

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 11 October 1983

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Presentation to Governor: Acknowledgment

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths): Honourable members, I wish to announce that, in company with several members, I have waited on His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech agreed to by this House. His Excellency has been pleased to make the following reply—

Mr President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council:

I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty The Queen, and for your Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament.

RICHARD TROWBRIDGE,
Governor.

SOUTH KOREAN MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS

Bombing Outrage: Condolence Motion

HON. PETER DOWDING (North—Minister for Mines) [4.32 p.m.]: I seek leave to move a motion without notice in relation to the deaths of several South Korean Cabinet Ministers and senior Government officials in Rangoon during the weekend.

Leave granted.

Hon. PETER DOWDING: I move, without notice—

That this House:

Expresses its abhorrence of the tragic killing of senior South Korean Cabinet Ministers and senior Government officials in Rangoon on the weekend.

Extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims and the people of South Korea.

This type of motion is moved traditionally by the Leader of the House, but since I had met and had personal contact with these gentlemen, I have moved the motion with the agreement of the Leader of the House.

I am sure that members on both sides of the House will join with me in expressing total abhor-

rence at the outrageous act which decimated the South Korean Cabinet and their key economic policy group in Rangoon at the weekend.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Economic Planning Minister (Mr Suh Suk-Joon), the Foreign Minister (Mr Lee Bum-Suk), the Commerce and Industry Minister (Mr Kim Dong-Whie), the Energy and Resources Minister (Dr Suh Sang-Chul), and the Senior Presidential Adviser for Economic Affairs (Dr Kim Jae-Ik) were killed, and many others were injured.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Western Australia, I extend to the families of the victims our deepest sympathy and condolences. For Western Australia, the loss is indeed a very personal one because many of these senior ranking Government officials were well known to members on both sides of the House.

Over the years successive Western Australian Governments have strengthened the bonds between the Republic of South Korea and this State. Very soon after the State election this year, the Deputy Premier and I led a senior delegation from Perth to Seoul to assure the South Korean Government of the new Western Australian Government's determination to maintain the close relationship between the peoples of Western Australia and South Korea.

The Deputy Premier will leave for Seoul today to represent Western Australia at the memorial and funeral services for the victims. I express my disappointment that, understandably in these tragic circumstances, President Chun has had to cancel the rest of his overseas mission which would have brought him to Perth this weekend.

This indeed is a testing time for the people of South Korea, with these most recent events following so soon after the shooting down of the Korean passenger airliner—an event which brought so much sadness and distress to so many people in that country.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Western Australia, I extend our condolences to the President and to the Government, and to all of the people of the Republic of South Korea I express our deepest sympathy.

HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.35 p.m.]: The Opposition joins with the Government in its expression of sympathy and condolences. Indeed, this was a tragic loss, not only to the people of South Korea, but also to many other people who had been associated with the South Korean Ministers and the South Korean Government in recent times. While I had not had any personal connection with any of the Ministers or other people involved in this

tragic incident, I know that many Ministers and officers had dealings with them when we were in Government. Their relationships were very cordial, and I know that they had very happy memories of their discussions with the Ministers and officials concerned.

This dreadful outrage is a matter of abhorrence to us all, as the Minister has said. It is a matter of great concern to the world that people should settle their differences in this dreadful and tragic manner.

I am sure that our sympathy goes out to the bereaved members of the families of the people involved in this tragic bomb outrage. It is a double blow to South Korea following, as it does, the recent tragic loss of its airliner over the Sakhalin Peninsula.

I extend the sympathy of the Opposition to the families of the deceased Ministers and officials. We join with the Government in this condolence motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Honourable members, we will carry this motion in the usual manner, rising for one minute's silence.

Question passed, members standing.

BILL (2): ASSENT

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

1. Constitution Amendment Bill.
2. Electoral Amendment Bill.

PETROLEUM PIPELINES AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Cape Lambert Power Station: Ministerial Statement

HON. PETER DOWDING (North—Minister for Fuel and Energy) [4.40 p.m.]: Mr President, I seek leave of the House under Standing Order No. 75 to make a statement concerning arrangements between the State and the Cliffs Robe River Iron Associates joint venture.

Leave granted.

Hon. **PETER DOWDING:** The House is informed that arrangements between the State and the Cliffs Robe River Iron Associates joint venture for the sale of natural gas and the purchase of electricity by the State Energy Commission of

WA (SECWA) from the joint venture at Cape Lambert have been finalised.

To implement these arrangements the joint venturers will construct a gas pipeline from a take-off point near Dampier to the Cape Lambert power station. This will cost an estimated \$12 million. The joint venturers will also convert the existing Cape Lambert power station to gas firing at a cost of \$3 million. Modifications to the electrical system costing \$2 million will be required to allow electricity sales to SECWA. The total expenditure by the joint venturers including engineering and management will be in excess of \$18 million.

Construction is expected to begin shortly to enable completion to coincide with the expected availability of natural gas in June 1984.

The joint venturers' activities are carried on within the framework of the Iron Ore (Cleveland Cliffs) Agreement Act 1964-73. The agreement provides for the submission of proposals and these have been provided to me by the joint venturers.

A minor variation to the agreement was required to complete the approval and this was recently finalised between the Premier and the joint venturers. I have already written to the joint venturers formally approving of the proposals.

