

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 17 August 1993

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 3.30 pm, and read prayers.

PETITION - MIDLAND WORKSHOPS, CLOSURE RECONSIDERATION

The following petition bearing the signatures of 376 persons was presented by Hon N.D. Griffiths -

We the undersigned, pray that the decision of the Government to close the Midland Workshop be reconsidered. We further call upon the Government to release all documentation associated with their decision to close the workshop.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper No 510.]

PETITION - FISHING NETS, BAN

The following petition bearing the signatures of 332 persons was presented by Hon Tom Helm -

We the undersigned citizens of Western Australia humbly request that recognition be given and consideration taken into our request to ban the use of fishing nets (other than Prawn Drag Nets and Throw Nets) for recreational fishing between and including Point Samson and Eighty Mile Beach.

We also request the phasing out of Professional Licence Endorsements allowing netting in tidal creeks and turtle breeding areas between and including De Grey River and Yule River.

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

[See paper No 511.]

MOTION - URGENCY

Road Funding, Minister for Transport's Statements Clarification

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): Earlier today I received the following letter -

Dear Mr President

Pursuant to SO 72, it is my intention at today's sitting to move that the House at its rising adjourn until 9:00am on December 25, 1993 in order to enable the Minister for Transport, Hon Eric Charlton, to explain apparent inconsistencies between his statements about road funding, particularly so far as those statements relate to funding the shortfall between moneys available for road construction and maintenance having regard to:

- (a) advice provided to the Opposition before June 1, 1993, denied at the time by the Government, that it was intended to introduce a metropolitan fuel tax levy;
- (b) the Minister's admission August 4, 1993 that there would be a funding shortfall coupled with his further admission by way of answer to a question in this House on August 10 that 2 options were available to meet the shortfall, viz, an increase to State fuel tax and increasing licence fees;
- (c) the Minister's denial during the same Question Time on August 10 that the Government would do either;
- (d) the Minister for Planning's tape recorded admission to a journalist on Thursday, August 12, 1993 that he was aware that the Government intended to abolish the Family car licence concession and impose a metropolitan fuel tax effective November 1993;

- (e) the statement on the same day by the Minister for Transport that he was aware these matters were under consideration; a statement seemingly contradictory to his previously stated public opinion;
- (f) the Minister's failure to correct the impression conveyed to this House and the public that these matters were not on the Government's agenda.

Yours sincerely

John Halden MLC

SHADOW MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT;

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The member will require the support of four members in order to move the motion.

[At least four members rose in their places.]

HON JOHN HALDEN (South Metropolitan) [3.39 pm]: I move -

That the House at its rising adjourn until 9.00 am on 25 December 1993.

I appreciate the opportunity provided by the standing orders in this House to discuss matters of some importance and urgency. In debating this matter with myself I was somewhat confused as to whether I should move an urgency motion or a privilege motion, because I believe that the Minister for Transport has yet again gone perilously close to misleading the House. Having considered that matter for some time, I thought the most appropriate course of action was to provide the Minister with an opportunity to clarify his previous statements, both in this House and to the media.

In May the Opposition received advice that a Cabinet submission was put forward for comment by Cabinet members to discuss the possibility of the Government's imposing a metropolitan-based fuel tax.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Say that again.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: In late May this year the Opposition received advice that a Cabinet submission was to be circulated to members of Cabinet to discuss the possibility of the Government's imposing a metropolitan-based fuel tax. Members may recall that on 1 June I announced that the Government would impose a fuel tax at the rate of 3¢ a litre, despite the current Premier's promises prior to the election that no new taxes would be introduced. On the same day the Minister for Transport went on ABC radio, after I had been on radio, and said -

Mr Charlton - Well, he's wrong because there is no such document - I think it is about time Gerry, that people like John Halden were brought to task and made to defend their comments by simply owning up and being honest about what they've got and what they haven't got.

GANNON - So, it's not going to come from fuel tax?

CHARLTON: Gerry, it was never even put forward both in Opposition and since that it was going to come from fuel taxes ... It's not part of the Government's planning whatsoever.

GANNON: And you have not taken any submissions to Cabinet about fuel taxes, or anything like that?

CHARLTON: No, I haven't.

Mr Charlton later commented -

There has been too much of this sort of comment coming from John Halden, as far as I'm concerned, all it does is worry people and generate a lot of political comment and there's no basis for it.

Hon E.J. Charlton: I got that right, didn't I?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The facts suggest that the Minister was wrong again.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Oh, golly!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The transcript continues -

GANNON - Alright, so finally no increases in the fuel tax?

CHARLTON: No increases in the fuel tax as far as funding allocations are concerned.

On the weekend Hon Reg Davies made the point that leaked documents are used only for political purposes. That may be the case, but I was somewhat confused at the time at acquiring the knowledge of the tax proposal and the Minister's denials.

Hon E.J. Charlton: From where did you get the information?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: My sources were particularly reliable, and I could not understand how the Minister was denying the accusation. Regarding Hon Reg Davies' comment -

Hon Reg Davies: Where did I make that comment?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It was in Saturday's *The West Australian*. I am not criticising the member.

Hon Reg Davies: I do not remember making that comment.

Hon N.D. Griffiths: It is not a royal commission!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Indeed. I could not understand how the Minister could possibly deny those allegations, bearing in mind the appropriateness of the source. Mr Charlton went on the Channel 9 news on 1 June and said that "metropolitan people will never be discriminated against by this Government". However, somewhere along the line things became a little confusing for Mr Charlton, as the imposition of a metropolitan-based fuel tax can be read as nothing but discrimination against metropolitan people.

On 2 June Mr Charlton said he denied the Opposition claims that a new metropolitan-based fuel tax would be introduced; he also said that no proposal was before him or Cabinet for any type of new fuel tax or any increases in fuel tax. On 29 June a Department of Transport spokesperson said that no plans existed for a State fuel tax. Basically, that provides the background to the point I wish to make.

The Opposition believed that the Government proposed to introduce a new tax, about which we were specific. We outlined the dimensions of the tax, about which we were relatively correct: We were told that it would be 3¢ a litre, and it turned out that the Government, as recently as last week, was considering a tax of 3.5¢ a litre. No member could consider that our information was too far wide of the mark. Clearly, we were not making this up or being mischievous; we were advising the public of this State of the likelihood of a new tax, which the Premier had ruled out when he was Leader of the Opposition.

On 4 August the Minister presented a ministerial statement to this House. The statement was dated 10 August, but was delivered to the House on 4 August. I do not want to confuse members, but I have checked *Hansard* and it would appear that someone in Mr Charlton's office made a slight error. The Minister said -

The Government will be considering a range of options to address the future funding shortfall. These include further efficiency initiatives in the delivery of road programs and additional revenue options.

The PRESIDENT: Order! About half a dozen audible conversations are being conducted. At least I am trying to listen to the member.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: When I asked the Minister about his possible revenue options, he said the options were either an increase in the State fuel tax levy or an increase in motor vehicle licences. In that regard the Minister was correct. I was well aware that only two options were available for him to fund the shortfall, which I knew would occur based on the figures from the Main Roads Department. Blind Freddy would have seen that the money available was insufficient. In his statement the Minister outlined the revenue options. I asked him which option was preferred, and the Minister answered neither.

Hon E.J. Charlton: That is right.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is incongruous that the Minister can say that the Government is considering neither option, because he said in essence that only two options were available to cover the shortfall. However, a document then became available to the Opposition which clearly indicated that the Main Roads Department, the Minister and, I presume, the Government were considering both.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You should not presume anything, Mr Halden; you usually get it wrong.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have provided this opportunity for the Minister to explain how -

Hon E.J. Charlton: Why don't you save us time? You sit down and I will tell you.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: How can the Minister say that two options are available, and he is considering neither when, in reality, he said from his own mouth that he must consider one or the other option. The last time we had a debate on such matters the Minister was sunk by two Dorothy Dix questions, but this time he has been caught by his ministerial statement. The Minister cannot blame clever Liberal Party backbenchers for his undoing - he can only blame himself. The Minister clearly pointed out that he needs more revenue, and he gave the options available. However, he denied that he would increase revenue through either option. I realise that the Minister said that the question I asked of him was in relation to the Budget; however, I have examined *Hansard* and the question made no reference to the Budget.

I understand that these are not increases to be announced in the Budget or about the time of the Budget. The document indicates that they are increases that will take effect on 1 November 1993 or 1 January 1994. One would have to be extremely naive to think that in the process of developing its Budget the Government has not considered these increases, which amount to some \$60m. If they are not included, clearly the Government's road funding program for the second half of this financial year will be in grave jeopardy. It must have considered these increases. If one has an expenditure and financial review committee -

Hon E.J. Charlton: Yours did not work.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I do not think the Government's committee is working, judging by the Premier's statement, but if one has a committee for that purpose one must discuss with it an additional revenue raising mechanism of \$60m.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You didn't pay for anything, did you?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: This figure did not just appear last Wednesday night, as the Minister for Transport would have us believe. The Government and the Minister knew there was a shortfall and clearly the Cabinet would have discussed the way the Government would fund the shortfall.

Hon E.J. Charlton: How did you intend to fund it when you were in Government?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I have answered that in the Press.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Tell us now.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will pursue my line of debate, and the Minister can pursue his. The Premier said in the other House that he never saw the Cabinet submission. I am prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Hon E.J. Charlton: There is no doubt.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am not prepared to concede that the Cabinet or a Cabinet subcommittee did not discuss it fully and know what was going to happen. The Minister for Transport cannot tell me that \$60m appeared last Wednesday night to appease his irritable disposition.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It did not go to a Cabinet subcommittee and was not discussed, let alone debated, for very good reasons. If Hon John Halden had half a brain he would work it out.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon JOHN HALDEN: If that is the reality, I remind the Minister that he made comments about our previous drafting of Budgets and their inappropriateness. I find it absolutely amazing that a Government would not have considered an additional funding of \$60m when it knew it would have a shortfall in road funding. The Minister is asking us to believe that the Government perhaps did or did not know it had a shortfall but was suddenly -

Hon E.J. Charlton: The difference between this Government and yours is that we pay for things as we go. We do not spend the money first and dream up ways to pay for it later. We made a commitment before the election that we would take \$11m from Transperth to go to road funding. You knew that and that is where it has come from.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That is a second reading speech.

Hon E.J. Charlton: He needs a lot of help.

The PRESIDENT: I do not know that he does.

Hon E.J. Charlton: I would never disagree with you, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: It does not matter what you think. Even if you think he is making mistakes, let him make his own, do not do it for him.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is interesting that again the Minister says that his Government works differently. I remind members that the Premier said when he was Leader of the Opposition that there would be no new taxes. What the Minister for Transport is proposing is a new tax; a special metropolitan fuel tax. This Government, which talked about open and accountable government, and still does, is hoist with its own petard. It is seriously considering a new tax. I do not know whether that Cabinet minute has yet been signed, but as I said in the adjournment debate, I was advised that the Minister for Transport released a statement that he was sending that submission off to Cabinet. Presumably the document had been signed by the Minister for Planning and -

Hon E.J. Charlton: This is opposition on the run. Tell us who gave you that reliable information.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am not saying it is fact; I am asserting -

Hon E.J. Charlton: You never give any facts.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The fact is that a leaked Cabinet document verifies a statement I made.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It was not a Cabinet document.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It was a Cabinet submission. I do not want to fall prey to the interjections of Hon Eric Charlton, but it is important that every once in a while we go back to the facts. I have seen a number of Cabinet minutes and I prepared a few when I was a public servant.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You prepared a few petitions too.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is a document from the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Planning to the Hon Premier in Cabinet on the road program for 2003. I suggest that at least that is a draft Cabinet minute. It is not an options paper as the Minister would have had us believe on Thursday. It is not a paper for consideration by the Minister; it is a draft Cabinet submission requiring the signatures of the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Transport. Having knowledge of these matters from the other end as a public servant, normally when one wants to raise such significant amounts of money one does not get to the position of drafting a Cabinet minute without the approval of the Minister. Sometimes it can be somebody in the Minister's office relaying the message, but to suggest that a quite detailed six page document, including such things as, "I asked the Commissioner for Main Roads at my request to prepare a report called MetRoads 2000 to bring the Government up to date on the current situation and future needs, a copy of the full report is attached . . ." is not an options paper or a discussion paper; that is a Cabinet document. I will concede it may be a draft, but it is a Cabinet document. As I

understand it, normally the drafting or preparation of a document like this requires the approval of the Minister, or at the very least of the Minister's office, for which I would presume he is responsible. It is not possible to suggest that the Minister had no understanding of this, that it came out of nowhere on Wednesday night as an options-discussion paper, after the Minister had asked the Commissioner for Main Roads to prepare a report on MetRoads 2000 to look at the current situation and future needs. One would presume from that that future needs means financial needs.

The advice the Opposition received in late May was correct. This document in its preparation did not include part two of the little exercise the Minister was going through to raise more money, but most definitely to suggest otherwise is really to stretch anybody's imagination about the facts. The second part of the Minister's proposal is to drop the family rebate on motor vehicle licences. Again, the Minister has raised this matter in the Press. He raised it in his ministerial statement. I asked him whether it was an option. He answered, "Yes, it was an option." Was it being considered? "No, we are not pursuing it." The Minister made it clear. I understand he wants to make a detailed explanation of this. *The West Australian* of 11 August refers to Mr Charlton and states -

He denied Opposition transport spokesman John Halden's claim that the Government was considering eliminating the \$20 family rebate on motor vehicle licence fees.

The Minister denied it. I did not say that. Hon George Cash and Hon Norman Moore did not say that; Hon Eric Charlton said it. It was not anybody else; it was the Minister. In spite of the fact that it was one of the options he gave us, he denied it in the House, it is a recommendation in a Cabinet submission. A report on MetRoads 2000 would not have been prepared overnight. I will tell the Minister that I have not seen the report. It has not come into my possession as yet. I presume from what I have heard about the maps and projections of cost that it was an extensive document. I suggest that the document was probably made over a 10 week period, from late May until now.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It was probably started about two years ago.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It may well have been. However, that does not in any way alleviate the Minister's problem of saying one thing in this House and another to the public of Western Australia, and then being confronted with this. The Minister said that he had seen the document on Wednesday evening. However, last night my colleague, Hon Kim Chance, and I compared the ministerial statement dated Wednesday, 4 August 1993 with this document. Fifty per cent of these two documents are word perfect.

Hon Peter Foss: Can you identify the two documents?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am reading from the ministerial statement by the Hon Minister for Transport, dated 4 August and delivered in this House on 10 August 1993, and the Cabinet submission. The ministerial statement was issued on 4 August, but on 10 August the Minister said that he was not proposing to increase the fuel tax levy or to do away with the rebate on family motor vehicles. However, on 11 August the second document appeared word for word with 50 per cent of it being interchangeable with the first document.

Hon Peter Foss interjected.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It probably is. I probably would make a lot more money, but I would be a lot more confused about it.

Hon Peter Foss: I don't think you would make a lot more money.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: One never knows one's luck. The ministerial statement, read to this House by the Minister, is reflected in the other document - to be generous, the draft Cabinet submission.

Hon E.J. Charlton: I hope it is.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I know it is.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Something would be wrong if it weren't.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Besides the attacks on Hon Bob Collins and me in the ministerial statement, the substantive differences between the two documents are the recommendations for a State fuel tax for the metropolitan area and the abolition of the family motor vehicle licence concession. Bearing in mind the contorted answering process we go through daily with this Minister where we are told, "Yes, no, denial, accept, yes, no", we never know where we stand.

Hon Peter Foss: Did you publish this document called *The Courier-Mail*? It seems to contain your style of sinister conspiracy theory.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: No. This is not a conspiracy. If I had a conspiracy theory I would not be debating an urgency motion; I would move a privilege motion. The Minister for Transport should answer certain questions in a non-confusing way so that we may ascertain where this proposition started in the Government through one or other of its agencies - whether it be the Main Roads Department - and whether a Cabinet subcommittee was deliberately considering the option of a metropolitan fuel tax and the abolition of the motor vehicle licence family rebate. This is no conspiracy. These two papers bear a remarkable resemblance to each other.

Hon Peter Foss: Could it be that they were written by the same person?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I am grateful for Hon Peter Foss' interjection. Of course they could have been written by the same person. However, I suggest that they would not be in this detail, nor would there be a report entitled *MetRoads 2000*, unless the Minister had given his approval. If the department under Hon Peter Foss' portfolio was going to raise \$60m to \$100m, he would want to know about it. Hon Peter Foss is happy to have people write his speeches and his draft Cabinet submissions; however, he would want to know about that, and I guarantee that he would know about it. I know Hon Peter Foss well enough to know that he would know every little bit of the department.

Hon Peter Foss: Unfortunately not; I am constantly surprised by things which occur in my department.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: We too are all surprised about some of the things which go on in that department. However, I am sure that Hon Peter Foss would know where \$60m was going to or coming from.

Hon Peter Foss: That is only 12 days' expenditure.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: It comes from the taxpayer.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It is remarkable that Hon Ross Lightfoot has entered the debate, in one of his few opportunities, with the interjection that it comes from the taxpayer. That is profound, and is probably one of the more profound things he has said in this place! It is obvious that the funds are coming from the taxpayer. The reality is that since 1 June the Minister has denied that the taxpayers of the metropolitan area, and the State generally, were in jeopardy of this tax. However, they were in jeopardy of this tax being imposed. The only thing standing between the facts coming out and people being confused totally was the Minister for Transport who, out of his own mouth, said that a need for extra revenue existed and that two sources were available to do that, but that the Government was pursuing neither.

Hon E.J. Charlton: That is right.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: We hear, "That is right."

Hon E.J. Charlton: It is the first thing you have got right since you stood up.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I would be delighted to know what new tax the Government will propose, or what avenue it will use to meet this shortfall.

Hon E.J. Charlton: We haven't got a shortfall. Will you tell us about the shortfall?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Yes, indeed I will. This document is revealing about shortfalls.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: There are many shortfalls from the previous Administration.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You're not wrong; we are starved to death.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: How long are members opposite going to live off the previous Administration? I will discuss the previous Administration with the Minister a little later in question time; he will not like that either. These are not initiatives of the previous Administration; they are priorities of this Government and its Department of Transport. Priority one for major rural roads is \$331.7m. The priorities for the metropolitan road system are also this Government's priorities. We do not sit on the benches opposite. We do not give the Main Roads Department our instructions as the Government of the day about what we think are the priorities. The members opposite do; it is their decision, not ours. The Minister has repeatedly said that the shortfalls would be covered by the \$11m from the transfer of the funds from the metropolitan trust fund; that is, Transperth. Members have all known for some time that the \$11m would not cover the shortfall; that was quite clear. The Minister said in his statements that some other method of raising revenue would have to be adopted. The Cabinet submission details exactly that the Government will do that. The Premier in another place and the Minister here keep trying to hang their hats on the fact that this is not a Budget consideration and will not be announced in the Budget. Of course it is not a Budget consideration. The Government has been blown away. It says that it is going to impose a metropolitan fuel tax on 1 November and that the family package concessions will take effect from 1 January. Of course that will not be contained in the Budget. The Government is proposing to deliver the Budget and then introduce these measures as stage two. The Opposition never said that it was part of the Budget; we simply said that the Government was going to do it. We know that, but the Government has denied it emphatically inside and outside this House, knowing full well that it was going to do that, and that it had to do so to meet its priority commitments. If the Minister for Transport did not do that he and the Government of the day could not meet the Government's commitments. The Minister is convicted by words from his own mouth.

On 10 August the Minister for Transport was asked by Gerry Gannon on ABC radio whether the Government intended abolishing the family rebate on motor vehicle licence fees. The Minister replied that it was one of the many options the Government was considering. Even more interesting, the Minister was asked whether the Government had a time line for the abolition of this rebate and he replied that the Government was not going to include it in the Budget - a good trick with mirrors - and there was no time line. There is a time line and it is quite clear that it is 1 January 1994.

Hon E.J. Charlton: What happens to your credibility if it does not happen on 1 January 1994?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Based on the Minister's performance it will happen on 1 February. The Minister is smart enough to put it off for a month thinking the Opposition had forgotten about it. How silly is the Minister for Transport? He knows that on 1 June the Opposition said what the Government was contemplating. The Minister then came out with a Cabinet submission which quite clearly detailed the two options. Did he honestly think I had forgotten what he said on radio on 1 June, when he emphatically denied any intention by the Government to abolish this family rebate? Of course, I did not. Did he think he could come into this House and put up a smokescreen by abusing the Federal Minister for Transport and Communications or me and get away with misleading the people of this State and this House? The reality is I did not forget what the Minister said. The bureaucrats in the Main Roads Department who prepared the Cabinet submission would have been aware of what I said on radio. More than likely they would have briefed the Minister on or after 1 June about this matter and they would have known that I would be watching the Minister closely. When they recommended it as good bureaucrats - I am sure they are - they would have known the sensitivity of this issue and that the Opposition would be watching closely. They would not have drafted the submission unless someone in a particularly high position - the Minister or a senior officer from his office - had requested them to do so. They would not have been insensitive to the Minister. Will the Minister contradict that? I am sure he will not. I know what it is like to be a bureaucrat and to watch the Opposition. The bureaucrats watch what is going on very carefully and if they are about to float something which the

Minister has denied they will not go ahead and draft the appropriate Cabinet submission unless the Minister has given the nod because it will be their heads which will be on the chopping block.

I said previously that after the Minister's statement on ABC radio he came into this House and said that he had only just seen a copy of this report the night before. Yet the opening paragraph of the Cabinet submission is identical - word for word - to the ministerial statement.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Do you want to fudge the figures?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I do not think the Minister would get the figures right.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You should stick to petitions.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Do I need to remind the Minister about Transperth's debt? He got that figure wrong and Opposition members had to correct him. Hon Kim Chance and I spent days in this place arguing with the Minister and trying to point out that he had it wrong and it was Westrail's debt. The Minister said he was right, but at the end of the day he was wrong.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You got it wrong.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will not become involved in petty debates which end up in a yes or no answer.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Good on you.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: The document is clear. The statements the Minister made outside this House are also clear. On every occasion he has denied that the Government is contemplating amendments to these two taxes. In addition, a spokesman from his office denied it; yet, lo and behold, it surfaces. The Minister has been clear in this House about the options; yet, lo and behold, a Cabinet submission - not an options paper or paper for consideration by the department, but a draft Cabinet submission - came to light minus the signatures of the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Planning.

The Minister for Planning said that he did not know about this issue until Wednesday night, but what did he say to a journalist? I have listened closely to the tape; he was asked when he had seen the draft Cabinet submission and he replied that he saw it when he returned from Vietnam on the Tuesday night. He did not say Wednesday night.

Hon T.G. Butler: What was he doing in Vietnam? Was he closing down the railway?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: God knows what he was doing there.

I was in the Legislative Assembly on the morning the Leader of the Opposition raised this matter and I saw the pain and anguish on the Minister for Planning's face.

Hon Peter Foss: The anguish was that he probably thought it had been pinched from his room. Perhaps the member can tell me where it was pinched from. Perhaps I am wrong.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I suggest that the Minister for Health is wrong.

Hon Peter Foss: Will you enlighten me?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will not, but when the police carry out their inquiry I will tell them. My statement is not inconsistent with the Minister's when it comes to timing. The Minister for Planning said that he saw the Cabinet submission when he returned on Tuesday night from Vietnam. He sat in the Legislative Assembly Chamber while the document was read to him by the Leader of the Opposition and one half to one hour later he sent his press secretary out to make a statement that the Minister had made a mistake and he was referring to the wrong Cabinet submission. I have been in this place for eight years and I know how to run the lines and how not to get them wrong. If the Minister made a mistake about the document which was referred to in a debate he should have admitted it himself. If the Minister for Transport or I made a mistake and one of our colleagues was in difficulty, I suggest that we would not send our press secretary to correct it. We would admit that we made a mistake. The reality is that this document has been around for some time - a lot longer than since 8.00 pm on the Wednesday when the

Minister for Transport claims he saw it. The Minister for Planning's comments clearly reinforce his first comment that the document may well have been around a lot longer. The Government has put up a smokescreen around these two issues.

I said in the adjournment debate last Thursday night that I could not understand why the Minister distorted the facts. He did not have to tell me the truth. He could have said that the issue was under consideration as part of the Budget drafting processes or simply that he would not answer the question. That is not the case and we have had to go around corners to drag the Minister down. It may be that we must go down the same track with the Minister for Planning. I heard the tape of exactly what the Minister said. There was no equivocation; he gave a precise answer to a precise question. If this is open and accountable Government we are presently witnessing, from this Minister primarily but also from other Ministers in this House, then I must say that my understanding and the Minister's understanding of open and accountable Government differ enormously. This is not the first time, as you would recall Mr Deputy President (Hon Barry House), that we have gone through this process with this Minister who has, in essence, great difficulty telling the story as it is. This is a problem that we will have to endure for some time. That does not reflect well on either the Government or this House. If we continue to get this sort of answer, the Opposition will continue to pursue this matter. I suggest to the Minister that this is not the only answer of this nature that the Opposition has received. The Minister should be careful about how he answers questions and of the impression he gives in this House when doing so.

In summation, the reality is - and I will go through this again so that the Minister for Transport is clear - that the Opposition wants the Minister to explain the facts. In May the Opposition was advised that the Government was considering a metropolitan based fuel tax levy. The Minister denied that that was the case in early June. He came into this House on 4 August and made the statement that the Government required additional road funding. The Opposition asked the Minister what were the options and he advised the House that there were two. When asked which of those two options the Government preferred, the Minister denied either. The Minister then went on ABC radio saying that the Government may be considering the abolition of the family rebate on motor vehicle licences, that that was one of a number of options being considered, and that it had no time line. The Opposition then came into possession of a draft Cabinet submission which made it quite clear that a time line applied to both a new tax and the abolition of the rebate, which were being considered by the Government. During that time the Minister continually denied the existence of that proposal.

The Minister then suggested that the Cabinet submission was a draft opinion paper passing between the department and the Minister. As I have said previously, a draft discussion document of such sensitivity, bearing in mind our previous involvement with it, would not be drawn without the concurrence of the Minister; if it were otherwise it would have involved a very brave bureaucrat, which I do not believe was the case. In conclusion, the Opposition is concerned that this Minister continues to make statements which do not concur with the facts. What he says and what we know by virtue of certain documents from either his department or his office confirms this. That is not good enough. The reality is that the people of this State should have an opportunity to know what the Government proposes in certain areas, particularly when a tax will impinge upon people as these two measures will in raising an additional \$60m for the Government.

It is incumbent upon the Minister to not defer, or be tricky when answering questions in this House. The Minister has not succeeded in being tricky on every occasion he has attempted to do so, and he has been caught out. At the end of the day, if that process continues, the Minister and the Government will be considerably embarrassed from time to time by such happenings.

At present the Opposition is moving an urgency motion every three weeks. I gain no enjoyment from moving such motions. The Minister says that I gain much publicity from doing so. However, that publicity is generated by him and not me. Had the Minister said in the first place that the Government was considering these options the

leaking of documents would have caused hardly a ripple and merely supported the facts as everybody already knew them. A journalist from *The West Australian* on Saturday referred to the leaking of documents and said that nine out of 10 documents leaked are in the public interest but that this document was presumably leaked by somebody who knew full well what the Minister had said both inside and outside this House. On that basis I decided that the difference between what had been said and the real situation could not be allowed to be ignored. Dealing in leaked documents is not necessarily advantageous to the Government. It does not help the process of honest and open Government. The first step along that path must be a Government keenly aware of the requirements of openness and being up front, particularly when quite simple questions are asked requiring simple answers. All the Opposition requires from the Minister is simple, appropriate, and truthful answers. Neither the Parliament nor the Opposition should have any lower expectation than that.

This series of events suggests that the Government should lift its game, particularly this Minister. On that basis I would like the House to use this form to enable the Minister to clarify the situation. If that happens the Opposition will not pursue the matter further. If, however, we hear the hoops, loops, humps, bumps -

Hon E.J. Charlton: Corrugations?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: - and corrugations that we have heard previously from the Minister he can be guaranteed that the next step in the process will be taken. This is not said as a threat, but the Opposition has done this before, and will do it again. If the House wishes to use its numbers in a blunt way, so be it. The Opposition will continue to pursue this matter under standing orders. I wait with interest for the Minister's response.

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural) [4.28 pm]: In seconding this motion I point out that the circumstances which led to it were strange ones. The Minister spent some time telling the House and the people that the Government of Western Australia had a problem funding its road program. That road funding program was developed by this Government as part of its election strategy, so it is an idea that it properly owns. It is a road funding program for which this Government is also responsible.

In June this year, acting on advice the Opposition had received, Hon John Halden put the view that the Government may introduce a special metropolitan fuel tax. In his response the Minister said that was not an option or something that the Government would do. He went further saying, if my memory serves me correctly, that it was time Hon John Halden stopped putting such points of view and going around scaring people. Whether such a tax would actually scare people is another matter, but it seems to me that something as fundamental as a tax on fuel used each day would certainly interest people and is a matter about which people would want to know a little more if they heard about it.

[Resolved, that the motion be continued.]

Hon KIM CHANCE: The option that was available to the Minister was to say, "Yes, it is one of the things we are considering"; and, as Mr Halden said, had that happened, we may have had a few things to say, but basically that would have been the end of the issue. Unfortunately, that is not the choice that the Minister made. In fact, he vehemently denied at the time that that option was being considered by the Government. Later, we found that in fact a plan had been developed within the machinery of government that included both the metropolitan fuel tax and the cancellation of the family car licence concession. The question then arises: At what stage was the Minister aware of the plan which Mr Halden says is called MetRoads 2000, and to what extent of detail was he aware of that plan?

The Minister told the House on 10 August that two options were available, and during question time that same day he denied that the Government would adopt either. On 12 August, he told a journalist in a taped interview that he was aware of both options. Any reasonable person would assume from that evidence that what the Minister has told the House is that the Government is not considering an option - an option which any reasonable person would have to conclude was not only known to the Minister, but was

known to the Minister in some detail, and which was under consideration by the Minister, his department and the machinery of government. In my view, it is barely credible that the Minister had not considered MetRoads 2000 and that he did not have some in-depth and detailed knowledge of the proposal. The ministerial statement of 4 August, as Mr Halden said, bears uncanny resemblance to the draft of the Cabinet submission - almost 50 per cent of one is common with the other. It is quite possible, as the Minister for Health said, that both were written by the same person. However, it is almost impossible for the same author, over a period of time, to so precisely duplicate the words and the form which they take.

Hon Peter Foss: Don't you think they just took it off the word processor?

Hon KIM CHANCE: The Minister is putting a hypothetical question.

Hon Peter Foss: No; you are.

Hon KIM CHANCE: No. What I have said is a matter of fact. One document is almost exactly duplicated by the other. That is not an hypothesis. That is a matter of fact. The Minister is the one who is hypothesising. The other option is that both forms of words come out of MetRoads 2000. Let me assume - and now I am being hypothetical - that the father of both documents is in fact MetRoads 2000. This is speculation, and I am happy to say that, but is it not a reasonable hypothesis that both of these documents were generated out of the parent document, MetRoads 2000?

Hon Peter Foss: Would you expect them to be written by the same person?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I would, but it is just as reasonable to expect that they came out of the same parent document. If that is the case, and the parent document spells out the road needs of the Perth metropolitan area, any such document would also spell out the means by which those works would be funded. That is the way those documents are generated.

Hon Peter Foss interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I do not think this motion needs to address that point.

Point of Order

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: This is not a debate between two parties. Other members would like to listen to what is being said. I ask for your support, Mr Deputy President, in ensuring that the member is heard in silence so that we can all participate in what is being said.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order! I was just about to rule along those lines, and I thank the member. If the member on his feet will address the Chair, I am sure there will not be any need for the interjections.

Debate Resumed

Hon KIM CHANCE: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. I did have a response prepared, but I will let it go this time. It is quite believable that both of those documents were generated from a common document, and the most likely common document, of course, would be MetRoads 2000.

Hon John Halden: Which the Minister had asked the Commissioner for Main Roads to prepare.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Yes, and quite properly. I cannot see anything wrong with that. The Minister would in those circumstances be acting quite properly and entirely within his rights. Very little of what I have said is in criticism of the Minister or his department. Our problem lies not with the way the Minister or his department have conducted their role but with what the Minister has told us in here and what appear to be the facts. We do not need a Minister to go to any great detail to tell us what the situation really is. We accept that in preparing papers for Cabinet, a Minister is not permitted to say what he intends to take into Cabinet and what his plans are. The fundamental problem is that the Minister is telling us one thing in here when he does not have to tell us anything. The Minister does not have to say, "No, we are not planning to do this", or, "We are not

considering those options." All he needs to say - although he might be more polite than this - is, "Mind your own business; I will not tell you what I am taking into Cabinet." The Minister would be entirely within his rights to do that. However, the fact is that what the Minister did tell us is in conflict with what appears may well be the case. The Minister will have his opportunity shortly to tell us why we are wrong, and I am sure he will.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You have great confidence in me. I am very pleased to see that.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Indeed I have, and I hope the Minister will be able to do that. We have a reasonable right to know why we have a statement which appears to be in conflict with other statements and with a range of other concrete facts and circumstantial evidence. The draft of the Cabinet submission and, I strongly suspect, the MetRoads 2000 document, have in common a Government policy, or at least a consideration before Government, of some importance. I do not know whether a figure has been put forward about the revenue that will be raised by those two measures.

Hon John Halden: Sixty million dollars, presumably for a half year.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Even if it were for a full year -

Hon E.J. Charlton: That is not right. No wonder your mob owed \$12b after you had finished your 10 years in Government!

Hon KIM CHANCE: Let us at least agree that we are talking about a considerable sum of money. Three and a half cents a litre on each litre of fuel used within the metropolitan area amounts to a considerable sum of money; it is about \$1.75 every time the average car receives a tankful of fuel. The revenue that will be raised from the cancellation of the family car licence fee concession is again a considerable amount of money. If we take the figure to be \$60m, in the context of the roads budget that is a solid figure. Taken in the context of the State Budget, it is a substantial amount of money. Is it reasonable to assume that any measure which would have the effect of raising \$60m, even though it was not to come into effect in this coming Budget, would not have been considered for some time? If the MetRoads 2000 document has been around for some time - and the Minister says it has probably been around for a couple of years - and if it is to raise something like \$60m, of course it would be a matter of serious consideration. It would not be a matter that would be sprung on the Minister at the last minute. All we want the Minister for Transport to tell us is how that came about; how he came to inform us that they were not considerations. He could say he was confused about whether we asked if they were considerations in the coming Budget, but he cannot do that on the second day because he could have gone to *Hansard* and confirmed that we did not ask that question. We did not ask the question in the context of the Budget. We asked specifically about when the charges would come in. I will be interested to hear the Minister's comments on the matter. Hon John Halden made the point a number of times in respect of the Minister for Transport, that we had to get to the truth with thumb screws. I will not call the Minister a liar -

Hon Peter Foss: You had better not.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I will not say he tells blatant untruths.

Hon Peter Foss: You should not.

Hon KIM CHANCE: But getting the truth at question time and getting a consistent line from the Minister -

Hon Peter Foss: You want the answers you want to hear, not the truth. That is the problem.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The Minister for Health knows that is not true.

Hon Peter Foss: I do know it is true.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The Minister for Health cannot read public accounts, if that is the case. The truth in terms of asking for a set figure, is a black and white matter.

Hon Peter Foss: *The Curia Mail* is in black and white.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I am not familiar with the publication. Is it a good one?

Hon Peter Foss: I will tell you about it.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The House deserves an answer, and we should have one now.

HON TOM HELM (Mining and Pastoral) [4.42 pm]: I support the motion. Perhaps I should discuss a conversation that I had with Hon John Halden in Caucus about this matter. At first I could not understand the reasons he wanted to promote this motion, because in the past we have had to deal with the Minister for Transport in different ways in regard to some of the information he has provided to this House - information which has been inconsistent with ministerial statements. I refer here to matters concerning the closure of the Midland Workshops. If the motion is carried it will perhaps be one of the last chances that the Minister for Transport will have to explain to this House the reasons he took those actions.

