Legislative Assembly  
Thursday, 2 April 1987

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 10.45 am, and read prayers.

GERALDTON POLICE STATION  
Staffing: Petition

MR TUBBY (Greenough) [10.47 am]: I have a petition which reads as follows—

To: The Honourable The Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled—

We the undersigned... urge the Minister for Police to give attention to the immediate increase to the staff at the Geraldton Police Station.

Such increase be no less than six officers an increase of two to each shift.

The increase to include one female Police Officer, so that each shift is permanently staffed by one female officer.

Immediate steps be taken to have two aboriginal Police Aides stationed at Geraldton to assist in solving many of the problems which currently exist among aboriginals in the community.

The petition bears 416 signatures. I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.  
(See petition No. 13.)

ANIMALS: VIVISECTION  
Abolition: Petition

MR BURKETT (Scarborough) [10.49 am]: I present a petition from 3,927 residents of Western Australia which reads as follows:—

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

We, the undersigned, as concerned citizens of Western Australia, urge the West Australian Government to legislate for the total abolition of vivisection.

IT IS WRONG to inflict suffering on helpless, unconsenting animals in the vain hope of finding cures for human diseases.

IT IS UNSCIENTIFIC. Diseases artificially induced in animals are often entirely different from those which afflict humans.

IT IS DANGEROUS. Treatments based on misleading animal experiments may seriously harm humans e.g. the malformations caused by Thalidomide. Many methods of medical research exist which DO NOT INVOLVE the use of LIVING ANIMALS.

In view of these alternatives we can see no justification for allowing experimentation on animals to continue.

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

I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.  
(See petition No. 14.)

GREAT SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BILL  
Second Reading

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Regional Development) [10.53 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to establish a Great Southern Development Authority to plan, coordinate and promote the economic and social development of the great southern region of WA.

The State Government, as part of its regional development policies, initiated the "Albany Tomorrow" programme. "Albany Tomorrow" is a development strategy focused on enhancing the economic and social development of the great southern and its regional centre, Albany.

One of the key commitments in the "Albany Tomorrow" programme was the establishment of the Great Southern Development Authority. An interim authority was established on 1 October 1986 and this Bill proposes the establishment of the authority on a statutory basis.

The functions of the authority will be to plan, coordinate and promote the economic and social development of the great southern. This will be achieved by close cooperation be-
tween the authority, other Government agencies, local government, private developers, and community groups.

The Government recognises the need for encouraging regional development and perceives as essential the need for local community input into decision making. It is only through cooperation between Governments at all levels, private enterprise and local communities that development, compatible with community expectations, can be maximised.

The proposed authority has three main components: A board, support staff, and an advisory committee. The seven-person board will consist of a chairman, deputy chairman, the director, ex officio, and four other members. The board is the governing body and provides policy direction for the authority.

The advisory committee will consist of a chairman and 14 members. The membership of the advisory committee will be representative of the interests of the people of the great southern. Special emphasis has focused on the important role of local government and at least six members of the advisory committee will come from nominees from local government. It is also intended that the membership will reflect a substantial representation of people from all areas of the great southern. Their expertise and interest will provide a significant contribution to the development of effective policies and initiatives.

It will be noted that this legislation will enable the authority to establish committees for the purpose of assisting it to carry out its functions. Such committees will be able to examine specific areas of economic and social development and provide additional expertise and community input.

I am confident that through the proposed structure the authority will integrate local community expectations into its decision-making processes.

The staff of the authority is the third and most essential component of the proposed structure. Staff under the direction of the director and the board will implement authority functions. A small, efficient, and effective unit of eight or nine staff is proposed in the first instance with the capacity to engage consultants where specific expertise is required. Staff would be employed under the Public Service Act 1978.

Funding for the proposed authority would be provided in the main from the Consolidated Revenue Fund as approved by Parliament.

In line with modern management practices in the public sector this Bill emphasises delegated authority and accountability. The authority will be Albany-based and through its board and advisory committee will ensure that decisions are made that reflect the priorities of the great southern.

In terms of accountability it should be noted that the authority will be subject to ministerial direction and to the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985 including the need for the preparation of audited annual reports. It should also be noted that a review of the operations and effectiveness of the Act is proposed after five years. The review report will be made available to each House of Parliament.

This Government gave a commitment, prior to the last election, to the development of the great southern and its regional centre, Albany.

The Great Southern Development Authority provides the mechanism for implementing this commitment and I am pleased to be associated with the implementation of the “Albany Tomorrow” programme.

I am sure that the Great Southern Development Authority will provide the impetus for increased economic and social development in the great southern.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Court.

CENSORSHIP OF FILMS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR PARKER (Fremantle—Minister for The Arts) [10.59 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow the Minister to specify picture theatres which are considered to be unsuitable for the screening of restricted exhibition films.

The showing of certain restricted exhibition “R”-rated films at some drive-in picture theatres is causing offence to nearby residents and to passing pedestrians and motorists because the screen can be very easily observed from outside the theatre. Problems are also experienced in controlling minors and other inquisitive persons who gather around the fenceline to view restricted films.
For some time, complaints have been received by the Government, the police, members of Parliament and local authorities about some drive-in theatres which screen particular "R"-rated films in clear view of the public.

Under the Censorship of Films Act, persons aged between two and 18 years may not be admitted to a picture theatre where a restricted film is being exhibited. There is nothing in the Act to prohibit minors or others from watching restricted films from outside the premises.

Provision exists in the Act for the Minister to prohibit the screening of a specified film or to limit the screening of a film to certain venues; for example, "hard-top" picture theatres. However, a direction that a film could not be shown at drive-in picture theatres would have general application and the exact title of each film prohibited would need to be stated in an order. It would be highly desirable to be able to specify particular picture theatres which are considered to be unsuitable for the screening of restricted films.

The proposed amendment would enable the Minister to prohibit the exhibition of restricted films at any specified drive-in picture theatre or at any other specified picture theatre where the screen can be easily observed from outside the premises. The Minister would be able to revoke an order. An offence would be committed by an exhibitor where a restricted film was screened in contravention of an order.

The proposed amendment will assist in confining the viewing of restricted films to adults who have been admitted to a picture theatre suitable for the purpose. The proposed amendment should also assist in protecting persons from exposure to films which they find offensive and will alleviate a situation which has caused embarrassment and concern in the community for some time.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Williams.

