

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 5th April, 1978

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.47 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 11th April.

Question put and passed.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

#### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 4th April, on the following motion by the Hon. W. M. Piesse—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

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

**THE HON. G. E. MASTERS** (West) [4.48 p.m.]: Mr President, naturally I rise to support the motion before the Chair. In doing so, I congratulate the Governor (Sir Wallace Kyle) on the manner in which he presented his Speech. Of course, we all know the Governor's Speech includes the Government's policy for the ensuing session of Parliament. I believe the manner in which the Governor presented his Speech was excellent.

I also add that I believe the manner in which the Governor and his wife (Lady Kyle) have conducted their duties in Western Australia has been exemplary; they will go down as one of the most popular couples ever to hold the position. They are a great credit to this State and we are proud of them.

I also congratulate the Hon. Win Piesse on her speech in moving the Address-in-Reply motion. Many members already have referred to the intelligent and straightforward manner in which she presented her speech; I heartily concur with those remarks; it was a very good effort on her part.

I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition

(the Hon. Des Dans) on his promotion to shadow Minister in this House and also the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (the Hon. Robert Hetherington) on his elevation to the shadow Ministry after only a little more than 12 months in this place. I think it is a great credit to them and a great asset for the House now to have two Labor Party shadow Ministers. It is a recognition of the role this House plays in our system of government.

The Opposition naturally will criticise the Governor's Speech because it represents the Government's policy for the coming session. However, I do not think we have had any constructive criticism from the Opposition. Their comments have indicated they are grabbing at straws.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I made a suggestion to help the unemployment situation.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It is a matter of opinion—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are you going to accept that offer?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: As usual we have the Opposition giving their familiar bleat of more Government spending. It seems to me they think massive Government spending is the answer to all our woes and ills.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I have not heard that mentioned.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It was suggested in so many words there should be more Government spending. There was not one single word about extra production, or more work for the dollar. There was no recognition of the fact that we must earn before we spend. We must produce at the right price to compete on world markets. Unfortunately there has been no word from the Opposition about these vital issues which are fundamental to our survival.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You cannot even sell the products.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member direct his comments to the Chair?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I repeat, the Opposition merely stated we should spend more public funds; we must not misunderstand that remark. Many people in my party consider it a foolish thing to do. It is foolish as far as the Liberal Party is concerned but not as far as the Labor Party is concerned; they consider it a very good idea. However, they know the full implications as we all do.

They want to increase the deficit and if this happens it must be paid for by the public. As far

as the public is concerned this means there will be increased taxation. It is the only way to pay for increased Government spending. No-one else will pay for it. The increased taxation comes out of the working man's pocket—from the pocket of the public generally. So, if the Opposition is suggesting we should spend more funds there is only one way for that to be done.

There can be only one result—a return to the inflationary spiral. We saw Mr Whitlam make a magnificent show of this, and it was only by an act of heaven that the nation was saved. I can assure the House that if we have inflation, and we will have if we increase Government spending, the economy will be in ruins as nearly happened two or three years ago.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Isn't the economy in ruins today?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We are recovering. What is the inflation rate compared with 18 months ago?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What is the unemployment rate?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I will get to that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member continue to direct his comments to the Chair and stop baiting members opposite?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I repeat, the economy would be in ruins and private enterprise on its knees, and the Labor Party knows there would be a massive transfer of funds from the private sector to the public sector. This is a most serious matter and is what happened in Whitlam's era. It is what the Labor Party members would like now; they are not fools and they know what they want.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley interjected.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We are doing that. If we have a massive transfer of funds and have the Government holding most of those funds we will have the public totally dependent on the Government of the day. That is socialism and it is what the Opposition wants.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Don't you agree that public funds are being used to assist private industry?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I think many of us in this House would be sickened by the Opposition's glib statements and sad head shakes when all the time they are revelling in the misfortunes of the very people they pretend to represent.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is a disgraceful statement.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Others would not put forward such ideas.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What would you suggest?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I would suggest more responsible attitudes for the Opposition to adopt in this House.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You suggest something and we will support it.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The members of the Government are concerned with unemployment. We are not happy about it and we are trying to provide permanent employment rather than the short-term employment the Opposition suggests. The Government wants permanent employment, not Government handouts.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You must be wearing seven league boots because you are taking big steps towards unemployment.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The biggest tragedy is that young people cannot find jobs. We realise the gravity of the situation and are doing all we can to create permanent employment and I emphasise the word "permanent".