I return to the conversation I had with Hon John Halden in Caucus. That member has been accused by the Minister of being a do-gooder, a bleeding heart; and a reading of the motion would support that accusation because Hon John Halden does not condemn the Minister. He does not say that the Minister has been guilty of a breach of privilege. He is asking the Minister to explain why his answers to questions are inconsistent with other answers. He is offering the Minister an opportunity to explain why he has said some things. We must be honest; if we go to the trouble of asking questions we try to make them as easy and as simple as possible for the Minister to answer because we are aware in this place that if we ask a trick question -

Hon Peter Foss: It takes a complicated person to ask a simple question.

Hon TOM HELM: That may be, but I am sure the Minister for Health will string together some comments and join this debate. I think he should. I will be interested to hear him demonstrate how a complicated mind can ask a simple question.

The Opposition must ask simple questions, and do some research before asking them, because the Ministry - at least in this place - has a problem with giving simple answers. The Minister cannot give simple answers consistent with other answers. I refer the House to the convoluted replies received to questions about the Midland Workshops. We must ask simple questions and expect to receive simple answers because the people of Western Australia expect to receive such answers. However, the public cannot see the embarrassment reflected on faces opposite. The public cannot see the contorted face of the Minister for Transport, particularly when he is asked questions and gives inconsistent answers.

Several members interjected.

Hon TOM HELM: If Government backbenchers have stomach problems, I am sorry; but they seem to have those problems only when the Minister for Transport gets to his feet to answer a question, or when he is making a statement. His answer or statement is either inconsistent or very difficult to understand or his answer is so different from other answers that we find it impossible to understand what has been said.

Hon John Halden has demonstrated to the House that we have some problems with the answers given by the Minister for Transport. We could understand the answers being so complicated and inconsistent if we were heading towards an election. In that case perhaps it would be in the Minister's interests not to tell the truth, or to say that he does not understand the meaning of the question; or to be reluctant to answer the question as fully as required; but we are not heading towards an election. This is the beginning of an Administration not the end of it. At this time one would think that Ministers would have the ability to tell the truth about what is going on or what will happen in future. Ministers should not be afraid of being criticised for doing that.

As a member representing the Mining and Pastoral Region, and as someone who lives in the bush at Port Hedland, I would not argue that the people of the metropolitan area get it easy and that perhaps they should chip in more to the State Budget so that the people of

the Pilbara, the Kimberley and the Murchison could receive a better deal. As the Minister for Transport is a member from the bush I could understand his being down on people who live in the metropolitan area. When I come to the metropolitan area, to Parliament, and see the freeways, the railways and the airways, and all the other things in the metropolitan area, I become a little angry. At least I come out and say that. As one who lives in the bush, and who represents the people who bring wealth to this State, when I see that wealth squandered on the people of the metropolitan area, I can understand that the Minister, coming from the bush, could be upset. He should not worry about hiding his light under a bushel. He should demonstrate his feelings and say that the people in the metropolitan area should pay more. He should say that this is the plan, and this is what he will do. He should not beat around the bush or jump up and down. He should tell us straight. I am sure that the proposal to revoke the family rebate on car registrations, and all the other things in the metropolitan area, would receive support particularly from people in the Pilbara and the Kimberley. The Minister for Transport does not choose to make such an announcement. Therefore, Hon John Halden is offering the Minister for Transport the opportunity to explain the reasons why he has acted in this way. I imagine that the people of Western Australia would have a great deal of difficulty understanding what the Minister says because he says different things every time.

Hon B.K. Donaldson: We have difficulty understanding what you say at times.

Hon TOM HELM: The member can read *Hansard*. However, when we read some of the answers and statements by the Minister they are difficult to understand. Accents do not matter; what matters is what *Hansard* picks up. If members do not understand it, it can be corrected. It goes on the public record. This Minister has given us inconsistencies, changes of heart, changes of mind and changes in the information that he wants to feed us. He is only consistent about his inconsistencies. I wonder whether the Labor Party Administration between 1983 and 1993 might have been guilty of the same offence? Did we, because we were in office for so long, become arrogant and believe that when we made statements it did not matter what we said?

This is an Administration which is at the beginning of its short term of office and we are already getting from it the arrogance that may have been demonstrated by the Labor Government between 1983 and 1993. We have seen its ability to shut down debate, not to answer questions, to give answers that are inconsistent or to make statements that have no substance. We have been told on the one hand that a report recommended the closure of the Midland Workshops and on the other hand that there was no report. We are unsure of whether there was a report which gave that recommendation or which said how much money would be saved. The Minister has had ample opportunity to answer our questions. He is either too silly to understand what his bureaucrats are telling him or he does not understand the importance of being consistent, doing research and telling us what is going on.

I would also like to deal with some matters which are not related to Hon John Halden's motion; namely, the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters. We were told that we should get an accountable, open Government. It seems strange that in Opposition members opposite spoke constantly of being consistent. They almost made us sick when they spoke endlessly of the need for accountability.

Hon Peter Foss: You have a lot to be sick about, with billions of dollars down the drain. We would not have this terrible trouble if you had handled things better.

Hon TOM HELM: I wait with baited breath for the Minister for Health - he is not as bad as Hon Eric Charlton - to take the opportunity to give us an explanation of why he is also inconsistent in his statements.

Hon Peter Foss: It is a conspiracy.

Hon TOM HELM: This is a good opportunity to join in the debate and not make silly interjections.

Hon T.G. Butler: He may need tranquillisers.

Hon TOM HELM: Let us take the first interjection.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member says on the one hand that he is not going to take any notice of the interjections and on the other he then proceeds to say he will deal with the first interjection. I suggest that is being inconsistent. I recommend to the honourable member that if he does not want to invoke the wrath of the President, he concentrate on the words in Hon John Halden's letter and forget the Minister for Health's interjections.

Hon TOM HELM: Mr President, you are right again. The Minister was agreeing with me and I should have avoided answering him. As I was saying, the thing that made us so sick was that the then Opposition members constantly told us that we had things to hide, answers were not being given to the questions that were being asked, and we needed to change the way in which the Executive behaved towards the Parliament. When in Opposition, Government members said that the Parliament was being seen as a rubber stamp and the Executive was getting away with murder.

Hon Peter Foss: I am listening.

Hon TOM HELM: I am sure that if the Minister for Health would close his mouth, his ears might open. He cannot hear because his mouth is too big; it covers his ears.

Hon Peter Foss: That's a bit rude.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member is doing exactly what I asked him not to do.

Hon TOM HELM: I am not responding to the interjection; I am just asking the Minister to listen. The major complaint from this Administration when it was on the Opposition benches was that the Executive was treating the Parliament like a rubber stamp. There appeared to be a mysterious cloud covering what the Executive did; there was no accountability and Ministers' answers were inconsistent. Those statements may have contained an element of truth. In fact, the royal commission took those points on board and made recommendations about the need for the Executive to treat the Parliament with a certain amount of respect and to give the answers that were required, particularly to questions that were relatively simple. The more we try to make the questions as simple as we possibly can, the more we get answers that are inconsistent. The frustration that we feel about receiving those answers can only be matched by our disbelief at their content. This Administration is at its beginning, not at its end.

The royal commission's recommendations have given the Government the ability to demonstrate to this side of the House that it can answer the questions as they are presented. The importance of that recommendation is not to satisfy the Opposition that the Government is doing everything right but so that the people who elected us, those who pay their taxes, have a fair idea of what they are up against. We do not have to treat this Administration differently at this stage because we are heading towards an election and people might be very sensitive about what we are saying. At this stage there is no need for there to be any sensitivity; but there is a need for Ministers to give answers that are relevant.

Government members say that we may not like the answers we get. But having become the Administration, they are allowed to make the hard decisions and to give us the hard answers. On looking through a Notice Paper - I advise the Minister to do the same - I found that the Minister's answers to questions included that the matter was under consideration due to the Budget papers; that a committee was looking at the matters and would give consideration to them; and that he could not answer questions because he was waiting for replies. At the beginning of a Government's term those sorts of answers are consistent with Ministers having new portfolios and finding their way. We had a conversation in the caucus about why Hon John Halden would give this opportunity to this Minister when we had already debated on a number of occasions matters that have caused us concern about the Minister's attitude to this House. I hope that when the Minister makes his contribution he will take into account the fact that we are not saying that anyone is being made a fool of. Basically, we believe that the Minister should have

integrity, not just as a member of Parliament but as a Minister. Therefore, it is not going down the track of the royal commission's recommendations about open government and parliamentary integrity. As members of Parliament, we are not held in very high esteem. On a number of occasions we have given the Minister the opportunity to give us some answers and he should remember the integrity of Parliament, because when he responds in the way he does he is speaking for us all.

[Continued below.]

[Questions without notice taken.]

STATEMENT - BY THE PRESIDENT

Questions, Member's Call Procedure

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): I make this statement in the interests of ensuring that honourable members understand how they get the call to ask a question. Firstly, a member must rise and indicate that he or she wishes to ask a question, because I am not a mind reader. When several members rise at once, I endeavour to remember the order in which they rose and to give them the call in that order. However, sometimes, because a question or a Minister's answer is long, I overlook somebody. If that somebody does not continue to rise in his or her place, either I forget the member altogether or I assume that he or she no longer wishes to ask a question. I do my very best to ensure that every single member gets an opportunity to ask a question, and I try to do it in some semblance of order without favouring anybody, except that I normally give the first question or so, if they are reasonably quick off the mark, to members of the front bench of the Opposition. Today they were not quick off the mark, so I gave the call to a member on the other side.

Hon John Halden: We are not complaining.

The PRESIDENT: I know you are not, and I am not suggesting that you are. However, question time is reaching the stage where everybody wants to ask questions. Everybody is entitled to do so, and I can only do my very best to fit in members in the order I see them.

STATEMENT - BY THE PRESIDENT

Question Time, Televising, Joint Committee Establishment

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths): Members may recall that last week a Channel 7 television crew came in to do some filming during question time. That was as a result of a suggestion made before this parliamentary session that perhaps question time should be televised. I am not sure whether that will eventuate. However, because some standards and rules need to be established as to how that procedure would be implemented, Mr Speaker from another place and I have conferred and decided to establish a committee of members from both Houses, and from both sides of the House, without being terribly exact about it, together with ourselves, to consider the sorts of rules that should apply. I have suggested that that committee may invite outside experts in television and this kind of work to help us make this decision.

I am telling members this because they will be delighted to know that their interests are in good hands: I have chosen two members from this House, in both of whom I have the utmost confidence; namely, Hon John Cowdell and Hon Bruce Donaldson. If members have any views about televising question time and wish to discuss them with anybody, they should talk to those two members.

MOTION - URGENCY

Road Funding, Minister for Transport's Statements Clarification

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON TOM HELM (Mining and Pastoral) [5.39 pm]: I reiterate that Hon John Halden

moved this urgency motion to give the Minister for Transport an opportunity to explain the apparent inconsistencies of his statements with regard to road funding and to point out why he has been inconsistent in this matter, in the same way as he was inconsistent in his handling of the closure of the Midland Workshops. This is important in relation to the standards of this Parliament and of members in Parliament in total. That is, if we on this side of the House can point out these inconsistencies and go to the trouble of asking questions that are rather simple to answer, in our view, and we do not get those simple answers, the people who elected us can be forgiven if they feel that both the Parliament and members of Parliament really are not serving the best interests of the State because they are trying to hide things or have motives that are not in the best interests of the State. Rather than raising what might be a breach of privilege or stating that the Minister stands condemned for misleading the House, we have provided an opportunity for the Minister to make a statement on these matters.

We have seen a pattern developing in contradictory statements which perhaps could be understandable if we were heading into an election campaign or if an Administration had been in office for 10 or 12 years and was tired and had lost the plot. However, this Administration is but a pup. It will probably last only one term on the Treasury benches. This Administration is not providing consistent or understandable answers to our questions, so only the Lord knows how it will end up. It appears to be adopting the standards of a Government which has been in office for many years and has become tired and delivers answers which are not well researched or easily understood. This causes problems.

The Minister for Transport threw the accusation at Hon John Halden that he was a do-gooder or a bleeding heart. This might have some truth. However, some members of the Opposition become angry at these inconsistencies in statements by the Minister.

Hon John Halden: Particularly this one.

Hon TOM HELM: We are entitled to expect credible answers to questions. If Ministers are not sure about some matter, they should inform the House of that - this method was demonstrated within the Supplementary Notice Paper in an answer provided. The House should support the motion.

HON E.J. CHARLTON (Agricultural - Minister for Transport) [5.43 pm]: A great deal has been said on this urgency motion, and I agree with Hon John Halden that it is time that some of the accusations and counterclaims were put to an end. I will attempt to do that. I hope and expect that the Opposition will acknowledge the facts I am about to provide.

Hon John Halden referred to comments made in May about a new tax and my response of no to a question about whether it would be applied. He referred also to comments made on 1 and 2 June. He said that if the proposal was being considered, it must have been considered in the lead-up to the Budget discussions. As a Cabinet Minister who participated in the Government's estimates committee process, the member claims that I would be party to that matter being discussed in that forum. I indicate - I hope for the last time - that this increase to the State fuel levy and the abolition of the rebate were never discussed by that committee.

Hon Peter Foss: Quite right.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It was never anticipated that it would be part of the negotiation as a means of raising revenue in the forthcoming Budget. It is a fact, as the Premier has said repeatedly, that no new increases in this levy will occur, and I have consistently said that such a rise is not anticipated or planned to occur.

Roads are part of my area of responsibility as Minister for Transport. Regarding road funding, I have been directing my total energies towards the projects in place at this time. These projects will be funded from the current State fuel levy and licence fee income, and this funding will be complemented by the Federal Government's contribution. It is absolutely wrong for Hon John Halden, or anyone in the Opposition, to say that this Government has overspent on its commitments. Hon John Halden brought that claim to

the fore on a number of occasions and accused the Main Roads Department of overspending.

Hon John Halden: No, just you.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It has not done that. Answers to that point can be found in answers to questions on notice.

Hon John Halden: I have not been provided with them.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: If the member has not received them yet, they will be coming through that forum and I will therefore not go into detail.

If the member were half smart and had done his homework, he would know that when the contracts are let for various projects they are for a segment of a project and are paid for in a variety of ways. This is either on a contract or part of contract basis. The funds come from the State in various forms allocated to various projects by the Main Roads Department, in full consultation with the Federal Department of Transport. Sometimes this is done annually, and sometimes it is based on the progress made on the project for which appropriate funds are made available. Therefore, it is completely wrong and misleading to say that the Main Roads Department, this Government or I have spent money which is not in hand. Contracts for projects under way will be met from funding we know we will receive this financial year, and that which will come in subsequent years. That is why I have consistently said inside and outside this place that no plan exists to increase the fuel levy - it is not a tax - or to remove the rebate. That is the situation with current projects.

Hon John Halden: Are you saying that there is to be no increase in the State fuel levy and the rebate will not be abolished?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: That is what I have consistently said.

Hon John Halden: Nor will it be?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I am about to come to the second part of the member's motion, which refers to my misleading Parliament. The responsibility of the overall planning of roads in Perth is not directly with the Main Roads Department. The previous Government, Mr Halden's party, when in power put in place a committee, the name of which I cannot recall off the top of my head, which dealt with the East Perth redevelopment project and the management of future traffic as part of the northern suburbs bypass project. That is not now and was not previously the responsibility of the Minister for Transport. That was facilitating the East Perth redevelopment project and its roads operation and planning in conjunction with the northern suburbs bypass. Members opposite would know more about that than this Government because the previous Government was a party to the decision to go down that path, to have that research done, to appoint a committee to decide the route it would take to hook up the Mitchell Freeway with a bridge over the river behind the casino with Orrong Road. That was not a direct responsibility of Main Roads Department. The committee was made up of a number of people from various sectors. It was considering costs, whether that road would be above ground or below ground, where it would be sited, and which alignment would be taken. Towards the end of its deliberations the committee arrived at some ballpark figures on the cost. It was not my responsibility to determine whether the project would go ahead, when it would be go ahead and how it would be paid for.

Hon John Halden: Whose responsibility was it?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It was the responsibility of the Minister for Planning. That is why the area to which the member referred was not part of my responsibility and why I have consistently said there have been no increases in the two avenues of funding. As time moved on I became involved in discussions with the Main Roads Department about that road and a number of other projects which the department considered would be needed to cater for the movement of traffic in the metropolitan area by the year 2000. It considered that if we were to meet that obligation construction would have to start in the next couple of years.

In order to satisfy that the department's planning requirements the northern suburbs bypass and other connected roads in the metropolitan area would need to be started in the next couple of years in order to be completed by the year 2 000. I asked the committee to proceed in conjunction with Main Roads to consider costs and how that money would be raised and in what form. That is the subject on which Hon John Halden has gained information. It is totally related to those projects and has nothing to do with the roads programs for which I am responsible.

When a decision is made by the Government to implement that road system the Main Roads Department will carry out those projects, but initially it has been the responsibility of an East Perth Redevelopment Authority committee. As the project has become more defined it has been run in conjunction with the Main Roads Department. The department built a model, which has just been completed and which shows the road and associated river crossing, part of the road being underground. I have been aware for some considerable time that the committee was nearing the completion of its report. I have still not seen the report about the final aspects of the project. When it is completed it will be made public and have a consultative period. This is not my area of responsibility. It will have time to go to the public, particularly to residents of the northern suburbs.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: They oppose it solidly.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: That is part of the democratic process. That is the difference between this Government and the party to which Hon Alannah MacTiernan belongs: We will always give the public an opportunity to have an input into proposed changes.

Hon T.G. Butler: When is that process going to start?

Hon John Halden: What happened with the Midland Workshops?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The decision on the Midland Workshops had nothing to do with building a new facility. We provided a period for public response with the Midland Workshops and we have received 220 expressions of interest. We are going through the process now to see who will be involved. We are being totally consistent. Members opposite can vigorously oppose this - I would expect them to, because they have minds the size of 5¢ pieces and never look to the future.

Hon A.J.G. MacTiernan: We are not locked into the 1950s.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I will talk to the Hon Alannah MacTiernan about this when the time is right. A range of inconsistencies is being spread by her leader the former Premier, Carmen Lawrence. I will table this letter dated 2 June 1992 from John Dawkins to the then Premier Carmen Lawrence. It states -

The Prime Minister's "One Nation" Economic Statement made available to Western Australia up to \$47.7 million under the National Highway System (NHS) Program.

Of these monies, some \$39.7 million is to be allocated to specific NHS projects. I understand that agreement between the respective Commonwealth and State Ministers as to these projects is imminent.

The remaining \$8 million has been held over, pending further consideration of infrastructure projects of benefit to the Western Australian community. While notionally allocated to the NHS program, it was anticipated in the formulation of the "One Nation" Package that this further consideration would encompass other than potential NHS projects.

When making this decision we had in mind the fact that the Hatt Report on the redevelopment of Subiaco Oval was in its final stages of preparation.

Should the WA Government decide to proceed with the redevelopment project, the Commonwealth would be prepared, under certain conditions, to have this remaining \$8 million allocated for this purpose in 1992/93.

On 2 July the then Premier Carmen Lawrence wrote a Dear John letter which stated -

Dear John

I refer to your letter of 2 June 1992 proposing that \$8 million of road funding made available for Western Australia under the 'One Nation' statement be reallocated to the Subiaco Oval redevelopment.

I cannot agree to this proposal, as Western Australia has very substantial needs for road funding which are not being met from existing resources. Western Australia's share of national and arterial road funding from the Commonwealth has declined substantially in the last few years, and I understand that only 9% of national roads funding in the 'One Nation' statement was allocated to Western Australia, which does not even represent a per capita share of funding for this State.

That is nine per cent before they took the \$8m off.

Hon John Halden: We do not disagree with you there, Minister.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The letter continues -

I believe that the \$8 million can be readily allocated to road projects in this State through consultation between the respective Commonwealth and State Transport Ministers.

In addition you may not be aware that my colleague, the Minister for Transport, is seeking an extension of the National Road network in Western Australia.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Would you make clear for me who was the author of the letter?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Hon Carmen Lawrence.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Is that not the Premier who "did not know"?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: She said on the radio today that she understood that no decision was ever taken that this money would go to roads. The letter continues

It appears the Federal Minister is proposing to only agree to a small part of this request. That is to accept as the part of the National Road system only the short section which connects the Perth-Adelaide (Great Eastern Highway) route with the Perth-Katherine (Great Northern Highway).

Hon Peter Foss: On the face of it that appears to be inconsistent with what she has said.

Hon John Halden: It is totally consistent.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

Hon John Halden: The Minister said he wasn't clear about when he became aware of the proposal from the committee established by the Minister for Planning. Could he be a little more specific about that?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: If over the next few minutes I come up with that date, I will let the member know. Otherwise, I am happy to do a little research to ascertain the first time that I was made aware of that situation and will inform the member of that.

Prior to the dinner break I mentioned that in June 1992 the present Federal Treasurer advised the State Government in a letter to the Premier, Hon Carmen Lawrence, that the Federal Government was going to redirect to Subiaco Oval the \$8m that had been marked for road funding. The Main Roads Department had been informed of the total amount that would be granted under the One Nation package. As with any other funding, the department was then required to outline the projects on which that money would be spent.

Hon Reg Davies: But have they got the money?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Hon Reg Davies asks the most important question about this. Where is the money? We are all aware that at some time last year it was made public that as part of its redevelopment Subiaco Oval would get \$8m.

Hon Reg Davies: There were big photos in the paper prior to the election.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Exactly. No-one outside the Government knew whether that \$8m had been paid. Obviously it had not been by 8 July.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: That is a bit like their secrets on Westrail.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Exactly. Subiaco Oval had not received the money by 9 July 1992 because the letter written by the Premier at the time stated that the funds were required for roads. The letter states -

Enclosed is a copy of the proposal "National Roads in Western Australia - A submission by the Western Australian Government April 1992" which was sent to your Minister for Transport, Hon B Brown, MP.

The cost to complete all this work after January 1 1994 when Federal funding will cease is approximately . . .

The Premier goes on to say what that funding is. I will return to that in a moment. The reference in the letter to the funding ending on 1 January 1994 is to tied funds. When the former Premier wrote that letter on 9 July 1992 she stated that Roe Highway required \$140m to be completed.

Hon Mark Nevill: You would have had a \$2m hole in your road funding budget if you had a goods and services tax.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: If I were Mr Nevill I would sit there and keep my words to myself, because after his little Fremantle mate -

The PRESIDENT: Order! That matter has absolutely nothing to do with this motion. The member who interjected knows that. The Minister also knows that; therefore, he should ignore it.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Yes, Mr President. I am stunned to hear such a comment.

The PRESIDENT: I am stunned that you fell for it.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I always have trouble when I hear blatant misleading comments made on this issue of road funding from people who should know better. I return to the letter from which I was quoting which states that, for completion, Roe Highway requires \$140m; Reid Highway, \$75m; and the Perth-Bunbury link, about which the current Opposition is making a lot of noise -

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am not saying anything about that.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: - a further \$145m.

Hon Doug Wenn: What do you mean by the Perth-Bunbury link?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Was the member not here? That is the coast road.

The letter also states -

Western Australia would appreciate the whole of the ring road and the Perth-Bunbury link, as described in the submission, being included in the National Road Network.

That link is in the metropolitan area to make it a national highway because currently the Perth-Bunbury road is not classified as a national highway. I return to Hon Reg Davies' question of where is the \$8m. It is obvious that at 9 July last year the money was still with Canberra because the Main Roads Department did not have it. I suppose it is not correct to say that it is obvious that it was still in Canberra because it might already have been with the West Australian Football Commission. Goodness knows where it might have been.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: It has probably been handballed all around those places.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: That is right; by one of those dropkicks from the Federal Government.

Hon John Halden: That is why you went to Canberra with \$102m in your pocket and came home with \$92m.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: On 2 October 1992 a letter was written by Hon Pam Beggs, then Minister for Transport, to the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr Bob Brown. The letter refers to several aspects of road funding and I have already advised the House that I intend to table the relevant documents. The letter states -

In June the Federal Treasurer, Hon J S Dawkins, MP, wrote to the Premier proposing the \$8M be set aside for non-road projects which related to the redevelopment of the Subiaco Football Oval.

In July the Premier replied to the Federal Treasurer disagreeing with this proposal and advising there is a greater need for the funds to be provided on roadworks.

This State's approved National Highway program in 1992/93 was some \$13M less than that which I submitted to you in May, with the major reduction being on the Great Northern Highway between Wubin and Meekatharra.

I ask that you have the \$8M allocated to this section of the Great Northern Highway. This will assist in completing this project at an earlier date. The project is important from a safety aspect, as the Highway is currently a narrow single lane seal with a high proportion of heavy vehicles using it. Additionally, there have been many complaints from the community about safety on this section of Highway and the allocation of these additional funds, will enable a greater length of safer two lane sealed road to be constructed in 1992/93.

Hon Reg Davies: What is the date on that letter?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It is 2 October 1992.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: And that \$13m was before the \$8m was handballed.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: While all this to-ing and fro-ing was going on some people in the previous Labor Government were calling on the Federal Treasurer and the then Federal Minister for Transport to allocate the \$8m to road funding. Two questions arise as a consequence of that. Firstly, the question asked by Hon Reg Davies: Where was the \$8m during the to-ing and fro-ing? Secondly: Did the Government know that the \$8m was intended for road funding? Obviously, one can deduce from the letters written by the Premier of the day and the Minister for Transport that they were certainly aware of the original intent for the \$8m; that is, that it was being set aside for the Subiaco Oval. Today the Leader of the Opposition said that she did not know what the money was intended for.

Hon John Halden: She did know and she said so clearly. You lost your temper on the radio this morning.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I did not lose my temper. Hon John Halden thinks that because I responded with vigour I lost my temper. I am at my relaxed best when I am fired up a bit. It is when I am being nice to members opposite that I am not being natural.

Hon Mark Nevill: How on earth do you become loving?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It is very difficult, particularly with a number of people.

Another aspect of this saga is that on 3 December 1992 -

Point of Order

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Although I am very interested in this matter and am happy to debate it with the Minister, his comments do not have much to do with the urgency motion before the House. Mr President, will you ask the Minister to draw his comments around to the issue of clarifying the statements outlined in my letter to you?

The PRESIDENT: When the Chair gives a bit of leeway to honourable members they tend to completely stray away from the subject matter. I am having an awfully hard job following the figures that have been produced by all members in this debate. In fairness to the Minister for Transport I think I should allow him to proceed, but on the strict understanding that he must relate his comments to paragraphs (a) to (f) in the letter Hon John Halden wrote to me. The Minister's comments obviously have some bearing on

what he has done with regard to his areas of responsibility, but what he is failing to do is to tell the House how they relate to Hon John Halden's comments. Does the Minister understand me?

Debate Resumed

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I do, Mr President. One of the paragraphs of the member's letter concerns the funding shortfall faced by this Government in meeting its road funding requirements. Hon John Halden said it was obvious that this Government would have to raise the fuel franchise levy and do away with the family rebate on licences. He went on to say in paragraph (b) of his letter that Cabinet must have discussed it. Hon John Halden reached the conclusion that there was a shortfall and that I, as Minister for Transport, would have taken the matter to Cabinet. That is the basis of his argument. Before the point of order was taken I was reaching the point of saying that the shortfall he accused this Government of knowingly and willingly not addressing was a shortfall created by the previous Government when it advised the Main Roads Department about what it would do. It then decided to negotiate with the Federal Treasurer and the Federal Minister for Transport. I will refer to the following letter from Federal Treasurer John Dawkins' office to Mr Brian Vincent of 51 Arlington Avenue, South Perth on 3 December 1992 -

Dear Mr Vincent

Thank you for your letter of 27 November 1992 regarding the redevelopment of Subiaco and Perth Ovals for football, which Mr Dawkins has asked me to acknowledge on his behalf.

As you are aware, responsibility for the direction of football, and the long-term use of football stadiums, in Western Australia is the province of the WA Football Commission. The use of funds allocated by the Commonwealth to the various states for infrastructure development - such as has occurred at Subiaco Oval - has been determined by the respective State Governments.

In the case of Western Australia, the WAFC and State Government decided that part of those moneys should be allocated to the continuing improvement of facilities at Subiaco Oval. The decision to proceed with the redevelopment of Subiaco Oval was determined by them.

Accordingly, any concerns you have regarding the redevelopment proposals are best directed to the State Government and the WAFC.

Yours sincerely
Michael Schaper
Assistant Adviser

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Assistant adviser to whom?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Mr Schaper is the assistant adviser to Hon John Dawkins. I table the documents to which I have referred.

[See paper No 515.]

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I explained earlier that there are two specific factors involved in the way I have responded to the questions put to me. Firstly, any increase in the fuel franchise levy and any movement away from the family allowance rebate on licences has been totally connected with any new project the Government may or may not go ahead with in the future. I refer to long term projects which will be undertaken over a number of years.

Hon John Halden: Some of them will start next year.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Mr Halden, they will not start.

Hon John Halden: The planning will.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: Nothing will be done until a final decision is arrived at on the time span over which this building will be built and how it will be funded. The Government has not been brought up to date with the situation by the committee which

devised this project. It has not completed its proposals and put them in a form suitable to go before Cabinet. We have reached the position of deciding whether this project will go ahead in conjunction with other projects. Consideration is being given to the time span required to put this project in place and how the scheme will be funded. That is a decision for the Government when the Minister for Planning and I, as Minister for Transport, put together the final package.

It is well known by interested people that the northern bypass was a project of the former Government which set up a committee to carry out an investigation into it. When the report is completed it will go to the public so that they have an opportunity to study it. I understand the information will be presented in such places as shopping centres where a model will be shown so that the project and associated matters can be discussed by the public. However, before that can happen the Government must decide whether the project will proceed. As I said earlier, Main Roads Department, as the road building authority in this State, would like to see this project proceed. It knows that if a decision is not about this project traffic congestion in the Perth metropolitan area, in the city in particular, and in close suburbs will be serious by the year 2000. This fact was well recognised by the previous Government which initiated an investigation into this subject.

The city also needs a foreshore development. Riverside Drive, adjacent to the Swan River, is currently under stress. It is not in the most acceptable position for a major road connecting eastern and western suburbs. Planners obviously agree that something should be done to alleviate high density traffic flow on that road, which will only increase in coming years. We have now reached the point where at some time in the future the Government will decide on the type of project necessary, when that project will proceed, and when it will be funded. The Government will make public the proposed project and talk about the funding some time following that announcement when it has decided to what extent it wishes to take the project and within what time frame. The other option is to say up front, "The project will cost X dollars and this is how the Government will fund it." The information the Opposition has gathered relates to one proposal which has much in common with an earlier proposal. When that proposal goes to Cabinet it may be in a different form. Once Cabinet has considered it, it may be in a vastly different form. Major alterations could be made to the point that the project will not proceed at this time.

Members heard, in relation to other projects, the remarks I read from the letters tabled; that is, that current projects are not adequately funded. This Government is putting some of the money back into road funding that was redirected to other avenues of expenditure by the previous Government. I have said time and time again that I cannot understand why the Opposition continues to run the line it does on this subject. In 1986 the previous Government withdrew from road funding approximately \$300m of State fuel levy and licence rebate money. The Government collected the fuel franchise levy of about \$250m and used it on projects which had nothing to do with road funding.

Hon John Halden: They were related to road funding.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: They had absolutely nothing to do with road funding. The previous Government used part of that money to fund the Transperth deficit. Despite that, members opposite stand in this place and make remarks critical of how I as Minister for Transport do not plan to look after the funding of projects currently under way, yet they are as guilty as sin because of what they have done and the funds they have taken from motorists in Western Australia which have not been used on roads.

It is best that I tell members opposite now, so that it is on file for future use, that the talk of metropolitan motorists being victimised by part of this proposal, and the statement that they will suffer, is nonsense. I remind Hon John Halden and his supporters who wish to take that path that the metropolitan price of fuel is anything from 6¢ to 10¢ a litre cheaper than it is in the country.

Hon John Halden: Your own document says 2¢ to 6¢.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I know.

Hon John Halden: Why are you stating the wrong figures?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister should ignore the member interjecting and speak to me as I will not interrupt him.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I would much rather do that, Mr President. The fact is that, although the variation is between 2¢ and 6¢ a litre as shown in that document, everyone knows that further variations occur which result in petrol in the city being up to 10¢ a litre or more cheaper than it is in the country. What appears in that prepared document -

Hon Mark Nevill: If you didn't have the railways you would have massive road problems.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The member's party when in Government wrecked the railways. The proposed road funding may not come to pass with the metropolitan fuel levy increased by 3.5¢ a litre generally or by 1¢ to 5¢ a litre for a specific project. Members see price variations in the cost of petrol in their own streets. Variations in price in the metropolitan area depend on whether a price war is under way at the time, the retail outlet is owned by a fuel company or privately, or is subject to any one of a number of other circumstances. For any member opposite to say that people can identify these differences accurately is nonsense. If one goes to a country area one will find that that is where all the industry action is taking place related to this matter. I remind members opposite - and I have asked for percentages to be given to me because they are relevant to this matter - that a lot of the fuel purchased in the metropolitan area is used to service country people.

Hon Mark Nevill: And vice versa.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: It is not vice versa. It is obvious that all transport operators will purchase their fuel at the cheapest possible point. A person will not fill up with 400 or 500 litres of fuel when he is 100 kilometres out of the metropolitan area and come back to the metropolitan area with that fuel on board when he can buy it here at 10¢ a litre cheaper. Members opposite are promoting furbies about the effect on country users. Where was Hon Mark Nevill when the previous Government was in power and took from the fuel franchise levy that was gathered around the State \$43m every year to give to Transperth? Mr Nevill should ask the people in his electorate what they think about the fuel franchise levy that was gathered in Kalgoorlie, Meekatharra, and everywhere else, and was given to the public transport users in the metropolitan area. Mr Nevill tries to justify that and say it is fair.

Hon Mark Nevill: We abolished it on diesel for farmers and miners.

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: The member should look at what is happening in country areas today after the term of his wonderful Government! How can members opposite support an urgency motion about fuel prices and road funding when their party supports the decision made by their Federal colleague Senator Collins? I think a lot of people were surprised when I came back from Canberra and gave Senator Collins the benefit of the doubt. I said that I had a good meeting with him and that I got a good response from my discussions with him. He said he had a good understanding of Western Australia's needs because he came from the Northern Territory. I invited him here, as everyone knows. His Government is now kicking Western Australia to death. Under the current pricing program, prior to tonight's Budget announcement, we delivered to the Federal Government last year about \$132m, based on the 6¢ a litre that actually goes to roads, and we got back from the Federal Government \$97m. The people of Western Australia were short changed by \$35m. Hon John Halden says that the basis on which that allocation was made was fair, when at the same time the letters from Hon Carmen Lawrence and Pam Beggs last year said that we were being short changed and we should receive more money from the Federal Government. If that were not good enough, we heard Mr Dawkins - the author of the letters about siphoning off \$8m for Subiaco Oval, and we still do not know where that \$8m went; I think Mr Davies has gone to look for it - state that everyone in Australia will have to pay an extra 3¢ a litre for fuel. I will be interested to hear whether that will go towards improving the environment or roads. So far I have not been able to find out.

Hon John Halden: Do not ask! If you go anywhere near them, we will get less!

Hon E.J. CHARLTON: I challenge the acting Leader of the Opposition - he spends most of his time acting - to go and get some more money for Western Australia and make a big name for himself. Rather than do that, he likes to sit here and make these accusations. That levy will be increased to 5¢ on all distillate and fuel next year. In addition, there will be a further 10¢ a litre increase for leaded petrol. This Federal Government claims to look after the poor. It created the poor! Many of those people have older cars which use leaded fuel, and in tonight's Budget the Federal Government has slugged them an extra 10¢ a litre. I wonder whether the Government will improve the environment of this State and assist those areas of the nation which obviously need assistance, or whether it will just use that money for pork barrelling, as it does with the 20¢ a litre that it collected from the fuel excise levy and did not spend on roads? The previous State Government siphoned off \$43m a year from the fuel franchise levy, and it also played politics with the family vehicle licence rebate. That did nothing for the roads of Western Australia, as demonstrated by the letters from the previous Minister for Transport to the previous Federal Minister Bob Brown.