DOOR TO DOOR TRADING BILL

Second Reading

MR PETER DOWDING (Maylands—Minister for Works and Services) [11.03 am]: On behalf of the Minister for Consumer Affairs, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce into the Parliament the Door to Door Trading Bill which has significant benefits for both consumers and, perhaps surprisingly, door-to-door traders as well.

This measure is the next step in a long-term programme, of reform with the object of unifying the present diversity of consumer legislation in the various States of Australia.

Each Australian State has or will introduce legislation parallel with this Bill. As a result, the many traders who engage in door-to-door sales will not have to worry about different legal conditions as they cross State borders. In particular, uniform legislation will mean nationwide operations will require only one set of contractual documentation, staff procedures and identification cards.

The benefits to the industry are obvious, and a good example of tangible results achieved by this Government’s commitment to removing unnecessary legislative burdens from small business.

I would now like to say a few words about the benefit of the legislation to consumers.

In the electorate of Kalgoorlie the Minister for Consumer Affairs is only too well aware of the problems that can be caused by unscrupulous door-to-door sellers. His electorate is regularly invaded by itinerant sellers of video recorders, home cladding, roofing and numerous other consumer goods and services. While many of these operators are honest and respectable, some have been manifestly unscrupulous. The constituents have lost sizeable deposits, and traders have forced the acceptance of contracts by commencing work before the expiration of the cooling-off periods provided by the existing Act. In other cases deposits have been accepted, and goods or services have been unsatisfactory or simply not forthcoming.

To some extent this problem has been alleviated by the Credit Act of 1984, which places an onus on linked-credit providers to be satisfied of the ability of the supplier to deliver. This provision has weeded out a substantial number of disreputable operators, but has no application outside credit contracts, and therefore offers no remedy for the consumer who pays in cash. Accordingly, this Door to Door Sales Bill differs from the existing legislation in two respects.

Firstly, it prohibits the supply or delivery of services during the cooling-off period, thus closing off the loophole mentioned earlier.
Secondly, the Bill prohibits the payment of any moneys during the cooling-off period. At the end of the cooling-off period, the trader will have a binding contract, but if the consumer changes his mind before that time, he will not be faced with the problem of recovering his deposit. This provision will eliminate the second loophole described.

In addition, the contractual documents which will be required under the legislation will now not only specifically require a detailed statement of the right to cool off under the contract, and the provision of a document with which to do so, but also will draw the attention of the purchaser in bold print to the fact that this contract is subject to a cooling-off period of 10 days.

Apart from these provisions things will remain much the same. Restrictions will remain on the times at which persons may call at the residence of consumers. There will continue to be requirements to produce identity cards, and traders will still be obliged to announce the purpose of their calls.

This uniform model Door to Door Sales Bill has already been passed and is operative in Tasmania; it is also incorporated in the Fair Trading Bill currently before the Parliament of South Australia. The introduction of this Bill is a further substantial step forward in the progress towards national uniformity of consumer legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Watt.

HUMAN TISSUE AND TRANSPLANT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR PETER DOWDING (Maylands—Minister for Works and Services) [11.08 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides for an amendment to the Human Tissue and Transplant Act 1982 to allow the Minister for Health to authorise specific persons to remove corneal tissue from dead bodies for the purpose of transplantation.

Western Australia’s transplantation laws were rewritten in 1982. Part 3 of the legislation provides for the authorised removal of tissue from the body of a deceased person for the purpose of transplantation or for therapeutic, medical and other purposes. Section 24 of the Act envisages that a medical practitioner will carry out the removal of tissue.

In July 1986 the Lions Eye Institute and Save Sight Foundation established the Lions Eye Bank of Western Australia. The central objective of its establishment was to provide quality eye tissue for corneal grafting, research and other medical purposes. The Lions Eye Bank is situated on the campus of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre. Since its inception more than 100 successful corneal transplants have taken place in Western Australia.

Corneal tissue may become available from the body of a person who dies in a hospital or whose body is brought into a hospital. When suitable donor tissue becomes available, the hospital’s designated medical officer can authorise removal of the tissue. Prior to granting such authorisation, the designated officer must make inquiries as to the possible wishes of the deceased with regard to donation of tissue. The designated officer must be satisfied that the deceased had wished to donate tissue and had not withdrawn his wish. Alternatively, if there is no apparent indication of the deceased’s wish, the designated officer must make inquiries as to whether the deceased would have objected to tissue removal. If there is no evidence of such an objection and if the senior next of kin does not object, the tissue removal may proceed. The designated officer would ascertain the information through discussions with the deceased’s family or doctor or by sighting a signed donor card or donation request on the deceased’s driver’s licence.

If a patient is on a life support system, tissue removal can occur only after brain death has been certified.

Excision of corneal tissue is carried out in a skilled manner to achieve the best cosmetic and aesthetic result. Donor tissue is then assessed for suitability and blood grouping. Testing for the presence of antibodies to the AIDS virus is also undertaken.

Most people can donate corneas. The Eye Bank will accept corneas from donors aged from 12 months to 80 years.

Corneal tissue will generally be transplanted soon after it has been obtained and tested. On occasions, corneal tissue has been sent interstate for emergency surgery.

Corneal transplantation is undertaken in Western Australia by any one of the 12 ophthalmic surgeons who have been accredited by the Eye Bank. A person receiving a corneal transplant will usually spend several days in hospital and could expect dramatic improvement in the eyesight soon after.
Under the present wording of section 24 of the Human Tissue and Transplant Act 1982, only medical practitioners can remove human tissue for the purposes of transplantation. Presently medical registrars at teaching hospitals undertake the removal of corneal tissue. This occurs after consent has been given for the removal of such tissue. In an emergency or in the case of donors becoming available outside teaching hospitals, suitable donor corneal tissue may not be obtained if a medical practitioner is not available to remove it. Ideally, corneal tissue must be removed within ten hours after death.