Since the pellet plant at Cape Lambert was placed on care and maintenance in 1979, the power station has been under-utilised. These new arrangements will allow the station to be operated at increased rates and the joint venture will gain revenue through the sale of electricity to SECWA. This will see more efficient utilisation of existing infrastructure and further progress towards the full integration of the Pilbara power grid. It will also avoid the need to spend scarce State capital on new gas fired capacity at Karratha to meet the electricity needs of the Pilbara.

In addition there will be natural gas sales by SECWA to the joint venture with sales to 1 July 1985 qualifying as early gas sales with consequent benefits to the State.

The arrangements mean that capital costs will be met by the joint venture, with SECWA then purchasing electricity on commercial terms for on sale to consumers.

I am extremely pleased to be able to make this announcement to the House. The arrangements are of clear benefit to the State, the joint venturers, and SECWA. They underline this Government's determination to see the Pilbara developed with the most efficient utilisation of infrastructure and to ensure that the iron ore industry remains a world-class, low-cost producer.

ELECTORAL

Referendum: Petition

On motions by the Hon. Kay Hallahan, the following petition bearing the signatures of 56 persons was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House—

To: The Honourable the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled:

We the undersigned electors of Western Australia desire that the State Electoral System be reformed so as to incorporate the principle of 'one person-one vote-one value'.

We specifically request the reform of the Legislative Council of Western Australia to achieve:

1. A reduction in the number of Legislative Councillors from 34 to 22.
2. The retirement of half of the Members of the Legislative Council at each general election (ie. simultaneous elections).
3. The election of Legislative Councillors according to a system of proportional representation such as currently operates in Senate elections.

And that the above reforms be decided by the people voting at a referendum.

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

(See paper No. 303.)

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Advertising: Petition

On motions by the Hon. Lyla Elliott, the following petition bearing the signatures of 17 persons was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House—

To: The Honourable the President and the Honourable Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned are school teachers and we believe that education programmes alone are ineffective in discouraging children from smoking and only by combining education with legislation to ban tobacco advertising can we expect that the uptake of smoking by children will be significantly reduced.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest con-

sideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(See paper No. 304.)

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Advertising: Petition

On motions by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, the following petition bearing the signatures of 4 persons was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House—

To: The Honourable the President and the Honourable Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned are school teachers and we believe that education programmes alone are ineffective in discouraging children from smoking and only by combining education with legislation to ban tobacco advertising can we expect that the uptake of smoking by children will be significantly reduced.

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

(See paper No. 305.)

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Advertising: Petition

On motions by the Hon. Tom McNeil, the following petition bearing the signatures of 45 persons was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House—

To: The Honourable the President and the Honourable Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned are school teachers and we believe that education programmes alone are ineffective in discouraging children from smoking and only by combining education with legislation to ban tobacco advertising can we expect that the uptake of smoking by children will be significantly reduced.

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

(See paper No. 306.)

HEALTH: TOBACCO*Advertising: Petition*

On motions by the Hon. Fred McKenzie, the following petition bearing the signatures of 45 persons was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House—

To: The Honourable the President and the Honourable Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned are school teachers and we believe that education programmes alone are ineffective in discouraging children from smoking and only by combining education with legislation to ban tobacco advertising can we expect that the uptake of smoking by children will be significantly reduced.

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

(See paper No. 307.)

HEALTH: TOBACCO*Advertising: Petition*

On motions by the Hon. Tom Stephens, the following petition bearing the signatures of nine persons was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House—

The Honourable the President and the Honourable Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned are school teachers and we believe that education programmes alone are ineffective in discouraging children from smoking and only by combining education with legislation to ban tobacco advertising can we expect that the uptake of smoking by children will be significantly reduced.

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

(See paper No. 308.)

Point of Order

Hon. JOHN WILLIAMS: Mr President, I rise on a point of order under Standing Order No. 133. I may well want to present a petition on this matter at a later stage. I cannot presuppose your ruling, but I realise you may rule against what I am about to say. *De facto*, we are contravening Standing Order No. 133 in so far as it tells us that no petition may refer to any debate in the

same session of Parliament. I am not concerned with what goes on in other Houses of Parliament; I am concerned only with what goes on in this Parliament. It is no secret that a debate is under way in another place concerning the very petitions that have been presented. It gives me some cause for concern that honourable members on both sides of the House—and I am included—may present such petitions when the Parliament is debating this issue in another place. I feel that the petitions so presented are germane to the content of the debate in the other House and should not be discussed. Mr President, I merely draw that to your attention and seek your ruling.

President's Ruling

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order, for the following reasons: I have always interpreted the word "debate" in our Standing Orders to refer to speeches made on a particular subject; therefore I do not consider that the petitions that have been presented to the House this afternoon do anything more than make reference to particular subjects; certainly they do not refer to specific speeches, which is the matter principally covered by Standing Order No. 133.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Highways (Liability for Straying Animals) Bill.
2. Dog Amendment Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by the Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), and transmitted to the Assembly.

ACTS AMENDMENT (CONSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL) BILL*Second Reading*

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [5.15 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is for an Act to reduce the number of members in the Legislative Council from 34 to 22 and to provide that, at elections for the Legislative Council, each elector will have a vote which is equal in value to every other vote.

This Bill will ensure that the people of this State, for the first time, will be fairly represented in this Chamber. They are not fairly represented now. They never have been. By one device after another—by whatever form of manipulation

necessary—conservative parties have always seen to it that Labor could never have a majority in this House, no matter how the people voted.

At first the corruption of the electoral system was simple and blatant. It was achieved by restricting the vote to males who owned property of a stated value. That effectively cut out most of the adult population and, to make matters worse, those men who could vote could do so more than once.