There will be no increase in the fuel franchise levy to meet this State's commitment for road funding. That has never been discussed. We will meet that commitment by adding another \$11m to road funding, as we promised, and by eliminating that siphoning off by the previous Government of \$43m a year. The family concession will remain. If the Government decides to implement new road projects, it will have to fund them. As I have stated previously, it can get that funding from only two sources: The fuel franchise levy or vehicle licence fees. The only other alternative is to take money out of the consolidated revenue fund and put it into road funding. There is a justifiable case for doing that, obviously, and had the previous Government put \$1b or \$500m into roads, rather than create a \$12b debt, we could have had some decent road structures in this State. We do not have them. We have been left with a deteriorating road system and we have a \$20m shortfall per year in meeting our road funding commitments. Had the previous Government put back into roads even half of what it siphoned off, we would not be in the situation which we are in today in this State. The road transport industry, which is trying to create the wealth of this nation, is being victimised because of the lack of funds to enable it to do its job. This motion is groundless. The innuendos put by Hon John Halden are without foundation. There has been no discussion in Cabinet. There has been no discussion in the Government's Budget estimates committee, of which I am a member, and other members here have vouched for that. This motion has no credibility and should be directed to where it should go.

HON PETER FOSS (East Metropolitan - Minister for Health) (8.08 pm): I support Hon Eric Charlton and point out how thin is the basis of Hon John Halden's argument, as it is for all of his arguments. The interesting thing about listening to Hon Eric Charlton answer questions is that he is a very careful answerer of questions. He listens carefully to the words and he answers the questions asked. To that extent, he follows the habits of Hon Joe Berinson, who always listened carefully to a question and answered that question. One of the problems, of course, is that people who ask questions in this House often have a clear idea in their mind about what they want to find out, but the words as they are framed in the question do not always come out quite the way they think they are coming out, and when they listen to the answer they listen to the answer to the question that they thought they had asked, rather than to the one that they had asked. Hon John Halden is a classic example of a person who is so fixed in his mind as to the question that he thought he asked that he never bothers to find out what the answer was to. The problem is that Hon John Halden has conjured up major conspiracies and arguments.

I was amazed to hear the extraordinary suggestion from Hon Kim Chance that because some identical words appeared in the two documents, somehow there was a conspiracy, somehow that was proof. I know nothing about the origins of either document. Sitting here listening, it seemed likely that some person had written both and, if so, in this day of word processors, that person, on the basis of something previously written, had used those words. But it is a deep conspiracy! And someone must tell the world about it. It is

strange it should come out while I was looking at a piece of mail called *The Curia Mail*, which has been passed on to all of us, containing some of those conspiracy words which fit in with the argument raised by Hon John Halden. The WA Greens party member should be particularly interested in this because it contains an argument about his party which is exactly the same as the argument being used by Hon John Halden and Hon Kim Chance against Hon Eric Charlton. It proves that the Greens party is part of a conspiracy, because at page 7 the article reads -

A political party known as The Greens came into existence. The agenda of the Greens, as expressed by one of its senators, coincides precisely with the Vatican Agenda.

That is something to look at; the words are the same. To continue the same flight of fancy -

The environment is a useful vehicle for political blackmail. It is noteworthy that this political party was missing when assistance was needed by Western Queenslanders after devastating floods, just as its members have been missing during the current devastating drought in the same area. *And how many alleged Greens have ever heard of Rachel Carson?*

That is about as good an argument as we have heard from the Opposition. It is almost the same basis of argument from the Opposition, and it is about as believable as this document. Members opposite have nothing to go on; they are straining at gnats, clutching at straws and making things up. They should go back and do some proper research, as Hon Eric Charlton always does, and ensure that they read their questions and his answers. They will find that he has answered the questions. But members opposite insist on reading his answers as if they have asked proper questions in the first place.

Hon John Halden has built up this amazing argument that the matter must have been discussed. He thinks he has proved beyond all doubt that the Government's Estimates Committee discussed this. I can tell him that I am a member of the committee and we did not discuss it. I had no idea about this proposition until I read about it in the Press. The member can produce all this wonderful proof and build up this conspiracy but in the end it comes back to the truth. The truth is, Mr Halden, we did not discuss it. I had never heard of it until it was raised by the Opposition. The member should get real at some stage and begin to find out the facts instead of conjuring things out of the air. It is a total invention. We had not discussed it, and we have since not discussed it. With all this wonderful proof, all these blocks built up, the member has this wonderful construction, but when we look at it, Mr Halden, it is no better than page 7 of *The Curia Mail*, which is based on the proposition that the agenda of the Green party as expressed by one of its senators coincides with the Vatican agenda. Hon John Halden might think that is a good argument and runs second to whoever wrote this rag, but his arguments are just as useful and baseless as those in *The Curia Mail*.

HON JOHN HALDEN (South Metropolitan) [8.13 pm]: I do not intend to respond to the objectionable comments by Hon Peter Foss. Obviously someone had to come to the defence of this reckless Minister for Transport, so Hon Peter Foss had to go to those depths. His comments have never bothered me. Basically, other people do not listen to him either.

Hon Peter Foss: Did you notice how many people in your party were listening while you were speaking?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I will get angry in a moment. I am being tolerant but I am starting to feel that perhaps members are taking too much for granted. I have tried to stop interjections. I suggest that in the interests of completing this matter members allow Hon John Halden to wind up.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will do that with pleasure, Mr President. We always know when we have hit home when the rabble from the Government backbench scream and yell about nothing. I will go through the comments made by Hon Eric Charlton. I am only too happy to have interjections if I have it wrong -

The PRESIDENT: Order! I suggest that you have no authority to ask for interjections.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I will not then, Mr President.

My understanding is that the Minister for Transport said that the genesis of this proposal rose out of a committee which was looking into road construction to do with the Mitchell Freeway, the casino area, Orrong Road, the Burswood Bridge connection, the bypass etc. The Minister responsible for the committee was the Minister for Planning, and the recommendation on the two increases came from that committee to the Main Roads Department. I understand that the Minister was saying that he was not responsible for that committee and therefore did not have responsibility for the decision or its genesis. He admitted he knew about it some time ago; he was not able to point out when he knew, but presumed it was before last Wednesday, 11 August. So the questions still remain. We were still asking questions in the House, and the Minister knew of the report even though he might not have been the Minister responsible. He was answering questions in this House, aware of the report and of its recommendations, but he was not giving us the contents of the report. It was not an answer that said that the Government was looking at it. Obviously if a committee is looking at it, and it goes to the Main Roads Department, and the Minister for Planning knows about it, the Minister for Transport knows about it, and the Government is considering it as an option. One must be suspicious of what the Minister is saying.

A gaping hole exists in the Minister's defence, because he said that all of the increase relates to those roads mentioned; that is, from the casino, Orrong Road, and the northern bypass of Perth. It would be well and good if that was all that the Minister's statement to this House on 4 August and this document referred to, but it is not. His statement and the document refer to those roads but they also refer to the completion of the Reid-Roe Highway, the Mitchell-Kwinana Freeway, and a range of other roads; so, when we hear the Minister narrowing it down to a particular set of roads to suit his circumstance, his words do not suit the circumstances of the document presented in this House on 4 August, and again today, as a draft Cabinet document. The draft Cabinet document does not only refer to the roads that the Minister would have us believe. It refers to a plethora of roads; something much more extensive.

The Minister gave it away in his comments at the end of his speech when he said, "If the Government is developing new roads it is going to need new funds." We are not talking only about, and I do not think he was referring to, the roads of the northern bypass, from Burswood Bridge going to Orrong Road. He was referring to a series of road projects throughout the metropolitan area and presumably throughout the State.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It is like an auction; you can have one or the lot.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I would just like some consistency. Quite clearly, in terms of this Cabinet document the Minister today has given us great advice about Subiaco Oval and about the previous Government. This motion is about the Minister's having had certain knowledge and not being clear with this House about that knowledge. Based on the facts that are presented in the two documents that the Minister used, one a ministerial statement and the other a draft Cabinet submission, they just do not refer to the roads to which he would like to refer. To suit his argument, he may like that to happen. Both these documents refer to a far larger network of roads than the Minister in all of his waffle tonight would have us believe.

The Minister is right. If we are to have new road projects in this State, we will pay for them by way of these taxes. The only issue at stake is the timing. On 1 June he got caught; on 12 August he got caught. It is quite obvious that as we go down the path this Government is just waiting for the time when it will have to say to us, "Yes, we will increase the State fuel tax levy in one way or another, by one percentage or another and the family rebate will be abolished." The Minister has not answered the questions in the letter I wrote to you, Mr President. The Minister interpreted this matter in a particularly narrow and suitable way for himself. The facts do not relate to that. The table at the back of the leaked document refers to the city-Norham bypass. It also refers to Great Eastern Highway and a whole range of second priorities, including Reid Highway, the

extension to the Mitchell freeway, the Fremantle eastern bypass, and so on. Quite clearly, at the end of the day the Government will have to fund those works. We require the Minister to tell us how the Government proposes to do that. There is no doubt in which direction the Government is going. Whether at this point the Government will implement this program as was suggested is another matter.

I will conclude my comments by referring to the irrelevance of the Minister's statements. It is important to put them to bed. As to Subiaco Oval, the Minister tried to make some point that the Leader of the Opposition in the another place had an answer which was inconsistent with the one contained in the letter. Her position in the matter has been totally consistent. She has said to the Federal Government that she believes those funds should have been spent on roads and not on Subiaco Oval. How much money did we give to the West Australian Football Commission? Not a cent. The decision to fund that \$8m out of the One Nation package was that of the Treasurer of Australia, not the Treasurer of this State, as the Leader of the Opposition then was. This Minister has merely put up a smokescreen in an effort to confuse everybody.

Hon E.J. Charlton: She didn't know anything about it, did she?

Hon JOHN HALDEN: Of course she did. She gave the same answer on radio. As I said, the Minister did not listen.

Hon E.J. Charlton: She wrote a letter, but she doesn't know anything about it.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: It might be more appropriate for Hon Peter Foss to give the Minister the lecture he tried to give me. The Opposition does not agree with the allocation of \$8m towards Subiaco Oval. It should have gone to roads. I have said that publicly today, and I have said it before. I do not agree with the decision of the Federal Government to cut Western Australia's road funding to the degree that it has been, and I have said that publicly. There is no point in the Minister trying to run those flags up the pole. My position is quite contrary to what the Minister has said here tonight. There is a way to deal with the Federal Minister for Transport and Communications. The Minister should not berate and call people names as he continually does. That will not work. There is no clearer example of that than this Minister going to Canberra with \$102m and coming home with \$98m after he had given the Federal Government the good oil on Western Australia.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Not bad; you went over there and had \$57m and got short-changed by \$58m. That's how good you are.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I did not go to Canberra with anything, nor come back with anything. I am a net non-gainer. It is unfortunate that the Minister has tried to narrow this debate. With a lengthy, convoluted answer he tried to obfuscate any answer he gave on this matter. This issue does not relate just to the roads referred to by the Minister - the documents prove it.

As required of me by standing orders, I seek leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MOTION - SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Extended after 11.00 pm

HON GEORGE CASH (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [8.26 pm]: I move -

That the House continue to sit beyond 11.00 pm this evening.

The Government requires the Supply Bill, the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill and the Financial Administration Legislation Amendment Bill to be passed this week, otherwise the Government will run out of money. It is now 8.26 pm and we have been going since 3.30 this afternoon on the urgency motion. It is fair to say that we have not started work on orders of the day as yet. If we are to complete these Bills, we will need to sit beyond 11.00 pm tonight. I have advised members on this side of the House that I expect we will sit beyond 11 o'clock tomorrow night, probably sit Thursday night and, if

necessary, sit Friday. I advise all members of that so that if they have appointments outside of what might be regarded as normal sitting hours, they can take appropriate action.

HON JOHN HALDEN (South Metropolitan) [8.27 pm]: The Leader of the House advised me of this decision earlier. The Opposition is prepared to accept the necessity of what he has outlined. The predicament that both this and the other House find themselves in is a direct result of the actions of and the making of the Government. The Parliament did not commence until late into the year and did not get its house in order for political reasons. The result is now manifesting itself. However, I accept the proposition advanced by the Leader of the Government in this House. Of course, important matters have to be resolved and the Opposition will be as cooperative as possible in resolving them. That does not mean that we will in any way be curtailing our right to address the Supply Bill as strenuously as possible.

Hon George Cash: We on this side will be very happy to sit down with Hon John Halden at any time to work out some time management so that we do not inconvenience members any more than is necessary.

Hon JOHN HALDEN: I thank the Leader of the House for that invitation.

Question put and passed.

TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 5 August.

HON MARK NEVILL (Mining and Pastoral) [8.29 pm]: The Opposition supports this Bill. The same Bill was debated some 15 months ago, on 28 May last year. It now falls into the category of a retrospective Bill because it must retrospectively ratify payments and advances made since 1 July. It is not good enough to attribute the delay to just the election. A dreadfully slow changeover of Government occurred after the election. It is now quite clear that the Parliament should have sat at least a month earlier than it did. As a result we now have a raft of retrospective Bills. I can remember only too clearly being berated last year by the likes of Hon Peter Foss and many other members opposite on the few occasions the Labor Government introduced retrospective legislation. Within the first few months of this Government's calling Parliament together so many retrospective Bills have been introduced one could almost say it has become a habit.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: What about the retrospective Bills during your Government?

Hon MARK NEVILL: There were very few; about 80 per cent of Bills being introduced into this House under this Government are retrospective. Hon Ross Lightfoot should do his homework before he makes interjections which do not do his side of the House any great service.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): Order!

Hon MARK NEVILL: The introduction of retrospective legislation is clearly against the stated views of most, if not all, members opposite. I will remind members opposite every time they introduce retrospective Bills into this House on which I am required to speak, that very little new legislation is in the Government's program. That fact alone suggests that these Bills could have been drafted, if they were not already drafted, at a much earlier stage and introduced into the Parliament prior to their taking effect.

The Treasurer's Advance Account operates under the authority of section 8 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Act. The latter Act specifies a limit up to which the Treasurer may draw on the public bank account for purposes of the account. It also defines the purpose for which such drawings may be made. The limit established by this Bill for the 1993-94 financial year is \$200m. The purposes authorised for making payments and advances are grouped into three categories: The first category is to make payments of an extraordinary or unforeseen

nature which will be chargeable to the soon to be established consolidated fund. That fund will be established by the next Bill that we will be debating this evening; that is, the Financial Administration Legislation Amendment Bill. The expenditures will subsequently be submitted to Parliament for appropriation against the consolidated fund. The new consolidated fund will amalgamate the consolidated revenue account and the general loan and capital works fund.

The second category is to make advances on terms the Treasurer thinks fit for the temporary financing of works and services of the State or other officers or public authorities, including advances to public authorities or to accounts forming part of the public trust fund or for the purchase of stores. Examples in that category are the Building Management Authority, and State Print for stationery and that sort of thing, which is generally referred to as stock in hand. In the previous category I mentioned, the extraordinary and unforeseen occurrences for which payments are allowed to be made can include things like natural disasters. I expect this year's Treasurer's Annual Statements to show some payment for the recent Kimberley floods which will fall into that category. The advances are recouped from the specific appropriation of Parliament to the applicable accounts or by recovering the advances from the trust fund account or from the officers or public authorities to whom, or on whose account, the advances were made.

The third purpose of the Treasurer's Advance Account is to make advances on terms the Treasurer thinks fit for the temporary financing of works and services undertaken in conjunction with or on behalf of the Commonwealth, State or Territory Governments, local government authorities or persons, or by those Government authorities or persons on behalf of the State with the advances to be recovered from the Government authorities or persons to whom, or on whose account, the advances were made. As I said earlier, the limit for this year, which lapses on 30 June 1994 will be \$200m, the same as the figure for the last two financial years. That amount is the aggregate of payments and advances before and after 30 June 1993. Statement No 13 in the Treasurer's Annual Statements is a statement of advances unrecovered. This gives a list of all the advances which have been paid up to 30 June 1992 and which have been unrecovered. They total just over \$30m. Some of those are the Building Management Authority cash projects account, the BMA cash order suspense, the BMA Welshpool suspense store and BMA works and sales which total some \$6.34m. Dental bulk stores total approximately \$344 000. Rental costs for the Department of Infrastructure and Government Assets amount to approximately \$4.7m; printing services totals \$870 000; and supply services which includes sundry debtors' advance accounts and warehouse inventories advance total \$4.9m.

Just as Hon Max Evans recommended last year, I recommend that members have a look at the Treasurer's Annual Statements because they contain a wealth of information and I do not think they are as widely read as they should be. In his speech last year when he was feeling in a generous mood, Hon Max Evans recommended to members that they look at the Treasurer's Annual Statements for each financial year and also at the analytical information because the amount of information that is available to Parliament and to the public has increased tremendously in recent years. He commended Treasury for its work. That shows that there have been great advances in the way the accounts have been published over the last decade. There have been big advances in the information that is available to members of Parliament, particularly in relation to the financial statements and annual reports. There is no excuse these days for members not having access to that information. It is there; it is only a question of their finding it and using it if the need arises.

In conclusion, I indicate again the Opposition's support for the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill. It usually attracts very little debate. The Supply Bill, which is usually introduced around the same time, is the Bill on which members can venture a little further.

HON MAX EVANS (North Metropolitan - Minister for Finance) [8.42 pm]: I thank the Opposition for its support of the Bill. When I first came to Parliament, the Treasurer's

Advance Account had to be studied. I found that amounts for the Government Printer and the Building Management Authority went from one year to the next. I could not work them out until I was alerted to the fact that it was really the way they financed their stock on hand. For instance, the Government Printer, because of cash accounting, might buy \$2m worth of paper in one year, but he might have \$1.5m worth of stock at the end of the year and it would not show up; it would be excessive expenditure. It was controlled that way because it was considered that that was an ideal way of doing the accounting. The BMA's accounts were done in exactly the same way. It has been tightened up fairly well.

For the benefit of new members, the Treasurer's Advance Account is a little like an imprest account or an advance account and is used by the Government when there are natural disasters or acts of grace. The amounts that are required to be paid out during the year can be drawn from this account. The amounts usually go into the consolidated fund and are reimbursed later in the year for amounts up to \$200m.

I have to take Hon Mark Nevill to task because he has a short memory. In 1983, the Parliament came back on 23 March 1983 after the February elections to deal with an excessive prices Bill. It sat for two days discussing excessive prices. I understand that the Bill related only to excessive petrol prices and they were never controlled from that day forward. It was a good political move. We are talking about the Supply Bill and I wish people would get their facts right. The Supply Bill is not retrospective although it was introduced after the end of June. It has been done before; members opposite taught us how when they were in Government because we did not know how to do it until they did it in 1983. In 1983, Parliament resumed on 26 July, and on the same day the Supply Bill was introduced by the then Treasurer, Brian Burke. Although that Government introduced it three weeks before we have introduced it in 1993, it was introduced after 1 July. There is nothing new in this world.

To put the Deputy President in the picture, it has been a pattern of Governments for many years that following February elections the Parliament does not resume until after the end of June. Hon Mark Nevill must be aware that it takes time for a new Government to draft legislation because the Government has to decide on the changes it wants made, get those changes approved and then have the legislation drafted. Governments have to be responsible. In our case, we have had to deal with a lot of legislation that was not dealt with by the previous Government, including the Mining Amendment Bill. That Bill had not even been dealt with by Caucus. We are now dealing with other legislation, including that which relates to the annual valuations of land. That puts the position correctly on the Supply Bill which was introduced on 26 July.

Hon Mark Nevill: We are talking about the Treasurer's advance.

Hon MAX EVANS: I wanted to go back into history. The date 18 August is a very historic date in this House because on that date in 1983, Hon Joe Berinson introduced the Temporary Reduction of Remuneration (Senior Public Officers) Bill which cut 10 per cent off salaries.

Hon Mark Nevill: What has that got to do with this?

Hon MAX EVANS: I am telling the member what happened 10 years ago.

Hon Mark Nevill: Was that a retrospective Bill?

Hon MAX EVANS: No, it was a no warning Bill.

Hon Mark Nevill: We also introduced the silencers for shooting starlings Bill! Tell us about that Firearms Amendment Act.

Hon MAX EVANS: The member has never referred to that Bill. I had better go back and have a look at that. It was probably a very important Bill for the honourable member.

That is what happened 10 years ago.

Hon Mark Nevill: These two Bills are not the major offenders, the rest are. The Supply Bill and the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill are not.

Hon MAX EVANS: The Financial Administration Legislation Amendment Bill relates to the consolidated fund. However, it has to be put through the Parliament at the same time as the Supply Bill and the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill. They have to be proclaimed at the same time.

Hon Mark Nevill: Only because you want it in this year and not next financial year.

Hon MAX EVANS: It would be a mistake if we had to try to put it through now. If we put it through in the year after, it would be a ridiculous waste of time because there are many things in the Bill which departments are keen to have.

Hon Mark Nevill: You are doing it by choice this year.

Hon MAX EVANS: Yes, it is just as easy to go back to 1 July. It really does not make any great changes. In fact, there was only one bank account but there are two separate funds. Now, there is still the same bank account, but only one fund. That is the only difference. Money is credited to a consolidated fund rather than two separate funds in the ledger. I do not see any problems with that. It will expedite what I believe will be better reporting. In 1985, Tasmania was the last State to introduce a consolidated fund. We are trying to bring this State into line with all of the other States. I thank the Opposition for its support.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee and Report

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon Max Evans (Minister for Finance), and passed.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 10 August.

HON MARK NEVILL (Mining and Pastoral) [8.53 pm]: The Opposition supports the Bill. The Minister for Finance quite correctly pointed out that after an election the Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill and the Supply Bill are often delayed. The Government has chosen to make this Bill retrospective. It comes into effect on 1 July and creates a consolidated fund. As the Minister recently said, this is not in itself all that complex, and it is a clear choice by the Government to introduce a consolidated fund in the 1993-94 financial year. It is probably not essential. The statements are published on a consolidated basis already, and this Bill could have been introduced for the next financial year. In that way the Government could have avoided the objectionable action of introducing retrospective legislation.

Part of this Bill had its genesis during the term of office of the previous Government, although it is not entirely the work of the previous Government. I noted in the second reading speech that changes being promoted now are referred to as Government initiatives, but changes made in the financial accounts and those sorts of matters before 6 February are referred to as Treasury initiatives. The McCarrey report also generally refers to all initiatives over the past 10 years as Treasury initiatives. It is interesting to note the change in terminology with regard to initiatives.

The Bill proposes amendments to the Financial Administration and Audit Act and introduces three financial initiatives. Firstly, it provides for net appropriations, which means that when sums are raised by an agency they do not have to be returned to the consolidated fund but may be applied for other purposes. Net appropriations were introduced into New South Wales on 1 July 1991, but its legislation is different from that before the House. Risks are associated with this reform, which were pointed out in debate in another place.

The second initiative in the Bill is to establish the consolidated fund, which brings together the consolidated revenue fund and the general loan and capital works fund. The financial statements have been reported on a consolidated basis for a number of years in the supplementary Budget information papers, and in the Treasurer's Annual Statements since 1991-92. It is quite clear that this initiative has been in the pipeline for some time, as has the net appropriations initiative.

The third change introduced in this Bill relates to the way in which certain revenues are dealt with. These are referred to as hypothecated revenues, such as those of the Lotteries Commission, the Healthway funds, some road funds, and some of the funds collected under the Road Traffic Act. These funds will be paid into the consolidated revenue fund rather than into separate accounts. In the past these funds have bypassed the consolidated revenue fund and have been credited directly to accounts. This way they will show in the reported Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, so they will go through the consolidated fund and back out to the various accounts to which they were previously credited, and will show in the consolidated fund when it is published at the end of this financial year.

I turn now to net appropriations, which are discussed in the McCarrey Report of the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances. McCarrey says net appropriations provide more flexibility if revenue is raised through the provision of services, the sale, leasing or hiring out of goods other than real property, or the sale, leasing or letting of real property. With net appropriations a department or agency will require agreement with the Treasurer before it can retain those earnings for whatever purposes it wishes to use them. The weakness, as we saw it in the Bill as it stands, is that there was no mechanism for the agreements entered into between the Treasurer and the department or agency to be reported to Parliament, or to appear in the Budget papers as an estimate for the coming financial year, or to be reported in the Treasurer's Annual Statements. The Minister for Finance has just provided me with a copy of a draft Treasurer's Instruction which is designed to overcome that problem. It would be more appropriate for us to discuss that during the Committee stage, but in the few minutes I have had to look at that draft Treasurer's Instruction I have formulated a couple of questions about it.

The accountability side of net appropriations in the New South Wales Parliament is disclosed by Treasurer's Instructions. We were concerned that these net appropriations would remove some of the activities of departments and agencies from the purview of Parliament, and it is hoped that this Treasurer's Instruction will make that information quite transparent. The Opposition moved an amendment in another place to incorporate in the Bill the full accounting of this mechanism to ensure some control remains over the expenditures by departments and agencies, and I hope this will achieve the same end. The main view behind net appropriations is that they allow departments and agencies more ability to charge the real costs for the services they provide.

The second area on which I wish to comment is the hypothecation of revenues. The proposals in this Bill are different from the McCarrey report recommendations. McCarrey says this is an undesirable process and that funds from tobacco licences and gambling that are applied to Healthway and the Lotteries Commission should be put directly into consolidated revenue. As I said earlier, this Bill will put those funds into the consolidated fund and then reappropriate them for the purposes for which they were originally intended.

I want to speak at a little more length on the consolidated fund. I will probably touch on this during debate on the Supply Bill, but as the Bill before the House actually sets up the fund it is appropriate that I make a few comments about it and about the various ways in which we can look at the consolidated fund. The commission on audit predicted a huge deficit next financial year and said that it would blow out over the next few years. As I said earlier, the consolidated fund will bring together the consolidated revenue fund and the general loan and capital works fund, but it will not include borrowings. If borrowing for social infrastructure is a philosophy opposed by the Government, the Government must not have any deficit on the consolidated fund; that is, there must be no net financing requirement. It would be interesting to know the Government's view on borrowing for social infrastructure.

Hon Max Evans: What do you mean by social infrastructure?

Hon MARK NEVILL: I mean police stations, schools and those sorts of things that do not pay for themselves. The McCarrey report clearly says that borrowings should be restricted to income producing assets which pay for themselves. Queensland has no borrowing for social infrastructure; all the other States have a different view. I understand that this Government believes that a Government should not borrow for social infrastructure. That is why it is trying to eliminate the underlying Budget deficit over the next four years. Does the Minister understand me?

Hon Max Evans: Yes, I understand you. McCarrey is expounding the ultimate that could occur if you have a specific cash flow. Queensland had big reserves in recent years and could build non-income earning assets from income. This was done years ago. Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital was paid for from CRF and not capital works.

Hon MARK NEVILL: The north block of Royal Perth Hospital was certainly not funded that way.

Queensland now realises that it underspent in many areas of social infrastructure and has dramatically increased spending in this area. It is dangerous to compare funding - as McCarrey has done - between Western Australia and Queensland. I recently had the good fortune to spend a week in northern Queensland. The roads to many Queensland tourist centres are much worse than any roads in Western Australia. The road into Daintree was incredibly bad. If one is comparing spending on social infrastructure and other such matters, one must compare levels of services. Kuranda had a box in the middle of its shopping centre seeking donations for an ambulance; this major tourist centre did not have - or I did not see - an ambulance, police station or nursing post. The McCarrey report compared Queensland with Western Australia in an unsophisticated manner.

Pitfalls are involved with the consolidated fund. Standard and Poor's is a major and probably the best rating agency and uses a different basis for its assessment of Government finance. Its assessment relates to business accounting principles, uses international conventions and relies heavily on Australian Bureau of Statistics Government finance statistics. The ABS has a parallel but slightly different system also using Government finance statistics. Both systems of review provide a very different assessment of the Western Australian economy from that of the McCarrey report, which uses a different form of consolidated fund to assess current and future State finances. I will leave some of those comparisons for the Supply debate.

Hon Max Evans: Otherwise you will have nothing left for the Supply debate!

Hon MARK NEVILL: I am sure the Minister will be able to watch the grass grow for a few hours tonight! Standard and Poor's has two tests when examining State debt: It looks at the percentage of State expenditure taken up with interest costs, and considers how much day to day spending is covered by earnings. Standard and Poor's clearly indicates that Western Australia has never borrowed for day to day spending and has always operated a surplus in its current account as distinct from capital account. Australian Ratings has reached the same conclusion. The only person who claims that we do not have a surplus in the current account is McCarrey. That is the crux of his argument, and he is out on a limb in that regard. The rest of the McCarrey report confirms the State debt which is outlined in Treasury papers. It also reviews a number of other matters providing little in the way of new information. Again, I will leave this matter until a later debate.

The Opposition supports this Bill, which is in line with the thinking of the previous Government. It relates to the progress that Treasury has made and continues to make in accounting procedures to ensure transparency for analysis. This will mean that the public sector will become more accountable and efficient.

HON MAX EVANS (North Metropolitan - Minister for Finance) [9.18 pm]: I thank the Opposition for its support of the legislation. I shall finish the story I started in an earlier debate. Supply operates on the basis of a 31 August deadline, and this relates to the

goings on in Canberra in 1975 when Supply was denied. At that time it was decided in Western Australia to implement a procedure in this regard, and Sir Ronald Wilson, Sir Charles Court and Mr McCarrey - the then Under Treasurer - devised amendments to the Audit Act, now known as the Financial Administration and Audit Act. Those amendments meant that if Supply was not passed before 30 June, the Government automatically had Supply until 31 August. The amount involved was one-fifth of the previous year's Budget or the amount outlined in the previous year's Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill. Therefore, the Government could not be caught out in that regard. It was essential that Supply be passed before 31 August following those changes.

I have already referred to retrospectivity. We decided that it was better to make these changes on 1 July this year rather than having to wait until next year. Net appropriations had been discussed before. At a function attended by Hon Ian Taylor and me I mentioned that the Government would bring in net appropriations. He said, "That's terrific. All the departments want that." It has been talked about for some time. I was alerted to this by the accounting executives of the Department of Marine and Harbours and the Department of Agriculture. Until that time net appropriations was something unfamiliar to me. Previously when a department decided to raise extra income on its own initiative, that income went straight into consolidated revenue to Treasury. There was no incentive for departments to raise revenue. The Department of Agriculture might have a new research initiative with a saleable value. It might cost the department \$50 000 to get the project up and running, and then it would have to wait until next year's Budget for the money to come in and it would not offset the \$50 000, which went to consolidated revenue. We must bring in some incentives for departments to do this. I talked to CEOs at a function at El Caballo Blanco and Neil Bartholomaeus said, "Terrific! We have a lot of services we could be charging for but are not." It is an incentive to them to generate revenue to offset their own costs.

I acknowledge the contribution made by Hon Mark Nevill about Treasury instructions. Those instructions will now say what must be reported in the annual report of the agency. They must show that the Treasurer has given approval for net appropriations to show what expenditure shall be offset against income. Those instructions say that a broad agreement will be set out for purposes specified by the agreement, including gross expenditure, gross revenue and the net expenditure against appropriation. It is not much different from what obtained previously. The expenditure was debited against the department, and the revenue went straight to a line item and revenue for that department. Now it will be credited directly against expenditure, which is an incentive and a very good move which will be well received by a lot of departments, as it was by Hon Ian Taylor when I mentioned it to him.

Hon Mark Nevill: It is a good idea, but it needs some controls.

Hon MAX EVANS: I accept that it needs to be reported. The annual reports at least in the past few years have been excellent; in fact, most are superb. The departments have toned down the cost of their reports - they got too glossy for a while - and they are very good documents which show what each department has done. I said at the Lonney awards that annual reports should be spread among departments so other departments see what business they are in.

I was interested to hear Hon Mark Nevill say that New South Wales went to net appropriations in 1991. I am surprised how late in life so many changes have come. Other States are moving to accrual accounting. We are also looking at the same thing to improve the accounting and costs of the Government.

Hon Mark Nevill also mentioned hypothecation and Healthways. Healthways does not come into that. The money from the tobacco excise goes straight into consolidated revenue, which pays out 10 per cent to Healthways. The only four examples are the Lotteries Commission, the metropolitan region improvement profit tax, licence fees and the fuel levy. Between the three of them, it amounts to \$300m in this year's Budget; that is, revenue of \$300m and expenditure of \$300m. We could have one appropriation Bill or a number of appropriation Bills out of the consolidated fund. Probably we will stick to

ordinary annual services, which is the money Bill that carries the ordinary annual services of Government and capital works.

Hon Mark Nevill commented on the McCarrey report's recommendation that there be no borrowings on non-income earning assets. That is a good stand, and this is what Les McCarrey is working for. The Government can increase its revenue from only a few sources and royalties would be the only large increase over a period. The Government must watch if expenditure is cut back, but it is not looking at it. McCarrey must have taken that from the Queensland example. I remember talking to Sir Charles Court years ago about how Queensland's finances were much better than ours. One had only to look at Queensland's hospitals and roads. That is the sort of policy that created that situation in Queensland, but we will not do that. Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital's balance was completely written off under CRF in the past couple of years. During the 1980s if the huge increase in revenues had not gone off in the wrong direction, Western Australia would have had several hundreds of million dollars for capital works or shown a surplus. If the State gets a good financial boom period with excessive revenue, that can quite readily be appropriated for capital works. That can be easily done out of consolidated funds as ordinary revenue under CRF and can be programmed out for capital works. Before there were two separate funds and that made a few changes necessary.

Hon Mark Nevill: Could you outline what funds these departments cannot obtain under net appropriations generally?

Hon MAX EVANS: I would not let Police Commissioner Brian Bull have net appropriations for his speeding fines. It is really for new incentives rather than present revenue. The capital budget of the Department of Marine and Harbours is about \$20m and revenue is \$21m. If one did a full net appropriation, that is next to nothing. Westrail had a crazy situation with \$263m expenditure at one end and \$233m revenue in the CRF. The two were offset to a \$30m net loss, but we had two gross amounts of expenditure and revenue. Now the Government has taken Westrail out of there; it is a net appropriation. The Building Management Authority is another example. The BMA accounts in the Lonney report represent a most complicated set of accounts. The BMA has drawn out money for capital works and expenditure and has umpteen more bank accounts than Westrail. If it had net appropriations it would be a lot better. Transperth is also like that.

The Government had net appropriations from concessions for school fees, fuel excise and CRF, and there is a fourth one which we will try to get back to net appropriations. Some of the bigger departments have net appropriations and it is hard to come back to a nil balance. I recognise the member's reference to the figures of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which are different from the Government's financial statistics. I prefer the GFS.

I considered Hon Mark Nevill's comments on Standard and Poor's and how it looks at our figures. He said that it accepted what the previous Government did. If it really did, its credibility does not stand up too well from my point of view. If Standard and Poor's thought the way it was done before between ordinary annual services and capital works was okay, I would say Les McCarrey and his boys are a lot closer to it than Standard and Poor's. I have not seen the Standard and Poor's report and I do not know what is behind the report, but I do not know how it could have accepted that. One has only to look at a few things that happened, even in the last year. For example, with the WA Development Corporation from where did \$50 million come into consolidated revenue? The Government lent \$50m to the Western Australian Land Authority, which put it in CRF. If Standard and Poor's say that is normal it should look at its own standards, because they look pretty poor.

Hon Mark Nevill: That comment contains a few assumptions.

Hon MAX EVANS: No. The money came out of the Western Australian Treasury Corporation; it was borrowed money.

Hon Mark Nevill: You are assuming that is the way Standard and Poor's have treated it.

Hon MAX EVANS: Hon Mark Nevill said that the report accepted the way ordinary annual service had been shown by the previous Government.

Hon Mark Nevill: I think that transaction was prior to the February report.

Hon MAX EVANS: Perhaps they may do it correctly this time. I will be interested to see what Standard and Poor's have to say about the voluntary severance scheme.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): The Minister is not giving a second reading speech; he should be winding up the debate.

