remaining factors are considered. A study quoted by Dr. Hammond in *American Scientist* for March, 1974, found that the deaths attributable to the use of coal and oil through accidents, cancer, lung disease, and other causes amounted to 19 000 in 1964.

Point of Order

Mr BARNETT: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am always interested in making myself more aware on certain subjects. Could I

ask the member, at the conclusion of his speech, to table the paper from which he is quoting?

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr McPHARLIN: It would give me the greatest pleasure to table the papers when I have finished. To continue—

A more recent study by M.I.T. Professor David J. Ross concludes that one coal-fired plant kills from 40 to 100 people each year through sulfurous gases and particulates . . .

And so I could go on. There are reams of information, but I do not intend to read it all. What I have quoted illustrates quite clearly that the inference in this House that scientists are irresponsible—and it is a highly and complex procedure for the development of nuclear power—is a false claim. Surely the scientists who have developed this power cannot be accused of being irresponsible. I have quoted several illustrations to show that if nuclear power replaces coal and oil, many hundreds of lives will be saved. I have many publications on this subject, and one from which I will quote is issued by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority. The publication contains a paper by Sir John Hill, Chairman of the UK Atomic Energy Authority. Sir John Hill comments about the problems in the United Kingdom, where there are approximately 12 nuclear reactors operating and something like another 12 on order.

He speaks about the development of power, and the power needs of the future, and his paper reads—

But does anybody really believe that England, still a comparatively wealthy country, is not going to try and raise its standard of living? Does anybody believe that across the world families are going to be limited to two children in the immediate future? Does anybody believe that the poor countries are not going to try and raise their standard of living? Of course not and the result will be that the world demand for energy will continue to rise at least for the next 30 years. Perhaps not so rapidly as in the past, but rapidly nevertheless. This energy must come from somewhere.

A concluding paragraph reads—

But I never give a talk on nuclear power without some reference to public attitudes and public acceptability. If I did not believe in nuclear power and if I did not think it was for the good of the country and not the bad I wouldn't have spent 25 years working with it.

I would, therefore, like to conclude by quoting two sets of statistics and asking three questions. The first set of statistics are the health statistics of the workers in the Atomic Energy Authority and in British Nuclear Fuels.

I will now quote a table of statistics relating to the sources of radiation exposure of the public. The table reads—

	Per cent
Natural background	83.6
Medical	13.5
Fall-out	2.1
Occupational	0.4
TV, luminous dials etc.	0.3
Nuclear power stations	0.1

Anyone who wishes to look at these documents is quite at liberty to do so.

Mr Barnett: What is the date of the Publication?

Mr McPHARLIN: It is February, 1976. The publications come out every month.

Mr Barnett: I think there is a more recent publication containing further details.

Mr McPHARLIN: I have also the report of the Royal Commission on environmental pollution. I might mention it contains 50 recommendations. Another publication elaborates on the small amount of danger attached to nuclear reactors working in the United Kingdom.

Of course, there are problems with regard to the disposal of waste. Scientists in all countries where there are nuclear reactors are involved with this problem every day and every night. They are endeavouring to find a suitable method of disposal, to render the waste as safe as possible. Another document I have is an assessment of the risks and benefits of nuclear power by Dr B. A. J. Lister, head of the Nuclear Environment Branch of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell. He makes the comment—

Techniques for converting these wastes in a very stable glass were proved on a small scale at Harwell in the late 1950s, and early 1960s, and this process is being further developed for fullscale operation at Windscale. To get an idea of the scale involved the present volume of liquid in store in the eleven tanks is about that of a four-bedroomed house; by the year 2000 the ponds for underwater storage of all the vitrified wastes produced in the UK will occupy no more than about the size of two football pitches. If all power now produced in the

UK were nuclear, the waste produced each year by Oxford's share would be a block of about ten cubic feet.

There is a great deal of information contained in these documents, which are available to any member who wishes to look at them. Another document I have is published by British Nuclear Fuels Limited. It is printed with the approval of the British Government, and this company has been in the business for 25 years. The document which I have deals with the subject of "Working with Radiation". It illustrates directions for workers involved in the industry, and specifies special clothing and special rules for the workers.

The workers are protected by means of scientific examination, and concern is expressed by the management for the need to look after the workers. The document states—

Highly active waste is stored in liquid form in stainless steel tanks inside stainless steel lined concrete enclosures. Storage of waste in this form is safe for many decades but development of a process to convert the waste to solid form for long-term storage is in progress.

Point of Order

Mr BARNETT: On a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order! I would ask members that when they wish to draw my attention to a point of order they should rise and indicate their intention to the Chair.

Mr BARNETT: While speaking to my motion I deliberately stuck to uranium mining. I believe the subject being canvassed by the member for Mt. Marshall is entirely different. It is a subject I could well have covered but did not—the problem of nuclear reactors. Whilst nuclear reactors may have some bearing in terms of being the end product of uranium mining—

The ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr BARNETT: The member for Mt. Marshall is not speaking to the amendment.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There has been a fair degree of latitude already allowed, if I remember correctly. I recall another member spoke about solar energy, without any point of order having been raised.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr McPHARLIN: Of course, the amendment refers to the mining and processing of uranium for use in power generators. I am referring

to the sale of the end product, which must have a bearing on the amendment. I want to repeat my last quote. As I said—

Highly active waste is stored in liquid form in stainless steel tanks inside stainless steel lined concrete enclosures. Storage of waste in this form is safe for many decades but development of a process to convert the waste to solid form for long-term storage is in progress.

That demonstrates scientists are working to find a better means of storing nuclear waste.

I come back to the criticism of those who support the mining and selling of uranium. The scientists have been accused of being irresponsible. I say again, they are not irresponsible. They are people with many years of practical experience, and years of weighing up the advantages against the disadvantages. They make recommendations to the Government, and those recommendations are followed to the stage of developing power in various countries throughout the world.

No-one denies there is a radioactive danger associated with the mining of uranium, the processing of it, its enrichment, and its use in nuclear power reactors. Nobody denies that the danger has always been recognised by the scientists.

I suggest we should look at this matter in a rational and common-sense way. There has been some criticism of the danger of exposure to radiation, and there is always reference to the explosion of the two atomic bombs over Japan towards the end of the second World War. I have read several articles on the effects of those explosions. I have with me a publication put out by the National Radiological Protection Board, in London. The publication is titled "Living with Radiation", and it contains an article dealing with the biological effects of radiation. I will refer to the explosion of the two atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. An extract reads as follows—

Knowledge of the delayed somatic effects in humans of large doses of radiation comes mainly from studies of the irradiated survivors of the nuclear bombing of the two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and from patients treated by radiation for chronic arthritic conditions of the spine.

The health of the Japanese survivors has been thoroughly studied by a team of Japanese and American scientists during the last 25 years. The incidence of leukaemia, a relatively infrequent form of cancer, began

to rise some years after the exposure but it is now falling back. In those survivors who received doses over about 50 rads, some other forms of cancer are more frequent than in the survivors who received much smaller doses. These other cancers appear after a longer delay than leukaemia. In the whole period, 3000 cancers have been found in the 80,000 survivors, and of these 200 can be ascribed with confidence to the radiation.

So we go on to the genetic effects. An extract from the publication reads—

However, in the principal human population studied in detail, i.e. the children conceived after the explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, no significant differences have been observed in babies born to irradiated parents when compared with those born to unirradiated parents. It cannot be concluded that genetic effects do not occur. It may be that the effect of these exposures was not sufficient to produce observable effects over and above those which occur naturally in a population of this size.

And it goes on with a great deal more explanation. However, that is a study which has been carried out in very minute detail and with great efficiency over the last 25 years to examine the effects of irradiation.

Mr H. D. Evans: Who is it by—Lang Hancock?

Mr McPHARLIN: I told the honourable member who it was by—the National Radiology Protection Board, and it was issued in London.

Mr Pearce: Which year is that?

Mr McPHARLIN: I am not sure which year it was.

Mr Pearce: That is significant in terms of the debate.

Mr McPHARLIN: It was issued in 1976. These papers have been sent to me by British Nuclear Fuels in England.

Mr Tonkin: They are unbiased, are they?

Mr McPHARLIN: That is a company which has been in this field for 25 years and possibly longer. Surely the honourable member is not saying that that company is irresponsible?

Mr Tonkin: They are there to make money. You might as well ask Western Mining what they think.

Mr McPHARLIN: I do not believe the member for Morley was in the House when I made reference to loss of life in the coal industry. I think there are many publications which Opposition members would do well to read, and

study the figures and statistics which supply information on other areas and other fields of production of power.

Mr Sodeman: Perhaps there is not enough political mileage in those other areas.

Mr McPHARLIN: I believe that we should all be better informed on this subject, because without doubt it will obviously be the power-generating unit of the future. There are a great number of coal reserves in some countries. My information, from the figures I have read on the subject, is that the mining, transportation, and extraction of this coal will be a very costly business; much more costly than the development of nuclear energy and nuclear power reactors.

Therefore, I believe that the amendment before us is not worthy of support because of the facts stated on this side.

Mr Bateman: Do you have any research on solar energy?

Mr McPHARLIN: The honourable member mentioned solar energy. I have also read a report on solar energy and I have the principal recommendations on solar energy here somewhere. I assume that the honourable member who made that comment would not have read them.

Mr Tonkin: Why don't you move an amendment to the amendment?

Mr McPHARLIN: The report on solar energy says that there is no possible way at the present time that solar energy can be developed to the extent that would be required for any major source of supply.

Mr Tonkin: Oh rubbish!

Mr McPHARLIN: It is quite obvious that the member for Morley has not read very much about it.

Mr Tonkin: Oh yes I have!

Mr McPHARLIN: No; you have not.

Mr Tonkin: You have not even tried.

Mr Sibson: The book is too dear for you to buy!

Mr McPHARLIN: The problem, of course, is storage. If one is developing solar energy what does one do during the periods when there is no sun—at night time?

Mr Pearce: Store it.

Mr McPHARLIN: What does one do then? The honourable member has not read very much about the subject or he would be aware of these problems. There is no immediate prospect of developing solar energy to the extent that would be required for any major supply of power anywhere in the world, and members opposite know

that to be the truth. There are minor sources, of course, but no major sources.

I am not knocking solar energy; it has my full support. It can be developed in a small way wherever people want to develop it. I am not opposing it. The Government has my full support for the Murdoch project and I hope that can proceed with all speed. However, at this stage there is no prospect of any large source of supply of solar energy.

Therefore, because of the great amount of study and the great amount of work that has been performed in other countries; because of the ever-increasing number of nuclear power reactors being built throughout the world—and if one country in this world should fear nuclear power development and radiological effects it would be the one country that has had an atomic bomb dropped on it; but it has 12 reactors operating and another 17 on order and in process of construction, and of course that country is looking for the supply of uranium from our country—I believe that the people in those countries who are just as concerned about the safety of their inhabitants as we are, do not want to see any ill effects on their population, and neither do we. I believe the way the Opposition has been talking this evening indicates that they hope to attract political headlines. They have not approached this matter in a logical, unemotional and common-sense manner.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr McPHARLIN: I believe we must all approach this subject in such a manner. Nobody denies that there are dangers, but these dangers can be minimised by sensible management. This was illustrated by the management in England which built the first nuclear reactor in history at Calder Hall, some 25 years ago. If that country, with a population of 58 to 60 million, and a country such as America which has approximately 100 nuclear reactors, consider it safe to use nuclear reactors for the generation of their power, surely that is significant. Nobody can say they do not have the same desire for the safety of their people as we have. Surely, then, if these countries throughout the world can develop these projects, mine their uranium and process it, and build their nuclear reactors, we in this country would be remiss if we did not mine and sell our uranium.

We are not talking about developing a nuclear reactor at the present time. We are talking about mining and developing a source of fuel which other countries in the world require. That is what we are talking about. We may in the future consider the development of a nuclear reactor. There is a small one at Lucas Heights

in Sydney which is used mainly for the development of radium for medical purposes. However, we are not talking about nuclear reactors at the present time. We are talking about mining and selling uranium.

I believe we in this country would be remiss if we did not look at this question in a sensible way and supply other countries which have decided after many years of scientific examination of the fuel and the way in which it is used in the nuclear reactors that it is safe enough. I feel, Mr Speaker, that I must oppose the amendment because it does not reflect unemotional, common sense and logical thinking.

Government members: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Order! I understand that the member for Mt. Marshall had some documents which were requested to be laid on the table. I direct the member for Mt. Marshall to place on the table for the information of members those documents from which he quoted.

Mr McPHARLIN: Mr Speaker, the request was for the document I mentioned in relation to the statistics for the coalmining industry. If any member wishes the other documents to be tabled also, I am quite happy to do this.

The SPEAKER: The papers shall be laid on the Table of the House for the information of members.

The documents were tabled.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 17

Mr Barnett	Mr McIver
Mr Bryce	Mr Pearce
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Dr Troy
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Wilson
Mr Grill	Mr Bateman
Mr Hodge	

(Teller)

Noes 27

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

(Teller)

Ayes	Pairs	Noes
Mr Jamieson	Mr Ridge	
Mr Bertram	Mr Crane	
Mr Harman	Mr O'Neil	
Mr T. H. Jones	Dr Dadour	
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr Sodeman	

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR NANOVICH (Whitford) [10.28 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I also wish to participate in the Address-in-Reply debate. Firstly, I take the opportunity to congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your elevation to the high office of Speaker. I am sure you will uphold our privileges and display the same dignity as your predecessor, the former member for Cottesloe. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the member for Karrinyup on his elevation to the position of Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees. I am sure he will perform those duties with the same diligence displayed by you, Sir, when you occupied that position.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Cottesloe on moving the Address-in-Reply and also on his very fine speech. I would like to thank the staff of Parliament for the courtesy and efficiency they have displayed at all times when they have been called upon since I came into Parliament in 1974.

Whilst I am in the mood, I would also like to convey my best wishes to new members on both sides of the House. I am certain that they will be patient and listen with very great attention, and will always adopt a common-sense approach to the matters discussed here.

Mr Barnett: You had better say hello to your aunty as well.

MR NANOVICH: I believe I can see the Shire of Wanneroo very clearly through the ears of the member for Rockingham.

The Address-in-Reply debate permits members to speak on any matter. I believe a successful member of Parliament is judged on his accomplishments in his electorate, as well as his ability to exude hot air in the Parliament at all times. I believe the electors of Whitford made a fairly good judgment on that score, and I am proud to be representing them. The reason the electors of Western Australia returned the coalition Government is contained in the blue dossier I have in my hand; and, of course, the policy of the National Country Party, which is very close to the Liberal philosophy.

Mr H. D. Evans: You are dead right there.

MR NANOVICH: The Government was re-elected on its performance over the previous three years.

I should like to pay tribute to the work done by our Premier during the election period and to his good housekeeping generally which has permitted and encouraged development to build our State for the people of Western Australia. This was clearly reflected in the ballot boxes. It is my opinion that our Premier is the hardest working parliamentarian of any Parliament in Australia.

Prior to the last redistribution of boundaries, I represented 90 per cent of the Whitford electorate in my old seat of Toodyay; of course, the remaining 10 per cent were people with whom I had had a very close association during my time as President of the Shire of Wanneroo and also as a councillor. The Marmion, Sorrento and Duncraig areas previously were ably represented by the member for Karrinyup, and I can assure him I will not let him down, but will continue to represent those people in the same capable manner.

The previous three years of Government saw many fine achievements throughout the Toodyay electorate. The Government had the foresight to recognise that Whitford is a fast-growing area. During the three-year period, over 300 classrooms were built and more than \$15 million was spent on schools in my electorate. Eleven new schools, including three new high schools, and seven new pre-primary centres, six of which were double centres were so built. The double pre-primary centres will permit the use of each centre by some 100 children daily and represents a great benefit to my area.

It is very heartening to see the continued expansion of the schools in the area to keep pace with the growing population. I am pleased to see that a contract soon is to be let for the construction of stage three of the Greenwood High School. A further contract has been let to extend the West Greenwood Primary School. Tenders are being called for the construction of the third and final cluster for the Allenswood Primary School.

On Saturday, tenders were called for the construction of a much needed new primary school consisting of eight classrooms and a double pre-primary centre at Mullaloo Heights. After many discussions as to where the site should be, I believe the Education Department has made the right choice in favour of Mullaloo Heights. The Duncraig school is to be expanded by the addition of six classrooms, and I am pleased to see that

tenders have been called for the construction of an additional four rooms for the Marmion Primary School. Additionally, resource centres are to be built at the two lastmentioned schools. I aim to work very hard to ensure that the Duncraig High School is constructed for the year commencing 1979.