It was not until 1963 that property qualifications and plural voting were abolished. Women belatedly were given the franchise at the same time. That widening of the franchise, however, did not make this Chamber democratic. On the contrary, the system under which we are elected today is just as unrepresentative as it was when it involved a property franchise, plural voting, and a sexually discriminatory roll.

The present system weights the vote of people in different areas so as to allow a majority of members to a minority of voters. Indeed, it ensures that.

Thus, the nine provinces with the smallest enrolment elect 18 out of our 34 councillors, but represent only 28.1 per cent of electors. It is surely self-evident that a democratic system would ensure that that last figure was at least close to 50 per cent and, preferably, above it.

The distortions of the system are readily demonstrated. For example, the result of the 1983 Legislative Council election was as follows—

Party	Votes Cast	Seats Gained
Liberal	45.7 per cent	9
Labor	51.3 per cent	7

The combined vote in the 1980 and 1983 elections was: Liberal Party 47.6 per cent, Labor 47.9 per cent. The Liberals, however, captured 19 seats and Labor only 12.

In other words, even when the vote for the major parties is quite even, the seats which result are grossly uneven and always distorted to favour the anti-Labor parties.

From the time the present system was adopted in the mid-1960s this has been the result time and time again. It will continue to be repeated until a fair and democratic system of elections is introduced.

That is the purpose of this Bill.

The Bill seeks to ensure that at elections for the Legislative Council each elector has the right to cast a vote which is equal in value to every other vote. Unlike the approach of past Liberal Governments, which invariably used electoral amend-

ments to advantage and to entrench their own position, this Bill is not for the benefit of the Labor Party or any other party. Its sole purpose is to ensure that the members in this House can reflect and do reflect the wishes of the people from time to time. Put another way, it is to ensure, for the first time, democratic government in Western Australia.

International recognition of the principle of equal suffrage is found in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights to which Australia is a signatory. The declaration states—

The will of the people shall be the basis of authority of government. This will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot or by equivalent voting procedures.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, to which Australia is a signatory, adopts the same ideal in article 25.

We adopt the view of the United States Supreme Court in *Baker v. Carr* where it was said—

The weight of a citizen's vote cannot be made to depend on where he lives. As nearly as practicable, one man's vote should be equal to another.

That is the philosophy behind this Bill. It is the philosophy of a Government which is prepared to accept the verdict of the people. The people have a right to exercise their vote on a fair and equal basis.

To become law, this Bill must not only be passed by both Houses of Parliament, but must also be approved by a majority of all State electors at a referendum. This will be the first time in the history of this State that important State constitutional changes will be decided by the people themselves.

This Bill, therefore, not only provides the opportunity to replace the least democratic set of electoral boundaries in Australia with a system that is fair to all, but also can do so only if endorsed by the most democratic method of all—the referendum. To reject this Bill, and thereby the people's opportunity to pass judgment on it, would itself be a denial of democracy.

I turn now to the major provisions of the Bill.

Most importantly, the Bill provides that, for future elections for the Legislative Council, the whole State will be a single electorate, and the ballot will be counted by the quota preferential method of proportional representation. In other words, the Legislative Council will be elected in the same way as Senators of this State.

Every elector's vote will be equal. Parties will gain seats in direct proportion to the votes cast for them. A majority of votes will mean a majority of seats. In such a State-wide election, small parties and Independents can gather votes from a geographically scattered base of support. Minorities and Independents will thereby have a realistic chance of parliamentary representation never previously available to them. Every candidate who wins $8\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of the vote—about 58 000—will be elected.

At the same time, the Bill provides for a reduction in the number of Legislative Council members from 34 to 22. This will produce a saving of almost \$500 000, but the change is not based simply on financial considerations. The fact is that Australia as a whole, and Western Australia in particular, have too many politicians. The average ratio of upper House members to population in the Australian States is 1: 76 000. Western Australia's ratio at the moment is about double that figure with one member per 39 000 population. The reduction in numbers from 34 to 22 will give a ratio of 1: 61 000, still well in excess of the average upper House ratio.

Once the Bill is enacted no future changes in the method of election to the Council will be possible unless also agreed by referendum. This will apply as well to either an increase or decrease in the number of councillors.

The Bill provides also that half of the Legislative Council members will retire at each general election. Under the present system, members can be defeated at an election, but do not retire until 21 May in the sixth year of their term. Earlier this year, we had defeated councillors sitting in Parliament and voting. That was a ludicrous situation which we should not allow to recur and which the provisions of this Bill will prevent.

Hon. Neil Oliver interjected.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: A periodic Council election will occur with every general election, with the longer serving half of the members retiring at the same time as the Legislative Assembly. In other words, Council members will in future be elected for two Assembly terms.

Members will note from the Bill that it is proposed that, at the next general election, 11 Legislative Council members will be elected under the new system and will serve alongside the 17 members elected in 1983. Continuity will be preserved by a two-stage transition which will be completed at the elections after next. In the transitional period, Council members will continue to represent the province from which they were elected.

Provision is made in the Bill for casual vacancies. Those occurring among members elected from provinces will continue to be filled by the existing method during the transitional period. In the case of councillors elected by proportional representation, casual vacancies will be filled by the Governor appointing the highest eligible candidate from the same group of candidates, provided that the appointed person remains a member of the party which formed the group.

If the vacancy is caused by a member who is not in a group, a joint sitting of both Houses will appoint a replacement. If the vacancy is caused by a member who is in a party, someone from that party will be appointed.