Hon MAX EVANS: I am answering the points raised by Hon Mark Nevill. He raised the Standard and Poor's final report of the previous Government's accounting of the consolidated revenue fund. I am trying to point out to the member -

Hon Mark Nevill: You can talk about that in the Supply debate.

Hon MAX EVANS: I might be asleep by the time the member has finished. I want to get the facts straight on these matters. The voluntary severance scheme was capitalised; it was not written off over 20 years, which I do not think is a normal standard. I would be interested to see what was reported on that. The maintenance of hospitals and schools, which was debated before, was also covered from the general loan and capital works fund, but I believe it should have come from ordinary annual services. In each of two years \$50m was spent on cars from ordinary annual services because the revenue came in and there was a small profit. If we capitalised that there would still be more than \$50m revenue for two years. I wonder whether Standard and Poor's reported that it liked the way the system operated before, because I saw many anomalies in that system. I thank the Opposition for its support of the legislation.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon Murray Montgomery) in the Chair; Hon Max Evans (Minister for Finance) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement -

Hon MARK NEVILL: I reiterate the point made by the Opposition about the retrospective aspects of this Bill which will come into operation under this clause on 1 July 1993, subject to subsection (2). Had this Bill been introduced towards the end of June I could see no problem with facilitating it so that it passed through the Chamber before the end of the financial year and before it came into operation. There is no real problem with this Bill. It will receive the cooperation of the Opposition to have it passed on time so that it is not retrospective. I hope that the Government looks seriously at introducing retrospective legislation. Depending on the Bill, it is my view that some retrospective legislation is an affront to the Parliament and is an undesirable practice. I certainly do not approve of it.

Hon MAX EVANS: In a perfect world, if the legislation had been passed before the end of June it would not have been retrospective. The Government believes the legislation is important to the State. It does not think it makes any difference to the formatting of the accounts between ordinary annual services and capital works; it just makes it tidier from the point of view of the accounting this year to future years. That has been shown to be a better way. We are following the formats of other States. The sooner we do that the better. It would be a pity for the sake of a few weeks to leave the legislation until 1 July 1994. As I have said before, the consolidated revenue money was going into one credit account and borrowings for capital works were being credited to another account. Now we are crediting both to the consolidated revenue fund. We believe that is a better accounting procedure. The appropriation Bills are the same as before.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3: *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985* amended -

Hon MARK NEVILL: I refer to the Treasurer's Instruction which relates to clause 3 and

the net appropriations. The draft Treasurer's Instruction No 952, 10(2)(b) states that gross revenue credited to the consolidated revenue fund will be shown and the amount of revenue retained by that department or statutory authority will also be disclosed in the financial statements of that department or authority. Will there be any way, by way of notes, that the sale of any significant properties in that will be shown in the accounts, because property will be allowed to be sold under this Bill?

Hon MAX EVANS: The sale of assets - cars, furniture, etc - if approved by the Treasurer, go to net appropriations against the department or to the departmental revenue; both actually go to the consolidated revenue fund.

Hon Mark Nevill: I was thinking more about properties.

Hon MAX EVANS: That could be possible. The Government is still working this one through. In the past proceeds from the sale of properties have just gone to consolidated revenue and we have lost track of it all. In the future if a particular partner sold property, the money could be credited here and the money used for specific assets for that department, rather than use its other revenue.

Hon Mark Nevill: Westrail might be quite keen on selling much of its land and all you would get is a global figure for revenue retained and gross revenue earned. You would have no idea of what it had been up to. That could be a significant amount of money.

Hon MAX EVANS: If it had come out of net appropriations it would have been approved by the Treasury, otherwise it could go into the consolidated revenue fund which would then go down as capital works. That is where money from one fund is appropriated two ways; it comes into one revenue base and is appropriated both ways. Westrail is a good example. Many more bodies would find more properties to sell if they knew the money could be retained there. There is a big advantage in that.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I agree with the Minister: If Westrail sells the land the money will go into the consolidated revenue fund and if it leases the land it will receive the proceeds. It tends to drive Government departments to an arrangement which may not be in the best interests of the Government. In order to obtain additional funds they enter into leasing arrangements rather than sell the land. As a result, Westrail has been drawn into the management of properties which is unrelated to its activities as a railway operator.

Under the Treasurer's Instruction 10.1 the broad terms of the agreement between the Treasurer and the accountable officer will be disclosed in the financial statements. Will there be only one agreement for Westrail, or will it be an annual process?

Hon Max Evans: It will be an annual process. The money does not carry on to the next year.

Hon MARK NEVILL: In other words, there will be an agreement between the Treasurer and the accountable officer each year.

Hon MAX EVANS: Hon Mark Nevill is correct and he made a good point about the sale of land and how the proceeds can be used. The money can be used for the sale, leasing or letting of real property under proposed section 23A of the Act. Victoria and New South Wales had a sale of assets and the money was used to maintain expenditure, which is wrong. The Government would not allow that to happen in this State. It has to be done for a special purpose. The Government is looking at ways of improving this situation. The Government has a lot of assets, but unfortunately there is no property asset register. Work on compiling a register was supposed to have commenced in January 1992. I am working on it now. When it is completed we will have a better idea of the situation and will be able to ascertain how properties can be sold and the money appropriated to departments to assist them.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 18 put and passed.

Schedule 1 put and passed.

Schedule 2 -

Hon MARK NEVILL: This schedule amends the Constitution Act and I ask you, Mr Deputy Chairman, whether we need a constitutional majority, which we do not have in the Chamber at the moment, to pass it.

[Quorum formed.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon Murray Montgomery): I am advised that this schedule is not covered by the Constitution Act.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedules 3 to 6 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon Max Evans (Minister for Finance), and passed.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 5 August.

HON MARK NEVILL (Mining and Pastoral) [9.50 pm]: It is customary that by convention during the debate on the Supply Bill members speak on any matter they consider important. I propose taking advantage of that convention tonight to debate some of the issues that have arisen as a result of the report of the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances, the McCarrey report. Little debate has occurred on that report except for some fairly superficial treatment of it by commentators. I have read the first report in detail and reached a number of conclusions about it.

The principle behind the report is quite laudable. Unfortunately it got off to a bad start and probably never recovered. If a review of Western Australia's finances is undertaken it should be done independently. I was pleased to see that the report was not titled "Commission of Audit" in the same way as three other reports undertaken for conservative coalitions after being elected to power in other States as those reports were not audits by any stretch of the imagination.

The McCarrey report is not an independent report by any objective tests. The chairman, Les McCarrey, is obviously a knowledgeable person. However, one cannot doubt or dispute his known antipathy towards the Australian Labor Party and Labor Governments.

Hon Peter Foss: Probably just against the stupid things they did financially over the years, is it not?

Hon MARK NEVILL: I think it goes deeper than any criticism of our finances. As I go through the report I will show that it is not an independent one.

Hon Peter Foss: It is impossible to find anybody with any financial nous who does not think the Labor Party was totally useless.

Hon MARK NEVILL: We had a number of inquiries in this State which evoked no dispute about confidence in the people who chaired them. Two of the other three members of this inquiry were on the central fund raising committee of the Liberal Party just prior to the election.

Hon Peter Foss: So what?

Hon MARK NEVILL: When I made inquiries around the accounting profession about these people, basically trying to gain an assessment of their competence from different accountants, I found that while some of them may be good accountants they are certainly not in the high echelon of esteem of a number of people to whom I spoke.

Hon Peter Foss: It was not a matter of having accounting skill but of having people with nous.

Hon MARK NEVILL: They should have financial and accounting expertise. Those people were not regarded by people of Mr Foss' persuasion as being anywhere near the best people who could have been selected for the job. The chairman had a strong antipathy towards Labor Governments and the Labor Party and two of the other three members of the committee had close links with the Liberal Party, having been on its fund raising committee.

Hon Peter Foss: What has that to do with it?

Hon MARK NEVILL: A lot.

Hon Peter Foss: It has nothing to do with it at all.

Hon MARK NEVILL: If we, when in Government, had put similar people on a commission the member would have screamed blue murder, as he did last year about retrospective legislation. He now sits opposite with a smile on his face. Why? Because of his hypocrisy. The member will show the same hypocrisy about retrospective legislation.

Hon Peter Foss: Nonsense!

Hon MARK NEVILL: If not, the member can cross the floor and vote with the Opposition.

The report got off to a bad start because its independence was questioned not only by me and other people on this side of the House but also by *The West Australian*.

Hon Peter Foss: That was what you said.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I think those people had their own sources of information.

Hon Peter Foss: Nonsense!

Hon MARK NEVILL: I would like to think those people quoted me, but I do not give myself that luxury.

If one compares the McCarrey report with the commissions of audit in the other three States one quickly sees that it has avoided many of the pitfalls of those commissions. It avoided the difficulty that some of those commissions presented to the Governments which set them up. The New South Wales and Victorian reports contain many recommendations on how to raise funds. The McCarrey report recommends that the public sector be slashed and taxes and charges reduced. The report does not comment on the different forms of revenue that the State could look at and, as such, does not leave the Government with the sort of problem left to the Victorian Government, which virtually walked away from the recommendations of its commission of audit.

I think it was the Victoria commission that recommended a levy of \$50 a year on toilets to fund sewerage costs. We have seen that proposal floated in the media in this State by the Minister for Water Resources. The Victorian audit recommended a charge on school children of \$175 each a year for school buses, which are presently provided free. The New South Wales report contained a similar recommendation. No such recommendation was put to the Government in this State.

One of the reports in the Eastern States recommended that a levy of \$200 be imposed on city parking to be used for urban transport. Recommendations were also made for increases in the motor vehicle fuel levy to pay for public transport. It recommended also a special property rate increase on metropolitan dwellers who had access to rail services. There was no mention in the McCarrey report of those major factors which affect the level of grants we receive from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. We are penalised tens of millions of dollars because we do not have a gold royalty, and it is strange that there was no comment about that. McCarrey mentions in one of his recommendations the comparative expenditure between Western Australia and other States which is disclosed in the Grants Commission report. He mentioned those areas

where we were above the average of the other States in expenditure, and they include welfare services, corrective services, community health, culture, recreation, and services to industry. We are below the standard in Government education, technical and further education and police. He conveniently leaves out the fact that we are way below other States in expenditure on Aboriginal community services. We spend 84 per cent of the average amount that other States spend. He seems to leave out things that are not ideologically compatible with perhaps some sectors of this Government in that highlighting them may cause problems.

There are two basic assumptions behind the McCarrey report: Firstly, that the Public Service is basically inefficient and inflated; secondly, that the Western Australian economy is in dire straits. Neither of those assumptions is correct. In my view, the Public Service in this State is very efficient. The State Public Service has certainly made gigantic progress in the 10 years that I have been in Parliament, and by all independent assessments the Western Australian economy is very healthy.

I move to one of the myths about the Public Service that Mr McCarrey has created in his report. He states at page 2 of the report, in reference to figure 1.1, "States Public Sector Employment - 1991/92 % of Total Employed Wage and Salary Earners", that -

The proportion of all wage and salary earners employed by Western Australian government agencies has, for many years, been higher than any other state except Tasmania.

There is a nice graph to demonstrate that purported fact. However, it is quite misleading, because a graph which I have put together on State public sector employment breaks down public sector employment into general Government and total State public sector employment, which also contains the public trading enterprises. Comparing Western Australia with Queensland shows that in the general Government sector, the core bureaucracy in Western Australia is smaller than in Queensland and South Australia. The Queensland public trading enterprise sector is smaller than in Western Australia. When one adds the two together, one gets this graph in the McCarrey report. However, that graph does not show the fact that the reason that Queensland has a smaller public trading enterprise sector is that urban transport, sewerage and cemeteries, plus many other things, are actually run by local government. Therefore, we are comparing two quite different sectors. If we put together State plus local government figures, we end up with Western Australia being about the same as Queensland. Therefore, McCarrey creates the myth that we in Western Australia somehow have an inflated public sector, whereas when we take into account those activities which in Queensland are done by local government but which here are done by State Government, we come up with the same figure. In fact, the Western Australian Public Service is not inflated. It is quite clear from my visits to Queensland that we are probably delivering a far better service here for a similar percentage of people employed in the State public sector. I seek leave of the House to incorporate in *Hansard* that table, which has as the source of its figures the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

[The material in appendix A was incorporated by leave of the House.]

[See page 2565.]

Hon MARK NEVILL: The McCarrey report is crude, almost to the point of being misleading in the comparisons it makes. In comparing public sector employees in Western Australia and Queensland it makes no allowance for the difference in part time and full time public sector rates, or the structural differences. In the comparison with New South Wales, the report makes no correction for the fact that electricity generation in both New South Wales and Victoria is, in part, undertaken by private operators. Therefore, that basic assumption in the McCarrey report is misleading.

The second myth in the McCarrey report which we touched on in earlier debate was that there was a recurrent revenue shortfall in the Western Australian Budget. The Minister for Finance referred to that aspect in his second reading speech. I put to the House that the McCarrey report is based on an assessment of the Government's operational finances

which is very superficial, to say the least, in its interpretation of the consolidated fund statement. The Standard and Poor's assessment, which is far more rigorous and based on international conventions of corporate credit analysis and Government finance statistics put out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, is substantially different from that of Mr McCarrey. At page 52 of his report, Mr McCarrey has put together a consolidated fund summary statement on a cash basis. That information is based on Treasury data. The McCarrey report's finding of a recurrent revenue shortfall in the Budget, at table 3.1 at page 52, depends on equating recurrent revenue with the consolidated revenue fund, and equating capital revenue with the general loan and capital works fund. However, it is argued at page 31 of the report that historical and other classification anomalies should be considered when looking at what goes into the consolidated revenue fund and what goes into the general loan and capital works fund. It is not a simple exercise to identify which transactions should go into either fund. That was demonstrated by comments by the Minister for Finance in earlier debate this evening. At page 31, the McCarrey report points out the difficulties of doing that. At the bottom of the same table at page 53, McCarrey has given an interesting treatment of capital repayments. Although the proceeds of borrowings and drawing on cash reserves are removed, appropriately, from the revenue stream of the consolidated revenue fund, loan repayments are not removed from the expenditure stream. Therefore, there is a built in bias and the capital repayments last year were \$52m.

The other major difference between the Standard and Poor's assessment and the McCarrey approach is the treatment of one off transactions. The consolidated fund, as published to date in Western Australia, does not differentiate between normal and abnormal transactions. However, such a differentiation is standard in the private sector and in other State jurisdictions. Excluding abnormal receipts and outlays is an intrinsic part of the Standard and Poor's assessment of the fundamental financial position of each of the States. The McCarrey report has sought to underpin this so-called recurrent revenue gap by identifying and excluding those one off receipts. He does that at pages 29 and 209 to 214 of the report. No offsetting allowance is made for one off payments such as the 1991-92 redundancy payment. Again, that is a clear bias introduced in the McCarrey report. Applying conventional principles of financial assessment, Standard and Poor's found in its December 1992 review of the States that Western Australia's general Government sector had consistently run an operating surplus over the last decade.

I wish to incorporate in *Hansard* a graph which shows the operating surplus as a percentage of operating revenue in the Western Australian general Government sector. The source is Standard and Poor's, December 1992, "Review of the States". It shows an operating surplus consistently since 1988. It is in direct contrast to what McCarrey says. It reaches a low in 1991, with the surplus increasing since then. In contrast to the predictions of runaway current spending in the Report of the Independent Commission to Review Public Sector Finances, the McCarrey report, Standard and Poor's assesses Western Australia's record of budget sector management as relatively cautious and conservative.

When we look at the McCarrey report, we see no finding that is new. There are no skeletons in the cupboard. When the Premier announced this inquiry in February he said, "I want skeletons exposed." The McCarrey report did not expose any skeletons; it did not find them. On the fundamental premise of this recurrent deficit, it is starkly at odds with the more rigorous assessments of the State's position with regard to the current account. In fact, I issued a press release predicting what the State's debt would be, the State's overall liability, which included debt plus unfunded superannuation, plus long service leave. I also put out a figure for the net per capita debt. They were all identical to the figures in the McCarrey report. The source of my information, as Hon Max Evans would know, is the little booklet that comes with the Treasurer's Annual Statements entitled "Analytical information in support of the Treasurer's statements". Basically it has been repeated in the McCarrey report.

[The material in appendix B was incorporated by leave of the House.]

[See page 2566.]

Hon MARK NEVILL: The McCarrey report made claims which were not substantiated. McCarrey predicted a \$560m deficit under existing policy settings. However, there is no breakdown of that figure in the report. It just comes out of the blue. The Commonwealth Government publishes a detailed breakdown of its projections. Unfortunately in the McCarrey report, McCarrey and/or the Western Australian Treasury have not published a detailed breakdown of those projections. It is very difficult to substantiate those claims. The two graphs I have included in *Hansard* have the sources of the information on them. They can be checked and people will know where to go to question the bona fides of the figures that have been presented to the House.

The projections in the McCarrey report would mean that spending growth on top of inflation next year would be more than the previous Labor Government had delivered in the past two years. There is no way in the world that we would have growth in spending this year which on top of inflation is more than it was in the past two years.

Hon Max Evans: Can you prove that your expenditure would not have gone up by that?

Hon MARK NEVILL: McCarrey does talk about it in the report. I am not sure what he is talking about because he does not give a breakdown of the figure. It just comes out of the blue.

Hon Max Evans: It was done with the Treasurer's information on it.

Hon MARK NEVILL: It is difficult to find out. I spent half a day working out the legislative basis for the third party motor vehicle insurance levy. When I am looking for something that may not exist, it takes a long time to find it.

The McCarrey report also predicts that the State's consolidated revenue fund deficit would be \$48m. It was way out there. Shortly before that, the Premier in a speech to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia predicted that the State's consolidated revenue fund deficit would be \$63m. It came back balanced. The Premier said when the report was released that the State was bankrupt. To give Mr McCarrey credit, at least he said that was not the case. The State's position is quite healthy. The New South Wales State Treasury's report on Western Australia, which was done about that time, put Western Australia at the top of the ladder under all the criteria it examined. The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry did an analysis of the financial situation of each of the States and also found that Western Australia had the healthiest economy of all the States. The only conclusion I can draw from my examination of at least volume 1 of the McCarrey report is that it does not really make the grade as a fair and thorough basis for public sector reforms. The New South Wales Treasury's analysis of each of the States, published in *The West Australian* of 3 May, said about Western Australia -

Western Australia and NSW led the nation's economic recovery last month, according to a NSW Treasury analysis which points to a marginal decline in the economic performance of other States.

The NSW Treasury's interstate comparison of economic indicators to be released today, ranks Western Australia as the best performing State and Tasmania as the worst.

The Treasury ranks the States on a scale of zero to six, based on their performance in economic activities such as employment growth, building approvals, car registrations, retail sales, bank deposits and business loans.

Last month, Western Australia scored the highest ranking of 5.2, compared with a ranking of 4.1 a year ago.

Hon Max Evans: They are the highlights of what the change of Government did for Western Australia. I acknowledge that.

Hon MARK NEVILL: There was a change of Government towards the end of that, but we tend to claim as our own the figures that suit our argument. My point is that the McCarrey report paints a much bleaker picture of our economy than does any other independent commentator. McCarrey has not substantiated his case on the detail of the

operating account deficit. I refer to Standard and Poor's, the Australian ratings agency. I must admit I did not know much about rating agencies until I was appointed to the position of shadow spokesman on finance. Standard and Poor's is not just a small outfit looking at the Western Australian economy; it must be a massive company. It analyses State and private business finances and is an international company whose work is surprisingly rigorous. Its ratings report for December 1992 on Western Australia, in contrast with the McCarrey volume 1 assessment, reads -

The ratings assigned to Western Australia reflect the State government's relatively cautious management of its budget, moderate debt burden and an economy which, reflecting the growing exploitation of its natural resources, continues to outperform that of the country as a whole. The strong integration of Commonwealth/State finances which characterises the Australian federal system also underpins the ratings.

With an economy rich in mining and energy resources, the State has grown faster than the rest of Australia. In line with the national recession, economic growth slowed over the past two years. Nevertheless, with exports equal to 32.9% of gross State product (GSP), Western Australia has been insulated to some extent from the national recession, with GSP recording real growth in 1991/92 of 2.4% compared with the lack of growth in the rest of the economy.

The State's general government sector has consistently run an operating surplus over the past decade, while its net budgetary deficit remains modest relative to the high capital expenditure needs of a growing economy. The State's net tax-supported debt amounted to 8.9% GSP at June 1992, one of the lowest levels among the Australian States.

One of the points I want to make is that Western Australia did not go into recession; it did not have negative growth. We have had positive growth throughout the 1980s. The fact that Australia went into recession was basically due to the desperate situation in which States like Victoria found themselves, the so-called rust belt States. The growth figures over the past four or five years indicate that our growth certainly slowed and got very close to zero, but it did not go into a negative growth phase. Standard and Poor's gives Western Australia a AA plus rating. The McCarrey report talks about our being behind New South Wales. In fact, New South Wales is going perilously close to losing its AAA rating because of its losses of about \$1b in the Homefund scheme. Even where reforms are carried out - no-one can deny that New South Wales has certainly led the way in these reforms over recent years - one can still get into trouble. It does not necessarily mean that because the bean counters have all the systems in place problems will not occur. When comparing Western Australia's situation with that of other States, one sees that Victoria's figures, for example, are quite depressing. However, they are much better than they would have been if the Commonwealth Bank had not bailed out the State Bank of Victoria. South Australia's figures are much better than they would have been, because the Commonwealth bailed out South Australia's State owned bank.

Hon Max Evans: It amounted to \$600m.

Hon MARK NEVILL: When one looks at those corrections, the net per capita debt really drops with that sort of assistance. Therefore, we have not had the benefit of any of those forms of assistance and we have much better public sector facilities than those that exist in Queensland. Western Australia's settings are virtually uncorrected and quite good. The ratings outlook for Western Australia is stable, not negative or deteriorating as it is in some States. The assumption in the McCarrey report that Western Australia is stuffed - I tried to think of a better word - or that the economy is about to collapse is not correct.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: With respect, the McCarrey report did not say the Western Australian economy was going to collapse. That is even worse than saying it is stuffed.

Hon MARK NEVILL: The member has obviously missed a lot of the earlier comments. The McCarrey report said debt is out of hand. It said that we have a \$560m operating

loss this financial year staring us in the face. I think that if the member wants to comment, he should follow the debate.

Perhaps if I summarise the findings of the McCarrey report and contrast them with Standard and Poor's findings, it will help. The McCarrey report found on page 52 that both the budget sector recurrent and capital accounts have consistently recorded a deficit. It found on page 29 that the deficit on the recurrent account would have been larger than recorded if once-off transactions were excluded. The third major finding appears on pages 21 and 25 and it is that the deficit on the recurrent account in the past and forecast for 1993-94 is largely due to ongoing government spending commitments rising faster than ongoing government revenues. In contrast, Standard and Poor's December 1992 review of Western Australia's credit rating found that the State's general government sector has consistently run and operated in surplus - that is quite the contrary to that which was found by McCarrey. It found, firstly, that that excluded abnormal transactions as defined by Standard and Poor's and the Government had consistently run an operating surplus over the past decade; secondly, that the general government net budgetary deficit, the result of a capital account deficit to the operating account deficit, remains modest relative to the highest capital expenditure needs of a growing economy; and, thirdly, that the State's net tax supported debt is one of the lowest levels of the Australian States. When we talk about tax supported debt, we talk about debt from the government sector, not the debt supported by the government trading enterprises.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: That does not include SECWA.

Hon MARK NEVILL: This is the debt that has to be serviced out of the normal taxes. SECWA and the public trading enterprises service their debt from their earnings.

Hon Max Evans: Take your time; you have plenty of time.

Hon N.F. Moore: And he is going to use every bit of it.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I would prefer to hear my voice than the member's.

I wish to refer to a couple of comments by Dr Michael Wood, the former Public Service Commissioner, on the McCarrey report. I think they were quite valid points. I also want to compliment the Government for publishing his comments. I like to see dissenting views. I worry when I see the same comments in a document. I certainly encourage people to put forward dissenting views. Dr Wood's comments are published in the *Executive News* which I presume goes to senior members in the Public Service and others. He said that the McCarrey report "had pointed to essential reforms in the public sector but it had grossly exaggerated some of the ills." I have tried to show that to some extent in the comments that I have made so far. He said also that the report "placed too much confidence in private sector practices as the source of the cure." I think the Government could be guilty of that. When Premier Nick Greiner took the reins in New South Wales, he tried to put private sector managers in government departments. Government departments have a very different focus and ethos from the private sector.

Hon Max Evans: You said that the Government could be guilty of that. Where are we guilty?

Hon MARK NEVILL: I am not sure that the remedies put forward by the consultants to the McCarrey report -

Hon Max Evans: We have not done that. You said that the Government had been guilty. I am trying to work out where.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I am saying that the sorts of remedies that the private consultants might be putting to the McCarrey committee and the Government -

Hon Max Evans: That is not the Government.

Hon MARK NEVILL: No, I said "might" because the Government has not actually done it yet. However, I do not think that the private sector will necessarily supply as many of the solutions to the problems as some key people in the Government are expecting it to. I would not include the Minister for Finance in that because he is a good, old fashioned,

Sir Charles Court interventionist, not an economic rationalist who counts beans and who does not tackle difficult problems, but just gets rid of them and we pick up the pieces further down the track.

Dr Wood said also that Mr McCarrey had "ignored very significant reforms undertaken in recent years." He refers to many of those throughout his report but he does not draw them together in any of the summary chapters which are the parts of the report that the vast majority of people read; so they get a picture from that report that the public sector has been rather ossified over the last 10 years. Dr Wood said that the public sector had different ethical, social and economic responsibilities which were of no concern to the private sector. I think that is correct. He said also that the "public service chief executives now exercised almost all employment powers granted by Parliament to the Public Service Commissioner." Those powers were delegated in 1987. He went on to say that -

... though the Commissioner remained the employer, only certain matters of discipline, some senior classifications, retirement on the grounds of ill-health, and senior recruitments were the major employment issues for which for which he kept responsibility.

He also went on to point out that the public sector had a big program of training in the development of skills. The McCarrey report harps on the need to get consultants in to train public servants. Dr Wood points out -

In the past 12 months the Commission had:

conducted 146 training programs attended by a total of 3600 staff.

provided career counselling services to staff from the State Government Insurance Commission, Hospital Laundry & Linen Service, Robb's Jetty, Homeswest and many other agencies.

placed 300 public sector trainees in agencies.

co-ordinated the Executive Development Program and Public Sector Management Course.

I am not sure that level of training is clear from the McCarrey report.

I will quickly run through some comments in the McCarrey report which acknowledge some of the changes that took place. I do not want to contradict myself, but this information is not apparent when one reads the chapter headings, although it is clear when one reads the report in detail. Unfortunately, many people will not read the report and will not get a fair impression. On the subject of Government finance statistics classification McCarrey states -

The May 1991 Premiers' Conference endorsed a report by Commonwealth and State Treasury officials on uniform presentation of government financial information. The aim is to develop an agreed presentation of 'whole-of-government' financial information which will allow easier and more accurate assessment of each government's financial performance and facilitate comparisons between governments.

He went on to say -

The availability of financial data on a GFS basis for Western Australia has greatly assisted the Commission in its analysis of state finances.

Until recently it was not possible to compare the finances of the different States and there still are deficiencies in terms of benchmarks. It is crass, for example, to compare the expenditure levels of Queensland and Western Australia without looking at some benchmark of service. Those benchmarks are being developed.

The preparation of three year forward estimates of CRF transactions was announced by the previous Government. In this connection McCarrey states -

The former government recognised this need when it announced plans to publish

three-year forward estimates of Consolidated Revenue Fund revenue and expenditure. The Commission found the Treasury well advanced with the preparation of estimates to 1995/96 detailed to principal elements of revenue and with expenditure to program level.

It also states on page 68 -

Western Australia was amongst the first of the States to publish balance sheet data for the state public sector with preliminary tables of assets and liabilities. While the liability data is now reasonably comprehensive, the asset position remains incomplete.

I am not convinced that we should be moving to accrual accounting this year because we still do not have the accounting standards.

Hon Max Evans: We will probably start next year because a lot of work is still to be done.

Hon MARK NEVILL: That is much better. Many of the accounting standards on valuations have not been established. In my view it is better to wait for the standards to be released and then take the action. That information is not essential.

Hon Max Evans: Valuations are one of the least reasons for moving to accrual accounting. It is more a question of matching income and expenditure.

Hon MARK NEVILL: That is why it can wait. There will be arguments, for example, over the valuation of hospitals. They cannot all be valued separately and a short cut procedure must be adopted. I turn to page 72 of the McCarrey report and the following statement -

Release of a final accounting standard on "Financial Reporting by Government Departments" which is being developed by the Public Sector Accounting Standards Board, and guidelines on asset valuation for government trading enterprises for performance monitoring purposes which are being developed by Commonwealth, State and Territory officers, are expected later this year.

Basically this must be available before we can move to the valuation of assets, which is essential to accrual accounting. Reference is made on page 108 of the McCarrey report to the setting up of the Western Australian Treasury Corporation. I will not go through the benefits listed, but clearly that has been an initiative of great benefit to the running of Government. That is acknowledged by McCarrey. On page 158 of the report is a discussion of the controls in the Western Australian public sector. The report states -

The legislative base for internal controls comes from the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985. More specifically:

all government bodies are audited annually. Audit opinions cover the propriety of financial statements, the adequacy of internal controls and the appropriateness of performance indicators;

each year, agencies prepare annual reports and heads of these agencies sign off that they have complied with the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act;

all agencies are required to maintain an effective internal audit function; and

agencies are required to ensure that the day-to-day activities follow the Treasurer's Instructions which provide guidelines for practices to ensure proper controls are in place. These instructions focus on controls associated with compliance with applicable laws and regulations, probity and reliability of financial recording.

The report states on page 161 -

The Western Australian framework for internal audit is ahead of most other States, with the requirement to maintain an internal audit function being imposed by the Act.

I now move to accrual accounting in Government. The Minister said that it will not be introduced this year and I recall that it was never intended that it be introduced this year.

Hon Max Evans: I do not want it to be retrospective!

Hon MARK NEVILL: Accrual accounting is in place in public trading enterprises. It is not completely new but it has not been used in the departments. I believe that a pilot program was put in place last year in the health or education area.

Hon Max Evans: Not that I am aware of.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I know there was some discussion about valuations in the Health Department, but the Minister is closer to the engine room than I am. I am sitting on a rock in the ocean and find it fairly difficult to gain a perspective of what is going on. I refer to an article in *The Australian Financial Review* which also included a photograph of the Minister. The article contains a comment about accrual accounting in the general Government sector as follows -

But outside the accountancy profession, enthusiasm for accrual accounting is muted.

In fact, the ratings agency Standard & Poors expressed scepticism in its February 1993 *Ratings Bulletin* concerning the usefulness of accrual accounting for governments.

It questioned whether gearing ratios were relevant to the public sector and pointed out the major difficulty of assigning meaningful values to government-owned land and mineral rights.

It also states -

Pilot programmes in WA's Education and Health departments are understood to have run into difficulties with valuing assets.

The other difficulty is the valuation to be placed on heritage buildings. Chapter 11 of the McCarrey report, in referring to financial management reforms, states -

SUMMARY

Parallelling the implementation of accrual accounting and full financial reporting, there is a need for overall financial management reforms directed at:

- (a) devolving greater responsibility for agencies' financial management to chief executive officers in line with the public sector management proposals in Chapter 14;
- (b) enabling Treasury to shed micro activities to be able to place greater emphasis on agency reporting and monitoring, and other macro financial management functions;
- (c) improved program definition and management;
- (d) the use of rolling three-year forward estimates as the basis for budget control; and
- (e) enabling full costing of agency functions and services.

Treasury has made considerable progress in planning these developments.

At page 142 of the McCarrey report is a list of recent advances in public sector financial reporting. A great number of improvements are listed.

I turn now to State debt. Chapter 6 of the McCarrey report says -

Net debt is an appropriate basis for meaningful debt measurement. The S&P - Australian Ratings more stringent measure of debt is the preferred . . .

In terms of accumulated liabilities, Western Australia is in the middle rank debt position behind New South Wales and Queensland but ahead of the other States.

I mentioned earlier some of the corrections that one could make and that have been made to other States' finances which put them in a better light relative to Western Australia.

Hon Max Evans: We are last in the A grade, because in the B grade the next three States are virtually bankrupt.

Hon MARK NEVILL: They are in a worse situation than this State. In respect of State debt, the McCarrey report's figures are not new. A report on State debt is included in the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee report No 25 tabled on 3 December 1992, less than 12 months ago. The major findings of the committee are summarised, in part, as follows -

There has clearly been a slow-down in the rate of increase of debt in the second half of the 1980s. The greatest increase was between 1980-1985, when per capita borrowing increased by 33 per cent. The increase between 1986-1991 was only 2 per cent.

The increase in debt is largely attributable to the extensive capital expenditure undertaken during the 1980s in order to develop the State's industrial and social infrastructure, in particular such "lumpy" capital expenditures as the gas pipeline and Muja power station.

As I said, Western Australia has a AA plus rating and the debt is rated as stable. Comments made over the course of debate tonight clearly show that the Western Australian economy is in good shape and that we should not be talking it down. The Department of Trade and Commerce review paints a more optimistic picture, as it did last year. We should not be depressed about our prospects. No doubt we must be careful and manage our debt situation but it is not out of hand. The previous Government put in place a debt management plan in 1992.

Hon Peter Foss: Is that the \$50m that you kept putting off paying?

Hon MARK NEVILL: While the State is one dollar in debt we can attribute that dollar to any item.

Hon Peter Foss: I was referring to the WAGH one which they kept deferring.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I ask the Minister for Finance a question which I considered putting on notice: Was the \$150m guarantee to the National Bank lost in Rothwells or Petrochemical Industries Co Ltd?

Hon Peter Foss: In both.

Hon MARK NEVILL: That point has always intrigued me and the royal commissioners, much to their discredit, did not clarify the matter.

Hon Peter Foss: They lost it twice in the end.

Hon MARK NEVILL: It cannot be lost twice.

Hon Peter Foss: It was.

Hon MARK NEVILL: Is that creative accounting?

Hon Peter Foss: They paid the money into Rothwells because it was thought that the guarantee would not be called. The money that was paid in was lost and they were eventually called upon to pay the guarantee.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Sam Piantadosi): Order! The member may get on with his speech. Other members wish to speak on this Bill.

Hon Max Evans: He wanted a little help.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I will put the question on notice to the Minister for Finance as I want a sensible answer.

Hon Peter Foss: That was a sensible answer.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I hope that the second volume of the McCarrey report will provide the basis for Government policy to improve the quality of life of Western Australians and the management of the public sector. I doubt whether I will agree with all of the Government's actions. The first volume did not tell the Government anything it

did not already know; it provided no guidance; and it was incorrect in its claims that the public sector is inflated and inefficient, in its assessment of State debt and about whether we have been operating with a surplus in our current account over the years. I have tried to be as objective as possible in assessing this report. However, we did not gain much value for our money in the McCarrey report volume 1. Let us hope that the report will redeem itself in volume 2, although I suspect a few recommendations will be made for asset stripping. I support the Bill.

HON CHERYL DAVENPORT (South Metropolitan) [11.13 pm]: I support the Supply Bill. I shall refer to recent water charges, the women's cancer prevention unit and Amnesty International.

Firstly, I record my thanks to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. Members may recall that in my Address-in-Reply contribution I concentrated on the motor vehicle repair industry review which I chaired last year. I commented on the committee that the Minister had named for stage two of that review, and I said it comprised too many members of the insurance industry; I asked the Minister to look at reconsidering its structure, which he duly did. I am pleased that the committee now comprises representatives from the Motor Trades Association, the Institute of Automotive Engineers and the Society of Automotive Engineers. The committee met for the first time at the end of July, and we will meet again at the end of this month. I have high hopes that the terms of reference the Minister provided will result in conclusions I formulated with my initial study on the matter. Other members of the committee are now catching up with these matters.

Hon Peter Foss: I have already accepted the conclusions. It is now a matter of getting concrete proposals.