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: The position is getting worse.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: This is happening overseas in all economies.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am talking about what is happening here in Western Australia.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have been in government four years.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will members refrain from interjecting so the member on his feet can get on with his speech?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: There have been comments made in this House about unemployment and about those who are unemployed; that is, those who wish to be unemployed. The term used is "dole bludgers" and perhaps some people have exaggerated the number of those who wish to be unemployed. There have been exaggerations in the opposite direction, such as when the Hon. Robert Hetherington said the figure for those wanting to be unemployed was only 1 per cent, and that the other 99 per cent were looking for work. That is not true either; it is very far from the truth.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I said when there is full employment you have at least 1 per cent.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am saying times have changed.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You are talking like people talked in 1939. They were wrong then and you are wrong now.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is a matter of opinion. It is a silly comment to make when the honourable member says the figure is only 1 per cent. I say it is much more than that; the honourable member has not studied the figures. I will quote some figures to him.

The biggest problem is with the under-29 age group; those who have no dependants, such as a wife or children. I would say 30 per cent to 40 per cent of those are not looking for work, or if they are they are not looking for it very hard.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: That is a disgraceful thing to say.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: As at the 31st January this year, of those receiving unemployment benefits, 56 per cent were 24 years of age or under.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: All over the world the unemployment rate is highest between the 16 to 25 age groups.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Furthermore, 65 per cent are under 29 years of age. Seventy-six per cent of those receiving unemployment benefits are unmarried and have no dependants.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: School leavers.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Rhubarb. If I have to repeat the figures I will. The point is 76 per cent of those who are claiming unemployment benefits have no dependants. Is it just a coincidence that only 24 per cent of the unemployed have dependants while 76 per cent of the unemployed have no dependants?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Most of our unemployed and the unemployed overseas are in the non-breadwinner class, aged between 15 and 25 years.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I suggest it is so because many of them do not want work. Three per cent of our population have more than one job. Thirty-nine per cent of the married couples have both husband and wife holding jobs. I want to emphasise the problem of the under-29-year-olds without dependants who represent the majority of unemployed.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: They cannot get work.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: They are not looking for work. I think it is a social tragedy and there is no doubt it is an indictment on the welfare State that the Opposition seems to promote, so that those without dependants do not need to work. It is all part of the socialist scheme.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why don't you make the economy worse and do away with the dole? You want to do away with the dole.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I do not.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is what you are saying.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the honourable member again to direct his comments to the Chair.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Certainly. By way of interjection Mr Dans has said that I want to cut out all dole payments. For the record I say that is absolutely ridiculous. There is argument to support people who are genuinely looking for jobs and who have wives and families to keep, but who cannot find jobs; these people need help. I am answering the question posed by the Opposition. Of course, we are not trying to cut out the dole.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are advocating the cutting out of the dole.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It is now on record that we certainly do not advocate this. All I am suggesting is that the welfare State ideas of the Opposition are discouraging many from accepting job opportunities, and ruining the chances of people who are looking for work. Undermining the foundations of our society is no accident.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Your party is the Government, federally and in this State. If you want to ruin the welfare State and do away with these payments you should say so.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am suggesting our Government should tighten up the position. For this reason I applaud the Government led by Mr Fraser for the stringent steps it is taking so as to ensure those who do not want to work are not paid.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Can you tell me the source of the figures you have just quoted?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The source is the Department of Computer Records, Bureau of Census and Statistics, dated the 31st January, 1978. I say again I applaud the Federal Government for the steps it has taken. It is high time there was a tightening up of the situation, and those who do not make a genuine effort to obtain work should receive nothing. I refer to people like those who support an alternative way of life and opt out of society.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You do not think they should have a free choice?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Certainly I think they should have a free choice, but they should not be entitled to receive handouts for nothing. It

is fine in the case of people who actively seek work, but there are many who just disappear from society and who think that society owes them a living. Such people should receive absolutely nothing; we owe them nothing.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: The point is there is no work available.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is rubbish, and the honourable member knows it. I know it, as does every member in this Chamber. The honourable member should not play games and say they represent 1 per cent when he knows it is incorrect.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I can still remember the same arguments being used in 1939.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The honourable member is putting up a bit of a show, and I am accepting the fact. If members of the Opposition are genuine in their desire to increase employment opportunities then surely they should realise to survive in this State we have to produce, to export, and to show good faith in our overseas markets and overseas trading partners. Are members opposite suggesting we do not have to show good faith?

I would point out shipments are being held up day in and day out, week in and week out, and year in and year out. Shipments of wheat, sheep, cattle, and iron ore are held up; but there is not one word of rebuke against those responsible from members opposite.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why do you not tell us about the balance of payments situation and the money borrowed to prop up our dollar? What a lot of rot you are uttering!