I am also pleased to note that work on both hospitals is underway; Glengarry should be completed by about the 11th November. The hospital at Glengarry will provide some 85 beds. Yesterday I inspected the hospital and was informed construction was well within the scheduled completion date. Mr Kirnot anticipates the first patient will enter the hospital on about the 16th November.

I was also pleased to hear a contract had been let for the first stage of construction of the Wanneroo Hospital which will service the Joondalup and surrounding areas and which initially will cater for 85 patients. Tender has been called for the installation of a bore to provide water on the site and I believe tenders will be called in October for the laying of the footings. While the footings are being laid—this entails a great deal of work—tenders will be called for the construction of the actual building. Although the first stage of the hospital will provide only 85 beds, the services and facilities required for a 200-bed hospital will be installed at a cost of some \$7 million. This will provide for future expansion at a minimum of inconvenience and cost.

I was pleased to note that the Wanneroo commercial industrial estate got off the ground very quickly and effectively. Approximately \$4 million-worth of land has been sold to date and, according to plans which have been submitted, job opportunities for some 1 800 people should be provided. Conditions of sale were placed on this land. Prospective developers must commence building within a period of 18 months on some land, and two years on other land. The member for Cockburn paid the shire a compliment in the way it has managed the project, and I thank him for that.

Another project within my electorate which has been causing concern for a number of years has been the proposed shopping centre. I inspected the site last weekend, and I am pleased to report that the earthworks are well under way. It will provide a much-needed facility for the area. The Opposition made many airy fairy statements during the election about how they would speed the completion of the shopping centre by cutting out the red tape. But there was no red tape to cut

out; all the ground work had been done. Approval had been obtained from the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and the local authority, and the matter was in the hands of the developers. So, I do not know how a Labor Government could have speeded up the project.

I should like to see the Mitchell Freeway project accelerated. The Joondalup development is well advanced in its planning stage, and once the urban area starts to expand in this direction we will find the motorists will be crowded off the road. I believe the Main Roads Department should seriously consider building the road itself, and forgetting about the bridges at this time. It should not embark upon the extensive expenditure needed to provide kerbings, additional drainage and so on, but should immediately commence construction on the actual road so that the motorists may use the road before the final completion of the freeway. I am sure this would provide a great benefit to the people in that area. The Joondalup development will be fairly intensive, once it gets under way, and the additional motorists will seriously overcrowd the existing roads.

I was very pleased to receive the support of the Minister for Water Supplies in obtaining permission for the Whitfords Sea Rescue Group to launch its boats from the Beenyup outfall groyne. This represents a major breakthrough for the organisation. Many members of the public sail pleasure craft off the metropolitan coast, and emergency signals are often sighted, necessitating the quick launching of the rescue group's boats. Any emergencies which occur late in the afternoon, when the sea is rough, make the launching of boats quite difficult, and I am pleased that the Metropolitan Water Board and the Minister supported my request.

Mr Clarko: You are too modest; you did a very good job yourself.

Mr O'Connor: A very good case was put forward by the local member.

Mr NANOVIH: I thank the member for Karrinyup and the Minister. I believe there would be no harm in allowing members of the public also to use the facility. A study of the coastline has been completed and forwarded to the shire, and the shire has farmed it out to the various environmental groups for their opinion. It is hoped some decisions will be made by those authorities in the very near future. The Government is only too anxious to spend money to construct a number of boat launching ramps within the region.

I turn now to the referendum which the Shire of Wanneroo proposes to hold on the possible splitting of the council. To date, a great deal of misleading information has been thrown about. Possibly, ratepayer groups and other community organisations are not aware of the facts. People are suggesting only one ward should be split from the shire. I do not believe the time is right for a split and in any event, we cannot simply take one ward away from a local authority.

If a shire is to be split, then something better than a referendum should be organised to ascertain whether the people agree. I am sure they desire the shire to stay as it is.

I pay a compliment also to a couple of sporting groups in my area, firstly the Sorrento Sporting Club which opened its new building in February. I would like to pay a tribute in this House to the people associated with that club, particularly the President (Peter Wooldridge) who has done a fine job in his term as president. Within three months of tenders closing, the building was completed and opened and I think that is a tremendous achievement by the president and his committee.

I also pay tribute to the Wanneroo Districts Cricket Association which in a short time has been accepted into the WACA. It was only approximately 12 months ago that the clubs made a move in this direction. I am referring to the Greenwood and Warwick cricket clubs and I was privileged to be present at the inaugural meeting at which the clubs decided to unite. They will be playing on turf this summer. So in some 18 months to two years they have done a wonderful job.

I also pay great credit to the organisation of the Sunday, the 28th August, event at the Olympic Kingswood Sports Ground. Some of the proceeds from the event will be allocated to Telethon. This is an example of how a willing group of people work to obtain better amenities and facilities for their club.

Mr McIver: Give the parliamentary bowling club a plug.

Mr NANOVIK: They are a great team and I think the captain is a great guy too.

I would now like to speak briefly about quarter horse racing. The origin of the quarter horse dates back some 300 years in American history. I understand it obtained its name because of its ability to run a quarter of a mile—400 metres—in extraordinary time. It is a special breed of horse to run the short distance. Its breeding is from the Appaloosas.

Currently there are over 10 000 quarter horses registered in Australia and I believe race meetings conducted in Victoria and Sydney are proving very successful. The quarter horse industry is growing at a rapid rate and it has been said that a number of these horses have been brought from America specifically for breeding purposes.

The Western Australian Turf Club is governed by the Horse Racing Restriction Act, 1917. Portion of the Act reads—

No race meeting, and no horse or pony race for any stake or prize, shall be held without the license in writing of the Western Australian Turf Club.

It goes on—

... the Western Australian Turf Club, shall not exceed seventy-six in any year, and no license shall be issued by the Western Australian Turf Club in contravention of this section:

It also governs the trotting racing meetings and I believe only about 35 races are allowed per annum within the metropolitan area boundary, which is within a 35-mile radius of the GPO.

For some time now the Quarter Horse Association of Western Australia has endeavoured to obtain the support of the WA Turf Club to permit 400 metre sprint races to be run, but to date it has not been very successful.

I believe this permission should be granted because the WA Turf Club was granted a lease over Crown property on reasonable terms in order that it might provide a facility for horses, breeders, owners, and the public at large. I believe that the Turf Club could be challenged because it is protecting the interests of breeders.

The Western Australian Quarter Horse Association has requested permission on many occasions to conduct sprint races over 400 metres but it has been refused continually. The Turf Club has its own races which it administers fairly effectively. There is no criticism of the club in that direction. However I do believe that it is avoiding its responsibilities, firstly by not taking in the 400 metre sprint races. The Turf Club does not permit any races to be run under 800 metres. It uses the argument that it is bound by the rules laid down by the principal racing clubs in Australia and that these do not provide for races of less than 800 metres. However, there is nothing in the Act which prevents it from doing this. I cannot see anything in the Act to this effect.

The club claims that if the races were permitted, betting would follow. If it were allowed, I am sure the TAB would be only too interested in taking it on. No-one has argued as to whether

or not betting should be allowed. All the Quarter Horse Association has asked for is permission to conduct such a race, but it has met with little success.

If the Turf Club is not in a position to sponsor such an event, it should be considering its obligations to owners and breeders of this special type of horse in Australia. The club itself would not have to sponsor it. The administration of the event would be left to the association. The race would not have to be held at Ascot or Belmont. It could be held anywhere. I understand that the club even stopped the Muresk Agricultural College group, in conjunction with the Quarter Horse Association, from holding a weekend involving certain courses with the horses. It was desired that the weekend should conclude with about an hour of quarter horse races across levelled-out paddocks, and permission was refused.

No entrance fee was to be charged and no prize money was to be paid out. The placegetters would have been awarded ribbons; and yet permission for the event was refused.

I believe that an amendment to the Horse Racing Restriction Act is required. The Turf Club is not a public authority which I will prove before I conclude my speech. It is a private organisation administering the use of public lands, and it is not fulfilling the responsibilities originally intended.

Helena Vale is not used for racing any more, but purely for training. It would be the best quarter horse venue in Australia. However, the association has not been successful even in that direction because the Turf Club will not permit it to hold races there.

Sprint race meetings such as the All Australian Futurity held at Queanbeyan attract a crowd of 20 000 people. Other events such as rodeos and horse carnivals attract families, and 20 000 people is a great number for a horse show event. I believe the Turf Club is ignoring its responsibilities by not supporting the Quarter Horse Association at this time.

Several country areas in Western Australia have indicated their intention to establish tracks for this sport. I believe one has already been established at Mt. Many Peaks near Albany and many other local authorities with which I have been in contact have indicated they would be willing to assist in the provision of a track for quarter-horse racing.

The association is anxious to establish headquarters at Wanneroo Park and it would like to hold a race over 400 metres in October, 1979. There would be a purse estimated at about

\$20 000. This would not go to only one, two, or even three or four horses. Of the total purse 82 per cent would be distributed from the first to the eighth prizes, and 10 per cent of the total purse would be distributed in consolation prizes from first to eighth. Of the total purse 5 per cent would be divided equally to each trial paying first, second, and third. Three per cent of the total purse would go to breeders. Therefore no large amounts of money would go to any one person.

The money would be raised by nomination fees, but to date the association has not been successful in its application. At the bottom of the sheet I have here is a note to the effect that the futurity would be held subject to the Act being amended and should the Act not be amended all nomination fees would be refunded.

The Quarter Horse Association is looking very seriously at establishing headquarters at Wanneroo Park. I have had considerable discussions with the Shire of Wanneroo. The area is now being used by the Western Australian Sporting Car Club which is only too willing to support the association in every way. This would be a tremendous opportunity to encourage this sport in Western Australia.

An article appeared in the Press concerning the Turf Club's failure in a Supreme Court bid to gain exemption from income tax. Section 23 (d) of the Act exempts from income tax the revenue of a public authority constituted under any Act or State Act. The club claimed it qualified. I will continue to quote from the article to demonstrate that the club did not qualify. The court gave this ruling—

The club claimed that it qualified because:

It carried on a public undertaking—the control and management of horse racing in WA.

It was given statutory power to do so.

It did not operate for profit to its members.

It had been given powers to make and police its by-laws.

It had exceptional powers, denied to other persons, to regulate and control race meetings.

The judge said that the club was formed in 1852 to conduct horse racing.

In 1877 its present headquarters, Ascot racecourse, was vested in trustees for the club for 999 years at an annual peppercorn rental by a crown grant.

Under the terms of the grant, the land had to be used as a place of public enjoyment and especially for the training and running of racehorses.

It was a further condition that a race meeting should be held on the land at least once a year.

Two later Acts, together with agreements made with a number of country racing clubs, had given the club effective control over the conduct of race meetings throughout the State.

This was recognised by the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act which provided for the board's surplus funds to be shared between the club (60 per cent) and the WA Trotting Association (40 per cent).

The judge said that according to the club's secretary no profits were distributed to members and the club tried to operate on a balanced budget.

Sir Lawrence had based his ruling that the club was not a public authority on High Court opinions that a public authority should perform statutory duties and exercise public functions.

He said: "Although certain very limited statutory powers have been conferred on the club, it still remains in essence a private member's club.

"Its members have rights and privileges distinct from the right of the public to gain admission to its racecourses.

"The club conducts race meetings for the pleasure, relaxation and amusement of its members and public patrons in the same fashion, broadly speaking, as the State football league and cricket association.

"In theory, the club could reduce its activities to one race meeting a year at its Ascot course, and even its obligation to hold one meeting is a condition of its land grant rather than a statutory duty.

"If its Ascot course was to be resumed, the club would be paid compensation for its buildings, and it could buy other land (as it has) and hold race meetings on other courses (as it does).

"The fact that the club's assets belong to the members and would be distributed among them on dissolution points strongly to the club as a private association rather than a public authority."

The court ruled it was not a public authority. I therefore believe at this stage it has a vested

interest. I know the club feels it has an obligation under the Act. Therefore it must abide by the regulations laid down by the principal racing clubs throughout Australia. I believe there is an urgent need to amend the Racing Restriction Act and I intend to ask the Government to give the matter serious consideration. The Act should be amended to allow this type of sport to be legally conducted in Western Australia.

I thank the House for its indulgence and support the motion.

MR T. J. BURKE (Perth) [11.05 p.m.]: Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Watt), it would please me if you would convey to the Speaker my compliments on his election to the Chair. I know he will strive to carry out his office with impartiality.

I wish to compliment new members on their election, particularly those on this side of the House, and I hope their stay will be long and rewarding.

I pay my respects to those who have recently left us—John Tonkin who retired and those recently deceased. I got to know Jack Heitman quite well, and I knew Lionel Kelly nearly all my life. Ken Dunn, as my leader indicated, was one of the most amiable men.

I mentioned during the last Parliament I would like to see reform in this place. I was thinking of the practicalities, particularly the sitting hours. One of the staff researched for me the sitting hours of the Parliaments throughout Australia. I will not detail them but if any member would like me to place the document on the Table of the House I will be happy to do so for the information of members.

The other change I sought, which has been overlooked by the Premier, was an improvement in the seating in this Chamber. Nothing has been done about it, and new members will find, as I have, that it becomes a burden to spend too many minutes in this place.

It is traditional in the Address-in-Reply debate for members to refer to their electorates. It was my intention to canvass tonight particular problems which I find in the Perth electorate. The electorate is one of the most cosmopolitan in the State, with its high proportion of newcomers. It has at one extreme many old people—pensioners and people on fixed incomes—and at the other extreme young people, many of whom reside in flats and are faced with particular problems which I believe deserve more attention from Parliaments than they have received in recent history.

One of the matters I intended to raise is the establishment in the Perth electorate of vigilante groups which, in co-operation with the Police

Force, seek to control some of the problems thrown up by high unemployment. I suggest here publicly that people living in large flat developments give consideration to forming within their complexes vigilante groups which, in co-operation with the Police Force, could control or at least curtail the problem of crime—mainly petty crime but some of it quite serious.

I particularly want to thank Superintendent Watts of the Perth Division for his co-operation in recent times. If there were more officers of the calibre of Superintendent Watts in the Police Force and fewer like those Road Traffic Authority officers who are inclined to police dual carriageways, conceal themselves, and affect the morale and public relations of the whole of the Police Department, we would receive much more co-operation from the people of Western Australia.

I had hoped to give the lie to the allegation of the Premier that I misled when I revealed to the people of Western Australia Government proposals for the extension of Marmion Avenue through Bold Park to connect up with that part which runs from Karrinyup Road. The extension from North Beach Road to Warwick Road is there for anyone to see, and I hope the Premier lives long enough for my informant to retire and reveal to the people of Western Australia that it was not I who was lying, as alleged by the Premier in statements he made at the time.

I must curtail my remarks this evening because a matter of extreme concern to all the people of Western Australia has been drawn to my attention. In view of the high regard I have for the people I represent, I am certain they will appreciate and understand my referring at this stage to what can only be regarded as incompetence on the part of the Government in its inactivity or its concealment of recent events.

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

But we beg to inform Your Excellency that this Government has deliberately concealed—or incompetently been unaware of—a crisis that threatens this State's nickel industry, a crisis that will result in:

- (1) retrenchment and unemployment for several hundred workers;
- (2) the closure of at least one mine and the severe restriction of output from several others;
- (3) a vivid threat to the future of the Eastern Goldfields area.

MR GRILL (Yilgarn-Dundas) [11.11 p.m.]: I second the motion. If people are not already aware of it, they will become aware tonight that a very grave and urgent crisis faces the nickel industry of this State, more particularly the nickel industry as it is established in the eastern goldfields. In this evening's newspaper it has been reported that no less than 600 men will shortly lose their jobs at Kambalda and no less than 180 men will lose their jobs in the Scotia, and Carr Boyd nickel mines at Kalgoorlie.

Mr H. D. Evans: Does it say what the Government is going to do about it?

Mr GRILL: This very night in Kalgoorlie and Boulder employees of the Great Boulder mine are holding wakes lamenting the impending closure of the Carr Boyd and the Scotia nickel mines.

Mr O'Connor: Does it say "no less"?

Mr GRILL: Yes.