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: The members of the committee must catch up with a lot of reading before making appropriate recommendations to meet the needs of this State. I thank the Minister for changing his mind, and I hope the committee will deliver recommendations to raise the status of the industry throughout Western Australia, as well as providing benefit to the consumer.

I now refer to water charges and consumption. I have been approached by constituents regarding the plight of pensioners living in multi-unit developments and villas with a single meter; they indicate that although they are registered pensioners who are entitled to a 50 per cent concession, they are not eligible for that concession. This is due to not having their own meter. I have received two letters on this matter from which I shall quote. They came from Mr Doug Sparks, the secretary of the owners of the property at 12 Attfield Street, Maddington. The two letters are good evidence that people are not receiving the rebate. The first letter was written to the manager of customer services at the Water Authority on 12 July. To date, no reply or acknowledgment of the letter has been received. I shall read most of this letter into *Hansard* as a good example of how people have been penalised regarding excess water charges. It reads -

The property comprises of 24 detached villas the occupants of which must be over the age of fifty years. About twenty of the occupants are eligible pensioners.

...

Residents received a leaflet titled "About Your Account" with their annual water rate notices. The leaflet promised that eligible pensioners would be granted a 50% rebate on their first 150 kilolitres of water usage for 1993/94 to reduce the impact of the phasing out of the Annual Water Allowance.

I telephoned the enquiry number given on the leaflet to determine the arrangement for pensioners in the Village to receive the 50% rebate.

Mr Jeff Collins informed me that no rebate would be given to pensioners in multi unit developments with a common meter, even if all of them were eligible pensioners.

Mr Collins suggested that residents should not have purchased villas without individual water meters. I pointed out that there was no question of axing the free water allowance five years ago when most of the villas were purchased.

Mr Collins than indicated that the only way the rebate could be made available to eligible pensioners in the village was for twenty four individual water meters to be installed on the road verge and for the Strata Company to pay a registered builder or plumber to re-lay the water pipes back to each villa, making good the bitumen and paving as necessary.

The villas are in rows of six back from the road verge and this suggestion would be ridiculously expensive to implement by anyone, let alone pensioners.

According to the leaflet, the Water Authority has a register of eligible pensioners. If the total usage for 1993/94 was divided by twenty four to determine usage per villa, could not the 50% rebate then be applied to the registered pensioners so that the benefit could be passed on to them?

It would be regrettable if the undertaking given in the leaflet proved to be incorrect for the many thousands of pensioners living in multi unit developments with but one water meter. The undertaking reads:

"All registered pensioners will have the rebate automatically deducted from their water consumption accounts."

On the same principle applying to the present excess water allowance, for Strata Companies with one meter, will future metred water consumption be divided by the number of villas or units before the sliding scale is applied, then aggregated once the per unit charge has been determined?

Mr Collins gave me your name as the proper person to whom this submission should be addressed. Copies are also being forwarded to a number of other interested parties.

The second letter is dated 8 August and is addressed to the General Manager of the Water Authority on behalf of the owners of 12 Atfield Street, Maddington. The heading of this letter is "Water consumption charges in multi-unit developments" and it states -

It would be appreciated if a reply could now be made to the enclosed copy of a letter sent four weeks ago to the Water Authority's Customer Services Department, which so far is unacknowledged.

The objective was to ensure that the many pensioners within this and other, similar, developments gain the promised benefit of a 50% rebate on their first 150 kilolitres usage of water in 1993/4.

With or without the pensioner concession, if the new sliding scale of charges was applied to the meter reading without taking account of the number of dwellings served by that meter, the resulting charge would be unacceptably high.

In these units for example, if consumption remained at 4,476 kilolitres and there were no pensioner concessions, 1993/94 billing would be either -

- a) Applying the scale with no account taken of number of villas

First 1950 kl	=	\$1,326.45
Next 2,526 kl @ 100.3c	=	<u>\$2,533.58</u>
Total	=	<u>\$3,860.03</u>
Cost per Villa	=	<u>\$160.83</u>

OR

- b) Applying the scale on a share basis between 24 villas

4,476 ÷ 24 =	186.5 kls per villa	
	0-75 kls	= Nil
	76-150 kl @ .19c	= \$14.25
	150-186.5 kl @ 53.7c	= <u>\$19.60</u>
	Cost per Villa	<u>\$33.85</u>
	Total Charge	<u>\$812.40</u>

The above figures compare with a total "excess water" charge of \$454.65 for 1992/93.

We are therefore seeking confirmation also that meter readings for multi-unit developments served by one meter will be divided by the number of dwellings before the sliding scale is applied.

I addressed question on notice 508 to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Water Resources on 11 August which reads in part -

- (1) Is it correct that pensioners who reside in multi-unit developments, served by single water meters, do not qualify for the 50 per cent rebate on their first 150 kilolitres usage of water for 1993-94?
- (2) If so, why?

The answer in today's Supplementary Notice Paper was that to be eligible, the pensioner must be responsible for payment of the total consumption account. That means every small unit must have its own water meter. Many of our electorates have a number of retirement villages working off a central meter system where the total amount is divided and charged out to each unit. We will find that many pensioners in particular will be caught by this. It is a pretty poor thing, as there seems no intention for there to be an averaged out account with that 50 per cent rebate allowed. The next part of that question on notice reads -

What is the cost to supply and install at the street verge an individual water meter for each unit?

As members will recall, someone from the accounts section of WAWA suggested that residents should not have purchased their villas without individual water meters, so I thought it was appropriate to ask how much it would cost. Unfortunately, the answer to that question reads -

Where technically feasible, the authority would supply a standard 20 mm boundary service/s free of cost to residential strata unit developments at time of connection. Where changes to existing services are involved these would be at cost to the applicant. Such costs vary according to site conditions.

I could not even get an idea of what it might cost to have an individual meter fitted. The information I have been given, which is hearsay, is that it would be quite prohibitive and possibly beyond the means of pensioners to have an individual meter installed to pick up that rebate. Those letters need to be answered, and the Government needs to look at that because many people who are expecting to get that rebate will be penalised.

The other area I will concentrate on is this whole notion that small business will benefit from a reduction in water charges. A constituent who has a small laundry in the Kensington-Como area came to see me. In effect, her account has increased substantially from last year - that is without any sort of water allowance being included. Obviously, owning a laundry business, which is a high water consumer, would add a whole lot more to the account than she would be paying now. In 1992 the amount she paid for sewerage and drainage was \$576; in 1993-94 she will pay \$851. That is certainly no reduction. Despite what the Premier had to say when he announced these sorts of water charges and the sort of reduction that would benefit small business, it certainly did not help this small business owner. The other irony for this woman is that her husband is about to be made redundant at Westrail.

Hon Tom Helm: Better management, more jobs!

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: These are a couple of examples of the attitude of this Government to people who are battling and trying to earn a living.

I now want to bring to the attention of members the work of the women's cancer prevention unit. On average six Australian women die every day from breast cancer, which is many more currently than die from AIDS related illnesses throughout Australia. Since 1991 I have been a member of the Women's Cancer Prevention Advisory Council which advises the Minister for Health. The unit has been set up now for some five years and during that time it has grown substantially, but it concentrates primarily on breast cancer. In the past 12 months it has also set up a cervical screening process for women.

The target age of women who are accessing this free screening process is 50 to 69. Originally it was from 46 to 69, but over the past couple of years a decision was made to increase that age to the 50 to 69 age group. That was based on research done which suggests the women most at risk are those aged from 50 to 69.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Is the screening program the most effective for those ages?

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: Yes. A fear is also present in the community that women of all ages should have access to screening, when in fact that is not necessary. If a woman's family has a history of cancer, obviously she would have immediate access and would never be denied that screening process. I will quote from a press release which was issued by the then Federal Minister for Community Services and Health, Brian Howe, in 1991 which states -

"The decision, to include women aged 40-49 in the national program was made on the basis that about half the female population reaches menopause by age 50, and to exclude these women from the program would prevent a large number of women from having access to a service which could be of great benefit to them.

"Women under 40 who either have a family history of breast disease, or suspected early symptoms of a malignancy, will continue to have access to diagnostic mammography services, including the accompanying Medicare rebate," Mr Howe said.

As I said, since then the target group for access has been altered. Over the past three years Western Australia has experienced an acceleration in this program, from just one screening unit at Cannington to now three mobile units, one of which operates in the south west, one in the south eastern region, and one in the northern region, excluding the Kimberley. A new centre, which was supposed to open in Mirrabooka in April this year, gained some publicity because of its delayed commencement. I will go into the reasons for that a little later.

I turn to a document which was tabled at a recent meeting of the advisory council which relates to recruitment. It is entitled "Recruitment for Women's Cancer Prevention Unit: Mammography Screening Services to 30 June 1993". The percentages for women aged 50 to 69 are calculated by dividing the target population by the number of women who have attended for screening. In the south west mobile unit, 75 per cent of the target group has been screened; in the northern region mobile unit - the worst performance - 34 per cent of the target group has been screened. We believe that one of the reasons that has occurred - extensive research is being conducted on this matter - is that there is quite a significant transient population in the north of the State, particularly in the Pilbara region, and the targeting is done specifically through the electoral roll, so it is not always as up to date as one would like. The interesting factor about this, however, is that where we thought we might be missing out on many Aboriginal women, the screening has in fact picked up a substantial number of those through recruiting by Aboriginal health workers, which is a good result. Obviously we could do better; women in that group are still missing out, and that is an area for improvement. In the south eastern region mobile unit and the Cannington service, 63 per cent of the target group has been being reached. Although that figure is not as high as one would like, it is still getting closer to the high levels of what the program seeks to achieve.

In this State alone during the 1992-93 financial year, \$3.7m was spent by the unit on the mammography program. On the cervical program, which is very much in its infancy at this point, nearly \$237 000 was outlaid. This service has only just completed its first year of operation. When Western Australia embarked on this program to set up the women's cancer prevention unit it was originally the initiative of Ian Taylor when he was the Minister for Health in 1987-88. This State was the first to embrace the program, but we are now some way behind. That is based on the fact that it has been difficult to reach agreement with the Australian Medical Association and the Royal College of General Practitioners on policy for referral of women to a specialist breast cancer assessment centre. Western Australia has missed out on a substantial amount of Federal funding owing to its inability to reach that agreement. That goes back to the days of a previous

Health Minister, Keith Wilson, and has continued until the past month or so when agreement was finally reached. The AMA and the college of GPs now agree to the position that the advisory council put over a year ago to the previous Minister and the current Minister; that is, when a woman was diagnosed with breast cancer, instead of necessarily being referred back to her GP she should have the choice to either return to her GP for referral or be referred straight on to an assessment centre which would have skilled personnel able to advise on appropriate treatment for removal of the cancer. That seems a fairly reasonable position to put, but we had a great deal of difficulty in convincing the current Minister and the previous Minister that that was the way this matter should be handled. I am pleased to say that after 12 to 18 months of to-ing and fro-ing, agreement has now been achieved.

The shadow Minister for Health in another place placed a question on notice in July which elicited this information from the current Minister for Health. The advisory committee was most concerned at its April 1993 meeting when statistics were given verbally advising that 20 per cent of women who presented with an abnormality diagnosed over the past year had not been referred to appropriate services able to offer mammographic confirmation that their small cancers had been adequately removed. Had the accredited assessment centres been in place, 50 women in Western Australia would not have received the much more radical treatment, which was quite inappropriate for the type of cancer they had.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: How many were screened?

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: Fifty.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: And 50 were identified?

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: No, 250 of the total screened in Western Australia presented positive, and 50 of those, because no appropriate assessment centre was in place, were referred by a GP to a specialist for treatment and were given inappropriate treatment. If these 50 women had had access to the accredited assessment centre - centres which exist in other States - they may not have had radical treatment entailing the removal of a complete breast. It is important that assessment centres be operating very soon.

The primary role of the prevention program is the provision of high quality, cost efficient breast screening to women attending the program, but it is now imperative that the appropriately accredited breast cancer assessment centres are established so that the treatment is available to every woman who presents with a positive screen. Since last September I have tried, with the board's support, to make sure that this impasse is resolved. This has been recorded quite extensively throughout the minutes of the advisory council meetings.

In September last year I suggested to the advisory council that it seek a meeting with the then Minister for Health. A delegation of four advisory council members were to meet with him some time last November. Unfortunately, that meeting was about to take place when he resigned. It has been a long process to try to resolve this problem. Following Mr Wilson's resignation the intervention of the State and Federal elections further slowed down the process. The problem associated with the establishment of assessment centres and the choice of who should refer women for treatment was unresolved. I know that the bureaucracy can be slow, but it is obvious that there has been an impediment within the Health Department. The unit is part of the Health Department, but it comes under the infectious diseases section. Although the advisory board and the unit believe the issue is urgent the brakes have been applied because the Health Department has become involved.

The Australian Medical Association and the College of General Practitioners have agreed that women should make their own choice on where they are treated. Contracts are now to be drawn up for public assessment centres, and then negotiations effected. It is my guess that the public assessment centres are probably still some months away from operation. There are even more problems associated with the possible establishment of

two private assessment centres. A problem has arisen with how much the Government will pay for specific procedures and it appears that this is preventing a satisfactory conclusion being reached for the establishment of these assessment centres.

The Minister received a letter signed by two board members in May this year and to date they have not received a reply. Both the signatories are workers with the Cancer Foundation of Western Australia (Inc) and they were trying to impress on the Minister the type of inappropriate referral that is meted out to women. It is very important that the Minister take this sort of information on board.

Since last September discussions have been held about moving the central unit to new premises. It now has approximately one and a half kilometres of X-ray photographs which must be stored somewhere and, of course, space is at a premium. The Health Department negotiated on this matter following ministerial permission which was originally given by Minister Wilson last November. After the State election the current Minister's approval was then necessary. Following that it got bogged down in the Department of Internal Government Accommodation. I understand that the Premier's approval is necessary in this context. Difficulty has been experienced in negotiating a lease and this has led to the delay in opening the Mirrabooka clinic. Until the central unit can be moved there is no way that the records that would be coming out of the Mirrabooka clinic could be processed and stored. The Mirrabooka clinic was supposed to open in April. Members may have read an article by Ann Treweek in the *Sunday Times* in June wherein she said that people were becoming anxious about the delay in opening the Mirrabooka clinic. I hope the Minister will ensure that the clinic will open very soon. Women who need breast cancer screening can access the Cannington screening centre, but I understand that bookings are at a premium.

The Federal Liberal member for Cowan commented recently on radio that women members of Parliament were not interested in breast cancer prevention. I happened to be returning to Parliament after attending an advisory council meeting when I heard his comments. I was aggrieved that he did not check his facts before he made such a sweeping statement. He said also that nothing was being done in Western Australia about breast cancer prevention. I managed to speak on that program half an hour after him to correct what he said. I concur with him that there is a need for further research money to be allocated and I certainly applaud him for the initiative he was trying to put forward for a Mothers' Day fundraising project, the funds from which could be directed to research. It is useful to know that major research is being carried out in the United States of America and we should not be trying to reinvent the wheel. The US is a developed country and is, in many ways, similar to Australia and we can draw on its experience. Instead of spending money on research it should be devoted to the screening and assessing process.

Recently Gina Reinhardt announced the establishment of a privately funded foundation for research into and education about breast cancer. As a consequence of that the Leader of the Opposition wrote to women members of Parliament from all political parties asking them to join with her in setting up a foundation support group, which might possibly be named "The Women on the Hill Foundation". It would look at raising money for research and education. The mistaken view in the community is that every woman should have access to screening fairly regularly, and from a much younger age.

I suggest that we not forget that radiation is also one of the major causes of cancer. Unless a woman's family has a history of cancer she does not necessarily need to have screening that regularly. I also suggested to Mr Evans when I replied to his comments that he might do well to consult with his Federal colleague Senator Sue Knowles, who is currently a member of the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs. On 27 May it had a brief referred to it requiring it to inquire into breast cancer screening and treatment in Australia and to report by 1 March 1994.

I hope that the Minister, Hon Peter Foss, shares my concern about the delay in both setting up assessment centres and the alternative accommodation problems of the central unit which have set back the opening of the Mirrabooka screening clinic. That delay has

in turn affected the next two clinics at Wanneroo, which should have opened in June, and Fremantle, which should have opened at the end of 1993. As a member of his advisory board, I urge the Minister to ensure that no further delays occur as it appears that what is sadly lacking is priority for this program in the high echelons of the Health Department. Perhaps a review of the working relationship of the department with the unit with the objective of streamlining decision making processes might produce immediate benefits.

Women need services if we are to reduce the number of deaths from breast cancer, which stands at six each day in Australia. I will take this opportunity to table a document prepared for the former Minister for Health, Keith Wilson, by the advisory board following a special meeting in September 1992. I ask the Minister to read this document as it puts together exactly what has happened during the time the unit has been operating, where it is now and what needs to happen in future. The document states in its summary -

The advisory Board has taken the unusual step of making these recommendations direct to you out of serious concern for the ongoing development of the screening mammography project. The Board believes that failure to alleviate the major difficulties facing the WCPU will carry a real risk of program failure.

The board believes that you should be fully informed of its opinion on these matters.

I seek leave to table that document.

Leave granted. [See paper No 517.]

[Quorum formed.]

Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT: I turn now to Amnesty International and the parliamentary group formed here last September of which I am currently the convener. Prisoners of conscience are being held in more than 76 countries around the world. Torture and ill treatment in prisons is reported from 90 countries. During the 1980s deaths in custody from torture were reported from 24 countries and in another 14 countries detainees died because of harsh prison conditions. It does not stop there. Children, and adolescents, were victims of human rights abuse in 32 countries in 1991 and students in 38 countries suffered abuse. I know some members have raised concerns about us as politicians being members of Amnesty International. So, I think it may assist members if I describe Amnesty's role as set out in its recent pamphlet. It states -

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IS . .

IMPARTIAL

Amnesty International believes that human rights violations are worth fighting wherever they occur. In any single year, this means taking action on some 140 countries. To safeguard impartiality, members do not work for prisoners in their own country.

INDEPENDENT

Amnesty International is independent of all governments, political factions, ideologies, economic interests and religious creeds.

ACCURATE

Amnesty International's activities depend on meticulous research into allegations of human right violations. The credibility and accuracy of our research is internationally recognised.

ACTIVE

Victims of human rights violations and their families need practical help. Through its network of members and supporters, Amnesty International takes up individual cases, mobilises public opinion, maintains pressure on governments for the release of prisoners of conscience, fair and prompt trials for political prisoners, an end to torture and executions and improved international standards for the treatment of prisoners.

SUPPORTER-FUNDED

Amnesty International accepts no monies from any government. It is entirely funded by its supporters.

ON THE SPOT

Amnesty International representatives observe trials where accepted international standards are at issue, meet prisoners and interview government officials. Amnesty International also works to protect human rights with other international organisations such as the United Nations, the International Labor Organisation and UNESCO.

Members may ask whether Amnesty International has been effective. Yes, it does work. It does more than expose human rights abuse. Since 1961 it has seen thousands of prisoners released, torture condemned, and the death penalty abolished in many countries. I have a quote from a former central American security agent to a reporter as follows -

In general you will kill the prisoners. If we pass them to a judge, they'll go free and we'll have to pick them up again. If there's lots of pressure - like from Amnesty International or some foreign country - then we might pass them to a judge.

But if there's no pressure, they're dead.

Amnesty International works for the unconditional release of prisoners of conscience, fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and an end to the death penalty and torture in all cases.

I have some quotes from letters that Amnesty International has received from released prisoners. The first, from Argentina, states -

At last I can enjoy the immense pleasure of writing to you as a free man. Yes! I'm a free man and feel so much pleasure and excitement about being able to kiss and hug my wife, my children, my parents, brothers, sisters, family and friends, not to mention the strangers who have welcomed me with open arms. You are part of this group of human beings who have been so intimate and dear to my family . . . Perhaps you don't realise how much hope, how much you helped to bring relief from the horrible nightmare. From the beginning we realised we were not alone. . . we, the prisoners, received your help with indescribable joy. Thanks to you and your people we were able to get through those years in prison in dignity.

The second quote from East Africa reads -

I write to express my deepest gratitude to your organisation, to your group and to yourself for the very great efforts you put to my release from detention. There is no doubt that your work was instrumental, indeed critical in effecting my freedom after almost 1 000 days behind bars. My wife assures me that a formidable network of concern and commitment was directly attributable to you. She further assures me that your direct assistance and moral support was a great factor in her being able to survive the nightmare.

The third quote from South Africa reads -

I am writing to you to express my deepest gratitude for the part you played in my release from detention which is only as a result of your appeal and pressure . . . I have just learnt your utmost love which is directed to the victims of injustice. The role you play on the international world needs honour and celebration from any entity that is thirsty for peace and justice. Justice will remain just, and evil shall be condemned for daring to equate itself with divinity.

These quotes give good examples of the types of things we, as politicians, or ordinary individuals who are members of Amnesty International have been able to achieve over the years.

I now refer briefly to my own work on behalf of Phyllis Coard, who has been a political prisoner in Grenada for the last 10 years. Along with 13 others she was sentenced to death in Grenada for a political crime of which she has always maintained her innocence. In fact, women members of this Parliament, across parties, became involved in Phyllis Coard's case in 1990. We all met on Amnesty International Day in October to begin a campaign of letter writing to the President of Grenada, our Foreign Affairs Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, asking him to intervene through the United Nations process, and the then United States President, George Bush. In fact, evidence suggested that in 1991 when the hangings were to begin, the generous involvement of a great many Australians and the intervention of the Australian Government were instrumental in having her death sentence commuted to life imprisonment.

At the end of October this year she will have been a prisoner for 10 years. For much of that time she has been in solitary confinement. Her sister, Beverley Ormerod, a lecturer in French studies at the University of Western Australia, has been a vigilant campaigner for Phyllis. When she received word that things were bad in Grenada, she galvanised us to maintain our campaign. I quote now from sections of a letter I wrote in May 1992 to Nicholas Brathwaite, the Prime Minister of Grenada on behalf of Phyllis Coard -

I am also aware that her death sentence was recently commuted to life imprisonment and I commend yourself and your Government for this humanitarian action.

It has come to my attention that you are the only person who has the authority to vary normal prison rules.

Can I urge you to perhaps allow Mrs Coard to join the male prisoners at the daily recreation time so she at least is able to talk to others.

Is it possible for her to have regular visits with her husband and could you allow her to write more than one letter each month so she can reach out to other people.

She suffered intense isolation during this time. I received a reply to that letter from the Grenadan Prime Minister in June 1992. In fact, the detail in this letter gave more information than was provided to her sister when she had made similar requests. I now quote some sections from the reply from the Prime Minister's office -

For the past several weeks the Prime Minister has been receiving a large quantity of mail particularly from persons in Australia and England showing concern for the well being of Mrs. Phyllis Coard who it is claimed is being held in virtual solitary confinement. . . .

It seems to us that Mrs Coard's main problem is due to the fact that, while there is at present a total inmate population of 254, there is only one female inmate which you would agree is a credit to the women folk of our dear country. Bearing that in mind however, the Commissioner of Prisons has allowed her several privileges including the following:

1. She is allowed her own radio and tape cassette player since last December and one reason there is no television access is due to lack of funds.
2. Every Sunday she mixes with other inmates at church and in fact is allowed to sit with her husband throughout the service.
3. On request by either husband or wife, they are allowed an half hour visit together, not with any barrier, but side by side in semi private conditions.
4. At present she has a daily routine at the tailor shop from 8.30 - 11.30 in the morning and 1.00 - 3.30 in the afternoon. There she is not supervised by Prison officers and mixes freely with civilian workers and inmates at the shop.

The final condition reads -

7. While the prison law (for all inmates) permits one (1) visitor and one (1) letter per month, the authorities have been extremely flexible by extending this rule.

The pressure we were able to generate through this action I hope has helped in relieving some of the suffering endured by this woman over the past 10 years. We have recently been called upon to write again on the basis that she has become frail and is suffering badly from clinical depression from which she is not recovering. A psychiatrist who saw her said that she was suffering from a post traumatic condition which was not likely to improve in her present environment. Her condition is causing concern to her family. For 10 years she has been deprived of her children, who, at the time of her imprisonment, were aged 12, 10 and four years. Her youngest child is now aged 14 years and has no memory of his parents. In a few months Phyllis Coard will be aged 50 years, yet she has no prospect of parole. In fact, in the event of her release she is prepared to leave Grenada never to return. She has the right of residence in Jamaica, the country of her birth. The next part of the process is to write on her behalf for release on compassionate grounds. Western Australia has 18 Amnesty International groups, two of which are country branches, which campaign vigorously. Often, branches adopt certain prisoners to support.

I will briefly enlarge on the establishment of the parliamentary group last September. An approach was made by Amnesty International - by Eric Moxham, the then president, and the current president, Jim Ife, and Kathleen Armstrong, the current director in Western Australia - as we were the only Parliament in Australia which did not have a parliamentary Amnesty group. This is one area in which we, as politicians, can come together without any friction and can work towards the release and well-being of people who are political prisoners in other countries. Of the total members of Parliament, about 15 are members of Amnesty. I continue to write to all members in the hope that although they may not have formally joined - this is why I took the opportunity tonight to talk about this matter - they will consider joining Amnesty and participating in some of these very worthwhile campaigns. As a parliamentary group, the executive is across all parties. I am currently the convener. Hon Phil Pendal is the Liberal Party representative and Dr Hilda Turnbull is the National Party representative. We decided that the convener's position should be rotated across parties and be held for 12 months. The group is also open to any of the senior staff of the Parliament. On that basis I would like to thank the Clerk of the Council, Laurie Marquet, for providing the group with backup parliamentary service. His assistant, Caroline Sinclair, has been of great assistance to me in doing some of the legwork in getting material out to people. In that context, I place on record my thanks for the assistance I have been given during the time the group has been in existence. We do not meet often. We merely come together when Amnesty has a specific campaign it wants us to take up. Since last September we have been involved in prevailing on Governments across the world to modify their human rights practices and to abolish the death penalty. We have approached the Governments of Uganda, India, Malawi, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Philippines, and the United States of America.

[Leave denied for the member's time to be extended.]

HON T.G. BUTLER (East Metropolitan) [12.13 am]: I place on record my disgust at the actions of the Government in not granting Hon Cheryl Davenport an extension of time.

Hon N.F. Moore: Your Government brought in time limits.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: It is the second time it has happened this session. I hope we do not see a repetition of the previous occasion when the Leader of the House was on his feet saying that we were the ones who denied Hon Cheryl Davenport an extension of time.

Hon Cheryl Davenport: I have a long memory.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: During the parliamentary recess I took the opportunity to read the speech of Hon Cheryl Davenport in the Address-in-Reply debate; in particular, that part that talked about her concern regarding the juvenile justice system. One of the most significant comments in her speech came from the Maori principal of the youth court whose first comment to her committee was -

If I thought we could cure the little buggers by imprisoning them, I would in fact be in favour of that; but my feeling is that we cannot legislate to cure social ills.

The judge put his finger on the solution. He came to grips with the fact that the lockup policy does not necessarily work.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I am thinking of the juvenile justice system legislation which was introduced into the Legislative Assembly last year.

Hon Cheryl Davenport: Which we all supported.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Hon Derrick Tomlinson supported it. He put up his hand at the right time.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Did I?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I do not care what Hon Derrick Tomlinson is thinking at this time of night. Governments of either colour have not previously done what this Government wants to do: To amalgamate the department responsible for juvenile detention with the Department of Corrective Services. I share Hon Cheryl Davenport's misgivings about that approach. The Department of Corrective Services does not rehabilitate its detainees, which is unfortunate. It is vital that youth who are detained be given the opportunity to rehabilitate or be placed in programs to fill the vacuum in which they find themselves and which causes them to resort to crime. I support a separate portfolio for youth crime. There is no easy solution to resolving juvenile crime. We all agree with that. We need to be more proactive by providing sufficient funds for services that will tackle the problem at its source. Governments, both past and present, have welcomed the work of non-government agencies which I am advised constitute almost 35 per cent of the budget of the Department for Community Development. If that is the case, in almost every instance the Government is getting value for money.

I am the chairperson of what I consider to be the most successful youth service in Western Australia. We conduct that youth service in Lockridge. Unfortunately we have to survive with great difficulty on an allocation of \$42 000 per annum from the Department for Community Development; although, I am pleased to say that amount will increase by \$3 000 to \$45 000 this year. The charter of the service states -

The purpose of the Lockridge Youth Service is to operate a centre for disadvantaged youth aged between 12 and 18 years of age who experience family conflict, unemployment, alcohol and substance abuse, self destructive behaviour, offending behaviour, and issues with education.

The service objectives for DCS funded services are -

1. Young people participate in education, training and/or employment.
2. Young people have adequate income and accommodation.
3. Young people maintain a relationship with their family/family network where appropriate.
4. Young people reduce offending behaviour.
5. Young people reduce substance abuse.
6. Young people reduce self destructive behaviour.

In addition to that sort of service we are also responsible for developing programs and activities such as Blue Light Discos, camps, bush walks, basketball, amateur boxing and young men's and women's personal development programs. We are under no obligation to have boxing; however, we encourage the boys to take part in healthy development programs. We also have a program of diet-right, which is funded by Healthway and which involves life skills, teaching young Aboriginal people how to shop for nutritional foods and how to cook for themselves and their children. We also work with the Alcohol and Drug Authority and the Commonwealth Employment Service, which sends us job vacancy cards each week. We attempt to link the youths with that service as well as counselling and any other agency which is appropriate. Everything the centre does is designed to keep youths off the street and out of the court. Earlier today I was speaking to Hon Max Evans in the corridor and he asked how the automotive program at

Bassendean was going. He made the comment, with which I agreed, that he was told by a senior scout that when taking youths to a camp one must ensure they do not have time to rest and that they are kept active and out of trouble. It is a question of being proactive and being able to keep them interested.

As I said, the Government contribution to the Lockridge centre will be \$45 000. We have done a needs analysis on the centre, and to run a centre effectively and to put into place effective programs will require approximately \$111 000. That which means we have a shortfall of about \$69 000. Some of the balance is made up through strong support from the Shire of Swan and other funding bodies. Unfortunately there is a restriction on paying wages from program money; therefore, we cannot get additional staff. In some instances specific funding is provided so that we can employ casual people to run programs.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Does Mr Tomlinson know where Lockridge is?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes; he had the good fortune to be in my company when we visited the Lockridge and Bassendean Youth Services recently.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: That was lucky for you.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: It was lucky for me, because I invited Hon Derrick Tomlinson -

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I expressed gratitude to Hon Tom Butler for introducing me to those services.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Hon Derrick Tomlinson came to both those centres at my request.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: Did it have to be at your request?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: If he were running the centre, I think I would have to wait until he asked me to look at it. I am satisfied that he was suitably impressed by the two coordinators he met and by the activities outlined to him.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: It was an admirable example of a very good program developed with very small resources.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Until now our funding had been guaranteed only to December this year. We are about to sign a further funding agreement which will provide us with a three year program under the same terms and conditions. That is a concern because an increase of \$3 000 for the next three years will not help very much with the services we would be able to provide for the youths of the area. The centre employs two full time employees for whom we are expected to pay wages from \$42 000. These people have degrees in social welfare and are highly skilled. Owing to our inability to impress on the Government our need for more funding, we are unable to pay acceptable wages. Apart from his endeavours to obtain enough money to run the various programs for the centre, our coordinator is required to spend half his time writing submissions for program funding and must spend double that time accounting for the expenditure under the Department for Community Development's guidelines. Although we have no argument about the need to account for the spending, the time he spends doing that deprives the youth of his time. We get very envious of the fact that the Government can find \$1 000 a week - \$52 000 a year - to keep a youth in detention, while our youth service centre gets something like \$45 000 a year to deal with a core group of 35 youths and a turnover of approximately 664 youths a month.

The Bassendean Youth Service located under the R.A. McDonald stand on the Bassendean Oval is another service with which I have been heavily involved. It is now being administered by the Town of Bassendean, for which I am extremely grateful.

Hon Sam Piantadosi: So are the ratepayers of Bassendean.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: They certainly are because the lads who go to that service are by and large offenders and youths at risk. The programs run by the service with its meagre funding have resulted in a dramatic drop in court appearances by the youths who attend that centre. In addition to operating similar activities to the Lockridge Youth Service the Bassendean Youth Service has a couple of programs, one of which involves 12 youths

driving three or four go-karts which they maintain and race at the Wundowie track. Most of them are high speed car chase offenders; however, since the program begun only one has re-offended. Unfortunately, the program has stalled owing to lack of funds available to pursue it any further this year. That is a great pity. Our major concern is that boredom may again take over which will result in those youths reoffending. This is the program that Hon Max Evans and I discussed in the passageway. I thank Hon Max Evans for his quick response to a request from me for assistance from the Lotteries Commission to get this program under way. The program involves the establishment of an automotive workshop. Hon Derrick Tomlinson was present at the opening the other day and he expressed his gratitude to me for my introducing him to both the Bassendean and Lockridge Youth Services.

The program has been set up by the Bassendean Youth Service with very strong support from the Department for Community Development, Youth Australia, the Lotteries Commission and a couple of other funding bodies that do not come to mind readily. It allows offenders to work on building, remodelling, stripping and repainting cars and doing all sorts of things which allow them to develop their latent skills and interests. I invite Hon Max Evans to visit the program, although I know he does not have a lot of time to go visiting.

The kids taking part in the go-kart program and the automotive program will tell members that they have taken part in high speed pursuits but they do not now have the time because they are too busy getting on with the course and learning as much as they can to develop their skills and interests. One lad who is involved in the course introduced himself to Hon Derrick Tomlinson when he attended the opening. That young lad came to me three years ago because he was having trouble obtaining a homeless allowance from the Department of Social Security. I took him to the DSS and got it straightened out. Unfortunately, he boarded with the wrong people and got himself into all sorts of trouble. He has been the whole distance of breaking and entering, being involved in high speed pursuits, and taking drugs. However, he is now back on track mainly due to the program. He was very quick to make himself known to me. I would not have recognised him because he has doubled his height since I last saw him. He thanked me for my support in the past. We have to keep these kids busy. We have all heard the old adage about idle hands. However, unless the Government agencies are adequately funded, they will continue to tinker around the edge only.

Fortunately, the Lockridge and the Bassendean Youth Services have energetic, youthful coordinators who spend a lot of their time ensuring that, whatever their meagre needs, they provide the best service that they can. They are employed for 38 hours a week but work not less than 60 or 70 hours a week, unfortunately for no additional money, because they believe in the service and because they also know the problems that we have in obtaining sufficient funding to get more staff or to pay them the overtime that they deserve.

As I said earlier, the latest statistic that I have heard is that it costs \$52 000 a year or \$1 000 a week to keep a youth in detention. The Lockridge Youth Service has a 95 per cent Aboriginal clientele. It also has a core attendance of approximately 35. Using simple arithmetic, if 15 of the 35 youths were to re-offend simply because we do not have sufficient funds and we got the Government to give us \$100 per week for each of the 15 for a year, the cost to the DCD would be \$78 000 or approximately \$33 000 more than it provides at present. Provided we can hang onto the shire funding - we have no reason to believe that we will not - we would have over \$90 000. If those 15 re-offended and we linked that in some way with the fact that we have insufficient funds to provide them with ongoing activities and each of those re-offenders were sentenced to three months' detention, it would cost the Government \$159 000 for the first 13 weeks and there would be no guarantees that they would not be back. In that example, the Government would save approximately \$117 000 by accepting our proposal for a \$100 allowance for each of the 15 youths and would possibly save a further \$585 000 for the remaining nine months of the year because they would not be in detention. As I said, I realise it is a simplistic proposition and probably does not fit into the Government's

budgeting program. However, it beats campaign statements like stopping the revolving door of the juvenile court. There appears to be more of a willingness by the Government to increase spending on detention rather than by tackling the problem at its roots. With the \$78 000 that my calculation would give to the service and the support we get from the shire, we would not have to worry too much about looking around for money to improve the salaries for our workers and it would give us more time to write submissions for program money provided by the various funding bodies around the State.

The Government's comment about stopping the revolving door syndrome is a response rather than a solution. It does not mean that we should not penalise youth when substantial crimes are committed or where substantial penalties are required for the community's protection. However, I fear that the comment does not go quite that deep. I fear the Government is talking more about locking up for longer periods people who commit crimes. I am aware that is a point of view prevailing in the community, one which is unfortunately fuelled by a local radio station and its unimaginative talkback host.