So far as voting itself is concerned, a valid vote under the reformed system will require the expression of 11 preferences only. If the voter wishes he may record more, but there will be no requirement to record a number against every candidate. This will avoid a repetition at the State level of some of the more unfortunate situations we have experienced in the past when large numbers of candidates stood for election to the Senate.

For the Legislative Assembly, the Bill introduces an optional preferential voting system. Voters for the assembly will be required to place the number "1" against the candidate they favour. They may, if they wish, place further numbers against the names of other candidates and, where preferences are shown, they will be given effect.

A vote will be treated as formal where the intention of the voter is clear to the returning officer.

So far as counting is concerned for future Legislative Council elections, the system provided by the Bill is based on the proportional representation provisions which now apply to elections of the Senate and of the Legislative Council of New South Wales. These have been shown by experience to be practical and fair.

As the number of Legislative Council members will be reduced from 34 to 22 over the next two elections, some members who are defeated in the process may not have served seven years and will not be entitled to a parliamentary pension as a result.

Special provisions are included in another Bill so that any such members with less than seven years' service will receive a pension in proportion to their term of office. For example, a defeated member with six years' service will receive six-sevenths of the basic pension.

While on the topic of special allowances, it should be noted that additional allowances will be

made available to councillors elected by a State-wide vote to meet the challenge of representing their expanded constituency.

These allowances will ensure, in particular, that councillors and their staffs will be able to offer an improved service to electors in country and remote areas.

Councillors will be entitled to operate up to two electorate offices provided only one of these is in Perth. It is hoped that some of the new councillors may choose to have both offices in country locations and they will be entitled to do so.

Having introduced the question of country representation, let me lay to rest the myth that the distortion in the present Council boundaries and enrolments is somehow intended to make up for disadvantages of isolation and distance from Perth. That is not their purpose, and it is not their effect.

North Province, for example, has an area 8½ times greater than South-East Province, is further from Perth than South-East Province, yet has a 5 000 greater enrolment than South-East Province. Such examples could be multiplied.

Disadvantages of isolation and distance cannot and need not be compensated by a discriminatory voting system. Distance and isolation are far better and more fairly compensated by improved transport, better communications, additional electorate allowances and offices, and assistance to members servicing such areas.

Those who argue that remote areas should be compensated by a weighted voting system might turn their minds to other disadvantaged electors. Is not the logical extension of such discrimination a weighted voting system for the unemployed, the sick, the poor, the aged, the elderly, the handicapped, the illiterate? So the list could go on.

Hon. P. G. Pental: That is almost as stupid as the other argument.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Weighting of votes is not the answer in a democratic society. The only democratic and fair method of voting is on the basis of one-vote-one-value.

Hon. P. G. Pental: Your Federal colleagues just do not agree with you.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! During this debate I am not going to tolerate any interjections from anybody when a member is addressing himself to a particular matter. I will commence by issuing the warning right now.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: That is not only accepted throughout the western democracies, but

also close to home in the Commonwealth and most other States.

It is a principle that the Liberal Party, itself, has strongly supported at the Federal level. The Federal Liberal Party has always accepted proportional representation in the Senate, and it voted as well for the present 10 per cent tolerance limit in House of Representatives' electorates. Liberal members in the State Parliament would do themselves more credit if, in this respect, they followed the lead of their Federal colleagues.

Mr President, this Bill provides that each Western Australian will have an equal say in future elections for this Legislative Council. It will ensure that parties gain seats in proportion to votes received. It fulfils the Government's election promise of a referendum to democratise the Legislative Council.

A rejection of this Bill will preserve the present undemocratic system by which a majority of the members of the Legislative Council need only represent 28 per cent of the electors of the State.

In 1977, Sir Charles Court said—

If any political party or groups want to change the basis of our Constitution, then we believe it is right and proper that the people should first be consulted and given an opportunity to consent to or reject the proposals.

This Bill provides just such an opportunity. Its passage through this House will not, of itself, change the law. That can only happen if the people, by referendum, support the proposals as well.

In other words, the final decision is with the people and the Government, for its part, is quite content to let the people decide.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon I. G. Medcalf (Leader of the Opposition).

RACING AND TROTTING: HONORARY ROYAL COMMISSION

Report: Motion

Debate resumed from 21 September.

HON. MARGARET McALEER (Upper West) [5.32 p.m.]: The Honorary Royal Commission on Racing and Trotting was set up originally as a Select Committee at least partly in response to or as a result of the uneasiness and dissatisfaction felt by many country and provincial clubs as to the allocation and distribution of funds.

A further reason for the inquiry was the decision by the Western Australian Turf Club taken

some years ago to have midweek racing in the metropolitan area. The decision was made at the expense of the provincial clubs, and certainly in some conflict with them.

I think it is true to say the Western Australian Turf Club was not in favour of the Select Committee. However, the Honorary Royal Commission, as it became in the course of time, duly reported this year.

Before the Government could or did react to the report, the WATC decided to embark on a rationalisation programme of its own. The provincial clubs, in an effort to have some input into any decision which the WATC might make, set up a working party which met with executive members of the WATC, as I understand it. However, shortly after this meeting the WATC, completely disregarding any proposals which the working party put forward, wrote to the Toodyay Race Club, for one, and said—

Further to our discussions on the 8th July last, relating to rationalisation of the Eastern District Clubs, I advise that my Committee has now adopted a policy on the matter.

It has been decided that in the context of this Club's response to the Minister on the report of the Honorary Royal Commission, the racing in your area should be conducted on a combined-Club basis, operating at the Northam and York Racecourses. It is envisaged that the courses at Toodyay and Beverley, would be phased out.