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Tell us about the \$2 000 million which the Federal Government has borrowed from overseas.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If the Opposition is genuine it should make a show of good faith and offer criticisms in some areas, because not everyone can be right. One would expect the Opposition to say the activities of some disruptive elements in our society are making the unemployment situation worse. If the Opposition is genuinely concerned about unemployment surely it should condemn these groups.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What have you done about the men at Wundowie who have lost their jobs?

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: And about the 1 100 meat workers who have lost their jobs.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: This part of your speech

recorded in *Hansard* will make very interesting reading.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Another problem which exists in our society today is the action of the pressure groups. Gone are the days of the left versus the right; of employers versus employees; and of Labor versus conservatives.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are not a conservative, but a member of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The Leader of the House can call me a conservative if he likes.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Your leader does not like it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Members opposite become so upset when we call them revolutionaries.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would remind members that interjections are out of order and I would recommend to the member on his feet that he direct his comments entirely to the Chair from where he will not get any interjections.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I was talking about the pressure groups and about the activities taking place today. We are in the era of confrontation and pressure groups. These groups operate to a large degree with the support of the Labor Party.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is being put to the fore. Pressure groups have always been part of the political scene.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Some of the members of these pressure groups are very sincere and comprise people who have concern for particular problems. But most pressure groups are now carefully and systematically infiltrated by professional anarchists who use them for their own political gain.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They are professionals.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Of course they are professionals. They do infiltrate. It is incredible the Opposition should deny this takes place, because such infiltration should be obvious to everyone. I would point out that nine out of 10 protest marches along St. George's Terrace to Parliament House are addressed and supported by the Labor Party, and Labor Party members march in the forefront. We only have to look at the pressure groups to determine whether they are sincere. In the last session of Parliament there was the occasion when we had a full gallery of protesters. If we had looked outside we would have seen protesters' vehicles plastered with many signs—"Ban bauxite", "Ban whaling", "Ban

uranium". It is a wonder they do not advocate the banning of breathing!

The Hon. Lylla Elliot: You have a list of the groups. Who supplied it?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It is a list of my own. I am saying it is the era of pressure groups, and the Labor Party is using them in a scurrilous manner. They are being used as political tools. I can give any amount of examples.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: One good example was the march along St. George's Terrace when Mr Wordsworth marched alongside the farmers.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If we look at the front rows of the marchers we find they are often the genuine ones. We see churchmen, academics, and concerned fathers and mothers. That is natural and acceptable. However, if one looks at the second or third row one will see the same regular faces among the protesters—anarchists; those who confront and challenge the law. If we were to take photographs of the confrontation groups we would see the same stirrers, urgers, and thugs; many of them are members of the Labor Party. I repeat that the second and third rows comprise the stirrers and trouble-makers, who care nothing for the principles involved.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Mr Wordsworth was among the farmers in the front row.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If we look beyond the second and third rows we can see where the real trouble comes from. In this State there is a powerful nucleus of dedicated men and women. They have dedicated their lives to furthering the cause of socialism, and will continue to do so. They have infiltrated much of the Public Service, and certainly the trade union movement.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Who are they?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The Leader of the Opposition may laugh, but he knows what I am talking about. The same powerful nucleus which has infiltrated Trades Hall controls these power groups, and most certainly the members of this House and of another place. The people in the powerful nucleus are the board of directors of members opposite.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you think they have infiltrated the Liberal Party?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: They may well have tried, but they have not succeeded. The very group which controls the pressure groups, the confrontation, and the taking-on of the law also controls members of the Opposition in this House.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You are wrong in saying that.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The honourable

member is an expert at hiding behind all sorts of guises. He says he is a democratic socialist.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did not hear what you said.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Mr Hetherington has said in this House that he is not a socialist—nothing so terrible—but that he is a democratic socialist. Mrs Vaughan may call herself a Chinese socialist; Miss Elliott may call herself a Russian socialist; I do not know. The only thing everyone knows for certain is that a socialist means one thing and one thing only, no matter how they disguise it. He may cover his tracks in whatever way he likes. I do not know why such people are ashamed of showing their true colours.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: If I stuck an old hat belonging to Mussolini on top of your head I know what people would call you.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: By their actions and by their refusal to condemn these pressure groups which are causing much of the unemployment, they are guilty of double standards. If they contend that they want to increase employment opportunities they should back the means of bringing about more employment. If they did we would support them.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: If we do that you will accuse us of being dishonest and of having improper motives.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: This is a matter of opinion. It is what Parliament is all about. It is unfortunate parliamentarians of all political colours seem to take note of these pressure groups.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Would you accept the fact that at the time of the rum rebellion in New South Wales the action was brought about by a pressure group?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That was before my time.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I suggest that you should study our historical events.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am speaking about today.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are talking about pressure groups.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I will say all members of Parliament are guilty of responding to pressure groups in one way or another. Who would have thought 10 years ago members of Parliament would take notice of militant homosexuals marching up and down the streets? Who would have thought 10 years ago members

of Parliament would take notice of some extreme feminist groups?