Hon Tom Helm: It is very kind of you to call him unimaginative.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: It is early in the morning.

Hon N.F. Moore: What would Hon Tom Helm call him? Why not say it?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: It is a most expensive method and yet it is not proving to be the answer to this problem in most western countries. It must also be remembered that Western Australia has the highest rate of youth detention in Australia, but does not appear to be solving the problem. I had the good fortune last year on my way to the Bahamas -

Hon E.J. Charlton: What were you doing over there?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I was representing members of this House and did so very well. I had the opportunity to visit the United States of America on the way to the Bahamas, and one of the ports of call was San Francisco. I spoke with two men in that city who were primarily employed as consulting criminologists. They were employed, among other things, on contract to the justice system to write and develop a package that would inform judges of what they should consider when bringing down sentences, and to expand sentencing options and advise of alternative services or parole. Their major concern was that the sentencing system in the United States also is not working and they had fairly good reasons for believing that. In California the use of imprisonment has expanded alarmingly. In 1977 19 000 people were incarcerated in California. By 15 April 1991 the figure was higher than 150 000, at a cost of \$2.6 billion to the Californian taxpayer through the so-called justice system. The detention system in California was 170 per cent over capacity. Members can imagine the problems that State has created for itself. The Californian youth authority runs 16 large institutions for juvenile offenders, and youth can be sentenced up to the age of 18 years, and retained up to the age of 25 years. Judges also have discretion to sentence youths between the ages of 18 and 21 years which means adults can be sentenced to serve with youth. That is an undesirable system and it is a major concern of Hon Cheryl Davenport when she expresses some trepidation at the possibility of juvenile detention being amalgamated with the Department of Corrective Services. California has a reoffending rate of 85 per cent. The United States has the highest number of lockups in the world, and California has twice the national average. I was advised that Pennsylvania has 500 youths locked up in adult prisons. That is a frightening thought and I do not know what the authorities hope to achieve in terms of rehabilitation with a policy such as that. The lock 'em up and hang 'em high mentality abounds throughout the United States, and the same feeling was unfortunately evident in Western Australia during the mass rally organised outside Parliament House by People for Fair and Open Government and Howard Sattler last year.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: There are some enlightening programs in some parts of the United States.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes, but I can only speak about those places I visited and the information I gathered.

Hon E.J. Charlton: You should go back.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes, I should and I would be only too happy to entertain a motion from Hon Eric Charlton for the Government to send me back.

Hon E.J. Charlton: Get Hon John Halden to go with you.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I also met a very interesting black man in San Francisco, Mr Anthony Lincoln, who is an academic employed on a contract basis by the Mayor of San Francisco to work on programs trying to solve the problems in the long term of San Francisco's high level of crime, unemployment and homelessness. Mr Lincoln relayed a fairly familiar story and laid the blame for the plight of the City of San Francisco on its not staying competitive, lack of long term planning, buying more than it exported, and shrinking job opportunities through modern technology.

Hon E.J. Charlton: It sounds like Australia.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes, he believed plans needed to be put in place for the future and said that the present situation was irreversible. He talked about his own youth and said that everybody in those days had a job and received a wage. He said the present generation of young people on the streets had never seen their parents going to work and, as a consequence, they know nothing about work. He said that people such as he got through the system because he was not threatened by the lack of jobs and opportunities in his youth, and he felt that today people are threatened by and suffer from pressures not experienced by his generation. To me, that rang a fairly familiar bell. He believed that the ledger needed to be ruled and we needed to forget the present generation of unemployed and look after their kids by using imaginative, long term strategies. I rather imagine that what has occurred for many years in the United States is just putting off the inevitable. I am afraid that is what is happening here. We are ignoring the big picture, and unfortunately exploiting the system as it is today. I do not want to labour the point, but I think also that the American system of government tends to confuse just who is responsible for what. They seem to have an election for just about everything. There seems to be a lack of clarity about what is the role of the Federal Government, State Governments, city councils and county councils. They all run their own police force, and a host of things, so it is very confusing. That seems to me to eat up taxpayers' money rather than organise things in a more practicable way. As I say, I was not there long enough to become an authority on it, but the interesting thing about the discussion that we had with Mr Lincoln in California is that, as Hon Eric Charlton said, it did sound a bit like Australia. That goes to show that this is not just an Australian recession. It is worldwide.

It is no good those on the other side of the House claiming that they have the cure by putting a stop to the revolving door syndrome at the juvenile court. They must do something more imaginative than that. Despite the lock them up policy that exists in California, they still have 150 000 people in prison and are 170 per cent over capacity. Therefore, we need to look at how best we can spend the money that is now spent on detention of youth. We have the highest rate of incarceration of any State, yet we still have a community that is crying out for harsher penalties. I am not playing politics. I believe Governments of all political colours need to bite the bullet on this subject and look at the long term issues and put in place some preventive measures to make our young people know that they have a place in our society. At present, we are using bandaid measures and are not using non-government agencies to their fullest. We must recognise that they are possibly the best equipped to deal with at risk youth because they are community-administered groups. However, non-government agencies need the finances to put in place the programs in order to fill the vacuum in which at risk youth find themselves by turning to drugs and crime. I realise that this is not a popular view and that many aspects of juvenile justice must be taken into consideration. It is not as simple as people may think. I am suggesting that something different must be started now.

My concerns are that insufficient resources are put into the prevention of crime. We seem to spend thousands of dollars a week unquestioned on detention and on shutting the

stable door after the horse has bolted. I also have deep concerns about the victims of crime and applaud the work being done here, despite again limited staff and resources. However, I am concerned that the endeavours of well meaning people in our community are geared towards revenge as a way of easing the pain of victims. I can understand the reaction, but nevertheless it does disturb me. The best way to care for potential victims of crime is to not make them potential victims of crime and to ensure that we can find ways of funding programs through the non-government agencies or, for that matter, whatever other agencies are available, because that is the best method and they are the best people to deal with at risk youth by removing them from the need to involve themselves in crime. Unfortunately, although the Minister has told the non-government agencies that there will be no decrease in funding, there will be little or no increase in funding, which is in fact a cut in funding in real terms. Therefore, while thousands of dollars will be spent on detention, there will be an actual cut in the organisations committed to keeping people out of the court system, and I wonder about that.

I will now take a short time to talk about Lockridge Senior High School. I am not sure whether Hon Derrick Tomlinson or Hon Peter Foss have had the opportunity to visit that school, but it is one of the most innovative high schools that I have seen in the State.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Thankfully they decided not to change the name.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: Yes. They really brought that up at the wrong time, I thought, during the course of an election campaign. It is an argument that I wanted to stay away from rather than get involved in. I am pleased, along with Hon Derrick Tomlinson, that the name has not been changed. They wanted to change it to Kiara, which is a new suburb.

Hon Max Evans: The jewel of the northern suburbs, is it not?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: It is a jewel in the East Metropolitan Region. I want to refer to the enterprise education curriculum that Lockridge Senior High School has for years 11 and 12 students who might otherwise drop out of school at year 10, which is, I suppose, a bit of an extension of my speech on juvenile justice. The enterprise education system was introduced to that school in 1983. It has grown into an integral part of the school's curriculum and is there to stay. The school has four enterprises in operation: Catering, clerical, health, and printing and silk screening. In addition, it operates a farm, where students are studying agricultural technology. That represents a great initiative by the school and lends strong support to the argument that the curriculum is capable of providing substantial vocational courses for students who have difficulty in coming to grips with the normal education system. Quite a number of the students who would normally leave school at the end of year 10 decide to stay on in order to join the enterprise courses, probably because there are no jobs for them or they are not able to cope with technical and further education courses.

Without playing down the importance of the other enterprises, from my observations the catering enterprise appears at this time to be the most successful. Each of the courses is based on the simple principle of teaching all aspects of the various courses, which includes everything from managerial skills down. I will use the catering enterprise as an example of what is taught. The students learn not only cooking and food preparation, but also the other fundamentals of food service and business acumen. They do everything from waiting on tables to ordering and quoting, and learning the managerial and financial sides of the operation. It is a certified course, so at the end of it they receive a certificate. That stands them in pretty good stead to enter the hospitality industry because they are familiar with most aspects of that industry and have been prepared to gain all of the skills which I just mentioned. That catering enterprise has been developed into a competitive business, and is run by the students under the watchful eye of their teacher, Maddie McNabb. Maddie is a very effective person and a great teacher, as was the late Jill Cook, whom we can thank for much of the initial success of the enterprise.

A Government member: Did you say the late Jill Cook?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: She died about two years ago. It was very unfortunate and very

sad. The school accepts catering orders and will deliver to functions or will supply the catering service - the preparation, cooking and serving of a meal of very high quality. The school prepares quotes and statements of account. Importantly, the school wants to take the enterprise one step further. A submission to the director of facilities and services of the Ministry of Education has been prepared requesting that the current temporary catering service be replaced by a permanent extension to the home economics centre. I understand that the Minister of Education will receive a copy of the submission. I am sorry that he is not in the Chamber because I had hoped to ask him for his support of the submission. I will write to him to ask him to do that. The extension will include a food preparation area, a cool room, a function-seminar area where food can be served. This will give students the opportunity to operate on a large scale in their own school function centre, if the submission is successful. The present location of the catering service in this school is a temporary transportable room which, because of the popularity of the service, is no longer suitable. Because of the success and the invaluable role it fulfils, the course has proved to be a meaningful alternative to the traditional courses in which a great number of students have difficulty in succeeding at school.

The Lockridge Senior High School is an extraordinary school, with an extraordinary staff and a forward looking parents and citizens' association. The submission to improve the teaching facilities will enhance the prospects of students entering the hospitality area, which is the growth area for job opportunities. I am hopeful that when the Ministry of Education receives the submission it will give the school the support it not only asks for but also deserves. I do not know whether Hon Derrick Tomlinson or Hon Peter Foss have visited the Lockridge Senior High School. If they have not, I would be happy to arrange for them to do so with me.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I am very familiar with it.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I am glad to hear that because I will now refer the school representatives to him to enlist his support for their submission.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I already have.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I will also deal with the future of the Homeswest Independent Appeals Tribunal which the Minister for Housing, on the advice of the Homeswest chief executive, Mr Greg Joyce, plans to close down. My electorate office is very close to the Homeswest areas of Lockridge, Ashfield and Bassendean. It follows that I get a lot of calls for assistance from a large number of Homeswest tenants. The complaints and queries range from assistance with transfers, priority listings, tenant liability, accounts and the need for maintenance and work to be done. Of course, East Metropolitan Region is half the size of the metropolitan region and contacts by Homeswest tenants are many and widely based.

I have a great deal of respect for Homeswest staff across East Metropolitan Region. They are first-class people. They are compassionate, helpful and always prepared to listen. If people have an urgent case that needs some attention, they can always get it from the Homeswest people. There is not an office which I have been in touch with which has not gone out of its way to assist. It is bound by Government policy and, of course, people cannot always get the response they want.

The Homeswest Independent Appeals Tribunal has quite often been the answer to many of the problems I have had referred to me. We now have a body that, provided a case is good enough, can overturn a Homeswest decision. I recently asked the Minister for Housing two questions regarding the \$800 000 that the Minister claimed it would cost to administer the industrial appeals tribunal. I asked when Homeswest would be releasing its report which recommended the appeals tribunal remain in operation. The answer I got was that it was in the Carrivick report. To the second part of the question, the Minister replied that it was in the report of December 1992, which turned out to be the Carrivick report. This report was not tabled in this House; rather, it was put together for the previous Minister for Housing by Mr Tony Carrivick. The attendants in this place had to chase all over town to find a copy for me. They did that, and I thank them. It was very interesting reading. From my reading of the report, I found that the tribunal stems from

two different initiatives: First, the general strategy of Homeswest to extend its service to tenants and, second, the Commonwealth-State housing agreement which sought to improve the legal standing of people applying for housing assistance.

The recommendations in the Carrivick report are framed around those two factors. The reason for closing down the tribunal was not based on cost, or for failing the initiative that caused it to be formed in the first place; in fact, it is somewhat different from the decision to close the Midland Workshops. Here, a report recommended that it continue, but it is still likely to be closed. The recommendations are not simply a review of the operations. In fact, they are fairly exhaustive and include an extensive market survey done by AGB Research Australia Pty Ltd.

The need to maintain a tribunal independent of Homeswest is necessary. I know that there is talk about putting in place a three tier system with a single officer replacing the tribunal. Homeswest complains of dealing with appeals through the tribunal, consisting of a number of people. What delays can we expect from a single officer appointed by the Minister and what autonomy could we expect that person to have and be able to maintain? In the submission to the Carrivick review, the HIAT made a submission that challenged Homeswest's costings and Homeswest's proposition to install this three tier system. The submission was based on, firstly, a local primary decision review by a senior officer not involved in the decision; secondly, an intermediate level of review based on practice review committees; and thirdly, a ministerial arbitrator reporting to the State Minister.

In its submission, HIAT queried the impartiality of this course because of the practices review committee, which consisted of Homeswest officers in a Homeswest building and was organised and run by Homeswest staff. It felt that this would place an overwhelming demand on a single ministerial arbitrator. The Carrivick report, despite the lack of terms of reference, strongly recommended the retention of the tribunal, of its name, and that it be housed in accommodation in a purpose built building.

It challenges allegations made by Homeswest blaming HIAT for delays in the appeal findings. HIAT points out that delays are not the fault of the independent appeals tribunal. In a letter to Homeswest executive director, Mr Greg Joyce, the independent appeals tribunal expressed its concern that delays in appeals resulting from Homeswest's failure to provide written statements were being attributed to the appeals tribunal. It also pointed out that in the current procedure the appellant lodges an appeal in writing. On receipt of the written appeal Homeswest is requested to provide the tribunal with a written statement advocating its views regarding the appeal within 28 days, or in a matter of urgency, 14 days.

The industrial appeals tribunal went on to say that a copy of Homeswest's statement is sent to the appellant with a request to contact the tribunal to discuss the appeal. The tribunal claims the purpose of this procedure is to give time for it to conciliate the appeal before proceeding to a hearing. All of this reinforces the non-legalistic approach taken by the tribunal. In its letter the tribunal claimed the process is stalled if Homeswest's statements are not forwarded to it and as a consequence the tribunal is forced to schedule appeals without such statements being available, but on the expectation that they will be available in time. The industrial appeals tribunal claims that it can only request the statements. In 1991-92 over 75 per cent of appeals were referred to Homeswest with a request to provide statements within three days, approximately 20 per cent within 10 days, and the remainder for longer periods. This means that Homeswest was requested to provide written statements within 10 days for 95 per cent of appeals. At page 128 of his report Tony Carrivick lists reasons found for the delays caused by Homeswest which include its antipathy towards the idea of mandatory internal review by the practice review committee, the timing and quality of Homeswest's statements provided in response to the appellant's claim, antipathy towards the prospect of Homeswest attending the hearing and reaction to the implementation of tribunal recommendations by Homeswest.

The Carrivick report was critical of Homeswest. On the question of cost the industrial

appeals tribunal in submissions to the Carrivick report challenged Mr Joyce's claim that it cost \$2 000 an appeal as that figure was arrived at by dividing the number of appeals into the total cost of the tribunal. The tribunal claims that the cost of the appeal is 25 per cent of the cost of the independent appeals mechanism and the balance is Homeswest's cost in advocating its own interests. The industrial appeals tribunal sets its operational cost at between \$525 and \$550 an appeal. Despite that argument and Homeswest's claims of a total of \$800 000 to operate and \$2 000 an appeal, Mr Carrivick clearly recommended that the independent industrial appeals tribunal remain under its present name and in its present building. He forwarded his recommendations on how he saw the independent appeals tribunal operating. Not all the recommendations of the Carrivick report were accepted by the appeals tribunal, but I am sure that an accommodation could be reached to arrive at a decision to ensure the original initiatives are achieved. It will not be helped by extravagant statements by Hon Doug Shave, the Minister for Housing.

[Leave denied for the member's time to be extended.]

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural) [1.14 am]: One of the real joys in delivering one's Supply speech at 1.15 in the morning is that at this time the Chamber is renowned for being packed with an excellent attendance of members - tonight is no exception! It is also a great pleasure to have the Public Gallery overflowing to the extent that it is!

Hon E.J. Charlton: Mr Chance, you will be very early for the first edition of the day's newspaper.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I appreciate this opportunity to support the Supply debate. In doing so I add that it is with a touch of sadness that we must deliver important speeches such as those to the Supply debate, which provides an opportunity to those of us representing our electorates to raise issues such as those just raised by Hon Tom Butler, at this time of the night. This debate may continue for some time yet. The reason for this unfortunate occurrence is that the Government has had difficulty keeping up with its business simply because it failed to get started in time. Let us be clear about why this is going on. It is certainly not because of bloody mindedness on this side of the Chamber.

Hon Tom Helm: They were too frightened to come to the House.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Aye, aye.

Hon John Halden: We can see why the member is on the backbench.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! We have one member on his feet and I ask that member to address the Chair and for all interjections to cease.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Be assured of that, Mr Deputy President. In my contribution to the Supply debate I will raise a number of issues all of which are either directly or indirectly related to my electorate. While I know we will have ample opportunity to comment on the three industrial relations Bills which I believe will be due in this House before too long, there is a side to the industrial relations issue which somebody from my electorate, the Agricultural Region, can present which is perhaps a little different from views expressed on this side of the House. It is a common perception of rural areas that the dominant industrial workplace is set largely by a group of small employers, generally those who have their acts together in industrial relations and have had harmonious industrial relations for many years. They have enjoyed those harmonious industrial relations largely because of the good relationship which exists between rural employers and their employees. At least part of that is true. Country employers do tend to have a close relationship with their employees, and industrial disputes, to the extent that they do occur, are sorted out on the spot simply because that is the most convenient way to sort them out. I have been both an employer and an employee in that situation. The common thread of negotiations between employers and employees in country small business and indeed arguably in small business anywhere is that of negotiations between parties in adherence to the fundamentals of a relevant award. Whether that is a union or non-union shop in any negotiation in small business between employers and employees, the award becomes one of the critical factors. Generally there are some deviations from the award. The employer frequently, although not always, gives substantial ground in the area of

wages. Above award wages are common in country small business as is the instance of employees usually making some concession in overtime and penalty provisions. Before any member opposite makes the point that this is the intent of the Government's legislation -

Hon E.J. Charlton: I thought you were speaking in favour of it.

Hon KIM CHANCE: There is no problem on this side for a freer form of industrial relations. Members opposite will no doubt have some joy in reminding us when we come back here that that is what our Federal colleagues are doing pretty well precisely. We will be able to tell members opposite the difference between what our Federal colleagues are doing and what is being proposed by Mr Kierath. Before any member does remind me that that seems to be the intent of the Government's legislation, I will quickly disabuse them of the notion. These informal arrangements rely heavily on three factors, the foremost of which is the award; the second being an understanding, however loose that understanding might be, of what the going rate is for that job. That going rate itself is dependent on the ruling award. The third factor is the underlying strength of the employer which dictates the employer's decision whether to hire at agreed rates or not to hire at all; in other words, the capacity to pay. Whether the workplace is unionised - remembering that I am speaking about small business workplaces - the agreed rate is strongly influenced by the award. The level of over award payment is the factor that is determined by the employer's ability and desire to make that payment and the employees' capacity to deliver productivity. Although I have made the point that these usually satisfactory arrangements are common in the smaller country workplaces such as farms, and in much of the smaller business sector, it is inaccurate to suggest that country businesses are in any way special in this regard. Similar arrangements are widespread in urban small business and always have been. Unions are well aware that this is the situation. Although they would prefer that employees concerned were union members, and often they are, they seem to accept the arrangements and rarely show a great deal of interest in interfering unless award conditions are being blatantly abused.

We must ask ourselves what will happen to these arrangements which have developed under the present industrial system if the sweeping changes proposed by the Government become law. With the best will in the world it is impossible to see any benefits which could accrue to either party from any deregulation of the labour market for small business. The arrangements that we have now are heavily reliant on both the award and on productivity. The latter element will not be enhanced by the proposals in the Bills, since they are already negotiated in a deregulated environment. The former, the award, is relevant as a benchmark for the level of the over-award payment, but provided that the capacity and willingness to pay remain unchanged, so will the arrangements remain unchanged; in other words, a neutral response to the basic elements of the Bills.

If benefits from the changes are difficult to forecast, what are the disadvantages? Although within a given enterprise no reason may exist to expect any response at all, it is also true that in a small manufacturing business, for example, the capacity to pay will be diminished if a competitor cuts the price of its product subsequent to negotiating a structure of individual contracts with its employees. If the result of that individual contract was substantially lower than the wages that the first employer was paying, in order to remain competitive that employer would be forced to renegotiate arrangements with his staff, or suffer reduced sales, or worse, go out of business. Assuming that all parties made rational decisions, the most likely outcome of that scenario would be that the employer's profits would remain constant, except to the extent that depending on price elasticity of the market it may rise marginally due to better sales as a result of the low unit cost of the product. So far so good.

What is clear is that the sole contributor of that benefit, however, is the employee. The increased sales and lower price to the consumer have not come about through better productivity, but purely through lower wages. I fully realise that it could be argued that as a direct result of lower wages per unit of production, employees may increase their output in order to maintain their total earnings; in other words, to try to match third world labour rates. However, that is surely not the destiny that the coalition had in mind for

workers in this State. The assumption that workers who are paid less will produce more, which is in any case an unproven concept, seems to be based on the coalition's philosophy that to make the poor work harder, one must pay them less. Assuming that unproven concept will work, there comes a time when demand and supply curves will eventually cross, and no more units will be sold above the marginal cost of production. This imposes a floor price for the product and defines the limits of the market. In other words, no matter how hard employees work, they cannot increase their earnings because no more of the product can be sold. Although that example is an illustration of the theoretical extension of any given market, it demonstrates the nature of the logical consequences of a totally deregulated labour market - wage levels fall.

In reality, other factors will intervene before the theoretical limits are reached, and inevitably industrial disruption will be one of those factors. Historically that has always been the case. We must ask ourselves whether we are unhappy about the way wages and conditions are currently determined in small business and if so, why are we unhappy. I turn now to an article on page 26 of *The West Australian* on 7 June this year that was so small that many members may have missed it. Members can see from the size of the article that it would have been easy to miss. The article is headed "Small businesses at industrial peace". It is date lined "Canberra". It states -

Most small businesses are satisfied with their industrial relations arrangements and few believe award restrictions are barriers to change in the workplace, a Department of Industrial Relations survey has found.

The survey canvassed 953 -

That is a substantial number.

- companies employing up to 50 people for their views on workplace issues.

It found 63 per cent were happy with present agreements or awards. Only 7 per cent said award restrictions were a problem when it came to introducing changes in the workplace.

That is, only seven per cent of the 953 businesses surveyed found that award restrictions were a problem. Why on earth are we going through the tortuous rack of these three industrial relations Bills in another place if that is the extent of the problem? The article continues -

More than 90 per cent of businesses were covered by awards and 4 per cent had enterprise awards. Fifteen per cent said they preferred individual contracts to awards.

The main complaints about the award system were penalty rates and flexible work hours.

The article states "flexible", but I am sure it meant "inflexible". Of the 90 per cent of businesses covered by awards, 63 per cent were happy; seven per cent were not happy. Is the labour market in small business really happy about current arrangements? I suggest from my experience of working on both sides of small business that, if the survey is any guide to the operations of small business in Australia, perhaps we are going through all this pain for no reason at all. If we are unhappy, why are we unhappy? If we are unhappy with the industrial arrangements in small business, is it because employees' earnings are too high or are current levels of productivity per employee too low? If, as reasonable people, we determine that our problem lies in productivity, not wages, do we assume that productivity is solely a function of labour? Of course, it is not. Productivity in this day and age is primarily a function of management and the application of capital. Labour comes third in the equation.

I will give members an illustration of this and they will have to forgive me for using terms which some of them may not understand. We do have a couple of farmers left in this place. The example is a farmer with two employees. Although they may be equal in ability, the farmer does not have equal plant in order to apply their labour to put in his crop. For instance, he has a 350 horsepower tractor which is pulling a 50 foot air seeder.

The rig is well backed up. In other words, the truck which is hauling the seed and super is well maintained and someone keeps it full so that the machine is serviced with fuel, seed and fertiliser at appropriate times. The operator is efficient and well trained to operate a rig of that size. In normal circumstances one would expect in an equation like this that the operator would be able to seed appropriately 600 acres a day; that is, in a 24 hour day he works 20 hours effectively. In working that 20 hour day the operator will be paid \$20 per hour and he will seed at a unit cost of production of approximately 66¢ an acre. The other employee is also provided with equipment by his employer. However, it is the farmer's backup equipment and is generally used to seed around rocks, but in this case he is using it to seed in country which is similar to the country the other employee is working in. However, the tractor is not 350 horsepower, but 50 horsepower, and the seeder is not 50 feet, but 12 feet. The backup is basically lousy. The truck which supplies him has to be filled by him and he is not dealing with bulk, but with bags. In addition, he has to shovel the super into the bags. It is an inefficient setup. At best, that operator will seed 80 acres a day. Again in a 24 hour day he will be getting 20 hours' effective working time out of the 24 hours. Assuming that operator is paid \$10 an hour - half the rate of the other operator - the unit cost of production will be one acre for \$2.50. No matter how hard the second operator works and no matter how little he is paid he will never achieve the productivity of the first employee, even though he is paid half the rate. His rate of productivity is one seventh of his better trained and better resourced fellow worker. His unit cost of production is almost four times higher.

The reason Australia is not the competitive industrial nation that we would like it to be is not that the wages are too high, but because the unit cost of production is too high. The reason we are consumers of European, American and Asian manufactured goods is not that the wage levels in those countries are lower than Australia's, but that they can produce a given item more cheaply. The two do not necessarily have the same causes. The Volvo and Scania trucks we see on our roads do not come from factories in third world countries. They come from Sweden where wage levels and conditions for workers exceed those for Australia.

Hon B.K. Donaldson: You are insulting the business acumen of farmers. Most farmers would have used two operators on two 12 hour shifts. You are not drawing a good analogy.

Hon KIM CHANCE: In this case the employer had only one employee available.

In Sweden the level of taxation, the so-called killer of enterprise, is far higher than in Australia. Australia has higher wage levels, better working conditions and higher taxes than Sweden, yet we drive Volvo and Scania trucks. People in Sweden do not drive Australian-built International trucks. In fact, trucks are not even built in Australia.

Hon N.F. Moore: Sweden is changing that. The Government has changed and the country is changing its whole approach. It cannot afford it any longer.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I accept the Minister's point that socialist countries in Europe are going through a process of change. In many ways that change is overdue. The dynamics of socialist countries are probably due for an overhaul. They have been locked into a philosophy which is stale.

Hon N.F. Moore: Volvo is producing motor vehicles in Italy.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Yes, and Scania is a big manufacturer in Argentina and Mexico. Lower wage levels have attracted people, but what has attracted manufacturers like Volvo and Scania into other parts of the world? It does not apply only to Swedish manufacturers. In the United States, where the wage levels are relatively low, they have that kind of industry. Cummins Diesels manufacture in Argentina and Czechoslovakia. The Cummins Diesels which are powering the *Prospector* railcars are made in India, which is something I learnt the other day.

The fact is that Volvo, Scania, Mercedes Benz in West Germany and a number of other northern European manufacturers developed in the high taxing countries during the post war period. They continue to be major manufacturers worldwide and they continue to

export worldwide. Australia is not able to export that class of vehicle - it does export motor cars. Australia is not even able to build a truck to meet its conditions. What have those countries got right and what has Australia got wrong?

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: What about the OKA?

Hon KIM CHANCE: It is a vehicle with great promise. It is certainly not a truck, but as a specialised vehicle I expect it to achieve great things for Western Australian automotive technology.

What Sweden has got right and Australia has got wrong is not necessarily its labour management, but the management and application of its capital. We seem to believe that Australian wages are too high. In fact Australia's wage levels are very competitive with other comparable countries in the OECD. Australia is uncompetitive in management, industry and investment policy. I am not entirely impartial in that criticism because no Government in my lifetime has grasped the need to do what that farmer did when he committed management and capital resources to give his tractor driver the chance to be competitive with a tractor driver in Nebraska.

I acknowledge the Senator Button's achievements in the steel, motor vehicle, footwear, clothing and textile industries. However, he was fixing something that had gone wrong. What he was not doing, and may never have been given the charter to do, was progressing to the next stage of boosting industries that had a chance of doing better. I am not critical of the coalition Government for wanting to improve our competitiveness - how could I be? However, the avenue it has chosen to achieve its aims is clearly the wrong one. To the extent that mutual benefit is available from devising more appropriate industrial rules, Mr Kierath acknowledged that we were on the right track when he welcomed the new BHP Iron Ore agreement. I do not know, but strongly suspect, he would also approve the kind of arrangement I have already described as existing in the small business area.

I must ask: Where is the gain and what is the point of this new legislation? It is surely not to force the pace of reform? If that is the Government's aim, it should take time to talk to the people at BHP Iron Ore, or people on the waterfront or anywhere that successful union negotiated enterprise bargaining arrangements have been initiated. I am not suggesting they should talk only to the workers and union negotiators; they should talk also to employers who are party to agreements. They will find that the process has not been without pain, but that with a lot of goodwill on both sides mutual benefits have been won and have been seen to be won.

Attempting to force the pace of reform will utterly destroy the goodwill so essential to reform. If the Government cannot see that after all it has seen of the unions' attitude and the attitude of many employers, then it is worse than blind. The landmark cases that supporters of this type of legislation have hailed have hardly been lasting success stories. Mudginberri abattoir is bankrupt and Dollar Sweets is bankrupt. These are the landmark decisions. Robe River Iron Associates is now competing with BHP Iron Ore, a company which now has more efficient work practices and a work force with an immeasurably better morale.

Hon B.K. Donaldson: Did Robe River not win a most successful business award given by the Federal Government about 12 months ago?

Hon KIM CHANCE: That was more than 12 months ago, but is historically true. However, Robe River is in trouble now. Unless it finds some way of addressing its problems and competing with BHP Iron Ore and Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd - whose arrangements are still better than those of Robe River - it will go under. The member should have a close look at what is happening to Robe River. It is flagging. Are these the landmark decisions which we are to hold up in future to all industry? Does the Government want the legal battles, disruption, misery and hatred that accompanied those landmark decisions? I do not think that it does.

Hon Max Evans: There are no problems these days.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Perhaps the Minister should take a trip to Robe River to see how

the people feel. Wickham is one of the unhappiest places I have been in my life. I do not think the Government wants that. Do Government members not understand that that is inevitable because of the path the Government has set itself on. Even if it is successful in forcing the pace of reform it will be at enormous cost. I ask again: What will the Government gain? Without management reforms and industry policy and investment policy reforms we will still have only addressed one small part of the problem.

I have spoken for longer than I intended on this matter considering the fact that the relevant Bills are yet to come into this House and we will have an opportunity to debate them. Their impact will be such that I have no doubt they will be the most important pieces of legislation we will see introduced during the term of this Government.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Historical.

Hon KIM CHANCE: They are.

Hon T.G. Butler: They will come back to bite you on the backside.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Do not be so vulgar.

Hon KIM CHANCE: They are important in the sense that they encapsulate ideological differences between Labor and conservative approaches to our future and to whom those approaches will be directed. Government members have a great deal to say about their perceptions of the shortcomings of the last decade of Labor Government; they go on ad nauseam in some cases. However, if any serious student of industrial relations looks objectively at the achievements of Labor in the past 10 years in that field and fairly places them in the context of Australian industrial relations history, I challenge him to deny that it is a record to be proud of.

Earlier I said it is only partly true that the predominant industry situation in country areas is the small business model. In fact, large employers overwhelmingly affect country people in general and primary producers in particular. It is the big employers such as Westrail, transport companies, fuel companies, fertiliser manufacturers, Cooperative Bulk Handling Pty Ltd, the Australian Wheat Board, stevedoring companies, machinery manufacturers and machinery importers and distributors, abattoirs, wool brokers and Telecom - and one could go on forever - that link primary producers' interests firmly with the industrial relations issue.

It is by the medium of big business that farmers, fishermen, and pastoralists have most benefited from Labor's proud record in industrial relations. Those of us who represent regions that rely primarily on our capacity to export for our very survival - that is, the mining and pastoral region and the agricultural region - do not need to be reminded of the appalling cost of industrial disputes in the 1970s. Stoppages and restrictive work practices gave Australia a reputation it could ill afford - that of an unreliable supplier. We then saw a range of policies promoted by people who sought to address what they saw as union thuggery and abuse of power.

Various pressure groups emerged based on this preconception of union problems. The National Farmers Federation raised a sum speculated to be about \$15m for its fighting fund. At that time I was a Western Australian delegate to the National Farmers Federation. One of the first uses of the fund was the Mudginberri abattoir dispute. It was always clear that the principal use for that fighting fund was to direct its use against the union movement.

The three industrial relations Bills presented by this Government are images of that line of reasoning from the 1970s. They are based on the 1970s notion of union thuggery. In fact, Hon Peter Foss mentioned union standover tactics in an interjection on an adjournment debate from Hon Tom Helm as recently as 5 August 1993. The concept of union thuggery was perhaps not a myth, but certainly a misconception. There were real problems in industrial relations in the 1970s. I saw my share of those as a worker in the Pilbara. These problems have been progressively dealt with and solved by Labor Governments which at the same time achieved a remarkable increase in productivity in those industries in which it could be said we were least competitive.

Only the most biased person could argue that these problems were caused by one side only, and yet after all these years of industrial peace and all the evidence that the unions can and do play a major role in negotiating appropriate work practices, the Government is introducing Bills which are nothing more than a bitter and vindictive attack on the union movement. The people of Western Australia will see these Bills for what they are, not a genuine attempt to further improve industrial relations but a bid to force confrontation on employees and employers alike, and beyond that, an attack on the union movement driven by purely political motives. If these Bills become law who will the Government blame for the disruption that will impede the flow of our exports? Will Government members have the honesty and courage to say to the farmers and miners who have been hurt by these disputes that their exports have been held up because the Government wanted to destroy the union movement for its own political ends, and in doing so it is prepared to sacrifice that industrial peace? I do not think they will say that. I shall follow the debate on the three industrial relations Bills with great interest, not simply because of my responsibilities here but because I fear the effect they will have on the people in my electorate.

Members will be aware of my interest in health services in country areas and my desire to see a level of security for our hospital system in the long term. Another side of the delivery of health care services which is not often emphasised is community nursing and the health education service provided by the Health Department. Those two branches, along with the homemaker service run by the then Department for Community Services, have made an invaluable contribution to a healthier community by preventive medicine and the promotion of a more healthy lifestyle. A benefit which would be overlooked by many, but not by the Minister, is the economic benefit which accrues from preventive medicine. As a child in a rural area in the 1950s, I occasionally spent some time in hospital. The Kellerberrin hospital, like others in the region, had a children's ward which seemed almost always to be full. I was only aware at the time that most of my ward mates were Aborigines, but since then I have found that the causes for their hospitalisation were complaints such as upper respiratory and ear and eye infections. Those were the common problems largely associated with poor housing, hygiene and nutrition. Today the Kellerberrin hospital does not have a children's ward. Along with improvements in housing and sanitation there have been improvements in hygiene and nutrition, and that has so effectively improved the wellbeing of the children and parents in Kellerberrin. The savings in money terms over the years has probably never been calculated but it would be considerable indeed. The savings in human terms similarly would be incalculable. I recall a few years ago losing an old friend who played football with us for many years. He died in early middle age of a common complaint among Aborigines; that is, heart failure as a result of rheumatic fever. That disease struck many Aboriginal children living in those conditions. I hope that rheumatic fever is a disease that under these better conditions, while it exists in the poorer housing conditions still among Aboriginal communities, is virtually a disease of the past.