The South Australian Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1983 is modelled on similar lines to the Human Tissue and Transplant Act 1982. In 1984 the South Australian Act was amended to allow authorised persons to remove tissue for the purpose of corneal transplantation. The amendment before the House is very similar to the Human Tissue and Transplant Act 1982. Anatomists undertake the removal of tissue for transplantation. Members will note that it is only in relation to the removal of tissue for corneal transplantation that it is proposed to depart from the general requirement of removal of tissue by a medical practitioner. Accordingly, I commend this very worthwhile Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bradshaw.

**BUSH FIRES AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

MR GORDON HILL (Helena—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [11.13 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to amend the Bush Fires Act 1954, addressing two areas. It seeks to change the present compulsory overriding powers of a forest officer over fire control officers to discretionary powers, and increase the penalty provisions, which have not been reviewed for ten years.

As the Act now stands, if a forest officer is present at a fire in or near forest or Crown land, he must take supreme control. When this happens, the powers of fire control officers, brigade officers, and brigades are removed—they cease to have any authority under the Act.

A forest officer must take control—must make all decisions relating to the containment of the fire—irrespective of his level of experience or competence.

These overriding powers were given to forest officers following the devastating fires in the early days of settlement when the first group of settlers began using fire to clear their land, and these early protective mechanisms have remained in force so far as State forests are concerned.

However, this situation is clearly in urgent need of remedy since the huge extension of forest officers' jurisdiction to national parks and nature reserves through the creation of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. The question of professional competence may arise should a mistake be made—resulting in loss, damage, injury, or death. The situation also jeopardises the harmonious working relationship between the Bush Fires Board, the volunteer bushfire organisation, the Department of Conservation and Land Management, and other Government agencies with land management interests. They have developed a "mutual aid" approach to firefighting, each assisting outside their area of jurisdiction to maximise all firefighting resources such as vehicles, equipment, and manpower. This good
working relationship is naturally jeopardised when a senior bushfire control officer is stripped of power on the arrival of a forest officer who may be much less experienced and competent in firefighting matters.

This Bill removes the mandatory requirements placed on a forest officer to take charge of fires irrespective of the circumstances, replacing them with discretionary powers.

This amendment, requested by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, has been endorsed by the Bush Fires Board in the interests of maintaining effective working relationships between forest officers, local bushfire control officers, and volunteers.

This Bill also seeks to increase the penalties for offences committed under the Bush Fires Act. These penalties were last considered by Parliament in 1977, and are now too low to offer a realistic deterrent. The new penalties have been recommended following a review carried out by the Bush Fires Board in consultation with other States, the Country Shire Councils Association, and the Local Government Association. Penalties in Victoria and South Australia have been very substantially increased following the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983.

Examples of the increased penalties sought under the Bill before the House include—

- lighting fires during prohibited times—the fine increased from $800 to $2,000, with the six-month gaol option remaining the same;
- false alarm—from $200 to $500;
- failure of a landholder to extinguish a fire on his land—from $400 to $1,000;
- arson—from $2,000 to $4,000, with the five-year gaol option remaining the same;
- permit-related offences—from $400 to $1,000.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Blaikie.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from 1 April.

MR THOMAS (Welshpool) [11.18 am]: I enter the debate to support the motion moved by my colleague, the member for Victoria Park, and seconded by another colleague, the member for Cockburn, and use this opportunity to raise a quite anomalous matter, which is that women who choose to have their babies at home at the present time receive no financial support through our health insurance system. The issue is quite unjust and I think it can be illustrated simply by an examination of the costs involved.

A woman who chooses to have a child by home birth must engage a midwife to attend, usually for classes prior to the labour, for the labour itself, and for some time afterwards. The costs throughout Australia for engaging a midwife to conduct these services vary, but figures that I have been quoted over the last few days in Perth indicate that a figure of between $600 and $700 is quite common for that service. Given that up to 45 hours of service is required altogether, that would seem to be a quite reasonable fee.

On the other hand, a woman who chooses to have a baby in a hospital receives precisely the same service from the hospital using salaried midwives, and the expense of that is automatically picked up by Medicare or by a private health insurance fund.

The effect of that is that one class of people; namely, those who have their children in hospitals, are reimbursed by the health insurance system for the cost of midwifery services which they must use, yet those who choose to have their children at home have to meet that expense themselves. I believe that is unjust and I intend to explain why.

There has been a marked change in birthing practices in our community over the last century or so. For most of our history, home births have been the norm rather than the exception. It is also the case, as opponents of the home birth system point out, that for most of our history the levels of maternal and infantile mortality and morbidity have been unacceptably high and at standards which would not be accepted today.

Over the last century there has been a marked improvement in the standard of health care generally, in particular in the standards of care for women giving birth to children. To a certain extent, that can be attributed to the fact that there has been a move towards women having their babies in hospitals. It is also explicable by reference to other factors. Standards of health have improved, which means that women having children are in a better position to do so due to their pre-existing health and to the better facilities which are available and which often mean they need not be necessarily confined to the hospitals.
In recent years, however, there has been something of a reaction against the earlier tendency. There is an increase in the number of women—and their partners who are invariably involved—who choose to have their children at home. There is a feeling that the hospital environment is not necessarily the most conducive to a relaxed or comfortable state of mind and certainly is not conducive to the situation where a birth is regarded as a family event. In some circles, it is considered more desirable for the children to be born at home.

That movement has been facilitated by the growth of a voluntary movement, a lay movement which is apart from the health professions generally, and is described as the home birth movement. The are a number of those voluntary associations throughout Australia which encourage home births.

In addition, that movement has received a degree of support from within the medical professions. I use the term “professions” in its plural advisedly because the extent of support has varied within the professions. One of the reasons that has come about is that staff are available within the panoply of medical professions who are able to assist at births outside hospitals with very high standards of training and qualifications. I am referring to the midwives who are specialised nurses. They are now trained in tertiary institutions. Prior to tertiary training they will have been trained within the hospitals to a high degree of skill. To become midwives they will have had postgraduate training.

As I said earlier, there is a degree of support for the home birth movement within the medical professions. By no means could it be said that that support is unanimous. Indeed, it is probably correct to say that the majority of medical practitioners—I am using that in its narrow sense to refer to doctors—would prefer births to occur within the hospitals. However, it is true to say that the home birth movement has a sufficient degree of acceptance within the medical profession to not be described as unorthodox. There is a tendency for it not to have majority support but it has a sufficient degree of support to be regarded as part of the mainstream of medical views.