Mr O'Connor: You must have a different edition from the one I have.

Mr GRILL: I am informed the announcements to be made tomorrow are only the tip of the iceberg. I am reliably informed many more men in the industry will be retrenched in the months to come. I am reliably informed, as I have said before, that the nickel mining industry is in a grave position.

When I addressed this House in my maiden speech only last week, I drew attention to this crisis. I drew the attention of the Minister for Mines, in particular, to this crisis; and it is in these words that I mentioned the crisis which has developed and become apparent tonight—

I have been reliably informed that Western Mining nickel operations would have been in a very shaky position if it were not for the last Fraser devaluation. I have been reliably told that the nickel industry is going through very hard times. The industry faces a very low level of demand; it must face the fact that new mines are coming on stream in various other parts of the world. It faces the fact, as was announced only a few weeks ago, as members will be aware, that the giant Canadian nickel company, Inco, has now entered into very aggressive marketing tactics.

I am also reliably informed by people well placed in the nickel industry, that inevitably some of the nickel mines around the world must close down. It worries me, and many other people in this area, that small mines like Scotia and Carr Boyd, north of Kalgoorlie, will close down in the near future.

It also worries people from my area that Kambalda will cut back operations and will not go ahead with further developments; that Kambalda will not be employing as many men as it has previously.

I am not saying these things to cast gloom on what I consider to be one of the great areas of this State, but I believe it is important that we appreciate just how fragile the economy of these mining areas is. It is essential that all members appreciate just how worried people are and how burdened life can become in these areas where one does not know from one day to the next whether one's house is worth what one paid for it, or whether it is worthless; whether one's children have a future in this area or whether they do not. All these things add up to a very unstable situation.

I went on further to say—

It is my humble opinion, that this Parliament and the Parliaments that follow it, must take a fresh look at areas such as the eastern goldfields. It is also my humble opinion that it is quite intolerable in this day and age that an area which has survived for 80 years and has sustained—

Point of Order

Mr O'CONNOR: On a point of order, I would seek your indulgence, Sir, to determine to what extent a person may read from *Hansard*.

The SPEAKER: That had passed through my mind, and I asked the Clerk to advise me. He is in fact looking up the Standing Orders at this time.

Mr H. D. Evans: The member is pointing out a prediction that has so plainly come true.

The SPEAKER: I think probably common sense dictates that a member may refer to what he has said recently, but it seems to me the time of the House would be wasted if he were to reiterate the remarks made by him in a debate just a few days ago. I think it is in order for him to make general reference to what he said, but perhaps he will make more progress if he introduces whatever new material he wishes to on this particular occasion.

Mr H. D. Evans: It is the circumstances that have changed, Mr Speaker.

Debate (on amendment to motion) Resumed

Mr GRILL: Mr Speaker, I had almost finished the reference I wished to read to the House. I make no apology for reading it, because those

words have come to fruition tonight, and I do not think anyone will deny that fact. If anyone here can deny it, I would like to hear him deny the fact that the nickel industry will face severe restrictions and retrenchments tomorrow.

I wish to refer to the fact that although I made those remarks last week, it does not appear that the Government took much notice of them.

Mr H. D. Evans: It has taken no action at all.

Mr GRILL: As far as I know no action has been taken. At the time of making that speech, the Minister for Mines—and I thank him for it—came over to me to congratulate me on the nature of my speech. He then referred to the nickel mining industry and I understood him to assure me that there was not a crisis in the industry. For some reason that I do not understand, he then referred to the Windarra nickel mine. I do not know why he mentioned that mine, because I did not refer to it. I mentioned the Scotia mine, the Carr Boyd nickel mine, and the mines in and around Kambalda. For some reason or other the Minister referred to the mine at Windarra and he assured me there would be no trouble there. I understood him to assure me that there would be no trouble in the nickel mining industry.

We are faced tonight not only with severe retrenchments, but also with a complete dislocation of the whole area. The whole of the eastern goldfields area—the whole of Kambalda, Kalgoorlie, and Boulder—will be thrown into chaos. It worries me that the Minister, having heard what I said, did not inform me that what I said was correct. He did not inform me that some action would be taken to remedy the situation. In fact, the Minister tended to allay my fears concerning the situation, and that concerns me. I am sure it concerns many other people here, because the loss of 780 jobs immediately and the possible closure of the whole nickel industry in the eastern goldfields is quite catastrophic. Even if we take the lesser of the evils—the loss of 780 jobs—that in itself is catastrophic. The number of lost jobs can be tripled or quadrupled because indirectly from this disruption other jobs will be lost. This will mean that 780 families will have to move out of their houses and out of the area. The men will have to start looking for new jobs, new places to educate their children, new communities to live in, new friends, and in every way they will have to commence new lives for themselves in different places. In turn many more people will need to do the same thing, and if that is not a catastrophic crisis, I do not know what is.

As I said before, this area seems to stagger from one crisis to the next, and it seems to do so without the intervention or the help in any way of the Government. It was to this end that I directed my speech last week. I stated that the neglect of this area had to be stopped. Not only are the major industries there neglected, but also there is a general neglect of the area.

It is quite wrong and unjust that the people of this area should live on the razor's edge of economic crises the whole time.

I would like to hear tonight from the Minister if it is possible, or from the Premier, about what is to be done if these allegations concerning the loss of jobs are correct. I would like to hear the answers to the questions I have posed because in a very real sense the Government has in its hands the destiny of many people who now live in the eastern goldfields.

I sincerely do not want to hear, and I know members on both the Government and Opposition benches, do not want to hear that nothing will be done. I want to hear, as they want to hear, that urgent negotiations will be entered into with the mining companies to prevent these retrenchments. I would like to hear that already something has been done; that would be even better.

Mr Speaker, the situation will mean that the whole viability of the eastern goldfields will be threatened again. It will mean the area will slip into a further long decline, and irrespective of the fact that the people are becoming quite used to these long declines and seem to be able to put up with them, I fear this decline will be the one to put the area back permanently. It could be the one to blight the hopes and prospects of the people who like to call themselves eastern goldfielders, who are proud to call themselves eastern goldfielders, and who want to live in the eastern goldfields because they think it is a good place in which to live.

It appears to me that the present crisis facing the nickel industry will set the area back for at least a decade. I ask members: how many of them feel happy about the fact that 780 people will lose their jobs immediately, and possibly three or four times that number could lose their jobs in the near future? It could then be that this is only the tip of the iceberg, and the whole nickel industry could fold up in the long term. I do not want to be emotional or overdramatic on this subject, but it is hard not to be emotional. The information I have to hand is that the nickel industry could close down. So I would be very pleased to hear tonight that the Government has something to say about the allegations which appear in the Press and the allegations I have

made. I would like to be assured by the Government that something will happen. Most of all, of course, I would like to be assured that something will be done about the chronic and ever-present instability in this particular area. I say those words quite sincerely and without any hint of malice. I sincerely hope something will be done about this industry, and done urgently.

The SPEAKER: Before any further action takes place, a practice has developed for the seconder of an amendment to continue to speak. This gives me no opportunity to state the question. So I now inform members that in future, after a member has moved an amendment, it is my intention to stand up to state the question before I call for a seconder. That will then enable the seconder to proceed with his remarks if he so wishes, or simply to formally second the amendment and allow the debate to continue. I state the question: the member for Perth has moved that the Address-in-Reply be amended to add the following words—

But we beg to inform Your Excellency that this Government has deliberately concealed—or incompetently been unaware of—a crisis that threatens this State's nickel industry, a crisis that will result in:

- (1) retrenchment and unemployment for several hundred workers;
- (2) the closure of at least one mine and the severe restriction of output from several others;
- (3) a vivid threat to the future of the Eastern Goldfields area.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [11.26 p.m.]: The amendment moved by the member for Perth and now seconded by the member for Yilgarn-Dundas literally reeks of insincerity.

Mr Bryce: Rubbish; it reeks of commitment and concern for people.

Mr Davies: More humbug.

Mr Bryce: The egg on your face is even brighter now because more than 27 000 people are out of work.

Mr Grayden: Why did you not introduce it at the beginning of the session?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Mr Speaker, the amendment reeks also of just being a straightout political stunt.

Mr Bryce: What is a member who represents the goldfields people supposed to do?

Mr Bateman: Are you accusing the reporters of telling lies?

Sir CHARLES COURT: If the Opposition were genuinely concerned—

Mr Skidmore: Which we are.

Sir CHARLES COURT: —and not out for a political stunt, it would have ascertained the true facts of the situation.

Mr H. D. Evans: You might have told us to give us a chance.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The fact is that the company has been trying desperately to maintain production in this industry to keep up maximum work for the maximum number of people. It would do the Opposition credit if it got its facts into proper perspective.

Mr H. D. Evans: What has the Government done about it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Just listen for a minute.

Mr B. T. Burke: Words, words, words—worthless!

Sir CHARLES COURT: The company, which is given very little credit by members opposite, and often very little credit by people in the area—

Mr Davies: Jingoism!

Sir CHARLES COURT: —where it has been a tremendous contributor to the well-being of that district, has to its credit that since 1974—as is well known or should be known to the member for Yilgarn-Dundas—it has been responsible for keeping production at the level it has by carrying ever-increasing stocks when the world nickel market has not been very healthy for a long time. At the moment the company is carrying surplus stocks to the extent of \$45 million.

This is an Australian company, and not really very large by world standards. It has been playing its part to try to preserve the stability of the area.

Mr Bryce: What has the Government been doing?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The company deserves tremendous credit for hanging on as long as it could. It built up this tremendous stock, and it reached the point where it could no longer carry it. I emphasise that this \$45 million-worth of stock is surplus, and not normal working stock such as a company would expect to have.

It would be well known also to the member for Yilgarn-Dundas that throughout the world this particular industry is in a similar situation and it has been deteriorating gradually for a long

time. Some of the great name companies such as Falconbridge and International Nickel are themselves in the situation where they have had to cut back. In one case the company anticipates it will take a long time to recover. In other words, these companies will need a new lease of life so far as minerals are concerned, particularly in regard to the steel industry, before this position can be corrected.

I remind members opposite that not only has this company hung on as long as it possibly could in the interests of the area, and with a humane approach to the problem—

Mr Davies: Who is criticising the company?

Mr Bryce: Nobody is criticising the company. We want to know what the Government has done about it, and why you are choosing to sit on it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Just listen for a moment.

Mr Bryce: You promised 100 000 jobs.

Mr B. T. Burke: Plain humbuggery.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The company has not gone as far as it could go. If it wanted to be ruthless and to think only in terms of dollars and cents for today—

Mr Bryce: If the company took a page out of the book of the Western Australian Government, it would do that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: —it could have decided to cut back production further. However, it has decided to cut back production to a certain extent, the details of which will be announced tomorrow after discussions have been held with the union. That is why the company wanted to reserve an announcement until it had discussions with the union.

Mr Grill: That is not quite true; what they are going to do tomorrow is to tell the union, not discuss the matter.

Sir CHARLES COURT: What else does a company do in a situation like this? It will have to tell the union about the matter before there is any public announcement. However, members opposite will not allow the company to do this; they thought they would have a political stunt tonight.

Mr H. D. Evans: It is not a stunt; it is a major emergency.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I come back to the point I have been trying to make: that the company has not cut back to the extent that it would be justified in doing; it will continue production at a level which is in fact slightly ahead of what is actually needed today to meet its present

demands. This again is the action of understanding and compassionate people, and it is also part of the programme this particular company has followed in this area. It could just cut back and say, "Let us get below our immediate needs; let us get rid of the men to enable us to get below our immediate needs and allow the stockpile to run down." On the present market demand the stockpile will not run down; the company is going to have to hold this very high level of stockpile.

Therefore, I want members to know that when they get the final details tomorrow they will appreciate the company has been patient, tolerant, and compassionate. Some member opposite said earlier, "Why doesn't the Government lend the company some money?"

Mr Bryce: We said we wanted to know what the Government is doing.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Somebody said something about the company borrowing money from the State Government.

Mr Bryce: You are twisting on the hook now. Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are just far too many interjections. I ask the Premier to direct his remarks to the Chair and ignore the interjections.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I come back to the matter that by interjection someone on the opposite side said something about the company borrowing money from the State Government.

Mr H. D. Evans: Who made the interjection?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am saying somebody made it; I am saying it was heard distinctly on this side.

Mr Davies: You wish someone had made it.

Mr Bryce: The record will show that is poppycock.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I was not the only one who heard it.

Mr Clarko: You must be on pretty strong ground, because they are pretty fidgety about it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is attempting to make a speech, and it seems to me that he has not been able to get a word in for several minutes. I ask that the interjections cease.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The State Government could not make available any substantial sum unless it was requested by members opposite that we take money from loan funds and thereby reduce the work force in other places; and that would not be sensible.

Mr H. D. Evans: What a shambles this place is.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I want to make the point that—as has always been the custom with this Government—whilst we have been in office without exception when a problem arises in an area such as this we are the first one there. I remind members of the work of the Government when crises—and there have been several of them—have arisen in the goldfields. The Government has been there quickly, and has been there in a very effective way.

Mr Grill: You and I disagreed violently over that in Kalgoorlie.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I think the honourable member has been quite surprised that the Government was prepared to get in and give assistance in an effort to help with a transition programme. The Minister for Labour and Industry and the Minister for Mines will, as soon as details are known tomorrow about the number of men involved, the timetable, and the duration of the problem—

Mr Grill: We know that now.

Mr Bryce: That is what this motion is about. Don't you already know that?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I thought I have been making a fairly good job of explaining that we know just what is the situation. When the facts are announced the Ministers concerned, together with the Commonwealth authority involved, will be on the job to see what can be done to alleviate the situation of men who are unemployed. I come back to my earlier remarks that the Opposition felt this was a good time to pull a stunt like this.

Mr Bryce: On the contrary, it is because your Government has a monumental record for its lack of compassion for people.

Mr T. J. Burke: You are trying to increase the demand for uranium mining; that is exactly what you are doing.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I repeat that the Government will quickly assess the situation. The two Ministers most directly concerned will, as always, be on the job to see what can be done to alleviate the situation. No-one likes such a situation, because it is not good for the district involved and it is not good for the State or for the nation. However, there are times when we have to face up to the realities of a situation.

I remind members opposite that as a result of the efforts of this Government a nickel smelter is being extended in the area, and I am assured there will be no interruption of that programme

in spite of the cutback that is necessary. I am also assured that the people who are now the new partners in Windarra will take a long-term view rather than a short-term view of that project.

Mr Grill: Will there be cutbacks there?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am assured, too, that Agnew will continue with its programme, because it is in the construction phase and it will use some of the facilities that are available in this area. So the picture is not entirely one of gloom and despair.

Mr T. J. Burke: It is for all those who are to be unemployed.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member for Yilgarn-Dundas has been assured by my colleague in respect of Windarra. He mentioned that specifically; he wanted to assure the member that the new partners in Windarra are people of substance who would adopt the long-term view and not the short-term view; because if they were not going to take the long-term view they would not get involved in the nickel industry at this stage, any more than the Agnew people would become involved at this stage.

So, Sir, I just want to say that we on this side question very seriously the sincerity of the amendment. It would not have been moved with such a perfunctory speech by the member for Perth—

Mr Sodeman: A three-minute speech—the longest he has made.

Mr T. J. Burke: It was all that was necessary.

Mr Pearce: That would be a long speech. Half of your members have not spoken. It would probably be longer than all the speeches of members opposite put together.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Obviously this is just a stunt to try to get into the Press in the morning on this matter. We believe the company has acted responsibly, and it has been in touch with the Government to assess the situation.

Mr Skidmore: You said you didn't know anything about it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Who said that? I want to make the point that members opposite, if they had any sensitivity in respect of the region, the industry, and the men who work in it, would not be handling the matter in this fashion. They would first of all find out the facts and then make their protest in a sensible way if they felt they had constructive opposition to offer.

I repeat the company has to my mind been extremely patient. It has been compassionate in keeping the level of production as high as possible

for as long as it has. It has tried desperately to keep the production at the highest possible level, hoping there would be a breakthrough in the world market situation. However, that breakthrough has not occurred. Not only this company is involved in this situation. I repeat that the company, instead of cutting back to the figure that ordinary commercial prudence would dictate—

Mr B. T. Burke: What other companies are involved?