The D. K. Dans: Militant left-wing homosexuals?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Who would have thought 10 years ago that we would take notice of the absurdities of extreme feminist groups? They are about as feminine as sticks of rhubarb; yet we listen to them.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The Liberal Party gets votes from them.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Who would have thought 10 years ago that members of the Labor Party would advocate the legalising of narcotics?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: A senior member of the party was disciplined on that subject.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is quite wrong.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The point I am making is members of Parliament and politicians today are listening to these pressure groups far too much; they represent far too small a percentage of our population.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is your opinion.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Of course it is my opinion. If the honourable member is suggesting those people represent the majority then I am amazed, and it would be yet another mistake he has made. All these groups demand attention, and members opposite are giving them attention. The groups have one strong weapon—the use of misinformation and mischievous lies. Unfortunately, they seem to be successful because the news media—newspapers, television, and radio—pass them along the line.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They are all left-wing journalists!

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It is bad journalism and bad reporting, if they want to be genuine. Many of us have been to functions attended by large numbers of people who have gone along to enjoy themselves or relax, and there will be a group of scruffy-haired goats in one corner kicking up a fuss. The news media centre straight onto them; on the television that night or in the newspapers next day all one hears about is that small group of stirrers, with no mention of the mass of decent, well behaved people.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You still haven't said what a left-wing, militant homosexual is.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I did not say that. I said "militant homosexuals".

The misinformation spread throughout the community is very dangerous and is being used to

great effect by such groups because of the attention they receive from the news media.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you mean the Women's Electoral Lobby?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I repeat: I referred to the absurdities of the extremely militant feminists who are no more feminine than sticks of rhubarb.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: You will live to regret that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member should continue to direct his comments to the Chair and refrain from baiting other members.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am sorry, Sir. The point I am making is by their silence members of the ALP are guilty of sentencing thousands of people to unemployment. When they support these pressure groups they are actively trying to destroy our economy, our overseas trade, and the development of our mineral resources.

Members of the ALP are continually calling for bans on uranium, bauxite, whales—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We are conducting a very exhaustive inquiry into bauxite mining. The only difference is we decided to have a look at the bauxite mining areas before you did.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Does the ALP support the mining of bauxite? I can say without doubt I do. It means many thousands of jobs, millions of dollars spent on employment, industry, and development, and millions of dollars in the pockets of the people of this State. Are members opposite opposed to that?

The Hon. Lyla Elliott interjected.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The honourable member has seen the rehabilitation of the areas. Does she think it is a serious problem?

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I do.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: So do we all, but eventually we must make a firm decision. I ask members opposite to make that firm decision instead of sitting on the fence. They were forced to get off the wood-chip bandwagon because they needed some votes in the area. They should examine their consciences and think about the future. The Leader of the Opposition has said he is not prepared to make the decision at this time.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I might agree with Mr Fletcher of the National Country Party, and that would be a bad thing.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Another matter which concerns me—and Mr Cooley seems to be an expert on the subject—is the constant attacks

on companies which have been developing this country for many years and have been responsible for providing thousands of jobs. They are probably making a profit now but their investment has been enormous. Yet time after time Mr Cooley gets up in this House and says what terrible people they are, while his money would be earning at least 10 per cent in the bank.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The only thing I am opposed to is excessive profits while there is control of labour.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What is an excessive profit?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: \$150 million a year.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am saying in effect the Australian Labor Party hides behind a smokescreen of respectability. It pretends to be the working man's party when it scorns the very word. I would be very happy to hear members of the Opposition perhaps condemning these groups who are seeking to destroy the economy, and who are certainly holding up important jobs in a situation where unemployment is very serious. We are seeking to create employment, get industry going, and develop our mineral resources.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Get rid of the dole and shoot dead everyone who does not agree with you.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Members on the Government side are prepared to get up and commit themselves; members of the Opposition are not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why do you think the ALP is so totally obsessed with homosexuality?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I do not know.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is not quite true. Your party served on a committee.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I think I have made my point fairly clearly.

The next matter I wish to raise is of great importance to my electorate and perhaps to many of the electorates around the metropolitan area. I refer to the rating of rural properties. I think the only way we can rectify the matter is to amend the legislation, which will be in the hands of the Minister for Local Government and, to a certain extent, the Treasurer of this State.

The rates are increasing in the Shires of Kalamunda, Armadale-Kelmscott, Swan, Mundaring, and probably many others; but those are the areas with which I am particularly concerned. The rates have increased as a result of recent changes of attitudes that have taken place as far as the public is concerned.