It should be appreciated that the matter of timing has not been addressed, simply because it will be now a matter for the Government to decide whether or not it will support this action by amending, among other things, the racing restriction Act.

I believe most of the issues were discussed at some length last Friday, however, if there are other points or issues that you feel should be discussed, I would be happy to meet with you.

That letter was signed by Mr R. H. Campbell, Chief Executive.

The letter may seem to suggest some degree of prior agreement with the Toodyay Race Club, but I understand this was far from the case. The Toodyay Race Club was shattered by the letter and the Toodyay Shire Council shared its dismay and completely supported its protests. The people of the district and of the adjoining districts, as well as others from the metropolitan area, particularly those who were connected with racing as owners, trainers, jockeys, or as regular racegoers, were opposed to the proposal to abolish Toodyay

and Beverley racecourses and to leave only those at Northam and York.

I shall confine my remarks largely to the Toodyay Race Club, which is the only provincial club within Upper West Province.

No reason was given by the WATC for its choice of Toodyay as one of the two courses in this area to be abolished or abandoned.

THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Hon. MARGARET McALEER: After it received the letter the Toodyay club sent a delegation to the WATC to ask for information, but none was forthcoming. Yet on Totalisator Agency Board turnover, in profitability Toodyay is second only to Northam among the provincial eastern districts clubs.

The Toodyay club had a good financial situation in respect of the money which it had borrowed to improve racecourse facilities, although I have been told that the WATC for some time confused the club's repayment of the loans raised for the purpose of improving those facilities—some \$7 500 per annum—with the rent the club paid for the land where the course is, which is approximately \$165 per annum.

The club has an attractive and popular racecourse—popular not only with metropolitan racegoers midweek, but also with owners, trainers, and riders.

As far as the town and district of Toodyay are concerned, quite apart from the money which people in town for race day may spend, the club estimates that it spends some \$60 000 a year, which includes payment for catering and employment of staff for race day. There is a permanent curator and a part-time secretary as well.

Nine local organisations are involved in the catering, among them being church groups and the St. John Ambulance Association. The profits are divided equally between the groups and at the end of the season last year they received \$1 100 each.

Buoyed up by these important reasons for continuing to race at Toodyay, a petition of protest was circulated in the area and nearly 3 000 signatures were obtained.

However, prior to the petition being presented to the Legislative Assembly, an article appeared in *The West Australian* which claimed that the WATC had relented; Toodyay was to retain its racing and its status as a provincial club; and Beverley would lose its provincial status, but

would join the Great Southern Racing Association and take part in its country race round.

It was mentioned rather vaguely that the remaining three eastern districts clubs would lose further race days to the metropolitan area. No notification of this new decision was received by the Toodyay Race Club before the article appeared in the newspaper and, indeed, notification was not received until some days later.

However, I believe information came from the WATC to the Toodyay Race Club in response to a telephone conversation and the matter was confirmed in a letter. In the meantime further information came to the Toodyay Race Club, and this was also confirmed I believe, to the effect that the new proposal was conditional on the Government's decision not to act further on the Honorary Royal Commission's report and, as well, on the Government's agreement to an amendment of the Racing Restriction Act to allow more metropolitan race days.

The article in *The West Australian* also mentioned that the country race clubs of Dongara and Coolgardie would still be phased out. However, first of all, where Toodyay is concerned, while it would be very glad to retain racing and it has been very relieved by the news that the racecourse is not to be abolished, the committee was not at all certain that it could continue to race at any price; that is, the club did not believe that it could afford to lose further race days to the metropolitan area at the present rate of compensation paid by the WATC, and perhaps it could not afford to do so even if a higher level of compensation were paid.

In my view it is quite unacceptable that the WATC should make these decisions without consultation with the associations or, indeed, any of the people in the industry outside the WATC itself, and that it should be attempting to have the Honorary Royal Commission's report bypassed, as it appears to be doing.

However, in an attempt to combat the lack of consultation, a new racing council has been formed, to be known as the WA Thoroughbred Racing Council. Its membership is open to anyone interested in racing including associations, owners, trainers, and vets, as I understand it.

The WATC did not accept the invitation to be present at the meeting which formed the new council, but it was hoped it would participate in the first meeting held yesterday, that it would participate thereafter, and that future decisions would be influenced by, or at least not taken without consultation with, all interested parties.

While this new council is a worthwhile effort to bring unity to the racing industry, or perhaps more truly to redress the balance of the situation—which is very much the WATC first and the rest nowhere—I doubt very much whether it is sufficient in itself to sort out problems highlighted by the Honorary Royal Commission or to protect non-metropolitan racing from the WATC's seemingly instinctive reactions to the report.

In the meantime, the future of other country race clubs is uncertain. Dongara and Mingenew, clubs which race on local courses on two days of the year, appear to be under threat in Upper West Province. In my opinion, it would be absurd and outrageous for the WATC to phase them out with a stroke of the pen; they have very pleasant courses, hard-working committees, and conduct popular meetings.

Dongara provides meetings on two very important dates, Easter Saturday, and in the second week of the Geraldton Sunshine Festival—meetings which are a real attraction to visitors in the region at that time. It is on the point of acquiring ownership of its racecourse after many years of negotiation; an acquisition applauded by everyone interested in country racing.

Both clubs provide dates for racing which are outside the regular Geraldton programme and so give racegoers, as well as a great variety of horses from far and wide, an opportunity which would not otherwise exist.