Sir CHARLES COURT: —will cut back only part of the way, and that is to its credit. It hopes it can manage to get by at the new level of production long enough to see a steady rise in the world market and some of the stockpile reduced. As far as the Government is concerned, we are on the job and will be as always. I oppose the amendment.

DR TROY (Fremantle) [11.41 p.m.]: I would like to begin my speech by commenting on the unfortunate remarks made by the Premier when he opened his speech and said this is a political stunt. Let us look at the situation. Members on this side found out late tonight for the first time that 700 jobs would be on the line tomorrow. The Premier also told us the Government has been well aware of the problems for some time.

The member for Yilgarn-Dundas referred in a general way in his maiden speech to the problems in this industry, and expressed some concern. Since he made those remarks, the Government has chosen to say nothing about the situation; and now the Premier has the audacity to get up and make sanctimonious remarks about members on this side moving the amendment as a political stunt.

I would like to refer to the whole question of Western Mining Corporation's attitude, that the Premier has tried to present with crocodile tears on behalf of the company. It would be true to say that Western Mining Corporation did not actually want to sack anybody—that is, if it could sell the nickel. Fairly clearly—and this is in the Premier's own remarks—the company already has stockpiled about 45 million tonnes, and has that amount stockpiled for some time.

Sir Charles Court: It is a \$45 million surplus, not tonnes.

Dr TROY: I stand corrected; the company has held a surplus amount of stock worth \$45 million for some time. Reference has been made to the fact that the world demand is not keeping up with the production capacity available. What the company is saying by sacking these people

is that in the foreseeable future there will be a depressed state in this market. Of course, the company's responsible action is to sack 700 people—people who, I might add, helped to create the production capacity over the period of time the mine has been in operation. These are people for whom Western Mining Corporation—for whom we got the crocodile tears from across the way—has now declared it has no further use in the foreseeable future. That is what the announcement released in the Press tonight means.

From a long-term point of view, what has been occurring for some time is that there has been an excess production capacity. This is something that is occurring not only in respect of nickel, but in respect of other minerals. Of course, Western Mining Corporation, being part of the private entrepreneurial system had expanded its capacity in an unplanned, chaotic fashion, and that is the reason we have this crisis in respect of production capacity today. Far from being a responsible act to sack 700 people, the company has taken these 700 people and led them down the road to a very insecure future.

Mr Nanovich: You are saying they should not have been employed in the first place?

Dr TROY: I am not saying that. I am saying that we have the financial, industrial, and social capacities to relate to the needs of people, but what determines whether investment is made is the profit that will go to companies; and that is what stands in the way. It seems to me that those who will turn up for work tomorrow ought to take note of the Premier's remarks that there is a serious shortage of market demand in relation to capacity, and the sacking of the 700 people represents a very bleak foreseeable future.

Those workers who have not been sacked ought to start scratching their heads because a further downturn is the most likely outcome for them. They have to see that it is not their fellow workers who were sacked who should be sent down the road. The directors and the owners of the Western Mining Corporation should be given nothing and sent down the road. What those workers have to do is to occupy the mines. They have to call on the Government for the nationalisation—

Several members interjected.

Dr TROY: —of the whole nickel industry. The industry must be run in the interests of the workers and not the profit makers.

The SPEAKER: Order!

MR B. T. BURKE (Balcatta) [11.47 p.m.]: The Premier should be the last one in this House to talk about sincerity because we have seen him repeatedly devise and devolve plans that involve not one whit of sincerity; and we see now the manufacture of another of those plans. It is very clear that the Premier, in conjunction with Western Mining Corporation, the prime mover behind Yeelirrie, is ensuring that the fears that have been smouldering and flickering for some time come to true fruition by the establishment of a somewhat captive and available labour force. There is no doubt in my mind that what the company is doing and what the Premier has allowed to happen is the creation of a pool of labour that will permit the expansion of the uranium deposits at Yeelirrie and will allow—

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balcatta has indicated that he wants to make a speech and does not wish to reply to interjections. When a member attempts to do that he will be afforded the protection of the Chair. If a member wants to answer interjections and invite one or two others, that I am afraid is going to be his business to a large extent. But when a member indicates that he intends making a speech directly to the Chair and shows his intention to ignore interjections, he will be given my protection to allow him to do just that. I ask members who are interjecting to cease their interjections. I call the member for Balcatta.

Mr B. T. BURKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, it is quite clear that the Government's plan, probably in co-operation or even collusion with the company, is to ensure that there is a work force desperate in its need for employment and in its desire to protect families—a work force that will readily grasp at any opportunity to retain some semblance of moral dignity by seizing upon any work that is available.

It is convenient that on the eve of the announcement by the Australian Government of the green light for the mining and export of uranium this sort of development happens to surface. It is even more coincidental, or perhaps more cruel, to see that this Government, while knowing about what has been going on, has deliberately taken no steps in real terms to alleviate or relieve the situation.

It is true that this sort of thing is in keeping with the general tenor of this Government's conscience. It is a tenor that depends entirely on political expediency and political persistence. It does not take into account the fact that 700 workers—perhaps 500 families and many business

people and others concerned with the eastern gold-fields—will now experience the sort of thing that Governments are empowered and engaged to avoid. I ask the Premier: Why no concrete action? Why no public statement? Why no public warning to the State of Western Australia about this impending crisis? Why has the Premier remained silent? Why has he not warned that this sort of thing might happen? Why has the Minister been silent? Why has the Minister not attempted to relocate before today? And the ultimate dishonesty—why has the Government, if it has known about this since 1974, promised 100 000 jobs? Now in effect we are looking for 100 700 jobs. Why did not the Government moderate its extravagant claims in the light of what has occurred?

Sir Charles Court: This is only one minor part of a total mining industry.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I think the Premier has adequately summed up his position: he regards the retrenchment of 700 people as a very minor thing. Notwithstanding that, I think it is equally clear that the Government has obviously co-operated with the Australian Government in what has happened. By any measure the unemployment of 700 people, especially in an isolated community far removed from the metropolitan area and obvious relocation opportunities, is very serious. The Premier then makes up his own interjections to ask why people will talk about shifting money and would say that money should be taken from some areas and given to others and necessarily throw out of employment people in other areas. Of course, that is not the only means open to the Government. It is not the only thing the Government can do. The Government can certainly try to reorganise and implement schemes that will assist in relocation and retraining. None of those things has been announced yet. The preparedness to do any of those things has also not been announced.

Sir Charles Court: No-one has been sacked yet. Just have a bit of responsibility.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Premier looks 10 yards down the road—not even half a mile. Neither he nor anybody else in this Chamber is doubting that people will be sacked.

Sir Charles Court: I have told you that our men will be on the job with the Commonwealth officers to see what they can do to relieve the situation.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The Premier has to wait in the same way that the Americans waited until Pearl Harbour before entering the war. Things do not go away by ignoring their presence.

I think a great credit is due to the performance of the member for Yilgarn-Dundas. He illustrated quite clearly to the House in his maiden speech that this was about to happen. Just as clearly the Government evaded the issue. It is not a laughing, joking, or political matter. It is a very serious situation causing real anguish and involving real hardship. The Government has not yet shown that it is up to the task. It has not yet shown any real realistic or certain intention of doing something about a very human and cruel problem—a very human and anguished situation.

Regardless of politics the Government must make an announcement and take the lead in relieving the situation. All we are asking for is some concrete advice about what the Government is doing or what the Government is going to do. The first concern must be for those people involved. The second concern must be our party's political future or the political future of the parties opposite. The Government has failed to substantiate the lack of sincerity on the part of the Opposition.

Unless this Government quickly and determinedly moves towards the provision of a policy designed not only to relieve this situation but also to resolve and relieve situations that the Premier has already said are on the horizon when he spoke about other companies which are facing difficult times, this Government will not deserve the trust of the people; and those who support the Premier must know that performance is the proof of ability. In this particular area the Government is performing very badly. It has kept from the public things that should have been known, things that should have been indicated, and things that it should have been prepared for. It has been said that the whole issue is a minor issue.

Sir Charles Court: I did not say it is a minor issue. I said it is a minor part of a total mining industry.

Mr B. T. BURKE: The other thing that is important is that people should know and have confidence in their Government's plans for this sort of eventuality. The Government either has deliberately concealed what has transpired or has been incompetently unaware of the situation. The Premier certainly did not answer that charge by praising the company. I know the member for Yilgarn-Dundas has a high opinion of some areas of the company's performance. It is not the company's performance that is in question but the Government's performance. If

any amendment deserves to be supported, this one does.

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.57 p.m.]: The Premier's contribution to this debate was a complete disgrace. In his initial remarks he accused the Opposition of manufacturing a political stunt because we expressed our very grave concern for the welfare of 780 workers who are to be sacked tomorrow and for the families of those workers. Involved in that allegation from the mouth of the Premier is a very clear illustration of the difference of opinion between the Liberal and National Country Party members of this Parliament and the members of the Australian Labor Party when we consider the social consequences of unemployment. It comes as no surprise to us that members of this Liberal-National Country Party coalition Government express very little concern about people losing their jobs.

Mr Shalders: Would you nationalise the company?

Mr BRYCE: A few days ago in this Chamber we saw members such as the member for Murray, the member for Bunbury, and a whole range of other back-bench members of the Government sit back and snigger with a lack of concern for people who are unemployed. As a result of this Government's decisions 27 000 people are out of work. That has to be seen in the context of this Government's promises to the people. This is the Government that promised to provide an extra 100 000 jobs for Western Australians and yet since that promise was made an extra 1 000 Western Australians are out of work and 780 are going to be out of work on the goldfields from tomorrow morning.

Far from being the statesman that he would like to see himself as, the Premier presents himself as a public relations expert for Western Mining Corporation. He stood here for 15 minutes this evening and, in a most pathetic contribution to the debate, defended the company. It was very difficult from this side of the House to work out whether he was speaking as the Premier of a Western Australian Government or whether he was here in this Chamber as the representative of a mining company.

We ask this fundamental question: What is the Western Australian Government doing about the situation that has developed concerning hundreds of people now on the eastern goldfields involved in the nickel industry? We have asked the question and we sought an answer. By the way this amendment has been worded we seek to draw the Governor's attention to the fact that this Government has done one of two things.

The Government has either deliberately concealed this information from the Western Australian community, sat on the facts and not made the people of the goldfields aware of their impending doom, or, in the words of the amendment, it has been incompetently unaware of what was going on.

The Premier's contribution to this debate suggested that tomorrow morning when this Government finds out exactly how many people are placed out of work, and exactly what the company's plans are for cutting back on the level of production in the nickel industry, his Government will act. I suggest that this Government has been incompetently unaware of what is happening. If that is not the case, then it has deliberately concealed this information from the people of the goldfields and the people of the State generally. This Government has a responsibility; if it is not prepared to accept that responsibility to the whole State and, in this instance more specifically to the people of this rather economically strife-torn part of the State, then it should hand over the reins of Government to people who will accept that responsibility. This was the Government that made the promises to the people of this State that they could expect a much better deal; a better deal in the economic sense and in almost every way imaginable in the terms of the Premier's most extravagant language. The people were promised a "great new era"; the second economic miracle was around the corner within a matter of months. We see the Premier's Government presiding over a situation where this additional 1 000 people have been thrown out of work.

Mr Sodeman: Why do you say nationalisation is the solution?

Mr BRYCE: I am waiting to hear from some of the people who are in a position to make decisions, what their Government intends to do about the situation. Why has this Government been caught with its pants down? Is it because it is incompetent or is it in fact quite a sinister move on the part of members opposite to sit back and conceal this information and allow the company to govern this part of Western Australia? That is in effect what the Premier was doing in this Chamber a few minutes ago. He was abrogating his responsibility and his authority. He stood here as a spokesman for the company and, in the words of the member for Fremantle, he almost had us producing crocodile tears.

The Western Mining Corporation does not govern Western Australia; the Liberal-National

Country Party coalition Government does, presumably. There are other parts of Australia which have experienced serious and sudden economic downturns as a result of developments in world markets, environmental decisions, and for a whole host of reasons isolated mining communities have come up against this sort of problem. This Government has a responsibility to do something about the situation. Its track record as far as a transition programme for the people of Kalgoorlie is concerned, following the recent downturn in the gold industry, was of the most abysmal nature. People came to my office looking for assistance with housing to enable them to resettle in the metropolitan area. Those people were being refused assistance by the State Housing Commission despite the fact that the Premier said he and his Ministers were first on the scene when Kalgoorlie was in strife some months ago. His Government promised then that it would do everything in its power to assist the people of Kalgoorlie to settle in other parts of the State; it would help them to readjust to life elsewhere.

Mr Grayden: That is precisely what the Government did.

Mr BRYCE: In fact, Mr Speaker, there were people who found their way to Perth after seeing their life's savings on the goldfields, in effect their equity in their houses, evaporate before their eyes. Some of these people came to Perth and sought the assistance of the State Housing Commission to put a roof over their heads and they were denied that assistance. That speaks volumes for the sincerity of the Government's intentions when it made those promises.

When I repeat this question—What is this Government doing?—we are almost deafened by the silence.

Mr Sodeman: It is not trying to nationalise the country as you are.

Mr BRYCE: The Government is sitting back and doing nothing.

Mr Sodeman: What is your solution?

Mr BRYCE: In fact, this Government's record in the nickel industry is abysmal. At this very moment the Government is sitting back and doing absolutely nothing to prevent the Poseidon company from slipping into the hands of overseas shareholders.

Sir Charles Court: I thought you wanted us to take it over.

Mr BRYCE: I would suggest to the Premier that I would most assuredly prefer to see the Western Australian people either directly through

a combined form of co-operative investment or indirectly through their Government, move into that particular situation and take a direct Australian interest in that company. I would prefer that to happen instead of a transnational company moving in and taking over the Poseidon company.

Sir Charles Court: Now you are letting the cat out of the bag.

Mr BRYCE: I received information today from a shareholder who was most disturbed that he had lost approximately \$21 000 in Poseidon. He had written to the Premier and explained that the AIDC had sent a receiver in to take over Poseidon without making any demands on the company whatsoever. The receiver was currently offering the company to the highest bidder. This man feared that one of the multinational companies would move in and take over this Australian company. He had been in touch with the Premier and he wanted to know what the State Government was prepared to do to prevent this company being taken over by a multinational concern. This particular individual is a Western Australian investor and he is very concerned. He is proud to be an Australian and he does not want to see another mining venture handed over to the transnationals. He would like to see some responsible action on the part of the Western Australian Government to fulfil that great election promise to encourage Western Australian investors to achieve a majority shareholding in all major projects. This particular citizen believed the promise made by the Government.

Sir Charles Court: Do you want an answer on the Windarra project?

Mr BRYCE: The Premier's answer to that gentleman was the same as his answers in this Parliament. It was open-ended and with so many loose loops of logic that one could drive bulldozers through them. The reason for this was that the Premier did not want to commit himself. Now his Government is doing nothing about these people who are being thrown onto the economic scrap heap tomorrow morning in this particular case with the nickel industry.

I should draw the attention of the House to the fact that even—and I repeat even—the Bjelke-Petersen Government in Queensland has been prepared to go to the national Government and say, "Look, in respect of the people whose livelihoods were involved with and dependent upon Fraser Island, give us special assistance to provide special employment opportunity for these people." This Government has not been prepared to do that. It has been prepared to sit back and wait and do nothing.

If 780 people are sacked tomorrow, we put a suggestion to the Premier that an approach to the national Government is warranted. If his Government had done its homework and was well aware of this situation such an approach should have been made a month or six weeks ago so that contingency plans could have been drawn up to cover this possibility. Of course, if 780 people are thrown out of work in one or two isolated communities tomorrow morning, those people cannot sit in those communities for another six or eight weeks while the Court Government and the Fraser Government—presumably—if the Premier is prepared to approach it—sit back and make up their minds as to whether they will make money available. The Premier says, "Where is the money coming from?" I repeat that a precedent has been set. The Fraser Government allocated \$10 million to assist the people of Fraser Island. I think it was the Minister for Labour and Industry who indicated that, in Parliament only this afternoon in reply to a question from the member for Cockburn. The Fraser Government has been prepared to allocate \$10 million to assist the State Government of Queensland to provide employment opportunities for people whose lives had been utterly dislocated by a decision to close the mineral sands industry on Fraser Island.

Mr Blaikie: Be fair.

Mr BRYCE: Why has not this Government—

Mr Coyne: They have a moral obligation.

Mr BRYCE: —done something similar in this instance.

Mr Blaikie: What about being fair with your argument.