I illustrate that fact by referring briefly to an editorial in the British Medical Journal last year where a discussion took place on the subject of the wisdom or otherwise of home births. On 10 January 1976 in that journal there was an editorial headed “A place to be born”. It is not my intention to quote at length from that article but essentially it says that there are points for and against home births. On balance they believe the situation would be better if births took place in hospitals rather than in “domiciliary confinements”, which is the phrase they use to describe to lay people what home births are. The editorial discusses a number of factors including the fact that some countries which have very low standards of infant mortality or morbidity and low standards of maternal mortality or morbidity have a higher rate of home births than do the English-speaking nations, where they are more predisposed to hospital-based births. On balance, the article came down on the side of the argument that maternity hospitals were the best places for births to occur, that the reaction away from maternity hospitals would be better countered instead of using the argument against home births by improving or altering the conditions in maternity hospitals so that they were more acceptable.

I wish to read the last paragraph of that article because I believe it summarises the position quite well. It says—

The pressing need is for a review of all aspects of patient care in maternity hospitals so as to make the mother’s stay more congenial without losing any of the discipline which is so essential to the safety of mother and baby. The price of safe and happy childbirth is eternal vigilance, and this is precisely what a well-organised maternity hospital should offer.

I do not think anyone would disagree with those sentiments. The fact of the matter is, however, that there are still some women who would prefer to give birth in their own homes. There are people within the medical profession who believe, for the psychological well-being of the mother and the adaptation of the rest of the family, that this is the preference.

It is interesting to see that in the very next issue of the British Medical Journal dated 31 January 1976, three weeks later, there was a letter to the editor also headed “A place to be born” which was a response to the article I have just quoted from. It is a rather long and involved letter and I do not intend to quote from it other than to note that it presented the contrary point of view. It said that home births—provided they were for women in low risk categories, who were able to be determined statistically, and provided a doctor was consulted during the pregnancy and that everything was all right—was not only a safe practice but also a very desirable practice. That letter
was signed by a group of people who called themselves the members of a study group on home confinement of the National Childbirth Trust. Following that, they have listed their names and professions which include a statistician, a number of sociologists, half a dozen paediatricians, a community midwife, an obstetrician, a psychoanalyst, a social anthropologist, a zoologist, a social psychologist and another obstetrician. That serves to indicate that there are differences within the medical profession as to the wisdom or otherwise of the home birth movement. It is nonetheless a respectable point of view within medical circles to advocate the practice of home births and it is not “beyond the pale”, to coin a phrase.

Mr Bradshaw: Do you know they are having a conference at Bunbury at Easter?

Mr THOMAS: No, I did not. Is the member going?

Mr Bradshaw: I have been invited but I do not think I will be attending.

Mr Laurance: I must tell members about a woman in my electorate who was determined to go to Shark Bay and have a child in the water amongst the dolphins. She could not be talked out of it. I think she was practising the sort of things you are talking about. She was determined she did not want to have it in a hospital. It caused a lot of consternation in that community.

Mr THOMAS: This question has been the subject of a review within Australia, and as I indicated when I commenced my remarks, my main concern is that women choosing to avail themselves of home birth services do not receive any compensation under the Medicare schedules. In 1984, from memory, the Commonwealth Government commissioned a review report titled “Medicare Benefits Review Committee”. Its second report of June 1986 addressed the problem of providing refunds for midwifery services. It is interesting to consider the report, which is quite a full document and which looks at more than just midwifery services.

As most members are aware, paramedical professions are constantly pressuring to have their services included within the Medicare schedules. Most members at different times would have been the subject of lobbying by the various paramedical groups, and this matter was addressed in this review. The committee issued two reports, both very substantial documents, and the second one enumerated at some length the criteria it used to evaluate the various propositions from each of the paramedical professions. It is not my intention to go through them at length other than to say the committee established a three-stage review on which it assessed the proposals put forward by the different professions.

The first stage had four steps, and in order to gain a recommendation from the committee that the group ought to be subject to some sort of funding under the Medicare system, the group had to pass four different hurdles which included cost efficiency and standards of practice and whether the profession was able to self-regulate itself or be subject to statutory regulations.

After that first stage of four criteria was passed the groups were confronted with a second stage of five criteria which went into more detail in different areas and which allowed the committee to further evaluate the propositions put forward by the various professional associations making representation to it. These criteria went not only to the organisation of the profession but also to the availability of the service and the cost of it to consumers and ultimately to the community at large if it were to be subject to reimbursement under the Medicare schedules.

The midwifery submissions were the most favourably received of all those that were addressed to the committee. I will quote briefly from the conclusions which were reached in relation to midwifery. I refer here to paragraph 9.1 on page 244 of the report where the committee says—

We are satisfied that the services provided by midwives rate highly on all the qualifying criteria with the exception of effectiveness, in which we express qualified acceptance based only on our inability to be satisfied as to the availability of back-up services in the event of complications arising at a homebirth delivery. There is an unmet need in relation to women who choose to have their children other than in a hospital.

The committee is talking there about effectiveness, which it qualifies at length in an earlier paragraph. It is not suggesting that midwifery is not able effectively or safely to deliver children in most cases. What the committee is saying is that if there are to be effective home birth services, then in the admittedly unlikely event of some complication there has to be some sort of back-up service available, presumably in the
hospital system, in order that that problem could be resolved as best as possible in the circumstances.

Mr Clarko: Do you think it's safer to have babies born in hospital rather than at home?

Mr Thomas: From what I have read it would seem that on the balance of evidence it is much of a muchness. Admittedly if something goes very wrong a woman is better off in hospital.

In any event, what the committee was saying there when it qualified that one criterion of effectiveness was that it was not reflecting on the effectiveness of the midwifery profession to carry out its duties but on whether the total services available within the community were appropriate for those services to be delivered at home. That is what I want to address myself to in the final recommendation made by the committee.

Following some other comments it made in regard to midwifery services in hospitals which are not relevant to my concern here today, it made a further recommendation, which I will read in full—

9.4 We are of the view that the way forward would be for a pilot program of home births to be instituted to enable an assessment to be made of the feasibility, safety and ongoing cost of home births. Properly evaluated, such a pilot program could go a long way towards resolving many of the contentious issues involved. The preparation of a report assessing a pilot program would assist in decisions about whether the costs, other than the practitioners fees associated with these births should attract Medicare benefits.