The idea used to be to move from country areas into the metropolitan area, but people are now moving from the metropolitan area into the country. People are now prepared to travel 20 miles to work in order to get away from the city and the working environment.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you think the situation will change when the price of petrol increases?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It could be. The land valuations have affected not only urban properties but also the small rural pockets dotted all over my electorate. The local authorities have adopted a two-tier system. They call in the Taxation Department and a valuation is carried out. The local authorities adopt the valuation and strike a rate in the dollar to finance their work for the year. They are able to adopt a two-tier system whereby they may have urban rates and urban farm rates. I emphasise the word "may".

In my province the Armadale-Kelmscott Shire permits a 40 per cent reduction and the Kalamunda Shire a 30 per cent reduction in rates for approved urban farmland, which is defined as land from which the owners derive a substantial part of their income and on which they live. They must be genuine primary producers. It might be thought that no-one should complain about a 30 or 40 per cent reduction in rates, but people do complain, and for good reason.

In areas such as those to which I am referring, people are buying hobby farms rather than urban blocks, and are paying anything up to \$10 000 a hectare for the property. The Taxation Department, when making a valuation, assesses the genuine rural producer on \$10 000 a hectare because that is what his neighbour has paid for his land; but the rates are still crippling, even with a 30 or 40 per cent reduction. This is particularly so in cases where anything up to 10 per cent of the gross income from the property can be paid in rates. I know of many examples.

The area that concerns me most is Pickering Brook-Roleystone-Karragullen, which produces 80 per cent of the State's export stone fruit, 70 per cent of the export pears, and 25 per cent of the export apples. It therefore makes a considerable contribution to the economy of the State. It is farmed in the main by people who have pioneered the area and have cleared the land with their own hands. This is their way of life and they do not want to sell their land unless they absolutely have to, in which case they will be cast onto the unemployment market. The ramifications of these people being forced to leave their land are considerable. They might be expert

orchardists, but if they leave their land they will be nothing more than farm labourers, and could become a charge on the community. Many of them will be forced into this situation.

Another serious problem is that land usage would change. These orchardists are highly productive; they get the last ounce out of their land. When the land usage changes to a hobby farm, it produces virtually nothing. Eventually, the Town Planning Department or the local authority will be approached with an application for subdivision. The change of usage and lower production will then place an added burden on local authorities and they will be subjected to more pressures to subdivide.

We should take a wider view of the matter. The concept of the corridor plan, which has been adopted in principle for the development of the metropolitan region, is that there should be fingers of development and in between them green wedges or rural development. Much of the rural development will be by way of hobby farms, but it is essential to keep the genuine rural producers there for as long as possible. The only way to do this is to have a lenient and workable rating system, which will entail some changes in the Local Government Act. Local authorities should be required to take certain action to help solve the problems and protect the rural producers, who would otherwise be forced off the land.

I have three suggestions which I would like to put forward to the Premier and the Minister for Local Government. The first is the amendment of the Local Government Act to create a third tier of rating, so that we would have urban land, urban farm land, and rural land.

We would need a clear definition of "genuine producer". A genuine producer should be one who is employed full time on his property, lives on his property, and earns the whole or the main part of his income from the property. Naturally, an income ceiling would be necessary. Evidence should be produced that the valuation of the property has been influenced unduly by the valuation of surrounding hobby farms. The Minister could be given discretionary powers, but I do not think this is a good idea. The Minister already has sufficient problems with regard to discretionary powers in relation to town planning.

Alternatively, we should retain the two-tier system and direct, through legislation, that local authorities shall apply to approved urban farmland a rate at a level of no more than 50 per cent of the general rate. Perhaps that seems to be a large reduction, and members might say it is not fair for the community to bear the burden and

shoulder the cost; but my information from local authorities is that very little urban farmland has been approved in the shires I have been speaking of; so this would have a minimum effect on the rates.

I hope the Minister for Local Government will take notice of our suggestions. I noted that Mr Pike made some comments on rating and put forward some suggestions in regard to direct amendments to the Act which were much more positive. However, I put forward those suggestions in a general manner.

The point I would like to raise now concerns the storm last night. I know the House adjourned early and in a flurry; but considerable damage was suffered by many people in the community. I am aware many people in the hills area of my electorate were very frightened because large fires were raging and threatening their homes or properties. The local volunteers were all out fighting fires. Generally speaking, it was great to see the community rallying together to try to solve the problem in the area.

I have no doubt at all the same thing occurred in the south-west of the State, and is occurring today. A number of country members are absent from the Chamber today for this very reason; they are in their electorates offering help wherever possible.

I congratulate the public for the support they have offered those in need and the work they are continuing to do at this very moment. I am sure if we as members of Parliament of whatever political party are asked for help we will join together in the interest of all.