Sir Charles Court: The nickel industry is not closing down; the mineral sands industry on Fraser Island was shut down.

Mr Blaikie: The Federal Government made a decision on Fraser Island; be fair about it.

Mr BRYCE: Mr Speaker, the facts demonstrate—

Sir Charles Court: We are not going to divert any loan money to put into Windarra to avoid an overseas company takeover.

Mr BRYCE: The Premier is taking the attitude that if one takes something from Peter to pay Paul, then one has to answer to one section of the community, therefore one will play off one section of the community against another.

I shall repeat my argument in the very simplest of terms. The Premier's Government should already have made approaches to the national

Government if it was aware of the crisis in the nickel industry. Presumably it was aware of this crisis. If it was not it is incompetently unaware. It should have made that approach to the national Government to seek this form of assistance. It is not good enough to say that the Fraser Island mineral sands mining industry was closed down and therefore this form of action was warranted, and that form of action is not warranted for the people in the nickel industry.

I suggest that if this Government were not so preoccupied—

Mr Blaikie: It is a different principle altogether.

Mr BRYCE: For the information of the member for Vasse, the principle is exactly the same. It is a preparedness to use the power, the influence, and the resources of Government to alleviate economic suffering. This Government has sat back. It has done nothing, and it is prepared to see tomorrow 780 families shocked and dislocated in this manner; and the Premier has the hide to stand up in this Chamber and say that, as when Kalgoorlie suffered its great set back, he and his Ministers will be the first on the scene. If they fly to Kambalda tomorrow to try to put the people at ease, what are those people going to receive? They will receive the same information that we received in this Chamber tonight: the disturbing proof that this Government has made no plans and has nothing in the pipeline. It has simply not considered the suffering that these people will face; and it is not in a position to do anything about it.

We find that from the disastrous figure of 26 500 unemployed people in Western Australia, the latest catastrophic decision will mean there are now more than 27 000 people out of work.

As I conclude, Mr Speaker, I would say that the tragedy is that the Federal counterparts of this Government have just made the decision to ensure that these people who are thrown out of work tomorrow will not receive any form of direct or immediate unemployment benefits. These people must wait an additional two weeks before they receive assistance. This is the same Government that sits back without any concern for the people it throws out of work and has the hide to join with its Federal counterparts in denigrating these people by calling them dole bludgers.

So the dole bludger stigma will be attached to these people of Kambalda, and presumably other parts of the goldfields, because they have been thrown out of work. There is no justice in this. This Government has fallen a long way short

of its responsibility. The Premier's remarks in this chamber tonight amply illustrate that his Government has no answer because it has not properly anticipated the situation.

Mr H. D. Evans: It is bankrupt.

Mr BRYCE: The Premier is left with egg on his face. Shortly after he resumed his seat, in a most uncharacteristic manner, he began to resort to personal abuse by way of interjection.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [12.15 a.m.]: I want to make a contribution, albeit small, and speak to the amendment that has been moved to the Address-in-Reply. I am not unmindful of the fact that in this place a few days ago, on the 17th August, I raised the question of unemployment and its results which reflected upon many people in the community. The Minister for Labour and Industry gave us many reasons for his belief that there was no reason for panic; the Government had a wonderful employment growth figure. He mentioned that the employment growth figure was 5.6 per cent better, as I understand it, than all the other States for the period of three years from 1974 to 1977. Rather significantly, these were almost the years the Premier mentioned in which it appeared to him that the nickel industry was in extreme difficulty.

It is amazing to me also that arising out of the question I asked, I was then told one of the sureties of employment for people in Western Australia was the nickel industry at Agnew. Great play was made of the fact that this project would require 600 workers while under construction, and I was particularly interested in the permanent work force which would be from 320 to 435 people. I do not believe that assumed work force can now be envisaged to be employed at that particular mine in view of the fact that one of the major nickel miners in this country has been forced virtually to cease its operations.

If anyone knows anything at all about nickel mining, he will know that the deep type mining that is required in the goldfields necessitates certain maintenance staff who must go down the mine to look after the plant, the pumps, the haulers, and the underground gear. If we take away the number of workers to be sacked from the total work force employed in the mine, I would say that the mine will be operating on a caretaker basis only. I doubt very much whether much nickel concentrate will be mined at Kambalda. I hope to be proved wrong in the future, but it seems a faint hope that Western Mining Company, having stockpiled this \$45 million-worth of nickel on the surface, and proposing to retrench 780 labourers, will ever re-establish the mine as it was.

These workmen have been told, "It is too bad; we have used your labour and you are finished."

People who make capital investments in industries in places such as Youanmi, Evanston, Magnet, Spargoville and Wiluna, extract the raw material from the ground and then close it up. However, I thought we had advanced from that period of the 1930s and the early 1940s and that the Government would have ensured that such disruption as occurred in those instances did not occur again. I was working at Evanston when the mine was shut down and we were simply told we were finished. We were 120 miles north of Southern Cross, and we had to find our own way out. We left everything behind because we could not take it with us. Whole families were uprooted.

Miners on the goldfield have accepted this as a challenging part of their lives, but surely today, in 1977, when we are supposed to have responsible government, this should not happen. The Court Liberal Government is trying to say, as the Premier, has said tonight, that we are just pulling a political stunt to try to show we are doing something. This comment is not up to the usual standard one would expect from a responsible Premier. We are not doing this for a political stunt. Anyone would think that the only people who make anything out of a nickel mine or who contribute to it, are the investors. It is a fallacy to say that one can put \$100 million of investment into a nickel mine and profits will rise out of the ground. We all know there must be workers to provide the profit for the capitalists who invest in what they believe to be a safe investment.

Without a shadow of doubt, Western Mining Corporation will not go broke because the nickel concentrate industry is in such a low trough. This company is controlled by the international markets, and as I said, already it has got its profits out of the ground. It has \$45 million sitting up there, and because of the inflationary trend which this Government seems to accept as being one of the reasons it has an employment growth, the value of this nickel will rise.

The other night the Minister for Labour and Industry applauded our employment growth. I do not follow his philosophy. He expounded some strange inexplicable connection between inflation and employment growth.

Companies can invest capital in such a way in this particular industry that it can be withdrawn at any time without any effort being made by the Government in the way of control. The companies take out the resources and leave a hole in the ground. Even the profits are taken

out of the country. Every time Western Mining Corporation wishes to make an investment in the mining industry it raises the capital by a share issue. Our mineral resources are being exploited, but more than that, our workers are being exploited.

When the work force went to Kambalda a few short years ago, it was promised all sorts of things. The company was to provide a permanent and enriched social life for the workers. The town was well planned and laid out and it would have many amenities. I have been working in various goldmines which have closed down around my ears at different times. Always the workers were told that permanent jobs would be created. They ought to have been warned and they should have known that the attitude of the mining companies would again be the same.

Fortunately the people of the goldfields have a great resilience, but I add my concern to that expressed by the member for Yilgarn-Dundas. I wonder whether the people of the area will ever recover from this blow. It is difficult to see that a community can survive when 700 people are thrown out of their jobs.

I am concerned that a few short days ago I challenged this Government about its efforts in regard to increased employment. We were fed a tirade of nonsense from the Minister for Labour and Industry from a document he produced—I know not from where because he tore the source of it off the top before he gave it to me. I found it indeed strange that all the document dealt with was employment. The Minister can now increase the figures for unemployment. In the future we will see additional unemployment in the area of the support groups; that is, the contractors, carters, and the people who transport the workers from Kalgoorlie to Kambalda. Food, clothing, and other commodities are also transported to Kambalda so members will see that far more workers than the original 700 will be faced with unemployment.

This area is doomed; it is finished. In my opinion it will never reactivate itself. Can anyone tell me that with \$45 million-worth of stock at grass this humane company will try to re-employ these 700 men in the mine to keep up that stockpile? Of course no-one can tell me that. The company will reap its benefits and profits and it will say, "We will not put the mine back into operation until such time as we can see a profit motive in it." As I say, at the moment there is no profit motive.

Is the company to produce more material that it cannot sell, according to the Premier? The Premier suggested that this would happen. What

a lie, what a deception, to try to bolster up the hopes of these people. The Premier suggests that two Ministers will go to the goldfields, and I assume these will be the Minister for Labour and Industry and the Minister for Mines. I do not know what the Ministers can do. If someone asked me to put forward some constructive ideas to help the unemployment situation these people face, I would have to say that I do not have any. I am not the Government, I am not a member of the Government. If I were a member of the Government I would be roaring like the proverbial bull to try to ensure that some efforts were made on behalf of the 700 unemployed workers. Where are they to go? I doubt very much whether the Agnew nickel mine concentrate will ever get off the ground. The people are faced with the usual solution: They pack up their bags and leave their homes behind. Somewhere along the line they hope they will be able to recover some of their life's investment because the average goldfields resident has only his home and very little else.

A few short days ago we challenged the Government on its unemployment record. I showed that there was need for at least 16 000 people to be retrained in jobs to fill vacancies that could not be filled. These are not my figures, but the statistician's figures. The people looking for jobs did not have the necessary training for these positions. I doubt very much whether the 700 miners would be able to fill these jobs.

It has been suggested by some of my colleagues—although I do not agree with them—that some of the people can be absorbed in uranium mining if it were to be mined. I would like to think this will not happen, but I do not know what an experienced miner would do at, say, Yeelirrie, because 700 miners will not be needed to mine uranium.

Mr Coyne: They will not need any—just a couple of bulldozers.

Mr SKIDMORE: That is right. Where are these people to go? This Government stands condemned. We do not raise this issue as a political stunt. To my mind it belittles the office that the Premier holds to say that is all it is. As the member for Yilgarn-Dundas stated earlier, he received a phone call from Kalgoorlie saying that men would be laid off. To the best of my knowledge at that time this information had not appeared in the Press. The member expressed great concern about this, and I believe it is correct that he did so. Had the Premier expressed the same sort of sincerity that the member showed for his constituents, we might be a little

further forward in solving a very difficult situation. I join with my other colleagues to say that the Government stands condemned in the terms of the amendment.

The Government deliberately concealed or was incompetently unaware of the situation. I do not believe the Government was unaware of it because the Premier stated he knew about it. He was forewarned of many of the problems when the member for Yilgarn-Dundas made his maiden speech in this House. Still the Government did nothing. That was just a few short days ago.

When we were debating unemployment, these issues could have been raised but no, apparently we were on a magnificent train of employment growth, heading down the track towards prosperity with no worries ahead of us. With 27 000 unemployed, I believe we have plenty of worries in Western Australia. It is about time the State Government, and its leaders in Canberra did something to really assist the work force of this country. However, the Premier said that 700 workers losing their jobs was only a minor matter.

Sir Charles Court: I did not say that at all. Do not start distorting what I said.

Mr SKIDMORE: I will put it in proper perspective. What the Premier said was the closure of the company and the forfeiture of 700 jobs was a minor matter in the industry.

Sir Charles Court: I did not say that at all.

Mr SKIDMORE: *Hansard* will show whether or not I am right. That can reflect only one thing: The Premier is not at all concerned about the 700 unemployed. In fact the whole history of this Government is one of unconcern for the unemployed. The Government is not concerned about the 27 000 unemployed of Western Australia. It promises to produce jobs which never eventuate. I have a manifesto stating the jobs which are to be created, which I can show to be patently false.

Mr Clarko: Manifesto would be the right word.

Mr SKIDMORE: I do not profess to have a marvellous grasp of the English language, and I bow to my learned friend, the school teacher. I can show that of the 9 300 jobs that are promised, not more than 3 000 could be sustained for over three years. I do not believe my figures can be disputed.

Between September last year and July this year, unemployment increased by 1 500, added to which will be another 700 unemployed from Kambalda. This Government's lack of performance

should lead to some searching looks by the electorate. I commend the amendment; I believe it is quite relevant to the situation. The Government should be condemned because of its failure to do those things enunciated in the amendment.

MR TAYLOR (Cockburn) [12.32 a.m.]: My remarks will be brief. We have had two debates this evening, and I support completely the remarks made to them by members on this side of the House. I deplore the answers given by the Minister for Mines and later, by the Premier. While many points were covered, one or two questions were left unanswered, and I would like to cover them now.

Firstly, with respect to the debate on uranium, and with your indulgence, Mr Speaker, there were three points I felt the Government could easily have answered during the debate tonight and the debate which has been ensuing for the last week or so. Firstly, with respect to the mineral matter in the depository at Rockingham, it has been agreed that ingestion of that material could cause harm to people living in the area. The first thing the Government should have done was to agree to conduct stringent and thorough tests of the area, other than simply looking for leakages in the mud pond. We have had no answer to that request.

Secondly, process workers were involved at that time, but there was no mention of that matter. A man is dying as a result of a disease contracted while working in an industry similar to the one which is now planned for this State. Again, surely the Government could have indicated it would take an interest in this man's case and check its validity to see what the future might hold.

I relate those matters to the question now before the House. With respect to the dismissal of some 700 workers, the Premier spoke in worldly terms as to why the matter should rest there. However, I should like to bring it down to a more mundane level, and request the Government immediately to dispatch an officer of the State Housing Commission to Kambalda to make himself available and provide what assistance he can to these families. For example, there are something like 40 apartments in the Kwinana area which could be utilised—not that anyone wants any more unemployment in Kwinana. In order to be in a position to obtain employment, these people must be assisted. They just cannot be left there day after day. The SHC should send an officer there as quickly as it can to take applications for housing assistance.

This is a very ordinary thing, and is the first thing about which any Government should think.

If necessary, those people should be offered accommodation in the metropolitan area or in other country centres, perhaps rent free or on a subsidised rental for the time being. We are talking about 700 families, and the Government should be concerned.

Secondly, an officer of the Department of Transport should be sent to the area. These people will want to move back to the metropolitan area with their families and possessions; they cannot look for jobs in Kambalda.

Mr Coyne: They will not want to move before they find jobs.

Mr TAYLOR: I disagree; they may well wish to move. It is very difficult for a man to leave his family in a company house in Kambalda while he goes to the metropolitan area or north, or wherever it may be, to look for work. Three-quarters of the State's population live in the metropolitan area and if the man and his family moved to the metropolitan area he would have a 75 per cent chance of finding a job. It is not for the member for Murchison-Eyre to decide; it is a matter for the Government.

The retrenched workers at Kambalda should be offered assistance to move their belongings. While the men can take their families and their cars and go looking for work, it is another thing altogether to move their belongings, and this is where the Government should step in. I realise this is only a bit of a debate when we consider what is going to happen to the millions of dollars invested in nickel, but I still say the Government should take action now to assist these people.

Sir Charles Court: Do you not know the form of assistance offered during the goldmining crisis?

Mr TAYLOR: I do, and that is why I expected the Premier's answer to the debate to have included this point.

Sir Charles Court: This is automatic.

Mr Davies: You have just thought of it.

Mr TAYLOR: I am not sure that it is. As I say, these and other points should have been mentioned in the Premier's reply, but were not. I should also like the Government to give an assurance, by interjection or otherwise, that it will pressure the Federal Government to have an officer of the Department of Social Security in Kambalda as soon as it can. The point has been made by other speakers tonight that there will be a two-week waiting period for unemployment benefits and it is imperative that there be somebody in the town to advise these men when they receive their dismissal notices in their pay packets, so they do not merely wander around wondering about their future. They must be able to register immediately

for unemployment relief so they do not lose several days' pay.

Sir Charles Court: I told you this would be done.

Mr TAYLOR: When?

Sir Charles Court: When I was replying to the amendment.

Mr TAYLOR: It was not a point I picked up. I have made these few points simply because I think the Government can do something to help these people. It must take initiatives. It could also send a Treasury official to Kambalda to advise the Government as to how to assist these people.

The last point I raise relates to the Kwinana nickel refinery. No mention was made in the Press tonight or in the Premier's reply that once production is cut and the stockpile is depleted, retrenchments may take place at Kwinana. The Premier must realise there will be questions for him tomorrow and I would appreciate his making an effort to provide adequate answers. Unemployment in Kwinana is already running at approximately 10 per cent and if one of the four major industries in the area curtails production in part or completely it could throw up to 300 men out of work in the Kwinana area. This would be a catastrophe. I hope adequate answers will be provided tomorrow to those points of concern.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) [12.40 a.m.]: I had hoped the Minister for Mines would make a small contribution to the debate, but apparently this is not to be the case. When the Premier rose to reply to the amendment moved by the member for Yilgarn-Dundas he epitomised the conduct we have come to expect from him. The member for Yilgarn-Dundas acted in a most proper and responsible manner as befitting a member from that area. If the honourable member had not done as much as he did he would have been held to criticism, and no doubt the Premier would have been the first to point his finger in his direction.