This is important—

During their appearance before us, the representatives of the RACOG and Homebirth Australia indicated a willingness to co-operate with such a pilot program.

The committee there is talking about a pilot programme which could be implemented with either salaried midwives based in maternity hospitals or with midwives receiving some other form of funding but with back-up services at hospitals.

In this respect the committee has perhaps been a little too cautious. On the balance of evidence available it would seem it should be possible now to make midwives' fees available for recompense. The committee seems to have been too conservative in view of the factual conclusions it reached earlier.

The experience which has been found in other countries would confirm that assertion in a number of respects. In areas in Europe and other places where such fees are able to be compensated under the health insurance systems, there has so far been no indication that it leads to frivolous use of or irresponsible practices by the midwifery profession.

There are a number of reasons why standards have improved, why some countries have never gone away from the practice of home births, and why in the English-speaking world there is something of a tendency back to home births. Since the widespread practice of having births in maternity hospitals came about early this century or late last century there have been very marked improvements in medical practices which make it quite possible for women to have, in most cases, safe deliveries at home. The techniques of diagnosis and prognosis have markedly improved and this makes much more likely the prospects of identifying any problem which might be there. Transport also is readily available to take women to maternity hospitals or such other place as they may have to go in the event of some sort of emergency arising. Also, very well-qualified staff are now much more widely available.

During the time when higher levels of infant mortality and morbidity prevailed and when home births were taking place widely, the midwifery profession was much less well-qualified and able to carry out its tasks than it is now. We have a very well-qualified profession now, something which is acknowledged in this report from which I have quoted, and the members of this profession are able to make their services available in the home almost as easily as they are able to in the hospital.

One of the cases that is frequently cited in debates that take place on this subject, one that is referred to in the report, relates to the situation in Holland. I referred earlier to the comparative practices between different countries; there are some problems in making comparisons between different countries because of different variables, but the one example that is quoted most often is Holland.

In Holland, of the order of 50 per cent of births occur in private homes and the infant mortality rate is 11.5 per thousand live births,
whereas in England and Wales, where over 90 per cent of births occur in maternity hospitals, the infant mortality rate is 16.9 per cent.

The member for Karrinyup asked for my opinion on whether it is safer to have children at home or in hospital. That statistic is quoted often by proponents of the home birth movement and is referred to in the British Medical Journal article to which I referred earlier. It is stated in that article that it is not because of the safeness or otherwise of home births that Dutch women have apparently safer births, but rather because Dutch women are healthier and taller. Other variables are also said to be taller. Other variables are also said to be

I think that indicates that, if there is any difference, it is not really discernible and certainly no statistics in Australia were available to the review committee to which I referred earlier that would lead one to conclude that home births are either safer or more dangerous than hospital births.

What should the State Government do about this situation? It is a fact that the Medicare system is a Commonwealth responsibility. However, because the review committee recommended the implementation of a pilot programme, that implementation requires the cooperation of State Governments. The committee's only reservation against funding home births under the Medicare programme is that it was not convinced that the backup services were available in the community. The committee did not say they were not available; it was just not aware of whether they were because no material was available to enable them to draw an opinion.

If there were to be backup services these would presumably be part of the hospital system. Such services that exist now are part of the hospital system and therefore are a State responsibility.

The pilot programme recommended by the committee was the subject of a submission by the Queen Victoria Medical Centre which, I understand, is a large maternity hospital in Melbourne. It put forward a proposition for funding and I understand it's to receive $2 million to enable it to conduct such a pilot programme. I suggest that a very substantial step forward could be made by the State Government by making available salaried midwives, based in hospitals, who would conduct home births if that was the desire of the parents. It would also be useful to review and document the facilities that are available in the event of mishaps occurring and any need for further backup facilities to be available.

I suspect that the documentation of those services might go some way towards satisfying the Commonwealth that all the criteria enumerated by the review committee as being necessary to qualify for Medicare funding would be satisfied.

I also suspect that, if discussions were undertaken between the Commonwealth Health Department and the State, it may be possible for them to come to some arrangement where salaried midwives on hospital staffs would be able to be used and therefore be eligible for Medicare funding.

Finally, I am reluctant at this time to suggest that there should be any increase in Government services or facilities because virtually every alteration proposed to Government services and facilities involves cost and, as everyone knows, at this time, funds for the Government are very short. However, this is an area where it would appear that a substantial reform could be achieved and actually save money.

Some interesting figures have been enumerated in the Commonwealth report. The report quotes a number of sources relating to the cost of a home birth. I mentioned a figure of between $600 and $700 for services available in Perth at the present time. The report quotes an organisation known as the Launceston Birth Centre which operates a quasi-hospital birth delivery centre, with which I am not concerned today. It also operates as the base for a home birth programme. That organisation has supplied figures stating that the full service is available at $360 which is a lot less than the figures I obtained in Perth. However, Home Birth Australia which seems to be the national organisation quotes a figure for home births in Canberra of $965. So there is a marked variation in the cost of midwives for home births.

However, even if one takes the highest of those figures—$965—it is substantially less than the cost of a hospital birth. The cost of an average hospital birth taken on the average number of days for which the mother stays in hospital is $2 134, added to which is $300 for an obstetrician or $225 for a general practitioner. When that figure is compared with the maximum cost totalling $2 434, and a home birth of $965 we are looking at a saving of at
least $1,500 per birth. Of course, the capital resources and space within the hospital are also not being used.

The Commonwealth report states that about 200 home births a year occur in Melbourne. By asking people who provide the services in Perth, I have been able to obtain figures that indicate that people in Perth seem to have a much higher propensity towards home births and it is estimated that about 200 occur a year here.

The Queen Victoria Medical Centre’s submission to the Commonwealth for the pilot programme indicated that it believed — this is my experience because I became interested in this subject through representations from a constituent — that there are probably many people again who would like to avail themselves of a home birth programme but simply cannot afford the midwife’s fees. The irony is that they can go to hospital and have their children by a method which costs the community and the Government several times as much as it would if they had their children at home and it seems that a number of them would prefer to have their children at home.