I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. F. E. McKenzie.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

### *Motion*

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West—Leader of the House) [5.32 p.m.]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### *Storm Damage*

Before you put the motion, Mr President, I would like to say the reason for it is fairly obvious, and Mr Masters has just touched upon it. I refer to the storm last night. There is no need for me to go into it; the history of it will take a long time in the telling. It is tragic that some lives have been lost and a great deal of damage has been done.



For some people the damage has been minor. I understand that in my house in Bunbury the front door was blown open and the hall was filled with sand, and a small door was blown off a shed. However, that sort of damage is minimal compared with the loss suffered by others. It is minimal compared with the tragedy of orchardists whose remaining income for the year has gone—something I experienced myself in 1937.

There is also the tragedy of the fires. This, of course, is the burning season and many people must be feeling terrible that they decided to burn off a little bit of wood, imagining they could do so in perfect safety and not reckoning on winds of such great force. I suppose such people feel responsible to some extent. I always think it is the worst thing that can happen when people feel that way as a result of something they did inadvertently and innocently which created great trouble for other people. I always have sympathy for those caught in that situation. I am sure all members have the same sympathy, because we have all been caught in it at some time or other.

Damage has been suffered by members of Parliament. I am aware that the Second Clerk Assistant of the Council (Mr L. A. Hoft) has suffered serious damage to his house. Also, many of us have to attend to personal matters. I am aware that many members are most anxious to get to their electorates, and for that reason I thought members would co-operate next week by speeding up the Address-in-Reply to compensate for the day we are losing. For this reason, after conferring with the Leader of the Opposition, I decided to adjourn the House early this evening to facilitate the various matters I have mentioned.

**THE HON. D. K. DANS** (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.34 p.m.]: I would like to support the remarks of the Leader of the House. He approached me before the commencement of the sitting this afternoon and we agreed to adjourn early.

I would like to offer my sympathy and condolences to those people who have lost property, and particularly to those people who have lost loved ones. The tragedy of the whole situation is that although we can see in the newspapers and the electronic media what has occurred, the actual human suffering really touches only those who are directly affected.

It is symptomatic of our country that when a situation such as this arises, which could best be described as an emergency, the people of Western Australia—or of Australia, because I remember the Hunter Valley floods—forget their differences

of opinion and assist those in need of help. Such situations bring out the best in people.

I say on behalf of the Labor Party, not only in this Chamber but generally, and on behalf of that much maligned section of the community, the trade union movement, that we stand ready to render any assistance that may be necessary. Many of the people fighting fires last night and endeavouring to hold back floodwaters were union members working alongside all manner of people, and I commend them for it.

If there is anything I can do personally, or anything other members on this side of the House can do by way of going to an area to render assistance, we will be only too pleased to help.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Thank you.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.35 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

#### *Pedestrians*

61. The Hon. R. F. Cloughton for the Hon. **LYLA ELLIOTT**, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Police and Traffic:

(1) Will the Minister advise the total number of pedestrians

- (a) injured; and  
(b) killed

for the years—

- (i) 1974-1975;  
(ii) 1975-1976; and  
(iii) 1976-1977?

(2) Of these, how many were—

- (a) on crosswalks; and  
(b) in other situations?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

	(i) 1974/75	(ii) 1975/76	(iii) 1976/77
(1) (a) Total pedestrians injured .....	611	651	655
(b) Total pedestrians killed .....	55	58	52
(2) (a) Injured on crosswalks .....	65	72	63
Killed on crosswalks .....	5	6	3
(b) Injured in other situations .....	546	579	592
Killed in other situations .....	50	52	49

## AUSTRALIAN MEAT AND LIVESTOCK CORPORATION

### *Export Quotas*

62. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is DEMCO meatworks in Derby to be opened for slaughtering cattle in the 1978 killing season?
- (2) If not, is this because the export quota determined by the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation is inadequate to justify the opening of the company's works at both Broome and Derby?
- (3) Is the Wyndham meatworks to lose the 3 000 tonne additional quota it received last year (1977) when other abattoirs failed to reach their quota targets?
- (4) In view of the facts that—
  - (a) available export quotas are down on last year; and
  - (b) quarantine restrictions, due to suspected blue tongue infection, will limit the movement of live cattle either overseas by ship or to southern destinations by road;

will the Minister make urgent representations to the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation requesting additional export quotas for the northern meatworks to maintain station turn-off figures?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) to (4) The decision to open the Derby abattoir is entirely a management matter, and I am informed that to date no final decision has been made.

The determination and allocation of quotas to the northern meatworks lies solely with the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation.