The substance of the Premier's remarks was that the Opposition was pulling a stunt and was insincere. Some 780 jobs are involved, yet the Premier is still accusing the Opposition of being insincere! No doubt the reason advanced by the Premier for the company's winding down of operations is the correct one; namely, that it has a stockpile of \$45 million worth of nickel, and on economic grounds it cannot continue. This is accepted; even the member for the district agrees that the mining company has acted well.

However, the timing of the announcement is far too coincidental to be accepted as a coincidence.

It is almost beyond belief that with the Fraser announcement expected tomorrow, this company will close operations at Kambalda, thus creating the perfect climate for the commencement of uranium mining. This is too opportune, to say the least.

The climate could not have suited the Premier better. With opposition to uranium mining and processing mounting, this was an engineered situation approaching perfection. This Government's track record in regard to unemployment has been maintained; not only that, but old jobs are being curtailed and various activities closed down. I could cite what happened at Kalgoorlie and at Wundowie earlier this year where, with the customary week's notice, 70 people were stood down.

I also could refer to the attitude of the Premier when he made a big fellow of himself with the conservationists and announced that the Forests Department working plan would be implemented and there would be a cut back of something like 17 per cent of the hardwood milled. He neglected to mention, of course, that 17 mills would close; this would not be mentioned until a week before the event, which is the statutory time demanded under law. The same treatment was handed out to the Hawker Siddeley company to which State building contracts were given.

Most recently, we have seen the closure of the mineral sands activities at Capel. Exactly the same situation has been allowed to occur at Kambalda, where some 780 workers are to be stood down. If one accepts the rule of thumb of the Department of Industrial Development that one mining job creates 2.5 jobs elsewhere, we are talking in terms of several thousand jobs.

If this Government had been in a position to say, "We have created 1 000 jobs" there would be four-inch headlines in the Press and a boisterous coterie of Ministers opposite taking full political advantage from the announcement. But what about the loss of twice that number of jobs at a time when the economy of this State can least afford it?

In the impressive document produced by the Liberal Party which asked people to place the State in firm hands, was a promise that there would be a rise of 100 000 in the work force, adding a quarter of a million to the population which would also mean a rise in local demand for primary products, thereby generating new outlets for rural areas.

That was not going back very long—only to the campaign of nine months ago. That was the proud boast on the hustings; that this Government would create 100 000 jobs. We have seen the situation at Kambalda on top of Wundowie and the mineral sands at Capel. I do recall the member for

"Barko" interjecting and saying that the Premier paid more heed to the needs of unemployment in this State than did the Opposition. What utter rubbish. This has never been more clearly demonstrated.

I wonder whether it would be possible to ascertain accurately whether or not this Government knew that this closure was imminent. If it did not, it was certainly derelict in its duty; and if it did, it stands utterly damned and condemned for its lack of action. The Premier says that the action would be automatic; that officers would go into the area. He thought of that on the spur of the moment, as someone from behind me interjected to say.

It is more than noticeable that the Premier said there would be discussions with the unions tomorrow. The inference was that they had been arranged, and then the member for the area pointed out that the unions at this juncture had not even been informed. So much for the credibility of the Premier right down the line, not only on this occasion, but also in regard to all the instances I have enumerated previously.

During the debates on unemployment last week there was a noticeable silence on the part of those opposite on the real question and implications of unemployment. Again they stooped to vilification and abuse of the Opposition and of individual members of it. That is all they resort to. The performance of the Premier this evening was the most discreditable he has displayed in this Chamber during his period as leader of the Government; and what a poor old Government it is turning out to be. There will be 100 000 unemployed soon the way the situation is developing.

I support the amendment.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [12.48 a.m.]: Had the facts that are gradually becoming known to us been available to us earlier in the evening the amendment would have been couched in more severe terms than is the one on which we are about to vote. It merely refers to the retrenchment and unemployment of several hundred workers. That was based on the facts as known to us then. However, it turns out that it is likely to be a minimum of 780 workers. It also refers to the closure of one mine and yet the newspaper which has come to us recently indicates that two mines are likely to be closed; that is, the Scotia and Carr Boyd. In our amendment we draw attention to the fact that there is now proposed a vivid threat to the future of the eastern goldfields area. Nothing could be closer to the truth.

Yet, while all these serious matters are coming to light gradually, the Government feels it can

deal with the matter in a cavalier fashion in an attempt to save face, completely distorting the argument which has been submitted by the Opposition. It has praised the Western Mining Corporation, but no-one on this side has criticised it.

Sir Charles Court: Not much. You could not have been listening to some of your colleagues.

Mr DAVIES: It is the interpretation which has been put on it. One member has suggested nationalisation might be the answer. Surely anyone is entitled to make a suggestion. We have not reached the situation where members are not entitled to submit their views to the House. Surely at least they are making an attempt to suggest a solution.

Several members interjected.

Mr DAVIES: The honourable member should be on his feet defending the eastern goldfields instead of interjecting. He should also read the platform, as amended at the last conference of the ALP, and then he would know the situation has changed quite dramatically. Then, instead of trying to scoff at what might be some solution, he might get to his feet and show us that he defends the eastern goldfields by submitting constructive criticisms. He might also then criticise the Government for being incompetent and unaware of what is going on. That is the worst feature. The Government should have been aware of the situation and should have been able to give the people some warning that tragedy was about to strike.

The Minister for Mines, who sucks his finger, has not entered the debate this evening. I wonder whether he knew what was going on. He is reported in the Press as saying he could not comment, which is fairly typical of him. He probably would not be allowed to because he had not received permission from the Premier or because no-one had told him anything. He said that possibly there might be something in the morning.

One of the union secretaries has been called to a meeting, but he does not know what it is about. A meeting is to be held at Western Mining Corporation's Belmont headquarters, but the union man does not know what it is all about. I doubt whether the Minister does, and the Premier obviously does not know. Every solution suggested by members on this side was greeted with a statement by the Premier that they were going to do it anyway or that it naturally follows.

Sir Charles Court: Except nationalisation.

Mr DAVIES: I am not agreeing with that either.

Mr Coyne: I shouldn't think so.

Mr DAVIES: I am abiding by the policy. Here again the only thing the member for Murchison-Eyre can do is scoff. He should be concerned instead of grinning and scoffing.

Mr Coyne: The whole thing has not come out yet.

Mr DAVIES: Precisely. The honourable member must have been asleep because this is the whole point of the amendment; that is, that the Government does not know what it is all about.

Mr Coyne: It is just a great big lark.

Mr DAVIES: The Government should know. We are led to believe that the mining industry has been the great saviour of Australia, and as far as exports are concerned, it has been. However, with regard to employment, according to the latest facts and figures which I am sure were distributed to everyone, the total number in the work force employed in the mining industry over the decade from 1966 to 1976 has not changed. It has remained at 1 per cent of the work force. Indeed, the total work force engaged in manufacturing and agriculture has declined, from memory, by about 3 per cent over the decade. The only section of the work force in which there has been an increase is in services which has increased by something like 3 per cent.

The point I emphasise—and it is a very valid point to this argument—and which the Government must have been very distressed to find out, is that over the decade there is still only 1 per cent of the total work force employed in the field of mining, and yet the Government would have us believe that the mining industry has been the saviour of Australia. As I said before, the mining industry has been of great benefit to Australia in regard to exports.

Mr Sodeman: What about the employment which flows from it?

Mr DAVIES: The member for Pilbara should have been listening to what I have been saying. If he gets out the copy of the facts and figures and reads them tomorrow he can make his own assessment of the situation. The fact remains that the Government has been less than fair with the mining population in the eastern goldfields. It has shown scant regard for the people. The warning was sounded by the member for Yilgarn-Dundas last week. Apparently the Minister for Mines tried to sweet talk him into believing that everything would be all right and that he had nothing to worry about.

Perhaps the Minister knew what was occurring and could see the winds of change on that occasion. Surely the people in the eastern goldfields must be completely disenchanted with the mining policies of the Liberal-Country Party after what has happened to them and after the undertakings given to them at the time of the last election.

We know they received no help from the Canberra boys and we can assume because of the lack of interest shown on this occasion they will receive very little from this Government.

Let us make it quite clear that the purpose of the amendment is to criticise the Government. The amendment was moved at the first possible opportunity. Obviously the member for Yilgarn-Dundas could not move it because he had already spoken in the Address-in-Reply debate, but the opportunity was given to him to effectively and forcefully present the case to Parliament almost within an hour of our knowing the seriousness of the situation.

As I have said he has already demonstrated his concern by speaking a few nights ago; and he has further demonstrated it and his closeness to his electors on this occasion. He is to be congratulated as the Government is to be condemned.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 17

Mr Barnett	Mr McIver
Mr Bryce	Mr Pearce
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Dr Troy
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Wilson
Mr Grill	Mr Bateman
Mr Hodge	

(Teller)

Noes 27

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

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Jamieson	Mr Ridge
Mr Bertram	Mr Crane
Mr Harman	Mr O'Neil
Mr T. H. Jones	Dr Dadour
Mr T. D. Evans	Mrs Craig

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Cowan.

ACTS AMENDMENT (PENSIONERS RATES REBATES AND DEFERMENTS) BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 1.03 a.m. (Thursday)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HOSPITALS

Cases Relating to Alcohol

457. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Health:

Would he give estimates of bed-day utilisation rate in the metropolitan hospitals as a proportion of the total capacity taken up with both the acute and chronic consequences of alcohol (those accidents whose prime cause is known to be alcohol might be included)?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

No. Statistics are not available. The prime cause of an accident is not known to the hospital.

ABORIGINES

Government's Views on Police Commissioner's Report

458. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

Would he elaborate the views of the Government on the question of Aborigines as expressed in paragraph 4 at page 3 of the Commissioner of Police's annual report for year ended 30th June, 1977?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

This seems to be a widely held opinion.

POLICE IMPARTIALITY

Brockway Incident

459. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

Paragraph 5 of the annual report of the Commissioner of Police for the year ended 30th June, 1977, begins with the statement: "Whenever arrests are made for breaking the law, as they have been, strict impartiality to the issues is maintained by my officers."

Is the incident where, a man by the name of Brockway, on his own admission in a court of law, deliberately drove a large truck loaded with fuel into a group of men and which was followed by the police arrest of the group of men and not Brockway, to be accepted as a factual example of the impartiality of the police?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

In the circumstances of that case, yes. I am convinced that in all cases involving a breach of the law the members of the Police Force remain impartial.

POLICE STATIONS

Closure

460. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

As the closure of police stations in some small country centres has possibly caused deep resentment and disappointment, will he advise—

- (1) Which other centres, if any, apart from Tammin, in the Mt. Marshall electorate, are enquiries being conducted which may result in a closure taking place?
- (2) In which other centres throughout the State is similar action proposed?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) As stated to a deputation led by the member, the planning and research section is surveying police requirements throughout the whole of the State. However, at present the only station under consideration for closure is Greenbushes.

POLICE PERSONNEL

Special Training Programme

461. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

What was the nature of the "... advance special training programme for personnel..." referred to on page 2, paragraph 2 of the Commissioner of Police's annual report for year ended 30th June, 1977?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

The nature of the advanced special training programme was a planned physical training course to ensure maximum fitness for crowd control during the tour.

TRAFFIC

Stirling Bridge Approaches

462. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has any survey been carried out to determine the effect the change in traffic flow has had on the people who live along the southern approaches to the new Stirling Bridge?
- (2) Do traffic surveys indicate the southern approach onto the bridge is used, in general, at excess speed?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Not as far as the Main Roads Department is aware.
- (2) No traffic speed surveys have been carried out by the Main Roads Department.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

World Steel Industry

463. Dr TROY, to the Premier:

- (1) Would he elucidate the causes of the present generally depressed state of the world's steel industry?
- (2) What was the financial cornerstone for the boom in steel production following World War II?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The present state of the world steel industry is a direct result of the general world recession that began in late 1974. The precise reason for the dramatic reversal from boom in early 1974 to slump in late 1974 is the subject of debate among economists, but the OPEC oil price rise and the consequent inflation it engendered is obviously implicated. National governments were thrown from a situation of boom and inflation to a situation characterised as "slumpflation".

I believe that the cause is of less interest than the progress that is being made in recovering from the recession. The slump was so deep that recovery will of necessity be slow and difficult, but all governments, including mine, are

working toward recovery, and there are signs of a general upturn gathering momentum.

- (2) There is no single financial base for the world upturn in steel in the years since the Second World War. In centrally planned economies, iron and steel production has been favoured as a means of industrialisation of the economy and has been undertaken as a matter of policy irrespective of profitability as we understand it. The financial base in these cases was the State.

In the EEC, the most dramatic growth was between 1952 and 1970 when capacity increased from 40 to 110 million tonnes. This can be compared to the 1976 production figure of 111 million tonnes. The establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (1952) leading to the EEC (1957) is credited with having created the right economic climate to encourage private investment in steel.

For the USA the buoyant years for steel were 1950-1970 when capacity rose from 100 to 150 million tonnes. This was as a result of private investment in a generally buoyant economy that demanded iron and steel products. There has been virtually no increase in capacity since 1970 as it has been cheaper to import steel, notably from Japan.

The Japanese upsurge over 1965 to 1974 when capacity rose from 40 to 120 million tonnes, was due to the availability of export markets, both in the USA and EEC, in addition to the rapid growth of the Japanese economy over that period. The Japanese government directly encouraged iron and steel production by ensuring that banks made funds available to private companies at attractive rates and accepting loan to equity ratios of up to 4 to 1, leaving the companies the need to raise only 20 per cent of the capital required to build the works. I have answered this question on the assumption that the member genuinely wishes to be better informed. However, it should be borne in mind that broad questions of this nature, which call for an expression of opinion on matters for which a Minister is not responsible to Parliament, are not admissible. See *Ersine May*, 18th Edition, page 325.

HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL

Federal Funds

464. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health:

As his answer to question 406 of 1977 indicates that there may be some cutback in the Health Education Council's drug education programme as a result of possibly insufficient Federal funds in the last budget, will he indicate the extent of the cutback and any specific programmes which may have to be reduced or abandoned?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

The amount of money made available is understood to be \$90 000 which is an actual increase of \$5 250.

No specific programmes will be reduced or abandoned.

STATES GRANTS (PARA-MEDICAL SERVICES) ACT

Qualification of Western Australia

465. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health:

As his answer to question 408 of 1977 asserts that Western Australia is a participating State within the meaning of the States Grants (Para-Medical Services) Act, 1969, will he explain why budget paper 7, page 53, gives an indication that Western Australia does not provide para-medical services in circumstances which qualify for assistance under the arrangements?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

The States Grants (Para-Medical) Services Act has two serious limitations. It relates only to services which are wholly or mainly for the aged, and the service must be given in the home of the patient.

There are other sources of funds which do not have these limitations.

HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES

Construction Programme

466. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware that capital grants for the development of public hospitals and other health institutions in Western Australia, under the hospitals development programme, have been reduced by 61 per cent from \$12 million to \$4 680 000?

- (2) Will he advise the House what the effects of these cutbacks will be on programmes of construction of public hospitals, mental hospital facilities, public nursing homes and health hostels in Western Australia for the next financial year?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The reduction will obviously mean that less work can be done from Commonwealth funds this year. However, the greater part of the hospital building programme is financed from State funds and it is hoped that sufficient funds can be made available from this source to enable a satisfactory programme to be undertaken. Details of the proposed programme will be available when the General Loan Fund Budget is presented to Parliament.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Federal Grants

467. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Why has Western Australia never received grants for minor agricultural research from the Australian Government (reference: budget paper number 7, table 60, page 80)?

Mr OLD replied:

Table 60 refers to direct grants made by the Commonwealth to State Governments for minor agricultural research.

Western Australia has received grants as follows:

University of WA—

Research in diseases in rapeseed—

1972-73 1975-76 \$5 500;

Department of Agriculture—

Fresh fruit disinfection research programme—

1975-76 \$19 341;

1976-77 \$5 056.

The above grants to the Department of Agriculture were received from the Commonwealth Government via the New South Wales Department of Agriculture and are therefore not shown as a direct grant to WA in Table 60.