On the one hand, it is simply not fair that they should be wiped out of existence by the WATC without so much as a by-your-leave, and all racing in the area confined to the Geraldton racecourse. On the other hand, it is possible that it may suit the Northampton and Walkaway clubs, which already race on the Geraldton racecourse, to amalgamate on certain conditions with the Geraldton Turf Club and so strengthen the financial position of that club and Geraldton as a racing centre.

For the rest, no-one knows where the WATC sword may fall next. The Acts under which it operates give it much power and it would appear to be abusing it. While all the recommendations of the Honorary Royal Commission may not be acceptable to the racing fraternity, they do deserve serious consideration by the Government and the racing industry, and so do the problems which they highlight. Certainly it is not good enough for the WATC to try to pre-empt that consideration by making unilateral decisions.

Finally, I believe that the responsible Minister, the Hon. David Parker, was to meet with rep-

representatives of the WATC this week. I understand it was the wish also of provincial clubs to have the chance to put their points of view to the Minister. I hope he will give them that opportunity, if he has not done so already.

I support the motion.

HON. TOM KNIGHT (South) [5.45 p.m.]: Much has been said in regard to this motion. You, Mr Deputy President (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth), and I are aware of the effect this question has had on one of the areas we represent, the Mt. Barker area, and, in particular, the Mt. Barker Turf Club. In the local Press of that area over the last couple of months headlines such as "Barker race club under threat", "Mt Barker puts case to WATC" and "Death knell for Barker racing" have appeared. In the "Late News" of the *The Albany Advertiser* of 2 August this article appeared—

THE chief executive of the WA Turf Club, Mr Ray Campbell, this morning refused to be drawn on a definite statement concerning the close of the Mt. Barker Turf Club.

He said it was not possible at this stage to give a definite answer as to the continuation or otherwise of the Mt Barker Turf Club's activities. Talks scheduled with the club this Sunday would centre on the upgrading of the racing industry in the Albany-Mt Barker districts.

That article was followed by others with headlines of, "Local community outraged by WATC powers", and "Mt Barker gets behind Turf Club". In *The West Australian* of 29 July under the heading of "Amalgamation is the answer", these comments were made—

Rationalisation must be introduced in WA racing if the sport is to continue the growth rate it has maintained in the last 10 years.

Further on the report states—

There should be some form of amalgamation of country clubs and a greater emphasis placed on midweek city racing at Belmont Park and Ascot.

I believe that represents the basis of the whole issue. The city club, the WATC, wants to take away from country areas a recreational pursuit which has become so much a part of country activities and the recreational pursuits of country people, in order to have that recreation conducted in the metropolitan area. We again see centralism. Once we allow centralism to occur in this area of activity, we will have all country sports centralised to the metropolitan area. This

matter does not represent a threat just to the Mt. Barker Turf Club, but also to other turf clubs, such as those to which the Hon. Margaret McAleer referred. In fact, centralism is a threat to all country recreational activities. We must not allow country people to be discriminated against. They should not be forced to travel to Perth for their recreational activities. Centralism of horse racing is what was meant by the statement that more emphasis should be placed on racing in the city. It would mean that country people again would have to go to the city for what they want.

Firms operating in this State have seen the need to have supermarkets, etc., sited in country areas to save country people the expenses associated with travelling, but now the WATC is trying to turn the tables and make country people travel to the city for horse racing. This will take away the rights of country racehorse owners, trainers, jockeys, and so forth, to be able to participate in their country area, because they will find it difficult to get to the city. Admittedly, a number of top racehorses are raised in the metropolitan area, but country race clubs fulfil a need in country areas, and that situation must be maintained.

Mr Deputy President (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth), you would be aware of the great deal of growth that has taken place and the money that has been spent over the last 10 years in the Mt. Barker area to establish a top-class racing club. Those top-class facilities have been provided by the whole community. These people have raised funds and have been supported by the Racecourse Development Trust, which the previous Liberal Government set up many years ago to ensure decentralisation in racing did come about and did benefit country people. However, I will not prolong that discussion tonight.

Last week articles appeared in *The Great Southern Herald* and the *Plantagenet News* in relation to this matter. In the *Great Southern Herald* of 28 September this article appeared—

THE Mt Barker Turf Club has emerged victorious after its battle for survival against the WA Turf Club.

The decision not to close the club was given to the Mt Barker club on Friday after it had met with the WA Turf Club's Country Club sub-committee in Perth last Tuesday.

The president of the Mt Barker club, Mr George Taylor, said he had been told by the WATC that no changes would be made to the club but there would be nothing in writing to confirm this until the WATC had met with the Minister for Planning and Employment, Mr David Parker.

The WATC committed itself but would put nothing to that effect in writing. We must maintain a watchdog position because, although its word has been given, nothing has been put in writing. With the support of people like the Hon. Fred McKenzie, I am sure racing in country areas will survive. He expressed his feelings on this subject in his speech the other week, and I am sure he will attempt to convince Mr Parker that we should do everything we can to ensure that country racing survives.

The article continued—

Mr Taylor said the club had made it clear to the WATC that it rejected any suggestion of amalgamation with the Albany club and pointed out the benefits of staying as an independent club.

The chief executive of the WATC, Mr Ray Campbell, said the meeting with Mr Parker would take place next week.

Mr Campbell denied that there had ever been any intention of closing the Mt Barker Turf Club and said it was only newspaper speculation that this would happen.