I think this is an area which offers itself for substantial improvement. I believe the State Government, in cooperation with the Commonwealth Government, can play a role in this matter. The mothers and their partners who wish to have their children at home pay the same Medicare levy as anyone else. If they wish to avail themselves of the home birth programme but simply cannot afford the midwife’s fees, there is no reason why they should not receive the same support for having their children at home as those who choose to have their children in hospital receive.

We have all heard that many times before, particularly those who have been in Parliament for a long time, as I have. While it is a traditional message, I doubt whether it will apply in this session.

As I indicated when I spoke on the amendment to the motion yesterday this session will probably be one of the dirtiest for many years.

Mr Parker: Are you about to make it so?

Mr Laurance: No, the Government has done that. With a scandal rocking the State for three months prior to the opening of the session, it was obvious that that matter would be raised. As the Opposition gathered material and evidence to produce to Parliament, which is its right and its duty, it became aware that the Government was desperate to find some material that it could use in its defence.

If things are not looking good for the Government, it employs the tactic of muddying the water a bit so that it does not look quite so bad. It would rather be losing by 80 to 20 than 100 to nothing. Up to the time the Parliament reconvened, the Government was losing on the Brush affair by 100 to nothing. We have known for several weeks that members of the Government, supported by some elements of the media, have been trying desperately to retaliate by digging up information on Opposition members. It is not a pretty thing that people have been told by their bank managers that members of the Labor Party and some journalists have approached them soliciting information, peddling rumours.

Mr Peter Dowding: Are you saying your bank manager was approached?

Mr Laurance: I will tell the Minister my story.

It did not suprise me at all that when the Premier had an opportunity to speak on opening day in the current session of Parliament he gave an indication of the sorts of tactics that he was about to adopt. If you recall, Mr Speaker, you prevented the first question about the Brush affair being asked because you had not had a chance to rule on the writs; you had not seen those writs.

The SPEAKER: I prevented the first answer, not the first question.
Mr LAURANCE: That is right. You allowed the second question and the Premier responded to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition. In part he said—

It may be that this Leader of the Opposition believes there is political mileage to be made from this sort of issue.

I do not take exception to that, but a little later on in that same paragraph he said—

I can tell him now that there is not one member of this side of the House who would know what a Slutzkin scheme is.

A Slutzkin scheme was a tax avoidance device, I understand. That presumably was a reference to one of the members of the Opposition. He was careful not to mention any other schemes because that might have got a bit close to the bone. It was presumably an attempt to draw into the debate a member of the Opposition. The Premier then went on to say—

We have not been in the sports specialist business.

That was obviously an attempt to bring in somebody else from this side of the House; it was presumably an attempt to embarrass me. I just want to tell the Premier and members opposite that that does not embarrass me in any way at all. No member of the Opposition has been involved in the sports specialist business.

I understand that you, Mr Speaker, know something of this issue. By way of explanation, I point out that Sports Specialists is a company that is currently in liquidation in this State. No member of the Opposition has ever owned any part of the company, so I do not know what the Premier was referring to when he said, “We have not been in the sports specialist business”. I presume he meant that no member of the House had been involved in the business because certainly no member of the Opposition has been involved in it.

However, the Premier may have been playing dirty again. Perhaps he was referring to the wife of a member of the Opposition.

Mr Crane: You can count mine out.

Mr LAURANCE: Mine cannot be counted out. For a very brief period my wife was a shareholder and director in that company. While I am not pleased about that episode in our lives—as an episode in her life it is therefore indirectly an episode in mine—I am certainly not embarrassed about it either. I just want to let the members of the Government know that I am quite happy to play that game. No-one enjoys the cut and thrust of parliamen-

tary debate more than I do. Mr Speaker, as you would know from the time that you have been in Parliament. I love the cut and thrust of parliamentary debate and I will mix it with the best of them. If it is now a matter of talking about our wives’ business interests, I am happy to play that game.

I preface my remarks by saying that for many years a Minister who sat opposite had a very difficult time over his wife’s business interests. I never raised those matters. To their credit, neither did any of my colleagues on this side of the House. We thought the matter was a personal one which was up to the Minister and his family to sort out. In fact, the matter went before the courts.

My wife had not worked very much during our marriage. In fact, she had been an unpaid helper of mine in running my electorate and doing charitable work in the community in which we have spent most of our lives, Carnarvon. After we lost Government I asked her to get involved in some business activities. Many Ministers opposite after 1989 when they lose their ministerial salaries might find they have to adjust and do certain things they have not done before. My wife bought a small business which she is very proud of. I am very proud of her and her running of that business.

The business employs a young manager, a 23-year-old, who represented this State in basketball. He was selected for a place at the Institute of Sport in Canberra and went there for two years. He has now returned and another young staff member is also employed by the business. My wife therefore gives a job to two young people. The assistant is only 17 years of age.

Mr Peter Dowding: Is that the one who complained about being underpaid?

Mr LAURANCE: No.

By way of my wife’s involvement I am given the opportunity indirectly to know the effect of the taxes and charges that this Government has imposed on small business. There are a number of other reasons why I think it is an excellent way of keeping in touch with the business community.

My wife was then approached to buy a half share in a company which had a bigger involvement in the sporting business in both wholesale and retail. It was an old company that had been taken over by two new owners only a few months before the approach was made to my wife and, indirectly, to me.
Mr Brian Burke: The people who complained to us said they spoke to you. The creditors said that they had had discussions with you.

Mr LAURANCE: I am not speaking about the creditors. I will come to them in a minute.

Mr Brian Burke: You are talking about your wife. These people are saying that all the discussions were carried out with you.

Mr LAURANCE: The fact is that we were approached as a family to purchase half of that company. My wife purchased that half share as a business partner after I had taken the books of account prepared by the accountants for that firm to my own accountant, who is an outstanding person in this city. I have dealt with him for the past 25 years. He looked at those books of account, saw that the company was profitable, and my wife invested the money to purchase a half share.

Mr Brian Burke: What was the cost?

Mr LAURANCE: I do not know that the Premier needs to know that. I have told him the facts.

I then asked my wife to have my accountants— as I said, a very reputable firm—move into that business in order to improve its management and its accounting systems. My accounting firm then found that the figures that had been provided to us and which had been verified and signed by an accounting firm were fraudulent.