TOURISM

Federal Grants

468. Mr. JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

Will the Minister explain to the House why the Fraser Government has phased out the dollar for dollar matching grants for tourism development in this State and what the effect of this action will be on the development of tourist attractions, such as pioneer settlements, historic sites and buildings in this State?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

It is understood that the Commonwealth Government suspended tourist grants to all States for reasons of economy. This means that less money will be available from Commonwealth sources for the further development of some historic projects. In appropriate instances State Department of Tourism grants will be made available to continue work on projects of significant tourist merit.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

Federal Funds

469. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it probable that Western Australia will receive an increase in funds for each of the sectors of tertiary education as a result of the review into tertiary education presently being made by the Australian Government?
- (2) If Western Australia does not receive an increase in funding after the review, what would be the result of effective cutbacks to the programmes of colleges of advanced education?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) It is assumed that the question refers to the review of tertiary funding being made by the Tertiary Education Commission which will report to the Federal Minister for Education. The Government is not yet aware of the amount of funding which will be made available to Western Australia, as the announced guidelines refer to a total funding commitment for the Commonwealth as a whole.

- (2) The question is entirely speculative and I have not been advised by the Colleges of Advanced Education as to any cut-backs to programmes or reduction in services that might result from reduced funding allocations.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Federal Funds

470. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Education:

Referring to my question 405 of 1977, the amounts should have read \$70 000 and \$57 000. Can he now please give the information I requested?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Grants for educational research are allocated by the Commonwealth on the recommendations of the Education Research Development Committee. In 1976-77 funds were allocated for specific projects to researchers at the following institutions—

	\$
University of Western Australia	29 876
Murdoch University	11 828
Western Australian Institute of Technology	13 500
Churchlands College of Advanced Education	11 750
Dyslexia Research Foundation	3 000
	<hr/>
	\$69 954

The allocation for 1977-78 represents the balance of the Commonwealth's commitment for 1977 approved projects, and an allowance for projects to be approved for 1978. As yet, the committee has not made any recommendations for 1978.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Aerodrome Development and Maintenance

471. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware that Federal Government grants direct to local government authorities for establishment, development and maintenance of local aerodromes in Western Australia have been reduced by \$155 000 to \$154 000 in the last Federal budget?

- (2) Will the local government authorities in Western Australia be able to develop and maintain local aerodromes at the same level as last financial year with this reduced allocation?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The moneys made available in the Federal Budget to the Federal Department of Transport in Western Australia for the establishment and the development of air ports under its control has been reduced considerably.

The moneys made available for maintenance is a separate allocation, and has dropped from \$151 600 to \$146 700.

- (2) It is not expected to greatly affect local government as the reduced amounts allocated reflect reduced applications for funds.

472. *This question was withdrawn.*

WATER RESOURCES

Federal Funds

473. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

Referring to his answer to part (3) of my question 411 of 1977—

- (a) if the funds available for 1977-78 are unchanged from 1976-77, does this not amount to a cut in the allocation after allowing for the present high inflation rate in Australia;
- (b) what will be the effect on the State's programmes of surface water measurement and investigation of underground water supplies and any other programmes of the effective cuts?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) The rate of growth of the measuring network will be slowed, which means that the construction of lower priority gauging stations will be delayed.

GAMING HOUSES

Raids

474. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

Referring to his answer to part (3) of my question 332 of 1977, will he please advise on what dates each of the premises named were raided?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

Dates on which each premises were raided are—

Roma Club, 155 James Street, Perth,
10th September, 1976, 16th January,
1977, 8th May, 1977.

Latin Quarter, 266A William Street,
Perth, 27th November, 1976, 20th
July, 1977.

Il Trovatore Club, 174 James Street,
Perth, 29th October, 1976, 14th
July, 1977.

Ginger Club, 240 William Street,
Perth, 28th October, 1976, 24th
January, 1977, 30th April, 1977,
8th August, 1977.

Club 27, Corner Lake and James
Streets, Perth, 15th October, 1976,
11th December, 1976, 8th January,
1977, 10th August, 1977.

International Club, 91 James Street,
Perth, 30th June, 1977.

Casa Blanca Club, 18 South Terrace,
Fremantle, 13th November, 1976.

Vastesi Club, 40 High Street, Fremantle,
20th November, 1976, 13th
February, 1977, 20th July, 1977.

ROAD FUNDS

Allocation to Local Authorities

475. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

Referring to his answer to part (1) (a) of my question 341 of 1977, relevant to road funds allocations, will he please advise how much of the money was from Commonwealth grants and how much from State Government sources?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

	Commonwealth Grants	State Government Sources
	\$	\$
1974-75	4 667 600	2 625 500
1975-76	5 723 000	2 214 200
1976-77	5 374 400	2 194 800

FORESTS DEPARTMENT

Industrial Award

476. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

(1) On what date were wage increases, pursuant to the forestry award, paid while the so-called "freeze" was in operation?

(2) What was the date upon which the Western Australian Industrial Commission awarded the indexation flow-on at the time referred to in (1)?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(1) Actual payment to employees varied according to the divisions of the Forests Department. The award was amended for the increase to apply from the beginning of the first pay period commencing on or after the 24th May, 1977. Wage indexation increases were exempted from the wage freeze.

(2) (i) For awards other than the forestry award—beginning of the first pay period commencing on or after the 15th May, 1977.

(ii) Forestry award, the 22nd June, 1977.

FORESTS DEPARTMENT

Industrial Award

477. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Forests: Why does the Forests Department wait the full 21 days before filing an answer when a claim is filed to amend the forestry award?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

The Public Service Board acts on behalf of the Forests Department in these matters and advises that it does not necessarily wait the full 21 days before filing an answer to a claim to amend the forestry award.

ERIC CHARLES RICHARDS

Land Agent's Licence

478. Mr TONKIN, to the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is Eric Charles Richards, who had his land agent's licence cancelled on 22nd April, 1977, still acting as a land agent?

(2) Has his licence been restored?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1) As far as the Land Agents Supervisory Committee is aware, Eric Charles Richards is not acting as a land agent.

(2) No.

CONSUMER PROTECTION*Johnson Aerosol Products*

479. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

Will the Minister undertake to test the claims by Johnson that its aerosol products contain no fluorocarbons?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I will undertake to have a test made and information provided to the member.

CONSUMER PROTECTION*Credit Laws*

480. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

When is it expected that the Bill dealing with credit laws will be introduced into the Parliament?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

This matter is in the hands of the Attorney-General and the question should be directed to him.

LAND AGENTS SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE*Replacement*

481. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Attorney-General:

Will the Attorney-General table the Law Reform Commission's report which recommends the replacement of the Land Agents Supervisory Committee?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

Report on a review of the Land Agents Act (Project No. 37) was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on the 30th July, 1974.

ERIC CHARLES RICHARDS*Land Agents Supervisory Committee Action*

482. Mr TONKIN, to the Chief Secretary:

Why was the Land Agents Supervisory Committee apparently loath to act against Eric Charles Richards and in fact did not act until requested so to do by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

The Land Agents Supervisory Committee was not loath to act against Eric Charles Richards and was not requested so to do by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.

ERIC CHARLES RICHARDS*Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations: Recommendation*

483. Mr TONKIN, to the Speaker:

- (1) Has the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations had occasion to order or recommend that the Land Agents Supervisory Committee act against Eric Charles Richards?
- (2) On what date did the Commissioner so act?
- (3) Will he table the documents related to the Commissioner's action?

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) replied:

- (1) No. A complaint was received from the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs. This was directed against the Land Agents Supervisory Committee and alleged some want of administrative action by the committee in connection with Eric Charles Richards. Some investigations were conducted but the complaint was withdrawn before its merits were determined and no recommendation was made.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No. Sections 23(1) and 23A of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act, 1971-1976, would prevent the tabling of the documents.

EMPLOYMENT*Youth Training Programme*

484. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

How many Western Australian—

- (a) females;
- (b) males,

have been assisted by the special youth employment training programme since its inception last October?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

It is not possible to establish that all those assisted are Western Australian.

- (a) 1 540;
- (b) 906.

Source: Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Albany Highway-Harris Street Intersection

485. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many accidents have occurred over the past six years at the intersection of Albany Highway and Harris Street, Beckenham?
- (2) Of these accidents, how many have been fatal?
- (3) What action does the Minister intend to take to prevent any further accidents occurring at this section of Albany Highway?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) 50 reported accidents.
- (2) None.
- (3) The City of Gosnells' request for a median barrier in Albany Highway at the intersection is being investigated.

HOSPITALS

Animal Units

486. Dr DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What was the total capital cost of the new animal unit at Royal Perth Hospital?
- (2) What was the total cost of furbishings and equipment of this unit?
- (3) What is the total staff of this unit?
- (4) What other metropolitan public hospitals and/or laboratories both university and State have animal houses or units?
- (5) What is the respective staff of each of these units?
- (6) What is the running costs of each of these units per annum?
- (7) What kinds of animals are kept in each unit and for what purpose?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) It is estimated that the final cost of the building which includes research facilities, will be \$1 068 440. Professional fees cost an additional \$83 361.
- (2) New furbishings and equipment cost \$62 485.
- (3) 11 (equivalent to 10.3 full time).
- (4) Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, State Health Laboratory Services, University of Western Australia.
- (5) to (7) *The answer was tabled (see paper No: 195).*

FEDERAL YOUTH AFFAIRS OFFICE

Establishment

487. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) Is he aware that the Commonwealth Government has decided to establish an office of youth affairs within the Commonwealth Department of the Environment, Housing and Community Development?
- (2) Is he aware of an advertisement for personnel for the proposed office of youth affairs which appeared in *The West Australian* on Saturday, 7th May, 1977, which indicated that several well paid jobs were being created?
- (3) Having regard to the existence and work of the Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, established under the Youth, Community Recreation and National Fitness Act of 1972, is it considered that a Federal office of youth affairs is necessary in Western Australia?
- (4) Was such office established after consultation with the States?
- (5) Is the establishment of such office consistent with the federalism policy of the State and Federal Governments?
- (6) Is it a fact that the moneys made available by the Federal Government for the office of youth affairs in a time of financial stringency could have been better spent without a duplication of administration by making the same available to the Community Recreation Council of Western Australia through the State Government?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) It is understood that it is not intended to establish a branch office of youth affairs in Western Australia; rather, the office in Canberra will co-operate with the Community Recreation Council and other State Government agencies on matters concerning youth in Western Australia.
- (4) and (5) Not applicable.
- (6) It does not appear that the creation of the office of youth affairs in Canberra will cause any duplication of services in Western Australia at present.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Teachers

488. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:
- Will teachers in community-based pre-school centres continue to have their present status of teacher-in-charge when

(2)			1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Primary—									
Government	....	....	143 638	145 275	145 813	145 398	144 412	143 298	140 505
Total	....	....	168 195	169 835	170 540	170 321	169 381	168 360	165 594
Secondary—									
Government	....	....	65 585	65 953	67 044	69 235	72 059	75 321	80 260
Total	....	....	85 322	85 666	86 493	88 458	91 181	94 618	99 656
Grand Total	....	....	253 517	255 501	257 033	258 779	260 562	262 978	265 250

PENSIONERS

Entitlements under New Legislation

490. Mr WILSON, to the Premier:

In view of possible widespread uncertainty amongst pensioners with regard to specific entitlements under the Acts Amendment (Pensioners Rates Rebates and Deferments) Bill, and in order that the greatest possible access to such entitlements should be available to eligible pensioners, will he consider publicising the new provisions in detail by means of advertisements in the daily newspapers or through some other mass media form?

the pre-school board is abolished, or will they then become officially responsible to some other person or authority?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Teachers in pre-school centres are responsible to advisers now and this system will continue. They will continue to be in charge of their centres.

SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Enrolment Figures

489. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the planning branch of the Education Department have projection figures for school enrolments over the next seven years?
- (2) If "Yes" what are the anticipated figures for primary and secondary school enrolments for the years 1978-1984?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Advertisements advising pensioners of their entitlement to the concessions and how applications could be made, were placed in *The West Australian* on the 30th July and *The Sunday Times* and *Sunday Independent* on the 31st July.

In addition, all the rating authorities involved have been advised of full details of the scheme and are in a position to answer any queries pensioners may have in this regard.

Should any pensioner still be uncertain as to his entitlement, his inquiries would best be directed to the rating authorities concerned.

LAND IN DIANELLA

Autumn Centre Site

491. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has he recently received a deputation seeking his approval for land owned by the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Board in Waverley Street, Dianella, to be made available for an autumn centre site?
- (2) If "Yes" what was his decision in relation to this request?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Negotiations between the City of Stirling and the Metropolitan Water Board are continuing at officer level.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Dianella Electorate

492. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What priority is being given to the installation of traffic lights at the following intersections—
 - (a) Flinders Street and Nollamara Avenue, Nollamara;
 - (b) Morley Drive and Grand Promenade, Dianella;
 - (c) The Strand and Surrey Street, Dianella?
- (2) What indication is there of the time delay in the installation of lights at each of these intersections?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) None are programmed for 1977-78.
- (2) Priorities are reviewed annually in the light of the funds available so that no time period has been set at this stage.

POLICE

Warwick

493. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) What progress has been made with plans to develop the proposed new police complex at Warwick?
- (2) What area will be served by the complex?
- (3) What is the number of personnel to be stationed there?

- (4) Can he give some assurance in terms of a possible completion date for the complex?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Plans are currently being prepared by Public Works Department.
- (2) The coastal area from North Beach to Whitfords taking in the whole area east to Uganda Road.
- (3) This will depend on the workload existing at the time which will be subject to periodic review.
- (4) This complex has been given a high priority on the department's capital works programme. However, the allocation of Treasury funds has not yet been determined.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Government's Financial Responsibility

494. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why, in view of the shortage of funds for education, is the Government willing to assume financial responsibility for the maintenance of kindergartens which at present are self supporting?
- (2) Is it a fact that each of the 300 kindergartens in the State costs approximately \$5 000 per year to maintain?
- (3) Will the money that the Government spends on the maintenance and upkeep of kindergartens come from the primary school allowances?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Self-supporting pre-school centres will continue to meet all their own maintenance expenses.
- (2) The upkeep costs of pre-school centres are not met by the State and details of maintenance costs paid by committees are not known.
- (3) No.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Administration, Funding, and Facilities

495. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) (a) Will the kindergarten committees who become affiliated under the Education Act, but who wish to remain under the management and supervision of an elected parent

committee responsible for running costs and equipment expenses, and who wish to remain in their own shire-owned premises still retain the current child/staff ratio;

- (b) will their staff automatically become under the direct control of the local primary school headmaster;
 - (c) will they be permitted to cater for some four-year-old children, and if so will the levy for them still exist;
 - (d) will they still be eligible for any available equipment grants?
- (2) Does affiliation under the Education Act give them the same administrative rights as their present affiliation with the pre-school board?
- (3) Will they become disadvantaged in any way by not transferring directly to the Education Department?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) (a) The accepted child/staff ratios will be retained.
 - (b) No.
 - (c) Enrolment of children will continue to be a responsibility of the parent committee. Levies will be required for children in attendance of more than one year below school age.
 - (d) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Centres which do not transfer will continue to be responsible for the total running costs of their centres.

HEALTH

Genetic Engineering

496. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What institutes and laboratories within the State are carrying out research in genetic engineering?
- (2) What are the topics of research being carried out?
- (3) What safeguards are employed in each of these institutes to prevent contamination by genetically altered material?
- (4) What mechanism does the Government have to ensure that it has complete knowledge of all such projects?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) None.
- (2) and (3) Not applicable.
- (4) It is understood that the Commonwealth Government is actively considering the establishment of a committee to control all research in this area. Western Australia would co-operate.

EDUCATION

Drug Documentary Screening

497. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it a fact that permission has been given for the recent documentary on drugs produced by Channel 9, to be screened in schools as reported in the *Daily News* of Monday, 15th August?
- (2) If "Yes", what education criteria were applied in making the decision?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

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

STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Compensation to Tenants for Improvements

498. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Housing:

When a tenant vacates a State Housing Commission dwelling, is the commission prepared, under any set of circumstances, to pay a sum in full or in part reimbursement for any or all of the undermentioned items—the additions of:

- (a) a third (or fourth) bedroom;
- (b) a garage or carport;
- (c) a bitumen or concrete driveway;
- (d) concrete slabs;
- (e) an enlargement of living room (by enclosing front verandah and removing intervening front wall) with State Housing Commission permission;
- (f) an enclosure of front or rear verandah;
- (g) an installation of electric stove, electric hot water heater or other such appliance;
- (h) any other addition or installation?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (a) If the need for an additional bedroom or any structural alteration had been established, it would have been done at State Housing Commission expense.