This statement indicates that the WATC has done a soft shoe shuffle and backed off, which has pleased me greatly because I know that the Mt. Barker club has worked extremely hard to produce top-class racing facilities for a top-class racing season, which would do any club in this State proud.

In the *Plantagenet News* of 28 September under the heading of "W.A.T.C. Give Turf Club Green Light" this article appears—

The long fight to save the Mount Barker Turf Club appears to have ended and the club will retain its own identity and continue racing at the same level as it previously enjoyed. This was the main content of a telephone conversation between the Chief Executive and Secretary of the W.A.T.C. Mr Ray Campbell and the President of the Mount Barker Turf Club, Mr George Taylor on Friday morning.

Again, there was a phone call. We must maintain our present stance; we must preserve racing in Mt. Barker and in other country centres until such time as we have in black and white a commitment from the WATC, which will mean that the Mt. Barker club can breathe easy. So many statements have been made, and so many points have been discounted.

Statements were made after this motion was brought before the Council and members had their say. Obviously the WATC has woken up to

the fact that it has bitten off more than it can chew—it has done the backing off. It realises that country racing must be to the benefit of racing generally in Western Australia. Among the many people who support and sponsor the WATC in the meetings it conducts in Perth are people from country areas. Horses from country areas race in Perth, and people from the country attend meetings at Perth. The attempt by the WATC to do the monstrous act of having all the racing in WA conducted at Perth, must stop.

If the WATC gets its way, racing in WA will be centralised. Next we will have the Melbourne Turf Club try to take over the WATC in order to ensure top-class meetings in Australia are centred in Melbourne, where racing originally commenced. The present day Melbourne is known as the centre of horse racing in Australia.

The people of Mt. Barker have got right behind the Mt. Barker club. Even people who have not previously been involved in racing have realised that many people have fought for a long time to establish the Mt. Barker club, and that someone completely independent of that club made a decision in regard to the facilities which people in the area had spent money on. A lot of the money was ratepayers' money, and that is why many people got their backs up. The ratepayers of the area contributed to the establishment of the facilities at Mt. Barker, and people from outside the area supported the establishment of the club and its facilities.

Mr Deputy President (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth), you and I made moves to establish the club and to make money available to the club through the Racecourse Development Trust, and many other people gave support and made money available to the club. The Government can hardly turn around to support the WATC in what it wishes to do, when one considers the fact that a Government body, the Racecourse Development Trust, saw the need to support financially the continuance and betterment of the Mt. Barker club. The present Government must feel the same way about this club as did the previous Government. Since we have the support of both sides we must retain the individuality of country clubs as against the centralisation of racing to the metropolitan area. The WATC wants everything to do with racing centred in Perth so that it can draw the big crowds and receive the big gate takings. It has said that more midweek races should be conducted in Perth, which would take many of the midweek races now conducted by country clubs from country areas.

We must maintain our watchdog position and must ensure that Mr Parker, after his discussion

with the WATC, has a letter signed by the WATC to the effect that it will maintain racing in its present form, and if the question again comes up for review it will be answered on the basis that everyone is aware of the situation instead of their being subjected to scare tactics similar to those which eventuated this time.

I give fair warning of what will happen if these assurances are not given. The WATC operates under an Act of this Parliament; for anyone to say we do not have any say as to what happens with Western Australian racing is totally and utterly wrong. If the rights of country race clubs are removed we should consider the establishment of a country racing tribunal and demand 50 per cent of the Government's TAB money and Racecourse Development Trust money go to country racing.

This whole issue came about as a result of the commission's suggestion in regard to the 70:30 distribution being changed to 60:40. It was suggested that the best way of changing the percentage of allocations was to close down country tracks. We must maintain the suggestion that the allocation to country clubs be increased, and we must get a letter from the WATC—get something in black and white—stating that country racing will continue. If the WATC looks like it will take any other course we will have to set up two tribunals, one for country racing and one for city racing, and give country racing 50 per cent of TAB moneys.

I support the motion.

Debated adjourned, on motion by the Hon. H. W. Gayfer.

House adjourned at 5.57 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Protective Clothing

477. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Within each regional area, how many overalls, boots and helmets are required to equip volunteers currently members of the State Emergency Service groups?
- (2) What is the cost of supplying to group members the required protective clothing?
- (3) For each regional area, what additional overalls, boots and helmets have been requested by State Emergency Service groups to outfit prospective volunteers for the remainder of 1983?
- (4) What is the estimated cost of supplying protective clothing to prospective members to the end of 1983?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) All members have been equipped except for the following:

State headquarters	110
Metropolitan south	210
Metropolitan north	300
Great southern and goldfields	220
South-west and upper great southern	280
Midlands	230
Gascoyne/Murchison and Greenough	160
Pilbara and Kimberley	190
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Total required	1 800

- (2) It costs \$130 to equip one member with adequate safety clothing.

- (3)

State headquarters	20
Metropolitan south	80
Metropolitan north	80
Great southern and goldfields	20
South-west and upper great southern	70
Midlands	40
Gascoyne/Murchison and Greenough	30
Pilbara and Kimberley	40
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Total required	380

- (4) Estimated cost of \$49 400 (\$130 x 380).