I can tell members opposite it all happened in a matter of a few weeks. As soon as my wife became a director of the company, my accountants had an opportunity to investigate it fully, and it was found the financial situation was not what it had been purported to be. That happens in many cases.

Mr Bosch was over here recently telling people that accounting these days is often portrayed in a way which is not strictly accurate. But this was worse. This was fraudulent. The whole thing happened very quickly.

Mr Brian Burke: Who was responsible for the fraud?

Mr LAURANCE: The Premier can check.

Mr Brian Burke: Who are you saying was responsible.

Mr LAURANCE: I have not said. On 6 May 1985, just on two years ago, my wife purchased that interest. My accountants called in my wife and myself on 17 July. I think it was, about six to eight weeks later, to say that the company was insolvent. That was a great shock to my family, because we had figures audited by an accountant showing that the company had been very successful.

I want to warn members opposite that there are only three ways in which this type of fraud can be perpetrated. One must look at three figures: Sales, stock, and debtors and creditors—particularly creditors; how much does the company owe. I found only one of those figures had been tampered with badly. The sales of the company had increased substantially in the few months before my wife bought an interest and the figures proved to be correct. The stock levels were checked and they were proved to be correct. But the creditors had been understated by about $100,000.

My accountant then said, "You have been defrauded, and there is no other way out of this company than for it to be liquidated."

Mr Peter Dowding: When were the charges laid?

Mr LAURANCE: No charges have been laid.

Mr Peter Dowding: I thought you said there was fraud and the police were aware of it.

Mr LAURANCE: I am saying that is the advice I had; that the figures produced to us were fraudulent, and I related that fact to the fraud squad.

Mr Peter Dowding: That was last year?

Mr LAURANCE: No, two years ago. On the advice of my accountant I suggested that part of the business should be sold. By the way, my wife is the biggest creditor. No-one has lost more money than my wife and family. I am not proud of that. I do not come in and brag about successful investments, and I do not expect any pity for the poor investments she makes.

Mr Brian Burke: I do not think anybody is worried about these things. It was not this matter.

Mr LAURANCE: The Premier raised it.

Mr Brian Burke: I thought it was the record of indebtedness which was causing concern.

Mr LAURANCE: No, the record of indebtedness is that my wife is the biggest creditor, and people will lose money as a result of this fraud, but in fact, after my helping my wife and identifying the fraud, the creditors will get something. After the sale of the business the creditors will get something. In losing more money than anyone else. my wife acted, and I am proud of her for this, in a very responsible manner.
Mr Brian Burke: The money paid by Mr Annear was used to discharge the creditors.

Mr LAURANCE: Yes. The person who took it over has an association with Mr Annear, who is running that business successfully. I wish him well because he was not involved in any of this business.

Mr Brian Burke: He bought the retail side. Did the wholesale part go into liquidation?

Mr LAURANCE: The whole lot went into liquidation.

Mr Brian Burke: He bought what was left?

Mr LAURANCE: Yes.

Mr Brian Burke: You are saying that what was paid for that part was used to discharge the creditors.

Mr LAURANCE: The whole business was sold. There is no wholesale side now.

Mr Brian Burke: So the whole business was sold to Mr Outhwaite?

Mr LAURANCE: That is right.

The lesson in all of this is what the previous member for Boulder-Dundas used to say many times in his eloquent Latin way, "caveat emptor," or "let the buyer beware". I have never bragged about any successful investments I have made—and I have made quite a number—and I am not asking for any pity for my wife and family for what turned out to be a poor investment. When the liquidation is completed, charges may be laid. I have certainly taken the matter up with the fraud squad.

The point of this is that members opposite can say what they like. They can raise any matter that is discussed in this Parliament about that matter, because I have nothing to be embarrassed about. In fact I am proud of what my wife did. When she found that she had been placed in this position by some very dubious business people and accountants, she worked her way out of it, and she was a strong lady to do it.

Every person who had any involvement with that organisation, or owed it any money, or owed it money, was better off as a result of my actions. My wife and myself had no involvement in that. We took the best advice we could from an accountant, and for the liquidator, Mr Stan Robson. He is also a professional person. Their advice was that we took the only course of action open to us.

The warning is this: Because of the facts I have told the Parliament, for anybody to make those statements public would be injurious to her reputation and to mine. I have made this clear to the QC I have briefed on this matter, Malcolm McCusker, who will be taking action on behalf of myself and my family. While members opposite may decide to take some steps about the matter in this Parliament, I will give them back more than they bargained for. But if they or any people associated with them decide to do anything outside this Parliament,
or if they try to make this matter public in any way to injure my family, I will welcome the opportunity to take further legal action against them.

Mr Brian Burke: This is wonderful, coming from you with your record!

Mr LAURANCE: That is my answer to the Premier.

Mr Brian Burke: Let me say this to you: Go ahead with whatever you like because you will not deter anyone on this side. Members are being truthful about the things they want to raise. You go ahead; do not threaten us.

Mr LAURANCE: The Premier started the ball game. He mentioned that particular matter; he raised that in here.

Mr Brian Burke: Do it; I invite you to do it. If you want to talk about black, white, and brindle, do it and see how far it gets you. What a disgusting animal. Black, while and brindle! What a disgusting thing to say.

Mr LAURANCE: The Premier started it. He will get back as good as he has given. I will give him a bit more.

Mr Brian Burke: Do not threaten me.

Mr LAURANCE: I move on to the matter of the debate yesterday on the Brush affair and the response by the Government. It was worse than pathetic, and when I listened to the Premier this morning on ABC radio he said the Opposition raised nothing at all—no evidence at all.

Mr Parker: That is not true.

Mr LAURANCE: We did not have to raise any; the Premier gave the evidence himself, as I will point out. What he forgot to say was that the Government gave no answers at all. For three or four minutes out of his 20 the Premier stood in his place and listened to the member for Murchison-Eyre interjecting, and in fact welcomed that. He had nothing to say; he was speechless.

Mr Watt: All the pretenders to the throne had a go.

Mr LAURANCE: Yes, all the pretenders had a go, except the real one, the Minister for Health. No answers were given. Even today in the answers to questions we were given yesterday, still no further answers. We asked the Premier a number of matters. Question 143—

MacKINNON, to the Premier:

(1) Did he or any other person provide to the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust information not previously available to enable the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust to overturn its decision not to pay an advance payment to Mr Len Brush in 1983 in regard to a motor vehicle accident claim?