Where the need had not been established, the addition or alteration would be at the tenant's expense and subject to the commission's prior approval and conformity with local authority requirements.

- (b) to (d) No.
 (e) and (f) Same as (a).
 (g) Providing the appliance is acceptable to commission standards, tenants are reimbursed.
 (h) Generally, there is no reimbursement for any other addition or installation that would not normally be provided by the State Housing Commission.

This attitude and policy is, I understand, in conformity with the practice adopted in the private sector where any addition, etc., for the tenant's convenience is at his expense.

HERITAGE LEGISLATION

Introduction

499. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

Is it intended to introduce new heritage legislation this session?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:
 No.

SCHOOLS

South Coogee and Munster

500. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the present enrolment of the South Coogee school?
- (2) What is the anticipated enrolment of the South Coogee school in 1978 should the proposed new Wattleup school be not constructed?
- (3) What is the anticipated enrolment of the South Coogee school in 1978?
- (4) What is the anticipated enrolment of the Munster school in 1978?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) 381 (including 39 pre-primary) pupils as at 1st August, 1977.
- (2) 401 (including 40 pre-primary) pupils.
- (3) 175 pupils in years 1-7.
- (4) There is no school in the locality of Munster.

SCHOOL

Coogee

501. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has consideration been given to the question of closing the Coogee (Beach) school?
- (2) If "Yes" what is the outcome of the review?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) No consideration has been given to this question at this time.

However, the long term planning for the area outlined in the Town of Cockburn urban development area No. 1 suggests that the school may eventually need to be re-located on a site more central to its future catchment area. The school will not be relocated until the southwestern quadrant of the urban development area No. 1 is subdivided and residential development takes place therein.

RURAL HOUSING SCHEME

Assistance

502. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many applications have been received for assistance under the rural housing scheme in each of the past two years?
- (2) Of these applications, how many were—
 (a) granted;
 (b) rejected?
- (3) How much finance was made available to successful applicants in each of the past two years?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) As at the 23rd August, 1977, 110 applications have been received since the commencement of the Rural Housing Authority on the 1st November, 1976.
- (2) (a) 19 applications have been approved,
 (b) 25 applications have been rejected.

- (3) \$429 000 has been committed to approved applicants from the authority's resources since its commencement on the 1st November, 1976.

BEEF PRODUCERS

High Rainfall Areas

503. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that in a recent report of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics it was forecast that some 7 000 beef producers would leave the industry in the next year and that 84 per cent of these producers would be from high rainfall areas?
- (2) (a) Is this prognosis correct; and
(b) if not, to what extent is the report incorrect?
- (3) (a) What number of beef producers in the high rainfall areas of Western Australia will leave the industry in the coming year;
(b) what measures does the Government contemplate taking to keep these producers on their farms?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) and (2) A recent report of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics suggested that some 7 000 beef specialist producers throughout Australia would continue to earn negative incomes, and that 84 per cent of these would be in the high rainfall zone. No forecast was made of the number of producers who would leave the industry in the next year or in the longer term.
- (3) (a) This figure is not known.
(b) Programmes under the rural adjustment scheme are continuing and increased funds for adjustment were announced in last week's Federal Budget.

POLICE STATION

Greenbushes

504. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Has he decided whether the Greenbushes police station will be closed or will remain operative?
- (2) In the event of the Greenbushes police station being closed—
(a) when is it intended that the closure will take place;

(b) on how many occasions each week is it proposed that Road Traffic Authority officers will patrol Greenbushes town;

(c) on how many occasions each week is it proposed that Police Department officers will visit Greenbushes after the closure of the police station in that town;

(d) will police officers who are stationed at Bridgetown and Donnybrook be replaced by a relieving officer when leave is taken?

- (3) If the closure of Greenbushes police station is still under consideration when can a decision be expected?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (3) The report of the planning and research section of the Police Department is now before me, including a report on matters raised in a deputation led by the Hon. A. A. Lewis, M.L.C., at which the member was present, and a decision will be made within two weeks.

WATER SUPPLIES

Midland Reticulation Area 10A

505. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Works:

In the letter to the La Salle College, Midland, on 1st July, 1977, he identified a reticulation area 10A, Midland as being recommended for inclusion in the works programme for the 1978-79 financial year. Would he now provide the following information regarding that scheme—

- (1) Have plans and specifications been drawn up for the mains extension?
- (2) What is the cost involved?
- (3) What will be the commencement date for the project?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Current estimate, \$40 550.
- (3) Presently unknown, as it will be dependent upon availability of funds.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AUTHORITY*Director*

506. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it intended to make an appointment to the position of Director, Alcohol and Drug Authority?
- (2) If so, what action has been taken to fill the vacancy?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) When did the previous director, Dr Scott, leave?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) An advertisement is being prepared and will be circulated nationally and internationally.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The 4th March, 1977.

EMPLOYMENT*Federal Grant for Kwinana Area*

507. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) In view of the precedence in the Federal Budget for special allocations to States to create employment opportunities in areas of high unemployment, such as the \$10 000 000 allocation to Queensland in employment grants for the Maryborough region, will he ask the Australian Government for a special employment grant to create job opportunities in the Kwinana region as this area has possibly one of the highest unemployment levels of any region in Australia?
- (2) Is he aware that on latest figures available, which are April, 1977, the unemployed in the Kwinana region as a percentage of the workforce were 9.49%?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) The \$10 million special allocation made to the Queensland Government is being made in the following form—
 1976-77—\$1 m. (already allocated).
 1977-78—\$3 m.
 1978-79—\$3 m.
 1979-80—\$3 m.

The allocation results from the Commonwealth Government's promise of assistance to Queensland and the Maryborough employment region. It is to

enable the creation of employment opportunities for people who have been put out of work following the cessation of the Fraser Island sand mining scheme. As such it is a special allocation made because of special circumstances.

The Western Australian Government has approached the Commonwealth Government for assistance in a major effort to dramatically increase industrial training. The State Government is awaiting results of this submission.

Commonwealth and State Labour Ministers are to study the problem of unemployment, particularly with reference to structural unemployment, at a conference to be held in Perth next week.

Although having a disturbingly high level of unemployment, the Kwinana area has not the highest level of any region in Australia.

- (2) Yes. Traditionally this area has had a relatively higher unemployment rate than most other Commonwealth employment service districts. It should be noted the district is made up of three local government areas. These are Mandurah, Rockingham, and Kwinana. Rockingham and Mandurah, in particular, are attractive living areas and there is reason to believe that people move into these areas with the primary consideration being to take advantage of the living environment. Some of those registered as unemployed may well be semi-retired.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE*Denmark Office*

508. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it correct that the Department of Agriculture has decided to close its Denmark office?
- (2) If "Yes" will he review the decision?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) and (2) The Department of Agriculture's office in Denmark has not been closed. Officers of the Agriculture Protection Board will operate from that office. A better and more diversified advisory service should be available from the pool of extension officers and research personnel based at Albany. The Denmark office will have an extension officer in attendance on a pre-announced regular basis for office consultation.

ROADS

Federal Funds

509. Mr COWAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What matching requirements does the Commonwealth Government apply to funds allocated to the State for road purposes?
- (2) What amounts have been made available in 1976-1977 and 1977-1978 to the northern division of the Main Roads Department from the MITERS funds?
- (3) What is the annual amount of all funds allocated to the Main Roads Department for expenditure within the area controlled by the northern division of the department since 1970-71?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The expenditure of a specified 'quota' on road works by the State from its own resources, which for 1977-78 is \$39.8 million.

It is assumed that the member is referring to the "Northam" Division not "Northern" Division in questions (2) and (3) and the amounts are:

	\$
(2) 1976-77	29 000
1977-78	16 000
(3) 1970-71	2 760 407
1971-72	3 147 423
1972-73	3 395 381
1973-74	3 562 637
1974-75	4 006 338
1975-76	4 467 496
1976-77	4 726 578
1977-78	5 031 953

KALGOORLIE SCHOOL OF MINES

Report

510. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When is it envisaged that the Western Australian Post Secondary Education Commission shall report to the Government with its recommendations on the Western Australian school of mines at Kalgoorlie?
- (2) Will the report be made immediately public?
- (3) Approximately how long after the report is received is it envisaged that the Government will make a decision on the future siting of the school of mines?

- (4) In the event that the Government makes a decision to retain the school of mines in Kalgoorlie will the Government be prepared to adequately fund the school so as to make it a viable institution for the training of the State's mining personnel?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (4) I am advised that the recommendations from the Western Australian Post Secondary Education Commission relating to the future of the Western Australian School of Mines and the Eastern Goldfields Technical College should be available to the Government by the end of October.

It is expected that the report, together with the Government's decision, will be released by the end of 1977, following consideration and negotiation of future funding arrangements.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE

Salmon Gums

511. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware that the Salmon Gums pre-school centre is housed in an extremely old secondhand building which is not entirely adequate for the job and is in need of urgent alteration or replacement?
- (2) If "Yes" could he state as to what renovations are currently contemplated for the building?
- (3) If the Government intends to replace the building could he put some estimate on when construction of the new building may be commenced?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) The local committee has been asked to recommend what improvements, in their opinion, are necessary to the existing building and to provide quotations for these improvements. Future plans will be determined after this report has been received.

HOUSING

Pensioners at Pemberton

512. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many—
 - (a) single units;
 - (b) married units;

of pensioner accommodation are in the course of construction at Pemberton?

- (2) When will these be ready for occupancy?
- (3) What will be the weekly rental of these units?
- (4) Is it intended to build further pensioner accommodation at Pemberton in the 1977-78 financial year, and if so—
 - (a) how many units is it proposed to build;
 - (b) when is building expected to start?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Six pensioner units are under construction—
 - 3 single units;
 - 3 one-bedroom units.
- (2) These units will be ready for occupancy by December, 1977.
- (3) Weekly rentals for these units will be—
 - One-bedroom—from \$12 (rebated rent varies on income received);
 - Single unit—\$7.60 (rebated rent).
- (4) No pensioner units are programmed for 1977-78.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Federal Funds

I. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the combined total estimated amount available to Western Australia in capital grants for Government and non-Government schools from the 1976-77 and 1977-78 Federal Budgets?
- (2) How much is for—
 - (a) Government schools; and
 - (b) non-Government schools?
- (3) Of the money for Government schools—
 - (a) how much has been committed; and
 - (b) how much remains uncommitted?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I thank the member for Cockburn for minimal notice of this question. The answer is as follows—

- (1) and (2) The allocation of capital grants for 1977-78 has not yet been made. However, it is anticipated

that the funding will be similar to that for 1976-77. Details of the amounts appropriated for 1976-77 may be found in the relevant States Grants (Schools) and States Grants (Schools Assistance) Acts assented to on the 24th November, 1976, and the 16th June, 1977.

- (3) (a) and (b) All money appropriated to the 31st December, 1977, has been committed. No information on funding for the 1978 calendar year is available and no commitment has been made against it.

NORTH-WEST SHELF GAS

Joint Venturers

2. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

My question concerns today's announcement relating to the North-West Shelf gas project. I was unable to give any notice of the question because I have only just had a chance to read the statement.

- (1) Can the Premier indicate to the Parliament whether there has been any change in the names of the joint venture companies which were involved in the initial study of the North-West Shelf gas project?
- (2) Can he indicate what percentage of Australian ownership is envisaged in the project?
- (3) Will he outline what action his Government has taken to encourage Australian investors to participate in the project?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) In respect of the main partners since the original exploration was undertaken and the successful exploration was achieved, the only major change has been the entry of the Australian company BHP at the time the Burmah people retired. I think that is the answer the Deputy Leader of the Opposition seeks. He will appreciate that meant there was a substantial Australian ownership brought into the project; more so than previously.
- (2) Without being precise and going into decimal places, it is approximately 48 per cent; and for this reason the Commonwealth had to

give the matter special consideration because it fell slightly below 50 per cent Australian ownership.

- (3) I think the fact that there has been a major Australian participation in the project from the beginning, now augmented by the entry of BHP, indicates a very conscientious effort has been made to ensure a maximum participation of Australian capital in the project.

Without having his question in front of me, I hope I have dealt with the points raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

FEDERAL YOUTH AFFAIRS OFFICE

Establishment

3. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Recreation:
Further to the Minister's reply to question 487 today—

- (1) Was the office of youth affairs within the Commonwealth Department of the Environment, Housing and Community Development in Canberra established after consultation with the States?
- (2) Is the establishment of that office in Canberra within that department consistent with the federalism policy of the Federal and State Governments?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) My understanding is that no consultation occurred relating to the establishment of the office. There has been some consultation relating to the relationship between the office, when it operates, and the Community Recreation Council, as I indicated in my previous answer. In respect of whether the office is necessary and whether it is in the spirit of the policy, we have some reservations which are reflected in my answer by suggesting at present it does not appear there will be any duplication of services. This is something that must be tested as time transpires, and we would much rather have an ongoing relationship which reflects a growing involvement with the States. This will be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of Ministers for Recreation at Sydney in two weeks' time.

HEALTH

Radium and Thorium

4. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are radium and thorium bone seeking isotopes?
- (2) Is it a fact that a person could stand next to radioactive materials, such as radium and thorium, which emit readings of 6.5 roentgens per hour with relative immunity?
- (3) Is it a fact that the same quantity of material, if digested into the body, increases its radioactive potency by up to one million times because of the ability of the alpha particles to irradiate the bone and bone marrow?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) For both radium and thorium the bone is considered to be the critical organ for radiation hazard for these isotopes after ingestion. It is common to call such isotopes bone seeking, but the quantity of the isotope which is deposited in bone would be critically dependent on the chemical nature of the material ingested.
- (2) No.
- (3) The effect is enhanced but the amount of increase is impossible to estimate.

FLUORIDE EMISSIONS

Upper Swan

5. Mr O'NEIL (Chief Secretary): The Minister for Health, in answering question 133 asked by the member for Victoria Park on the 9th August, indicated he would supply further data concerning ambient fluoride levels in the Upper Swan area. The information is now available, and as it is in tabular form I seek permission to table it on behalf of the Minister for Health.

The answer was tabled (see paper No. 196).

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

World Steel Industry

6. Dr TROY, to the Premier:

I would like to refer to two parts of the Premier's answer to question 463 on the notice paper today. In the final paragraph of the answer the Premier said that he answered the question on the assumption that I genuinely wish to be better informed. I find that remark

slightly patronising, to say the least. There is no question that my interest in the matter is genuine, even if it is to ascertain whether the Premier's knowledge of the activities is sufficient to meet the needs.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member to get to the point and ask his question.

Dr TROY: Yes. My question is: Does the Premier see the Nixon decision of August, 1971, and the subsequent devaluation of the US dollar, with its effects on US dollar real earnings, as being factors in the information supplied in answer to part (1)?

The SPEAKER: Order! The question on notice asked by the honourable member was in my view a borderline case so far as seeking an expression of opinion is concerned. In my view the question now asked is clearly seeking an expression of opinion, and I direct that it be not answered.

EARTHQUAKE IN INDONESIA

Government Sympathy and Aid

7. Mr WILSON, to the Premier:

In view of the tragic effects of the earthquake in Indonesia on Friday, and the fortunate escape from harm to life or property from the secondary effects felt in Western Australia, will the Premier

consider recommending action at a State or Federal level for a message of sympathy to be sent to Indonesia, together with an offer of some tangible aid towards rehabilitation of the victims of the disaster?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Matters of this kind are normally handled at the Federal level, particularly if any physical aid is involved. However, there are circumstances in which the State Government can do something; I refer to the Italian earthquake not so long ago when a State fund-raising committee was set up by the local Italian community to which the State Government contributed, together with many citizens of Western Australia.

So far as the Government is concerned in this situation, I think our relationship with the Indonesians is so congenial—and has been over the years—that, first of all, they would know of our sympathy and, secondly, would be very prompt to ask us if they needed any assistance. My understanding is that Indonesia has been able to cope with the position within its own facilities, and without outside help. However, we are sympathetic in respect of this position and ever watchful of it.

Mr Clarko: We could send them some wheat.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Yes, if we could get some ships away.