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Local Government Involvement

481. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Which metropolitan local government authorities have active volunteer State Emergency Service groups?
- (2) Taking the most recently available figure, what is the number of personnel in each group?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1)

Armadale	
Cockburn	
Gosnells	
Kalamunda	
Melville	
Rockingham	
Serpentine/Jarrahdale	
Bayswater	
Perth	
Stirling	
Subiaco	
Swan	
Wanneroo	
- (2)

Armadale	70
Cockburn	40
Gosnells	40
Kalamunda	80
Melville	30
Rockingham	60
Serpentine/Jarrahdale	60
Bayswater	43
Perth	54
Stirling	45
Subiaco	20
Swan	40
Wanneroo	60
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Total	642

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Protective Clothing

485. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) What protective equipment is normally supplied to volunteers working with the State Emergency Service?
- (2) What is the cost of outfitting each volunteer?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Normally basic equipment clothing issued to each member including safety helmets, consists of overalls and safety boots. When available foul weather trousers and jacket are also provided.
- (2) Including the purchase of the required foul weather clothing, cost to outfit each member is \$130-\$140.

TOURISM

Spencers Brook-Wundowie Railway Line

487. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to my question 247 of Wednesday, 24 August 1983, in relation to the possible use of the Spencers Brook-Wundowie railway line for tourism purposes, and ask—

- (1) Is it a fact that his colleague, the Minister for Transport, and Westrail officers, met yesterday at 4.00 p.m. with parties interested in retaining the line for tourist purposes?
- (2) If so, what was the outcome of the meeting?
- (3) Is it correct that the lifting of this line is now to proceed as originally planned?
- (4) Did the Minister make any efforts to intervene to ensure that the line was kept intact for tourism purposes?
- (5) Has the Minister come to any arrangement with the Minister for Transport over the replacement of this heavy gauge line with a lighter gauge?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) to (4) The decision that the line be lifted by Westrail was confirmed at the meeting but the interested group was offered replacement light rail.

The group is considering the offer and the Minister for Transport is expecting a further submission shortly.

An officer from the Department of Tourism attended the meeting.

It is pertinent to point out that the heavy rail has an opportunity value of some \$1.1 million and is urgently needed prior to the commencement of the coming

grain haulage programme, for line upgrading between Amery and Wyalkatchem.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Bunbury: Hall-gymnasium

488. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government programmed the building of a hall/gymnasium at the Bunbury Senior High School?
- (2) If so, when will it be built?
- (3) If not, why not?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) to (3) The Bunbury Senior High School had the opportunity to opt for a hall/gymnasium within its present building programme but it was not a first priority and could not be included.

HOSPITALS

Charges: Differences

489. Hon. W. G. ATKINSON, to the Attorney-General representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will the Minister give details of the difference in hospital charges between normal charges and charges made for workers' compensation cases in ordinary hospitals and teaching hospitals?
- (2) Will the Minister give the reasons for the difference in charges in detail?
- (3) As extra charges in hospitals have played a large part in the rapid rise in workers' compensation insurance premiums, will the Minister give an undertaking to order an urgent review of these charges to ensure workers' compensation cases are not charged at higher levels than normal charges?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) (a) Charges for hospital accommodation, maintenance, care and other services, excluding medical services—

Workers' compensation patients:

	\$ per day
Teaching hospitals ..	220
Non-teaching hospitals	154

Other (non-compensable) patients:

	\$ per day
Single bed ward.....	145
Other wards.....	125

(b) Charges for hospital accommodation, maintenance, care and other services, including medical services—

Workers' compensation patients:

	\$ per day
Teaching hospitals ..	285
Non-teaching hospitals	219

Other (non-compensable) patients:

	\$ per day
Single bed ward.....	210
Other wards.....	190

(c) Charges for outpatient services—

Workers' compensation patients—
all services:

	\$
Teaching hospitals ..	33
Non-teaching hospitals	28
Other (non-compensable) patients—all public hospitals:	
	\$
Medical services	28
Pathology	25
Radiology	40
Other non-medical services.....	12

(2) Charges for workers' compensation and for other compensable patients are based on actual cost of providing the service in public hospitals whereas charges to other patients are kept lower than cost by the payment to hospitals of Government subsidies.

(3) Annual reviews of charges are carried out and in accordance with the hospitals (services charges) regulations a determination of compensable patients' charges is made annually by the Minister for Health. As indicated in (2) the charges determined are based on actual cost.

TOURISM

Spencers Brook-Wundowie Railway Line

490. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Mines representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it correct that the lifting of the heavy gauge railway line between Spencers Brook and Wundowie is to proceed as originally planned?
- (2) Is the heavy gauge line to be used for scrap and, if so, what is its approximate value?
- (3) Is the Minister giving consideration to the replacement of this heavy gauge line with a lighter gauge in order to meet the tourist requirements of the district?
- (4) Will the Minister agree to a cessation of work on the line lifting to allow full discussions to take place with local tourist authorities and those seeking to retain the line for historical purposes?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. This rail has an opportunity value of some \$1.1 million and is urgently needed, prior to the commencement of the coming grain cartage season, on the Amery-Wyalkatchem line upgrading.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No. However, the light rail option is being considered by the interested group and the Minister is expecting a further submission on the tourist railway shortly.

EDUCATION

High School: Newton Moore

491. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government programmed the building of a hall/gymnasium at the

Newton Moore Senior High School,
Bunbury?

- (2) If so, when will it be built?
- (3) If not, why not?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) to (3) The school will be given an opportunity to indicate whether it considers a hall/gymnasium should be included in its building programme within the funding available and its other priorities.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Bunbury: Prevocational Centre

492. Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government programmed the building of a pre-vocational centre at the Bunbury Senior High School?
- (2) If so, when will it be built?
- (3) If not, why not?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) to (3) The school will be given an opportunity to indicate its priority for this project within the funding available and its other requirements.