I am sure that I would hear no argument from Hon Peter Foss about the undoubted benefits which come from the health education and community nursing programs which we have developed over the past 20 or 30 years, but particularly during the past decade of Labor Governments. Labor's enlightened approach to preventive medicine has been one of which we can be proud. Both the Health Department and the Department for Community Services, and later the Department for Community Development, have been funded to deliver preventive medical services which rate among the world's best. The appointment of health education officers has been a relatively recent initiative in country areas. While we have had the benefit of those services for only a few years they have been at the forefront of massive health education programs which are now household names: Quit, Drinksafe, and Slip, Slop, Slap have translated the successful advertising campaigns into effective programs with which people can identify and relate to a particular local person.

Recent events have led me to believe that the Government has made a decision to wind back its efforts in this area which developed during Labor's term in office. Earlier this

month in the central wheatbelt health region, two health education officers were informed that their positions had been abolished. Those two officers, on every account - and I have spoken on this matter to a wide range of health professionals and people in the street - have done a superb job of bringing the programs that they manage to the public's attention. They are to be replaced by a single administrator. The new administrative role will be to coordinate the delivery of health education by the so-called underutilised generic health resources in country hospitals. Of course country hospitals, like general practitioners and community and school nurses and a number of other professional people such as teachers, sports coaches and dentists, all have a valuable and ongoing role to play in promoting a healthier lifestyle. Until recently those people provided almost all of the health education that was delivered. In the main, they did a good job even though some advice I received from sports coaches in respect of nutrition could probably have been better. This changed remarkably during the term of the Labor Governments.

I have mentioned just a few of the programs initiated and the role of the health educators in enacting those programs. What has made their role so successful, apart from their commitment and personal effort, has been the coordinated regional scope of their charter. They have been able to deliver a service which readily adapts to new programs because they are a small work force who recognise the need to be approachable and, above all, adaptable and flexible. Delivering a service of this level of excellence does not happen by accident. It has taken the right people, the right administrative support, the right programs, and years of ongoing training. At least in the central wheatbelt health region we are about to throw away all that effort and success. The alternative that has been proposed by the Health Department, that it provide services via the local hospitals, is flawed in concept and doomed to mediocrity in its execution. The very nature of a health education service is extensive. The services that can be delivered by a hospital are inherently intensive. The role of a health education officer is to use his or her extensive training to take a message to the public. What training do these so-called underutilised generic health resources have and what inclination do they have to deliver anything near an equivalent service to that which we have already from the health education officers, and which we seem intent on throwing away? It is inevitable that we will get a diminished service and it is almost certain that it will be a more expensive service.

The Minister has already said, in answer to question 242, that the resources currently invested in the two health education positions will be redirected to the establishment of a higher level position. To the cost of this higher level position must be added the cost of delivering the service. Presumably health education under the so-called new direction will be delivered by hospital and private health resources that will contract to the Health Department to provide their services. Having made the point that these resources will tend to be only able to deliver services within a localised area - indeed, that factor was recognised in the Minister's answer to question 242 - it follows that a large number of contractors will be needed to provide health education services over an area as large as the central wheatbelt health region. In essence, the two systems, the present and the proposed, are as different as chalk and cheese. The present system is cheap, mobile, efficient and effective. The proposed system is expensive, unwieldy, difficult to direct and coordinate, and unlikely to deliver effective coverage of the whole region. I urge the Minister to reconsider the decision to change to the so-called new direction for health education. We have seen some good ideas come from the new Minister and the new Administration in health; this is a bad one.

I was pleased to receive this week a letter from the Deputy Premier, Hon Hendy Cowan MLA, Minister for Commerce and Trade, with an accompanying report from the Department of Commerce and Trade entitled "The Western Australian economy June 1993". The Deputy Premier's letter made five points which are worth sharing with members. It confirmed that the State's economy has generally outperformed the national economy during 1992-93. It went on to say that while world trading conditions were difficult and were likely to remain so during 1994 the medium term outlook was positive. It says that new private investment in the State is estimated for the year just gone, 1992-93, at \$4.6b and the State has the largest order book for major projects among the States.

Hon B.K. Donaldson: Did this all happen between February and 30 June?

Hon KIM CHANCE: The Deputy Premier also states that the employment growth rate of three per cent is encouraging, although the rate of unemployment is unacceptable. He says that net exports have remained consistently high and overseas exports are up by 6.5 per cent in 1992. In dealing with employment the department's report contains some extremely interesting information. On page 3 of the report the author says that the employment gain in Western Australia is the outcome of a relatively good performance of the State economy during a national downturn. Also, the composition and structure of Western Australian industry with the predominance of small to medium sized firms meant that Western Australia did not undergo the same degree of labour shedding by large firms experienced in other States. It says that WA has also done well in containing inflation. Page 4 of the report states that inflation pressures have been kept in check over the past two years, but the recovery in general economic activity together with the lagged impact of a depreciating Australian dollar saw prices increase by 0.9 per cent over the March 1993 quarter. The report says that inflation in Western Australia for the same quarter was 0.3 per cent, and that Australia and Western Australia still have relatively low inflation rates among OECD nations and certainly well below those of our Asian trading partners. It says that, contrary to fears expressed by Hugh Morgan and others that private investment in mining developments was already suffering, the growth in new private investment in 1992-93 was 21 per cent. Page 5 of the report under the heading "New investment" states that new private investment in Western Australia is estimated at \$4.6b for 1992-93, an increase of 21 per cent over the previous financial year. It says that the majority of private capital remains directed towards mining and minerals processed, and that the expected total investment in 1993-94 is about \$3.6b. It says that Western Australia has maintained a strong investment outlook and should sustain the high levels of investment of recent years. Possibly the best news of all in the report from the Deputy Premier's department is the strengthening growth in our economy. In this the Department of Commerce and Trade has brought in some external figures for us to compare. The author says that, despite a sluggish national economy and a weak world economic growth, the Western Australian economy is projected to grow by three per cent in real terms over 1992-93. It goes on to say that growth will increase to 4.5 per cent in 1993-94. As a means of comparison when we look at other OECD member countries, table 2.2 on page 5 cites as its source the OECD economic outlook. Bearing in mind that in 1992-93 WA's gross domestic product growth was three per cent, the United States in the same period grew by 2.6 per cent, Japan grew by one per cent and Germany's growth contracted by a factor of 1.9 per cent. The OECD average is 1.2 per cent. To remind members, Western Australia had a growth rate of three per cent. This hardly sounds like a State on its knees.

Hon E.J. Charlton: We had a 10 per cent growth in the debt.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I am quite happy to talk about debt if members will give me an extension of time.

Hon Tom Helm: They haven't got the guts to give you an extension.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The report states that the strong growth has been driven by a massive trade surplus in Western Australia. That has shown a spectacular increase.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: In what commodities?

Hon KIM CHANCE: Chiefly in mining.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Was not that a heritage of the Court years?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I hardly think so. In order that Hon Derrick Tomlinson does not misunderstand what the Department of Commerce and Trade is saying, it is talking about the spectacular increase since 1986. That is a fair while since the demise of the last Court Government and certainly much too soon for any effects from the current Court Government. Table 3.1 on page 6 in the report shows that in the first year -

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Gas, was it Mr Chance, or was it diamonds?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I imagine both of those commodities would be significant. Both came on stream during the past ten years.

Several Government members interjected.

Hon KIM CHANCE: The bulk of the State's exports are primary commodities. The value of Western Australia's exports account for around one-third of the total of national exports. The State's foreign trade surplus has grown at an average rate of 13.4 per cent a year since 1980. Western Australia's foreign trade surplus over 1991-92 remains at around \$10.2b. Exports rose by 6.5 per cent to \$14.5b.

I have been pleased to present some excerpts from the Department of Commerce and Trade report on the Western Australian economy.

A Government member: It is amazing how such a strong economy can lead to a bankrupt Government.

Hon KIM CHANCE: If members opposite did not understand anything of what Hon Mark Nevill said about the State's position; and if they say they hired Mr McCarrey, who has told us what he was paid to tell us; and if they are not going to take any notice of Access Economics or Standard and Poor's, they will not learn anything.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The member's time is running out and, although it is refreshing to know that everyone has woken up, the member should address the Chair.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Some of the figures and comments that I have read from the report come as no real surprise to those of us who have always believed in the inherent strength of the Western Australian economy. However, it will be something of a shock to those members opposite who believe the rhetoric of their party machine while it has been talking down the State of Western Australia and implying that, in spite of all the facts, our State is in some way broke. Our State is obviously not broke and this report provides the evidence to support that. It contains factual information and I congratulate the Deputy Premier and his department for the report's candid clarity - something of which we have not had much from the Government side since the unfortunate occurrence at the election. If the Government had expected to achieve a public relations bonanza from the McCarrey report, it must have been extremely disappointed. In fact, apart from the Minister for Finance, one very rarely hears a Government member mention the word McCarrey these days. It was the classic fizzer of all time. The Government must have been extremely disappointed with what came out of the McCarrey report because in important areas the report either does not stand up to scrutiny, or its findings are totally contradicted by the release of the Access Economics report and the opinion of Standard and Poor's. In spite of the evidence, the Government seems to feel bound to prove that previous Labor Governments have somehow left the State in a poor economic condition. Perhaps it makes the Government feel better to run Western Australia down so that it will look better by comparison. Western Australia's debt, of which approximately 40 per cent belongs to the State Energy Commission, is among the lowest of the Australian States on either a per capita basis or taxpayer funded basis. Its prospects are obviously excellent.

Hon Peter Foss: It should be better than Queensland.

[Leave denied for the member's time to be extended.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon Sam Piantadosi.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - ORDINARY

HON GEORGE CASH (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [2.14 am]: I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

Adjournment Debate - Federal Budget

HON TOM HELM (Mining and Pastoral) [2.15 am]: It is timely to say a few words of

congratulation on the Federal Budget. I am taking this opportunity to dispel some myths which have been put about in today's edition of *The West Australian*. It begins by giving the misleading impression that the Budget will have an adverse impact on low income earners. However, I will highlight specific measures which will assist low income earners: A new \$100 tax rebate will apply to those on incomes of less than \$23 200 a year. That means that 90 000 taxpayers will be relieved of their entire tax bill. I know members on the other side will certainly have to withstand some lobbying from some of the richer people in our society because they will not receive tax rebates. However, at least there will be some relief for those people on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. One thing that will be very effective in the Pilbara, Kimberley and more remote areas of the State which the Minister for Transport might care to take note of and spread around his electorate is the child care cash rebate of 30 per cent of claimable costs to be introduced in July next year. Some 230 000 families will benefit from this measure. Low income retirees not receiving the pension will benefit from a seniors' health care card. Recipients will be entitled to concessional pharmaceuticals and hearing aids and will have access to the new dental health program. The pension assets test will also be eased, which will benefit about 60 000 non-pensioner and part-pensioner retirees - a measure which had been called for. Under the Newstart allowance, single adults without children who have been unemployed for 12 months will receive an extra \$6 a fortnight.

Hon P.H. Lockyer interjected.

Hon TOM HELM: Hon Phil Lockyer should know all about that because it is his Administration which has added to the costs of people who drive cars in this State.

Hon P.H. Lockyer interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon TOM HELM: I will tell them that the Budget will be helpful in providing jobs. If Hon Phil Lockyer spent a bit more time in the north west he would realise that this measure is very important in the provision of jobs. Income tax cuts, despite indirect taxes, will see a total of \$400m injected into the economy in the short term.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon TOM HELM: That will directly affect members who represent the metropolitan area in this State - the short term stimulus will assist with employment in the short term. In the medium to long term, jobs will be created only by expanding production on an internationally competitive basis. Although major world economies such as those of Germany and Japan have yet to emerge from the recession - as was demonstrated by my comrade Hon Kim Chance when he told us how the various nations around the world are going backward while this State is going forward - Australia is growing at a rate of 2.5 per cent a year. However, as members can see, in spite of their philosophy we are not an island.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: Martin Ferguson said, "How can you defend the indefensible?"

Hon TOM HELM: I must take Hon Phil Lockyer's word for that because I was not able to leave the Chamber earlier. I was interested in the debate in which members on his side of the House were too cowardly to partake. They did not take up the opportunity to contribute to the debate tonight. If I were them, I would keep my mouth shut and my ears open to what goes on in this Chamber rather than what goes on outside.

This country is experiencing the lowest inflation rate since the 1960s and the lowest interest rates since the 1970s. These three figures will ensure that Australia emerges as an internationally competitive industrial nation where investments and growth will provide long term sustainable jobs.

HON R.G. PIKE (North Metropolitan - Parliamentary Secretary) [2.21 am]: What a sad display it was of misguided, puerile, socialist, hypocritical Bovril that we heard tonight from Hon Tom Helm.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: Pompous claptrap.

Hon R.G. PIKE: The words "pompous claptrap" applying to Hon Tom Helm probably misstates the issue. Let me be frank about it. Other than the member's misguided loyalty to a hypocritical, socialist party, the real issue is this: The Liberal-National Parties put forward a legitimate tax on the people which was clearly recognisable and Prime Minister Keating, who referred to the Senate recently as a swill so we know where he stands on upper Houses, said that his Government would not impose a GST and that it would lower taxes, and promised a panacea which he was never able to produce. Therefore stripped of all the garbage that Hon Tom Helm has applied to it out of loyalty to a party that is fading, the Federal Government has imposed a wholesale sales tax on the people of the Commonwealth of Australia that will be hidden by the socialists because the amount of the charge will not be shown on the docket.

I do not think the night can pass without referring to the comment made by Hon Phil Lockyer, that is, the words, "How can you defend the indefensible" used by Mr Ferguson, the great champion of members opposite, tonight should stick in the craws of members opposite like an intestinal parasite. Those words were made off camera before he put on his hypocritical display which was not as bad as Hon Tom Helm's hypocritical display tonight.

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural) [2.25 am]: I would also like to comment on the Federal Budget. However, before I do, I remind members opposite that what they offered the people of Australia was rejected by the people of Australia. When are they going to learn that they might have won this one and that they might have another 181 weeks on that side of the House, but when it came to the big one, they blew it? We still have government in Canberra and that sticks in their craw. They will stay in Opposition because they offered the people of Australia a load of rubbish that they say the people did not understand. The problem with Fightback was that the people of Australia did understand it.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! If the member addresses his comments through the Chair, I am sure there will be no interjections.

Hon KIM CHANCE: There are one or two things I want to raise about the Budget in my own calm way. There have been complaints in the Press and tonight about tax cuts by the Federal Government. There have been changes over and above what was law. We are not talking about a promise; we are talking about law. However, laws change. Friends of members opposite in the other place are in the process of changing a few laws now. Taxation laws change. In fact, the Australian Labor Party has a proud record of changing taxation laws. It has been - members opposite can look at this in the calm of tomorrow - the party of income tax reform. The only party in Australia's history that has ever delivered marginal tax cuts is the Australian Labor Party. Members opposite do not have to believe me; they can check for themselves. However, Hon Max Evans knows I am right.

What has been delivered in this Budget with the income tax cuts which have been honoured and the new rebate is an effective saving to the Australian people of \$1.7b - not what was promised or not what was law but the bringing forward of those tax cuts has put \$1.7b into the economy. Total indirect tax increases for this financial year total \$1.3b. The net flow to taxpayers and into the economy is \$400m. The net contribution to WA is about 10 per cent of this figure or \$40m. The Federal Government has reduced the tax burden on WA PAYE taxpayers by about \$40m and injected it into the WA economy. However, this aim has been thwarted by the outrageous increases in taxes and charges by the Court Government. That Government will slug WA taxpayers an extra \$190m this year. The breakdown of this figure includes - members opposite will have to give me a little latitude on this - the metropolitan fuel levy tax taken with the family licence concessions -

Hon N.F. Moore: When was that brought in?

Hon KIM CHANCE: I said in the next 12 months.

Hon N.F. Moore: Rubbish, you did not say that.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I said the Court Government was going to slug WA taxpayers an extra \$190m this year.

Hon Peter Foss: You have done one on six months and the other on 12 months. Give us both 12, Mr Chance.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I do not know whether it is six months or 12 months. This Government has ultimate control over when it will introduce the tax. We know the Court Government is going to introduce the tax and it will total \$60m. A tobacco tax will earn another \$50m; Water Authority charges, \$26m; and compulsory third party insurance, \$50m -

Hon Max Evans: That is not a tax.

Hon KIM CHANCE: It is a tax and it is not even legal. Transport fees will earn a further \$5m. Perth motorists will now face an increase of approximately \$70 in their car registrations and a 3.5 per cent increase in petrol prices courtesy of the Minister for Transport, and taxpayers will also be slugged with a tax of \$14 000 on any compensation payment they might receive from motor vehicle injuries. While the Opposition does not support all the measures in the Federal Budget, it commends the Federal Government on its attempt to reduce the overall tax burden on PAYE taxpayers. Unfortunately, this reduction of \$40m has already been obliterated by the aggressive, regressive tax hikes brought on by the Ministers for Finance and Transport, and the Court Government.

Adjournment Debate - Parliament House, Security System

HON MARK NEVILL (Mining and Pastoral) [2.30 am]: I cannot let the House adjourn before relaying to the House an experience I had this morning. It was a beautiful spring morning and I tried to open the window of my office but found it would open only 10 centimetres. I noticed somebody had put a lock on the window. I asked the security manager for a key to open the lock and was told we cannot be provided with keys to open the windows of our offices. I do not know whether any members have been in one of the front offices during the middle of summer when those offices are like ovens.

Hon P.H. Lockyer: Is there a special lock on the door?

Hon MARK NEVILL: I will come to that. During the summer months those rooms are very hot, particularly in the morning, and the only way to survive in them is by having the windows wide open. It demonstrates a lack of thought by whoever has designed the security system. I may as well put on the record my strong objection to the security measures being adopted. We have two sets of locked doors to go through, and the other day I was struggling with my case and keys trying to get them open. It was most inconvenient.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Were you here on the opening day of Parliament?

Hon MARK NEVILL: Yes.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Did you see the hoons trying to get in?

Hon MARK NEVILL: Three or four people were carried away and I am sure the police would have managed them quite comfortably. We do not need to convert Parliament House into a gaol for occasional incidents such as that. Some very welcome and significant improvements have been made to this building since I have been a member, with additional artworks, plants and the gymnasium. However, in my view Parliament House should be accessible to the public and we should not be cutting off the people from the legislators. At times the security of Parliament House will be at risk. However, those occasions are usually predictable and we can always obtain extra police officers to cope with them. If anyone thinks they can keep the window of my office locked during the summer months without any air conditioning in the building, they have another think coming. The lock will not last long. It is impossible to work in that office in summer with the window closed. I urge those who have dreamt up the security system to rethink,

at a minimum, the locks on external windows. I make sure the window is locked every night when I leave the office. Also, it is not necessary to have a second set of locked doors once we pass through the front door.

Adjournment Debate - Police, Asian Squad Cutback

HON SAM PIANTADOSI (North Metropolitan) [2.34 am]: Much has been said by Government members who pounced on Hon Tom Helm because he supported certain elements of the Budget. Comments were made about broken promises. I draw to members' attention an article which appeared in yesterday's edition of *The West Australian* under the heading "WA police boost in doubt". It is obvious that members opposite did not bother to read that newspaper. The article on page 3 refers to a promise made to employ an additional 800 officers. Talk about broken promises. What is occurring in this area? Members opposite should not point the finger at others, they should look at their Government's track record. The article is accompanied by two photographs showing the conditions at certain police stations and in central office.

Hon Peter Foss: Do you think that all happened this year?

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: No, I do not. The Minister for Health and his colleagues were making a noise some 20 minutes ago about some broken promises. They appear to have had a lapse of memory with regard to their Government and the promises it made. One of the areas of concern I have with the cutbacks, especially in the Police Force, relates to the Asian squad. This small, two-man squad was set up to deal with some of the problems encountered by Asian people. The squad has done a tremendous job and it has eliminated the standover people who were beginning to emerge in the community. The Minister for Police has decided that he does not have enough resources and he is cutting back in areas such as community policing. It appears that the Minister also proposes to abandon the Asian squad rather than increase its numbers. One need only ask members of the Asian community for their opinions to learn how effective this squad has been. It is quite obvious that members opposite do not have a clue about this matter; they do not have the drive to ask members of the Asian community about the direction offered to them by the squad. These are the constituents of members opposite. Hon Bob Pike may very well laugh and I am sure that *Hansard* will record that he has laughed at the Asian community.

Hon E.J. Charlton: No one is laughing at the Asian community, we are all laughing at you.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: Hon Eric Charlton's track record speaks for itself.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): The member should address the Chair and stop inviting interjections, and his comments will go on the record.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: If there were no interruptions I would address the Chair, but if there are interruptions I must respond to them.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I asked the member to address the Chair and to stop inviting interjections. He is coming close to reflecting on my ruling.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: Had the member allowed me to continue, he would have found out that I was not reflecting on the Chair but was continuing what I had to say.

Hon P.H. Lockyer interjected.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: Mr Deputy President, can I continue with a bit of protection?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Address the Chair and you will get protection.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: Mr Deputy President, I will endeavour to do so, and I am sure that being the fair person that you are, you will give me that protection from a rogue like Hon Phil Lockyer, who does not know when to keep his mouth shut.

The test will come over the next few weeks. We have already had a test of the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs, Graham Kierath, when an issue was raised in Parliament last week about his portfolio, when he stated publicly, and he will have to

answer for that, that he did not think that he was the person responsible for multicultural and ethnic affairs and he had asked Cheryl Edwardes to look at the matter and wanted a legal opinion about whether he was the Minister concerned and whether he had the right to make a decision in respect of the Western Australian Yugoslav Bowling Club and the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association.

A member interjected.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: Mr Deputy President, one may well ask is there any justice, because you assured me that if I addressed the Chair -

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The member who is interjecting was brought to order.

Hon SAM PIANTADOSI: The Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs stated publicly that he had no jurisdiction in one of his portfolios. The truth of the matter will come because, as I understand from sources and information that we have, funds which have been allocated for the multicultural and ethnic affairs area have been shelved and there will be few funds to accommodate and expand facilities in that area. In addition, the only group of officers within the Police Force with whom a lot of non-English speaking people have been able to establish a relationship, people who they thought were protecting their interests against people who had adopted standover tactics and were demanding and extorting money from people in the Asian community, will be disbanded. That will be a travesty for many Australians of Asian descent, because the only form of protection with which they feel safe and secure will disappear. That force has cleared up a lot of the bad element within the community, and the Asian section of the community can now feel safe. I urge members opposite to discuss this matter with the Minister for Police and also with the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs so that the resources which have been directed into that area in the past are not diminished. If members opposite want to do justice to the Asian community, they will try to expand those services and increase the number of officers in the Police Force who work in that area.

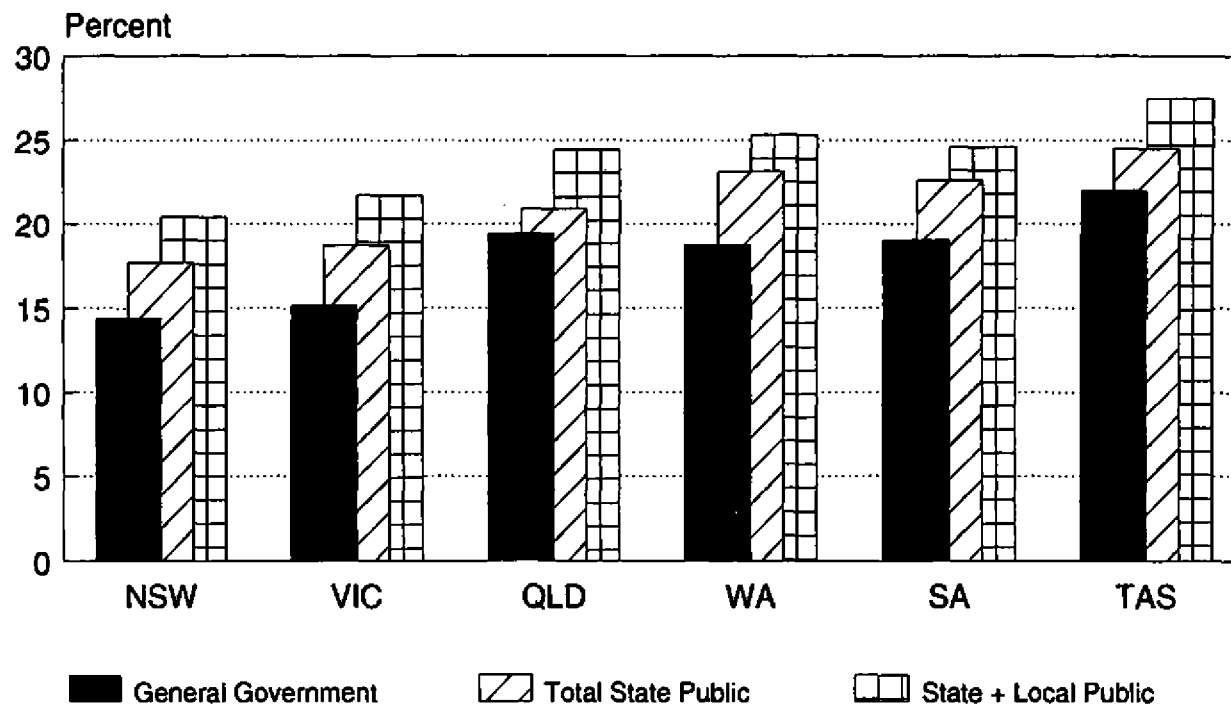
Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 2.43 am (Wednesday)

State Public Sector Employment

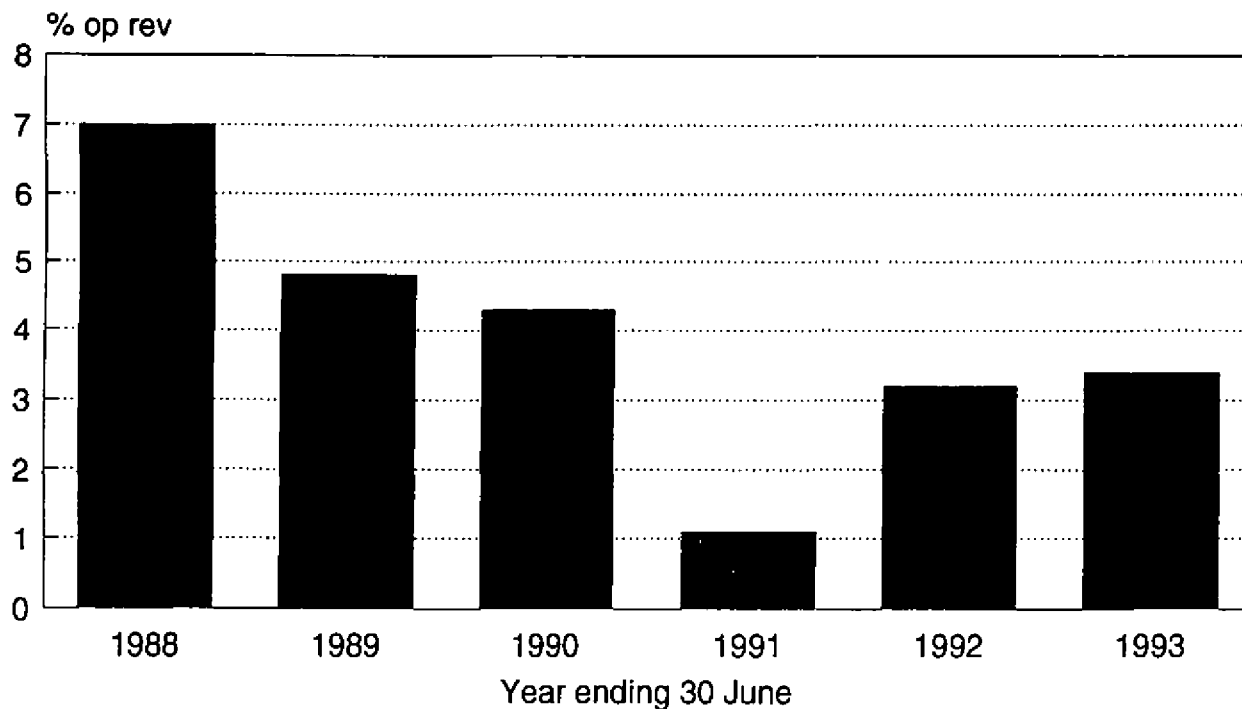
November 1992

% of Employed Wage and Salary Earners



Source: ABS Cat No 6248.0 Dec Qtr 1992
Table 6

Operating Surplus As a Percentage of Operating Revenue WA General Government Sector



Source: S&P's December 1992 Review of the States; excludes extraordinary payments and receipts; 1993 budget est.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD - CASES, JUDGES' DECISIONS RESERVED, HANDED DOWN

284. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) How many cases did each of the judges of the Workers' Compensation Board have in which their decisions had been reserved and had not been handed down by 30 June 1993?
- (2) As at 30 June 1993, how many cases of each judge in part (1) were the decisions reserved for more than -
 - (a) six months;
 - (b) one year; and
 - (c) two years?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

(1)		
	Chairman	Deputy Chairman
Trials	7	5
Chamber Hearings	7*	Nil
(2)		
	Chairman	Deputy Chairman
Trials -		
(a) 6 months	1**	3***
(b) 1 year	Nil	Nil
(c) 2 years	Nil	Nil
Chamber Hearings -		
(a) 6 months	Nil	Nil
(b) 1 year	Nil	Nil
(c) 2 years	Nil	Nil

* All decisions handed down since 30 June 1993.

** Handed down on 15 July 1993 - Culkin v CSR Limited - heard by the board over 21 days between 13 July 1992 and 26 October 1992.

*** One decision handed down 16 July 1993.

PREMIUM RATES COMMITTEE - WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE RATES, REPORT TABLING

291. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

Will the Minister table or make publicly available a copy of the report of the Premium Rates Committee, which sets workers' compensation insurance rates?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

Yes, and accordingly now tables the Premium Rates Committee report with this question. [See paper No 514.]

ABORIGINAL HOMES DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION - GRANT \$615 000, SIGNED BY FORMER MINISTER

315. Hon REG DAVIES to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Did the former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs sign the approval for a \$615 000 grant to the Aboriginal Homes Development Association?
- (2) If yes, was the Minister aware that the AHDA's budget forecast allowed the salary of \$200 000 to be paid to its project manager, Brian Easton, over two years?

- (3) If yes, was the former Minister aware of the AHDA's project manager's track record in business?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I am not in a position to respond with certainty to this question, as I do not know all the information the previous Minister may have been aware of.
- (3) Not applicable.

SYSTEM 6 - CONSERVATION RESERVES

Recommendations Implementation; Study Review

321. Hon REG DAVIES to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Is the Minister committed to implementing the System 6 recommendations?
- (2) If yes, in what time frame?
- (3) If no, why not?
- (4) Has the Minister made a decision to review the System 6 study?
- (5) If yes, will the review include the identification of additional areas for inclusion in a System 6 Red Book?
- (6) If yes, what time frame is envisaged for these additional areas to be included in the System 6 Red Book?
- (7) If yes, does the review include any other changes to the System 6 study?
- (8) If yes, what are these changes?
- (9) Will the implementation of the System 6 recommendations and the inclusion of additional areas in the System 6 Red Book be completed before the major amendments to the metropolitan region scheme are finalised in Parliament?
- (10) If no, through what process will the existing System 6 areas and those to be identified under the review of System 6 be put into the conservation estate?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for the Environment has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A program for implementing each of the System 6 recommendations for the Perth metropolitan region is coordinated by the Environmental Protection Authority. This program involves several key Government agencies and local authority representatives. It began in May 1992 and to date 43 per cent of the recommended areas have been set aside and are being managed for conservation and related purposes. This program is ongoing and will continue for at least another 12 to 18 months. There is also an EPA coordinated program for System 6 country recommendations as part of implementation of all other Red Book recommendations from throughout the State.
- (3) Not relevant.
- (4) Yes, in so far as the issue of urban bushland is to be reviewed.
- (5) Yes; if relevant areas are identified they will be considered.

- (6) The time for the review of System 6 and for additional areas to be included in the Red Book is yet to be determined.
- (7) At this stage no other changes to the System 6 study are anticipated.
- (8) Not relevant.
- (9) Not all the System 6 recommendations will be implemented before the major amendments to the metropolitan region scheme are likely to be finalised in Parliament.
- (10) I would expect that the intent of the System 6 recommendations will be preserved through the major metropolitan region scheme amendments, and any addition to the conservation estate to subsequently occur as part of the ongoing implementation of the Red Book recommendations.

JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL - OPERATION GUIDELINES

325. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Health representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Under what guidelines will the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council operate?
- (2) Will senior representatives of the Departments of Community Development, Education, Police, Justice and the judiciary also be represented?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Will the council be independent of any one department?
- (5) Will the Minister advise whether any members of the former State Government Advisory Committee on Young Offenders have been invited to participate on the new committee?
- (6) If so, who are they?
- (7) If not, why not?
- (8) Will the new committee have the capacity to develop policy and initiatives through community participation?
- (9) Will all committee reports be made available to the public?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) The guidelines under which the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council will operate are still at the draft stage.
- (2) No.
- (3) It is Government policy that the council be a truly community council. The Director General of the Ministry of Justice will be the only Government department representative.
- (4) Yes. Administrative support only will be provided by the Ministry of Justice.
- (5) Yes.
- (6)-(7) Responses are not yet complete. It is therefore not appropriate at this stage to name individuals.
- (8)-(9) See (1).

ROADS - ROE HIGHWAY EXTENSION, CONSTRUCTION TIMETABLE

335. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the construction timetable for the extension of Roe Highway from its current end point at Tonkin Highway?
- (2) Is construction currently going to timetable?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1)-(2)

The section from Tonkin Highway to Welshpool Road, currently under construction, is due to be completed in July 1994 and is on schedule.

WESTRAIL - LOCOMOTIVES
Major Electrical Repairs, Companies

339. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Which companies in Western Australia have the facilities to conduct major repairs on units such as the standard gauge L and K classes or 3'6" gauge DA - DB W, A and AB classes of locomotives?
- (2) Which companies in Western Australia have facilities to conduct major electrical repairs on such units?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1)-(2)

Westrail has received expressions of interest from 220 prospective tenderers for the maintenance and repair of its locomotive fleet and other work. The closing date for expressions of interest was 2 August, and those received are currently being evaluated. Tenders for work previously carried out by the workshops will be called from 27 August.

AIRSTRIPS - ALL WEATHER, ALL HOURS ACCESS; LIGHTING

346. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What progress is being made to ensure that all major airstrips are accessible in all weather, at all hours?
- (2) Will these airstrips be equipped with lighting?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1)-(2)

The term "major airstrip" is somewhat ambiguous. However, I can advise the member that all major airports and aerodromes served by Ansett WA and Skywest are all-weather facilities which are equipped with lighting.

ROADS - LEINSTER-NEWMAN ROAD, SEALING

347. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

When will the road from Leinster to Newman be sealed?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

The Main Roads Department is finalising its report on a strategy for the development of a route between Leinster and Great Northern Highway. This report will be made available to me shortly.

ROADS - KALGOORLIE-BOULDER NORTHERN BYPASS, CONSTRUCTION

348. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

When will the Kalgoorlie-Boulder northern bypass be constructed?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

It has been established that with construction of the Kalgoorlie-southern

bypass, the bypass to which the member refers will not be required in the short to mid term future.

ROADS - SOUTH WEST HIGHWAY, UPGRADING

354. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What plans does the Government have to upgrade South West Highway?
- (2) When will the upgrade be completed and at what cost?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1) The Government is progressively providing improvements to the South Western Highway.
- (2) The upgrading program will be continuous for the foreseeable future and the total estimated cost is \$14m.

ROADS - BOYANUP ROAD, UPGRADING

355. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What plans does the Government have to upgrade Boyanup Road?
- (2) When will the upgrade be completed and at what cost?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1) There are plans to commence reconstruction of a 16 km length in 1994-95.
- (2) The upgrading will be completed as funds permit. The current estimated cost of the work is \$5m.

ROADS - BUNBURY ROAD NETWORK, UPGRADING

356. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Government planning to upgrade the road network in and around Bunbury to facilitate the rapid and safe transport of mineral sands to Bunbury Port?
- (2) If yes -
 - (a) what roads will be upgraded;
 - (b) what is the cost;
 - (c) when will the work commence; and
 - (d) when will it be completed?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(2) Recent works were carried out on the dual carriageway section of Bunbury ring road at a cost of about \$5.5m. No further works are considered necessary at this time.