The position taken by the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation is that any negotiations concerning quotas or variations to quotas are matters for direct discussion between the company concerned and the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation. Although inappropriate for me to make representations to the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation at this time producer organisations may wish to make such an approach to the Corporation.

## HOUSING APPLICANTS

### *Aborigines and Caucasians*

63. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Attorney-General representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Will the Minister advise the present number of—

- (a) Aboriginal; and
- (b) non-Aboriginal

applicants for State Housing Commission assistance under the following headings—

- (i) rental accommodation;
- (ii) purchase accommodation; and
- (iii) aged persons accommodation?

- (2) Will he also advise the estimated waiting periods under each category?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH for the Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) and (2) The information will take a little time to collate, and the Minister will advise the member by letter.

## QUESTIONS

### *Cost*

64. The Hon. G. W. Berry for the Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Would the Minister obtain from the Premier the estimated cost of answering parliamentary questions, in this session, in each portfolio of the Cabinet, and advise this House of these costs, on a weekly basis?
- (2) Would the Minister also obtain from the Premier the hours spent by the chief executive officer in each of the portfolios in preparing the answers to these questions and advise this House?
- (3) Would the Minister also state whether the answer to the bulk of these questions would be available to Members through the process of contacting ministerial offices, and what would be the estimated delay if answers could be obtained in this manner?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) to (3) As the member will realise, the answer to this question will involve considerable research. I shall advise the House at the earliest possible date of the answers to the member's question.

## MOTOR VEHICLES

*Licence Plates*

65. The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Police and Traffic:

Will the Minister advise the number of Country Shire Councils that have refused to include the words "W.A.—State of Excitement" on vehicle registration plates?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

Forty-one (41) country local authorities have advised that they do not wish to include the above slogan on vehicle registration plates. Some of these have indicated that they wish to place their own local or regional slogans on the plates.

## TECHNICAL EDUCATION DIVISION

*Survey*

66. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the Minister table the analysis of the results of the 12 question survey (T.E. 39/74) of all students who enrolled this year in the Technical Education Division?
- (2) If the results are not yet to hand, will the Minister table them as soon as they are available?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) and (2) The answers to question from the document TE.39 are analysed by computer which produces one major print-out (matrix). This matrix may be examined by the member on application to the Director-General.

67. *This question was postponed.*

## MEAT

*Lamb Marketing Board*

68. The Hon. N. McNeill for the Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What has been—

- (a) the weight and number of lambs handled by the Lamb Marketing Board from March, 1976, until the present time; and

- (b) the monthly cost of running the Lamb Marketing Board for each month since March, 1976?

- (2) Will the Minister list the variability of the cost for this period?

- (3) What profit or loss has been made on the purchase of lamb from interstate in the last 12 months?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The following information has been provided by the Lamb Marketing Board of W.A.

1 (a)	No. of Lambs Handled		Average Weight Kilos	
	Month	Year	Month	Year
March 76 .....	81 676		13.27	
April .....	86 058		13.07	
May .....	87 540		12.97	
June .....	108 130		12.92	
		1 700 642		14.00
July .....	153 013		12.91	
August .....	260 528		12.87	
September .....	298 914		13.07	
October .....	298 564		13.61	
November .....	284 837		13.67	
December .....	72 670		13.66	
January 77 .....	68 328		12.95	
February .....	86 548		12.50	
March .....	95 004		12.37	
April .....	68 715		12.25	
May .....	45 692		12.56	
June .....	36 391		12.20	
		1 769 204		13.11
July .....	93 798		12.54	
August .....	182 445		13.18	
September .....	304 934		13.85	
October .....	344 502		14.10	
November .....	143 856		13.96	
December .....	52 629		14.18	
January 78 .....	40 809		13.76	
February .....	44 820		13.94	
		1 207 793		13.75

1 (b) Monthly Cost of Running Board  
(Overhead in Cents per Kilo)

	Month	Year
March 76 .....	4.50	
April .....	4.08	
May .....	4.64	
June .....	2.50	
		2.39
July .....	4.83	
August .....	1.78	
September .....	1.46	
October .....	1.39	
November .....	1.05	
December .....	5.99	
January 77 .....	4.98	
February .....	3.00	
March .....	4.25	
April .....	6.94	
May .....	7.72	
June .....	10.83	
		2.60
July .....	4.61	
August .....	2.22	
September .....	1.79	
October .....	1.24	
November .....	3.40	
December .....	8.11	
January 78 .....	9.29	
February .....	7.27	
		2.83

## NOTE:

Does not include direct costs such as killing, processing, stock firm representation, storage, interest, cartage, wharfage-etc.