ROADS - NORTH WEST, MAJOR ROADS SEALING

358. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does the Government have a plan to systematically seal all major roads in the north west?
- (2) If yes, could the Minister provide that plan?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

- (1)-(2) The Government is preparing long term strategies for all major roads in the State known as the Roads 2020 project. Strategies for the Gascoyne and Pilbara regions are well advanced and work has just started on a strategy for the Kimberley region.

ROADS - NEWMAN-MARBLE BAR-PORT HEDLAND ROAD, SEALING

359. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does the Government have plans to seal the Newman to Marble Bar to Port Hedland road?
- (2) If yes, when and at what cost?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1)-(2)

The Marble Bar to Port Hedland road is being progressively upgraded. The Newman to Marble Bar section will be considered for sealing as funds permit.

BUSES - MANDURAH PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES, PRIVATE BUS OPERATORS

363. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the Government commenced negotiations to have a private bus operator/s to operate selected public transport services within the City of Mandurah?
- (2) If yes, with whom?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1)-(2)

I refer the member to the answer given to question 49.

JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL - MEMBERSHIP

375. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Health representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Who are the members of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council?
- (2) What are their respective dates of appointment?
- (3) What are their qualifications?
- (4) What rates of remuneration are being paid?
- (5) From what date is the council coming into operation?
- (6) What legislative authority provides for the council?
- (7) What appropriation, if any, has been made for the council?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

(1)-(5)

Appointment of members to the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council has yet to be finalised.

(6) No legislation is required.

(7) The 1993-94 budget of the Ministry of Justice has yet to be finalised.

PRISONS - DRUGS***008 Input Line, Information Supply***

376. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Health representing the Attorney General:

With reference to a media statement purporting to be issued on behalf of the Attorney General and dated 3 July 1993, in which it is stated, inter alia, "I have also authorised the introduction of a 008 input line, which people will be encouraged to use to supply information on all aspects of the illicit drug trade in prisons - as well as information on any other matter" -

- (1) What other matters are contemplated by the words "on any other matter"?

- (2) Which people will be encouraged?
- (3) Who will receive the information?
- (4) Who will process the information?
- (5) To whom will the information be supplied?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) All matters which may impact on the good order and security of a prison.
- (2) Any person with information.
- (3)-(4) Intelligence Unit, Corrective Services Division, Ministry of Justice.
- (5) Director General, Ministry of Justice, and the Executive Director, Corrective Services Division, Ministry of Justice.

PRISONS - DRUGS
Use; Other Jurisdictions Use

378. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Health representing the Attorney General:

With reference to a media statement of the Attorney General of 3 July 1993 in which it is stated, "Although the Western Australian prison system does not have the level of drug use experienced in other jurisdictions" -

- (1) What is the level of drug use in the Western Australian prison system?
- (2) What is the level of drug use in the other jurisdictions referred to in the media statement, and what are those other jurisdictions?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1)-(2) The illicit drug strategy is presently accumulating data on this matter. However, in the meantime anecdotal evidence and regular contact between prison administrators suggest that there is a higher incidence of drug use in Victorian and NSW jurisdictions.

GRANT, MR DAVID - JUSTICE, MINISTRY OF, DIRECTOR GENERAL
Criminal Justice Experience

379. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Health representing the Attorney General:

With reference to the media statement of the Attorney General dated 6 July 1993 that the former head of the Corrective Services Department, David Grant, has been appointed the first Director General of Western Australia's new Ministry of Justice, and the statement therein, "Mr Grant, 45, has extensive experience in the criminal justice and prison systems": What experience does Mr Grant have in the field of criminal justice as distinct from prison systems?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

Mr Grant's experience was assessed by the interview panel and endorsed by the Public Service Commissioner.

LARK HILL - EQUESTRIAN ESTATE PROPOSAL
Port Kennedy Development, Cost

388. Hon REG DAVIES to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Is the Minister considering a proposal for a private developer to establish an equestrian estate on public land at Lark Hill?

- (2) Will the Minister confirm that the land was originally bought for public purposes using the metropolitan regional development fund?
- (3) Will the Minister confirm that part of the land was given to the WA Trotting Association?
- (4) If yes, how much?
- (5) If no, to whom was it given?
- (6) Will the Minister indicate whether the Director of Finance and Administration in his department holds a senior position in the horse racing industry?
- (7) If yes, what is this position and how long has he held it?
- (8) Will the Minister advise whether a road has been cleared through System 6 reserve M106 at Port Kennedy to allow horse owners to gain easier access to the ocean?
- (9) If yes, was this road approved by the Environmental Protection Authority?
- (10) If no, why not?
- (11) Will the Minister advise to what extent the State Government is still subsidising the Port Kennedy development?
- (12) Will the Minister advise whether Messrs Max Poole, Bob Peters, Paul Frewer and Russell Perry are working for the Minister in attempting to facilitate the Port Kennedy development?
- (13) If yes, what proportion of their time is allocated to this project and how are these costs being met?
- (14) Will the Minister advise the total cost of Government personnel resources which have been devoted to this project since its inception?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) No. The City of Rockingham has submitted to the State Planning Commission a consultant's report proposing a multipurpose sporting complex and rural subdivision on SPC land which adjoins land leased to the Southern Districts Thoroughbred Association for a racing and training complex.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) None of the land was given to the Western Australian Trotting Association.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Part of the land is leased to the Southern Districts Thoroughbred Association.
- (6) The Director of Administration and Finance of the Department of Planning and Urban Development does not hold any position in the horseracing industry.
- (7) Not applicable.
- (8) No road has been cleared for use by horses.
- (9)-(10) Not applicable.
- (11) The State Government has never subsidised the Port Kennedy development.
- (12) Mr Max Poole is advising the Minister on the implementation of the Port Kennedy development agreement.

(13) Approximately 10 per cent of Mr Poole's time is spent on matters relating to Port Kennedy.

(14) No, because it is not possible to do this with any accuracy.

**ROYAL COMMISSION INTO ABORIGINAL DEATHS IN CUSTODY -
RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTATION**
Funding; Non-custodial Safe Houses

390. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Will the Court Government proceed with the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody?
- (2) Will the Court Government be allocating financial resources to assist with the implementation of these recommendations?
- (3) If yes, how much and how will the funding be allocated?
- (4) Will State Government departments and agencies be required to implement any recommendations involving additional services and resources on the basis of operating inside existing Budget allocations?
- (5) How many non-custodial safe houses have been established by the Court Government in response to the recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody?
- (6) Are there any plans to establish non-custodial safe houses at Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek or Roebourne as proposed by recommendation 80 of the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody?
- (7) Will there be similar provisions provided for juveniles in the future?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 1993-94 Budget details are not yet available.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) This section of the question should be directed to other relevant Ministers as appropriate.
- (5)-(6) This section of the question should be directed to the Minister for Health.
- (7) This section of the question should be directed to the Attorney General.

MINISTERIAL TRAVEL - CHARTER AIRCRAFT, TRIPS

423. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) On how many occasions has the Minister used charter aircraft since 6 February 1993?
- (2) What were the dates and destination of each trip?
- (3) What was the cost of each trip?
- (4) Who accompanied the Minister on each trip?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) Two.

- (2) (a) Saturday, 8 May 1993 - Albany
- (b) Monday, 26 July 1993 - Perth
- (3) (a) \$798
- (b) Account not yet received.
- (4) The Minister was not accompanied on either of these trips; however, on each occasion the aircraft was shared with other users.

LAND - McCABE STREET FERTILISER SITE DEVELOPMENT

Submission, Short Notice

428. Hon J.A. SCOTT to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for the Environment:

In relation to the article in *The West Australian* on 23 July 1993 by Brendan Nicholson, entitled "Public to have say in buried soil plan", I ask the following question:

- (1) Given that the Environmental Protection Authority Act was written so as to give all interested parties the ability to submit responses to development proposals, is the Minister aware of the difficulty of ordinary people who lack facilities which are available to Governments and companies to prepare submissions at short notice?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that the McCabe Street fertiliser site development has only had a two week submission time when the Act allows for up to four weeks? As this site is sensitively located beside the Swan River, can the Minister explain why there has been such a short submission period for this project?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for the Environment has provided the following reply -

- (1) I am advised that the Environmental Protection Authority has decided to accept submissions for a further week in order that people having difficulty getting their submissions in can do so.
- (2) The proponent was involved in considerable public interaction prior to finalising his proposal to the Environmental Protection Authority. The EPA has previously reported on disposal of contaminated material on this site in 1988, and this included public comment.

**MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS - TAXES, CHARGES, LICENCES, FEES,
LEVIES, FINES OR RATES, INCREASES**

435. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister for Education:

- (1) For all of the Minister's portfolios, what Government taxes, charges, licences, fees, levies, fines or rates have been increased since 6 February 1993?
- (2) By what dollar amount and percentage has each tax, charge, licence, fee, levy, fine or rate been increased?
- (3) When was the most recent previous increase in each tax, charge, fee, levy, licence, fine or rate?
- (4) What was the amount and percentage of the most recent previous increase for each tax, charge, fee, levy, licence, fine or rate?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) A schedule of charges applies to course fees for full fee paying overseas students in TAFE. This schedule, which was established in 1986 and has remained unchanged since, was amended in July 1993 with the approval

of the interim council of the College of Customised Training. Materials charges for some TAFE courses may also have been increased by colleges, with the approval of college directors, in line with cost increases. Charges for commercial fee for service courses vary according to the content of the courses and client specifications. In addition, the former Government approved increases for the short courses at Tuart and Canning Senior Colleges. These courses are the entry courses for Australian academic studies and are of eight, 15 and 18 weeks' duration. These increases came into effect after 6 February 1993.

- (2) Information relating to specific changes - increases and decreases - in the overseas student course fees schedule would require detailed investigation. Should the member have a specific concern, this should be provided in writing and a response will be provided. In relation to the ECAAS courses -

	\$ Increase	\$ Increase
18 week ECAAS course	80	2.1%
15 week ECAAS course	70	2.1%
8 week ECAAS course	40	2.0%

- (3)-(4) (a) The TAFE administration fee of 70¢ per student enrolled hour was introduced in February 1992 by the former Government.
- (b) A late enrolment fee of \$45 and a change of enrolment fee of \$20 were introduced by the former Government in September 1992 as part of the new TAFE enrolment management system. At Karratha College a late enrolment fee of \$20 is charged; no charge is made for change of enrolment. No such charges are levied at the Kalgoorlie and Hedland Colleges.
- (c) The TAFE adult education fee was increased from \$4 per hour to \$4.15 per hour - \$1.50 to \$1.55 per hour for concessional card holders - from 1 January 1992 in the former Government's annual review of fees and charges in the budgetary context. This is an increase of 15¢ - 5¢ for concession card holders - or 3.75 per cent - 3.33 per cent for concession card holders. In the independent colleges, the adult education fee was maintained at \$4.
- (d) (i) A schedule of charges applies for TAFE colleges levying the student service/amenities charge. The schedule was last amended in December 1989.
- (ii) A schedule of charges also applies for ancillary charges, such as re-marking of examinations, late entry to examination, deferred examinations, challenge examinations, and correspondence course administration. This schedule was last amended in May 1989.

Both of the above schedules were amended on the recommendation of the department and approval of the then Minister for Education.

- (iii) Materials charges vary from course to course and are levied by colleges so as to recover the cost of materials used in a course, such as paints, brushes, tools etc. Charges vary in line with the cost of materials.

Information relating to specific charges within each schedule would require considerable investigation. Should the member have a specific concern, this should be provided in writing, and a response will be provided.

- (e) Fee and charges increases are aligned to either the beginning of the

1993 academic year or the beginning of the financial year within the Ministry of Education. Please see attachment 1 which lists a schedule of increases both in percentage terms and dollar impact for the Ministry of Education. [See paper No 513.]

- (f) The most recent previous increase in charges and fees for the Secondary Education Authority was 1 July 1992. The amount and percentage of the increases can be found at attachment 2. [See paper No 513.]
- (g) The most recent increase in charges and fees for the Country High School Hostels Authority was 2 February 1993. The student accommodation fees at residential colleges was increased by \$50; that is, one per cent.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY
INSURANCE**
\$50 Levy

469. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

Is it correct that vehicle owners whose vehicle registration expired before 1 August 1993 are being charged and have paid the \$50 third party levy?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The \$50 third party premium levy is effective from 1 August 1993. All motor vehicle licences which expire on 31 July 1993 were charged the levy in consequence of section 18(4) of the Road Traffic Act which inter alia states -

... the renewal shall be deemed to be a continuation of the licence and to have effect on and from the day next succeeding the day on which the licence expires.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY
INSURANCE**
\$50 Levy

470. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

Will the Minister advise the House how many people have paid the \$50 levy for vehicles whose registration expired before 1 August 1993?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

There were 14 737 motor vehicle licence renewals issued with an expiry date of 31 July 1993. All motor vehicle licences which expire on 31 July 1993 were charged the levy in consequence of section 18(4) of the Road Traffic Act which inter alia states -

... the renewal shall be deemed to be a continuation of the licence and to have effect on and from the day next succeeding the day on which the licence expires.

I am unable to say how many of the renewals qualified for an exemption from paying the levy, nor am I able to say how many of the 14 737 remain unpaid; that is, overdue.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY
INSURANCE**
Premiums, Income

496. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

What is the estimated income for 1993-94 on the basis of the existing scales of premiums for third party insurance?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

\$255m based on the existing scales of premiums effective 1 August 1993.

MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) ACT - SECTION 3T(1)
"Other Income"

497. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

Under section 3T(1) of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act what "other income" is expected for 1993-94?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

Other income refers to investment income plus claims and reinsurance recoveries. The 1993-94 annual estimates for the Insurance Commission, incorporating the third party insurance fund, are yet to be formalised.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY
INSURANCE FUND**
Accumulated Deficit

498. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

What was the accumulated deficit of the motor vehicle third party insurance fund at the commencement of the 1993-94 financial year?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The financial accounts of the SGIC for 1992-93 have yet to be finalised and the requested information is not available.

**MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) ACT - CLAIMS,
SUCCESSFUL**
Below \$15 000; \$55 000; Above \$200 000; Total Value

499. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

In respect of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act -

- (1) (a) How many successful claims were for less than \$15 000 during the financial year ending 30 June 1993; and
- (b) what was the total value of those claims?
- (2) (a) How many separate successful claims were for amounts below \$55 000 for the financial year ending 30 June 1993; and
- (b) what was the total value of those claims?
- (3) (a) How many separate successful claims were there for amounts above \$200 000 (for pain and suffering) during the financial year ending 30 June 1993; and
- (b) what was the total value of those claims?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) 5 732 settled; however, not incurred during the financial year ending 30 June 1993.
- (b) \$32 772 887.
- (2) (a) 8 718 settled; however, not incurred during the financial year ending 30 June 1993.
- (b) \$110 995 386.
- (3) Nil.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - ACTUARIAL REPORT,
TABLING**

502. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Finance:

- (1) Will the Minister table a copy of the actuarial report provided to the State Government Insurance Commissioner?
- (2) If not, why not?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The actuarial report is obtained for the purposes of section 3T(2) of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act prior to consideration and assessment of the 1993-94 premium requirements. As the report is not a public document, I am not prepared to table the report.

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY
INSURANCE
\$50 Levy**

503. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Finance:

Has the Minister received legal advice to the effect that the imposition of the \$50 levy on motor vehicles in force now is lawful?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

Yes.

**COMMERCE AND TRADE, DEPARTMENT OF - WASTE MANAGEMENT,
INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS REPRESENTATIVES
*New Working Group Establishment***

504. Hon TOM STEPHENS to the Minister assisting the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Has the Department of Commerce and Trade had representatives to attend any interdepartmental meetings about waste management since May 1993?
- (2) If so, how many times and on what dates?
- (3) Has any new working group on waste management policies been established by the Court-Cowan Government?
- (4) If yes, what is the name of that interdepartmental committee and what is the reason for the formation of this group?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

The Minister for Commerce and Trade has provided the following reply -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 24 May 1993.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.

**WATER AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - PENSIONER REBATE
50 per cent Entitlement, Multi-unit Developments; Water Meter Installation Cost**

508. Hon CHERYL DAVENPORT to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is it correct that pensioners who reside in multi-unit developments, served by single water meters, do not qualify for the 50 per cent rebate on their first 150 kilolitres usage of water for 1993-94?

- (2) If so, why?
- (3) What is the cost to supply and install at the street verge an individual water meter for each unit?
- (4) Did the pamphlet which accompanied this year's water accounts to consumers contain information that all registered pensioners were entitled to the 50 per cent concession?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The Minister for Water Resources has provided the following response -

(1)-(2)

The metropolitan pensioner consumption concession is modelled on the existing country concession. To be eligible, the pensioner must be responsible for payment of the total consumption account.

(3) Where technically feasible, the authority would supply a standard 20 mm boundary service/s free of cost to residential strata unit developments at the time of connection. Where changes to existing services are involved these would be at cost to the applicant. Such costs vary according to site conditions.

(4) The brochure accompanying this year's annual charges accounts advised that eligible pensioners would receive a consumption rebate.

SCHOOLS - NAREMBEEN DISTRICT HIGH
Headworks Charges, Ministry of Education Payment

510. Hon KIM CHANCE to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Have headworks charges which were raised by the Water Authority to cover the augmentation of supply services to the Narembeen District High School now been paid by the Ministry of Education?
- (2) If not, can the Minister advise when these charges will be paid?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

(1)-(2)

The Ministry of Education has authorised the invoice for payment and it is currently being processed.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

RUDALL RIVER NATIONAL PARK - KINTYRE DEPOSIT EXCISION

296. Hon P.R. LIGHTFOOT to the Minister for Lands:

Earlier today the Minister gave notice of his intention to introduce a Reserves Bill into the House.

- (1) Does the Minister intend to excise the Kintyre deposit from the Rudall River national park?
- (2) Was the proposal agreed to and approved of by the previous Labor Government?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Reserves Bill contains a clause which seeks to provide for the excision of approximately 151 square kilometres, or one per cent, of the national park. That area contains most of the established mineralisation. The excision will minimise management difficulties for the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

Point of Order

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The Minister has now turned to the second page of his second reading speech.

The PRESIDENT: What is your point of order?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: He is delivering a speech.

The PRESIDENT: You may be correct, but it is not a point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Hon GEORGE CASH: I assure Hon Nick Griffiths that this is not part of the second reading speech.

Hon John Halden: Will you table it?

Hon GEORGE CASH: Yes, if the Opposition requires that.

- (2) The area is entirely outside the Rudall River watershed, and the ecosystems involved are well represented elsewhere in the national park. It is proposed that the western boundary of the national park should be extended 2.8 kilometres further west to compensate for the area being excised. This represents an area of approximately 154 square kilometres to be added to the national park. The proposal was agreed to on 3 August 1992 by the Cabinet of the former Labor Government.

Hon P.R. Lightfoot: Hon Nick Griffiths asked whether the paper should be tabled, and I do not know whether that was heard.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You must ask the Minister whether he will table the paper, no matter what Hon Nick Griffiths said. Will the Minister table the paper?

Hon George Cash: With pleasure.

[See paper No 512.]

**STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY
INSURANCE**

Bills, Political Material

297. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

Has the Minister recently approved, recommended or given instructions for the inclusion of material of a political nature in third party insurance bills?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

The material is not of a political nature but to serve as a reminder.

LANDCORP - BUNBURY CBD SHOPPING CENTRE

Involvement Withdrawal, Minister's Instruction

298. Hon DOUG WENN to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Did the Minister instruct LandCorp to drop its involvement in the shopping centre planned for the Bunbury central business district?
- (2) Were these instructions given following a meeting with Hon Barry House MLC, Ian Osborne MLA and the Federal member for Forrest, Geoff Prosser MHR?
- (3) Considering that Mr Prosser is one of the largest retail shop owners in Bunbury, why was he invited and what was his input to the meeting?
- (4) Who were the CBD businessmen with whom the Minister met?
- (5) Did the Minister meet with the Bunbury City Council on this issue?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

(1)-(5)

In view of the number of areas that question covers I ask that it be placed on notice so that I can give the member a substantive reply.

**PORT KENNEDY LAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMITTEE -
EVICTED**

299. Hon REG DAVIES to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) When in Opposition, did the Minister exact an assurance from the previous Government that the Port Kennedy land conservation district committee could remain on site until development commenced?
- (2) If yes, why is the Port Kennedy land conservation district committee being evicted?
- (3) When will the new development commence?
- (4) When in Opposition, did the Minister exact an assurance from the previous Government that when development commenced, the Port Kennedy land conservation district committee would be relocated to an appropriate site which would enable it to continue to manage the rest of the reserve according to its responsibilities under the Soil and Land Conservation Act?
- (5) If yes, what appropriate site was offered to this voluntary organisation?
- (6) Is it possible for the Port Kennedy land conservation district committee to properly carry out its responsibilities for management of the reserve from this site?
- (7) Is the sea rescue centre being demolished by the Department of Land Administration?
- (8) If yes, is the Government proposing to relocate the sea rescue centre away from the coast?
- (9) Will the sea rescue centre be in a position to continue to provide this vital service to the community if it is not adjacent to the coast?
- (10) Has the Minister changed his position of support for these worthy community organisations?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

(1)-(10)

Because of the number of elements raised in that question I ask that it be placed on notice so that I can provide as speedy a reply as I can. Some action has been taken in the past few days concerning the Port Kennedy area. I am most disappointed with some of the actions of Geoff Anderton at this late stage. Both I and the Department of Land Administration have attempted to assist Mr Anderton on a number of occasions. Numerous on-site meetings have been held, as well as contact by telephone and letter. I have inspected the site and had a tour of the facility with Mr Anderton. As the Minister for Lands, I am in rather a difficult position in that the Parliament approved legislation last year requiring me to remove all unauthorised structures - a polite term for squatter shacks. Clause 16 of schedule 1 of the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act requires DOLA to proceed diligently to have those structures removed. Alternative sites have been offered to the LCDC, with relocation of its equipment at the Government's expense. I understand that a site at Lark Hill, to the east of Port Kennedy, was agreed on. I am therefore concerned at the eleventh hour concern and action now taking place.

Arrangements have been made in writing for the Rockingham Sea Rescue

Group to provide services for the next two years. This is on the basis that, once the development at Port Kennedy occurs, facilities will be available for sea rescue purposes. Clause 4(4)(c) of schedule 1 of the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act requires the developers to provide 200 square metres of office space which is to include accommodation for rescue and emergency services. It is fair to say that we have something of a chicken and egg situation. The unauthorised structures must be removed before the developers take possession of the site; if not, the Crown is in breach of the agreement. Furthermore, the unauthorised structures occupy the very area to be developed which will provide, in part, facilities for rescue and emergency services.

Hon Reg Davies: Have they been knocked down with all of the equipment in them?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister said he could not answer the question. I hate to think how long he would go on if he could.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Mr President, I understand that today in the Supreme Court an injunction was sought and granted. Details of the injunction have not been provided to me. Therefore, it is not clear whether further work, albeit limited, will continue. I understand that the injunction is limited to 5.00 pm on Friday. I will be requesting the Ministry of Justice to defend the action rigorously.

Notwithstanding those comments, I invite the member to place his question on notice so that I can address any of the areas that I have not covered.

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

Bills, Political Material

300. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

- (1) Whom did he instruct to include the political material in third party insurance bills?
- (2) What information did he ask to be included in those bills?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

- (1)-(2) What does the member mean by "insurance bills"?

Hon Mark Nevill: The accounts which go out to motorists for their third party insurance premiums and levies.

Hon MAX EVANS: I may have to help the member. Motor vehicle licences go out. It is not a third party insurance bill.

Hon Mark Nevill: The third party insurance is part of the licence. Who authorised that?

Hon MAX EVANS: It was put on at my request and approved by the Minister for Police.

Hon Mark Nevill: I want to know whom you instructed.

Hon MAX EVANS: I ask the member to put the question on notice.

MINISTERIAL TRAVEL - MINISTER FOR LANDS, TRIP DETAILS

301. Hon SAM PIANTADOSI to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that he has planned an overseas trip in the forthcoming recess?
- (2) If so, where is he going?

(3) Who is accompanying him and how long will he be away?

Hon GEORGE CASH replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The destination is Vietnam and Malaysia. The purpose is to make a presentation to the Government of Vietnam on the land management system that is being developed and, we hope, sold to the Government of Vietnam by the Department of Land Administration. It is part of a United Nations development funded project. The presentation is to bring the Vietnamese Government up to date with the proposal and to seek further input from that government to see whether the Department of Land Administration can offer any further assistance. Members may be aware that, from time to time, large numbers of Vietnamese officers are in Perth being trained by the Department of Land Administration in the general land management system.

(3) I am being accompanied by Mr P. Rowe from my office and Dr C. Branch of the Department of Minerals and Energy. Dr Branch is attending because we will also meet with the Minister for Heavy Industry, who is responsible for mining. I hope we will be able to introduce our mining registration system to Vietnam. There will be some benefits for private enterprise and a strengthening of this Government's ties if we are able to do that. The third person who will accompany me is an interpreter employed by the Department of Land Administration. I understand that a senior officer from the Department of Land Administration is in Vietnam and that I will be meeting with him. He is currently arranging other meetings that he believes will be of benefit to the department and to the Government of Western Australia.

WEST AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL COMMISSION - SUBIACO OVAL
\$8m Federal Funds - Roadworks Reallocation

302. Hon REG DAVIES to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to an article on page 5 of this morning's *The West Australian* under the heading "Roads cash for Subiaco Oval revamp" and ask -

- (1) Has the \$8m or any part of it been paid to the West Australian Football Commission?
- (2) Does the Government support the \$8m of road funding being given to the WAFC to redevelop Subiaco Oval?
- (3) If the Government supports this position, will the Minister give this House an undertaking not to increase vehicle registration fees or to impose any other tax or charge to meet this road funding shortfall?
- (4) If the Government does not support the reallocation of roadworks funding, will it attempt to have the money reallocated to roadworks?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1) I am not the Minister responsible for sport and therefore am not aware of the West Australian Football Commission having that money or any part of it in hand.

(2)-(4)

The Government and I do not support the reallocation of that funding. I took action when I first became aware of the reallocation. Rather than elaborate on this point now, I will elaborate a little later when I talk on the road funding and taxes issues raised in the urgency motion which was being debated prior to questions without notice. I repeat that I am not

aware of the current situation with the commission and that the Government and I vigorously oppose the allocation of funds that were intended for roads. I have taken up the matter with the Federal Minister for Transport and Communications and he told me that the money was reallocated on direction from Hon John Dawkins. I will elaborate a little more on that later in my comments on the urgency motion.

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION - THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

Bills, \$50 - Third Party Insurance Levy for WA Inc losses 1988-92 -

303. Hon MARK NEVILL to the Minister for Finance:

Did the Minister recently instruct the State Government Insurance Office to include the following on third party insurance bills: "\$50 - Third Party Insurance Levy for WA Inc losses 1988-92"?

Hon MAX EVANS replied:

Yes.

BARRACK SQUARE JETTIES - REDEVELOPMENT

304. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

I have given the Minister some notice of the question.

- (1) What is the extent of the redevelopment of the Barrack Square jetties currently under way?
- (2) What is the cost to the Department of Marine and Harbours of this redevelopment and how is it to be funded?
- (3) When the redevelopment is completed, what space will be available to retailers or boat operators and have any users already entered into arrangements for the lease of such floor space?
- (4) If yes, who are the lessees?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

(1)-(4)

The current program for redevelopment of the Barrack Square jetty complex involves buildings on jetties 1 to 6 and the water areas between jetties 5 and 6. The redevelopment is being carried out at no cost to the Department of Marine and Harbours. It is being funded by the private sector. All existing operators have the opportunity of participating in the new development, which will be staged over a two year period. Captain Cook Cruises, trading as Vyscot Pty Ltd, is currently finalising the lease for its offices on jetty 3. Negotiations are continuing with other interested parties. This development is, in essence, a scaled down version of the previously approved Old Perth Port proposal. The ferry operators initiated the new proposal and the Department of Marine and Harbours is facilitating the project.

ELECTIONS - FAIR AND DEMOCRATIC, MINISTER'S OPINION

305. Hon A.J.G. MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) In the context of the Minister's expressed concern over the accountability of student associations, is the Minister aware that, unlike his own unopposed appointment to the presidency of the Claremont Teachers' College, dual council elections in this State have been contested vigorously over the last decade?
- (2) Does the Minister agree that fair and democratic elections are a sound method for attaining responsible, responsive and accountable administration?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The last part of the question requests an opinion and the Minister may decline to answer. The member cannot ask for an opinion.

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

With respect to my election as president of the Claremont Teachers' College student council in 1966, I acknowledge that I was unopposed. It was not my choice but other people chose not to stand against me, fearing they would be defeated! They were all supportive. I acknowledge that fair and open elections are vital to any organisation of which any person seeks to be a member.

PRODUCTIVITY AND LABOUR RELATIONS, DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS LEGISLATION, OFFICERS' INVOLVEMENT

306. Hon T.G. BUTLER to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that officers of the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations were not involved in the drafting of the Minimum Conditions of Employment Bill, the Workplace Agreements Bill and the Industrial Relations Amendment Bill?
- (2) Will the Minister further confirm that officers of DOPLAR did not see the three Bills until three days before the legislation was introduced in the Legislative Assembly?
- (3) If the answer to (1) and (2) is yes, will the Minister provide to the Parliament the names of the people responsible for the drafting of that legislation, their organisations and the terms and conditions of their contracts?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Did Hon Tom Butler say that he had given some notice of this question to the Minister?

Hon T.G. BUTLER: No, I said that I apologised for not giving notice of the question.

Point of Order

Hon R.G. PIKE: This question contravenes the standing orders of the House and should be ruled out of order. It is asking a question of the Minister representing a Minister in another place, and no notice of the question has been given to the Minister in this House.

The PRESIDENT: I was trying to ascertain the situation when I asked the member whether he had given notice.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I thought that I could ask a question without giving notice.

The PRESIDENT: If the member asks a Minister a question without notice in his capacity as representative of the Minister in another place, he must give the Minister in this House some notice.

Members may ask a question without notice of a Minister in this place in connection with the affairs of the department with which the Minister deals in his portfolio. However, they cannot ask a Minister a question without notice in this place in his capacity as the representative of a Minister in another place. If Hon Tom Butler has not given notice of the question to the Minister for Health representing a Minister in another place, he must put the question on notice.

Hon T.G. BUTLER: I will do so. The annoying part of this is that Hon Bob Pike was right.

Questions without Notice Resumed

FREMANTLE PORT AUTHORITY - PILOTAGE, CONTRACT OUT PROPOSAL

307. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

Is it correct that the State Government proposes to contract out pilotage services at the Fremantle Port Authority?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

The pilots at Fremantle have been offered an opportunity to provide that service from their own resources.

**FREMANTLE PORT AUTHORITY - PILOTAGE, CONTRACT OUT PROPOSAL
*Acts Amendment (Port Authorities) Bill***

308. Hon JOHN HALDEN to the Minister for Transport:

Is it not correct that the Acts Amendment (Port Authorities) Bill currently being drafted includes a proposal to do exactly as I have suggested; that is, contract out the pilotage services of the Fremantle Port Authority?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

This is another example of the member's continually getting it wrong. The amendments to which he refers deal with regional ports, and Fremantle is not a regional port.

WESTRAIL - DOG SPIKES, 16 MM

309. Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Are 16 millimetre short and long dog spikes used to hold rail tracks on when timber sleepers are used?
- (2) Are examples of rail tracks with timber sleepers the lines Perth to Fremantle, Northam to York and Perth to Geraldton?
- (3) Were the 16 mm dog spikes until recently manufactured in Western Australia at the Midland Workshops?
- (4) Is there continued demand for 16 mm dog spikes?
- (5) Is it the case that the dog spikes are now being manufactured for Westrail by a New South Wales firm, Sydney Cooke?

Hon E.J. CHARLTON replied:

(1)-(5)

I ask the member to put that question on notice, although I will respond to part of it. The dog spikes currently produced in Midland are straight sided square spikes. Westrail had been intending for some time to move to spiral spikes with a thread - I am not sure whether a left-handed or right-handed thread. However, the reason for changes that may be made in future is that the Midland Workshops will not be able to produce the square spikes.

**PORT KENNEDY DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT ACT - PROCLAMATION
*Fleuris Pty Ltd, Proposal Submission; \$500 000 Payment***

310. Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) When was the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act proclaimed?
- (2) Has the company, Fleuris Pty Ltd, submitted a detailed proposal for carrying out the project in accordance with section 4(1) of schedule 1 to the agreement Act?
- (3) If not, by what date is it required to do so?
- (4) Has the company paid to the State the sum of \$500 000 required under section 14(5) of schedule 1 of the agreement Act?

(5) If not, by what date is it required to do so?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

- (1) This Act was proclaimed on 24 December 1992.
- (2) The company has not submitted its detailed proposals to the Minister for Planning for approval at this time. However, it is understood that it has the proposals ready for submission and will submit them to the first meeting of the Port Kennedy management board, which must advise the Minister on these proposals.
- (3) Under section 4(1) of schedule 1 to the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act 1992 the company is required to submit its proposals by 30 June 1994.
- (4) No, the company has not paid this sum to the State.
- (5) Under section 14(5) of schedule 1 to the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act 1992 it is required to pay the money within 30 days of the Minister's being satisfied that it has the finance available to carry out the project, and that it is ready to carry out the operations included in the agreement.

HOSPITALS - NORTHAMPTON DISTRICT
"Redevelopment-Development Process" Discussions

311. Hon KIM CHANCE to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In relation to the proposed restructuring of the Northampton District Hospital, at the Minister's 27 July briefing with Dr Peter Brennan was the document "Redevelopment/Development Process" discussed?
- (2) Did the Minister raise any objections or concerns about the Northampton District Hospital consultative committee's having to exit the redevelopment/development process on 30 September 1993?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

(1)-(2)

I do not know to which document the member refers. There was a document in the possession of Mr Allen, which may very well be the document referred to. It had a list of times on it but I have not looked at that, so I do not know whether it said anything about the meeting. I am not able to satisfy the member on either of his questions. One thing I did insist upon was that the full consultative process take place and that I would not be prepared to do anything until I had the recommendation of the Northampton hospital consultative committee, arrived at properly, in accordance with the process that had been set up.

HOSPITALS - NORTHAMPTON DISTRICT
Consultative Committee, Six Months Review Period

312. Hon KIM CHANCE to the Minister for Health:

Supplementary to my previous question and the Minister's answer, can the Minister confirm that at a meeting to discuss the Northampton hospital he informed the deputation, which included Hon Murray Criddle, that the Northampton hospital consultative committee would have an extended six months' review period to determine what health services should be put in place in the shire?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

By "an extended six months' review period" does the member mean another six months?

Hon Kim Chance: No, but that it would have six months in total.

Hon PETER FOSS: No, I did not say that. I do not understand what the member is talking about. The meeting we had recently was because the people were down here for Local Government Week. Is that the meeting to which the member refers?

Hon Kim Chance: No, I am referring to the Northampton hospital consultative committee.

Hon PETER FOSS: I really have not been involved directly in what time the committee will take and how it will go about its task. That is being done by the regional director of that area. As I understand it, the committee is continuing its process and will soon come back with a recommendation. What I did make clear quite recently was that I was not prepared to do anything until such time as I had the committee's response. I have not put a time limit on when that should or should not be. I understand a process has been agreed as to when that time will be, but I cannot say I am particularly au fait with what that time is. However, I have not suggested any shorter, longer, or different period from that which the committee originally understood it would have.

HOSPITALS - NORTHAMPTON DISTRICT
Consultative Committee, Six Months to Prepare Report

313. Hon KIM CHANCE to the Minister for Health:

Is the Minister aware that, as late as 23 July, the regional director of the midwest and Gascoyne health region was writing to residents of Northampton explaining that the consultative committee would have six months to prepare its report?

Hon PETER FOSS replied:

No.