- (2) The cost varies month by month in accordance with throughput—Refer Answer to Q1 Monthly Production.
- (3) The Board has not been involved in purchase of interstate lamb for the W.A. local market. It has only recently negotiated small tonnages interstate for exports to the Middle East to meet commitments on Contracts due to a temporary shortfall in local production. The Board is not in a position at this stage to assess profit or loss on these negotiations.

## ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND PROVINCES

### *Enrolments*

69. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

What are the current enrolments for each Legislative Assembly District and Legislative Council Province in Western Australia?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

State Electoral Enrolments as at 3rd April 1978 were—

#### Legislative Assembly Districts

Ascot—15 506  
 Balcatta—18 273  
 Canning—18 257  
 Clontarf—16 671  
 Cockburn—16 344  
 Cottesloe—15 555  
 Dianella—17 649  
 East Melville—16 738  
 Floreat—15 886  
 Fremantle—16 938  
 Gosnells—18 829  
 Karrinyup—17 675  
 Maylands—17 151  
 Melville—16 495  
 Morley—16 911  
 Mount Hawthorn—16 587  
 Mount Lawley—16 451  
 Murdoch—20 876  
 Nedlands—14 884  
 Perth—14 780  
 Scarborough—15 396  
 South Perth—14 815  
 Subiaco—15 320  
 Swan—16 714  
 Victoria Park—15 416

Welshpool—16 114  
 Whitford—23 244  
 Albany—8 305  
 Avon—7 912  
 Bunbury—9 293  
 Collie—8 615  
 Dale—8 296  
 Darling Range—8 197  
 Geraldton—8 956  
 Greenough—9 008  
 Kalamunda—9 403  
 Kalgoorlie—7 827  
 Katanning—7 838  
 Merredin—8 226  
 Moore—9 847  
 Mount Marshall—8 050  
 Mundaring—8 615  
 Murray—9 905  
 Narrogin—7 927  
 Rockingham—11 365  
 Roe—8 775  
 Stirling—8 661  
 Vasse—9 483  
 Warren—8 920  
 Wellington—8 852  
 Yilgarn-Dundas—7 979  
 Gascoyne—3 765  
 Kimberley—5 288  
 Murchison-Eyre—2 124  
 Pilbara—15 283

Total—692 190.

#### Legislative Council Provinces

East Metropolitan—65 293  
 Metropolitan—76 425  
 North Metropolitan—91 175  
 North-East Metropolitan—84 876  
 South Metropolitan—66 515  
 South-East Metropolitan—71 191  
 Central—23 889  
 Lower Central—25 373  
 Lower West—29 566  
 South—25 741  
 South-East—24 032  
 South-West—27 628  
 Upper West—27 811  
 West—26 215  
 Lower North—5 889  
 North—20 571

Total—692 190.

## HEALTH

### *Fluoridation of Water Supplies*

70. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Attorney-General representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) During this summer, has the water in the reservoirs been regularly tested for fluoride content before the addition of fluoride?
- (2) What quantities of fluoride have been added to the metropolitan water supply, and at what intervals?
- (3) Has the water which has been obtained from underground and added to the water in the reservoirs been tested for fluoride content from time to time?
- (4) Has cognisance been taken of these tests when fluoride has been added for the purpose of complying with the requirement of 1 p.p.m.?

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth for the Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Fluoride is added at each source continuously to maintain a total fluoride content of 0.95 p.p.m.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Yes.

#### WATER SUPPLIES

##### *Chemical Additives*

71. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will the Minister advise—
  - (a) what chemicals and other properties are added to the water supply before it reaches consumers;
  - (b) (i) whether his Department or the Metropolitan Water Board is aware of any medical evidence on record to show that any of these chemicals or properties are capable of producing allergies or other illnesses when ingested; and
    - (ii) if so, which ones;

(c) whether the present problems created by low rainfall and resultant low level in the water storage areas, could adversely affect the position referred to in (b)?

- (2) If the answer to (1) (a) and/or (b) is "Yes", will he undertake to have inquiries instituted to establish whether in fact there have been illnesses in this State diagnosed as being attributable to this cause?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) (a) Hills sources:—

Chlorine  
Sodium silico-fluoride

##### Water Treatment Plants:—

Chlorine  
Hydrogen peroxide  
Aluminium sulphate  
Potassium permanganate  
Calcium hydroxide  
Sodium alginate  
Sodium silicate  
Sulphuric acid  
Sodium silico-fluoride  
Various poly-electrolytes

##### Service reservoirs:—

Sodium hypochlorite  
Chlorine

- (b) (i) The chemicals listed under (1) (a) are used either for disinfection, water treatment or algae control and as such are part of normal processes required to produce potable water. Used in this way none of these chemicals would be harmful to health.
  - (ii) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
- (2) Not applicable.