That was the first of four questions. The reply was—

(1) to (4) As part of my normal parliamentary duties I convened a meeting at my electorate office in 1983 at which Mr Brush, his solicitor and representatives of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the MVIT were present. As a result of that meeting I understand information was provided to the trust by Mr Brush's solicitors.

Any decision to provide an advance payment to Mr Brush on the basis of that information or any other information was the decision of the MVIT.

That answered only parts (1) and (2) of the question. Part (3) of our question was—

(3) Has the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust made any further payment on the claim since the advance payment was made in his electorate office in 1983?

There was no answer. Question (4) was—

(4) If yes to (3), when was the last payment made; and was that payment made at the instigation of any person outside the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust?

There was no answer. The Premier has a lot to answer on this particular matter, and yesterday's debate did not provide any answers at all, and that is what the Parliament is for. It is for us to raise matters; it is for the Government to answer them if it can. It showed quite clearly yesterday that it could not.
I refer to question 140 on yesterday's Notice Paper—

Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

1) Was the letter of resignation from the former chairman of the State Superannuation Board, Mr Len Brush, written by, or with the assistance of, him or any member of his staff?

2) If yes, why?

This matter was referred to in the debate yesterday. The Premier carefully side-stepped the answer. To this question on notice, he gave this reply—

On the day he resigned, Mr Brush discussed his reasons for resignation with me. One can only assume from that answer that the Premier or one of his staff did write the resignation for Mr Brush, and we ask why.

Mr Brian Burke: That is not true.

Mr LAURANCE: Why did he not give the answer if it is not true?

Mr Brian Burke: Because, as I said, he discussed it with me.

Mr LAURANCE: The Premier has not answered the question. We want to know why he did not answer the question.

Mr Brian Burke: I did.

Mr LAURANCE: He has not. We will ask him again.

Mr Brian Burke: Repeat the question again.

Mr LAURANCE: No. I have made my point. Let me go to another one—

144. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

1) Has the Treasurer approved every investment made by the State Superannuation Board since July 1984, as he is obliged to do under section 25 (2) of the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act?

The answer—

1) The requirements of the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act as they affect the board's activities have been met.

Mr Brian Burke: That answers the question.

Mr LAURANCE: It skirts around the question.

Mr Brian Burke: That answers the question.

Mr LAURANCE: That skirts around the question, as the Premier did last night when the member for Cottesloe asked the question whether he approved the State Superannuation Board Investment Trust buying into the Anchorage deal. The Premier did not answer that question, and he was told it was quite likely that the Government was operating outside clause 25 (2).

Mr Brian Burke: You did not listen. I am told The Anchorage is owned by the State Superannuation Board, not by the trust. That was said last night. That was answered last night.

Mr LAURANCE: Is the Premier saying to me that the State Superannuation Board Investment Trust was not involved in any way in the Anchorage deal?

Mr Brian Burke: I am saying to you that when the member for Cottesloe—

Mr LAURANCE: He did not answer my question. If ever there was a need for an inquiry, it was shown by the evidence that came out from the Ministers opposite last night, and particularly from the Minister for Education. I raised the matter of what happened to the third cheque. We have only heard about two cheques, but everyone knows there was a third cheque. I asked the question, what happened to the third $50 000 cheque? They were all jumping up and down and saying I accused members opposite of having it. I did not do that at all. I said, "Who has it?"

The Leader of the House said that even the $150 000 was wrong. All this talk about a third cheque would indicate that the member has been reading too many stories by Graeme Greene. The third cheque has not gone to Mr Brush.

Points of Order

Mr PEARCE: I have not in fact corrected that speech, and I understood that under the forms of the House, although members as a courtesy are sometimes given Hansard speeches in advance of their being corrected, I have not corrected that speech. As far as I am aware, I have not actually received the speech for correction.

Several members interjected.

Mr Parker: The fact that it is past midday does not make any difference. You cannot quote unless it has been corrected.

Mr PEARCE: I am not suggesting that there is anything incorrect in the quotation, and from what I heard it seems to be a particularly accurate one, but—

Mr Brian Burke: The thing is that he is used to correcting things himself.
Mr PEARCE: We should have that position clarified a little because I would not like to have read into the Hansard report an uncorrected version of my speech if there were any inaccuracies in it.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he obtained that speech.

Mr LAURANCE: It was sent to me just before I commenced speaking.

Mr Pearce: You started speaking well before midday. It will have stamped on it: "Hansard, not for quotation." I bet.

Mr WATT: It is the practice of this House, as I understand it, that other members may have access to Hansard copies but may not refer to them publicly until either the speech has been corrected or after 12 noon of the following day.

The SPEAKER: Just for the members' information, the standard practice of this House is that uncorrected transcripts may be released at the commencement of the next sitting day or at midday of the day following the speech.

On that basis, and with the information given to me by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I rule that the speech can be used.

Debate Resumed

Mr LAURANCE: The point was that the Minister for Education proved that there was a third cheque in his speech last night and he referred to the fact that Mr Martin—

Mr Pearce: Mr Martin has publicly acknowledged that.

Mr LAURANCE: The cheque was returned to Mr Martin. Mr Brush did not want it; he took two cheques amounting to $100 000 but he did not take the other. These questions must be answered.

DR LAWRENCE (Subiaco) [12.23 pm]: I rise with pleasure in this debate and I hope that in the course of my address we may, as a group, redress some of the unpleasantries we have had to sit through this morning.

It is a matter of great regret to me that the sort of mudslinging which has emanated from the Opposition benches in the last two days has continued apparently untrammelled. However, I want to address one of the policies of the Government. Policy is not something that occupies the mind of the Opposition very frequently. In fact, prior to the beginning of this sitting the Leader of the Opposition quite clearly indicated to the Press, which was asking him about the way the session would go, that he was not really interested in the legislation. That is generally the view of members opposite.

I have been in this place for a little over a year and I have yet to find a clear interest, understanding or commitment to policy and its development on the part of the Opposition. The result is that the Labor Party, the Government party, has had to carry almost entirely all sides of the debate. So if members on this side of the House sometimes look like a group that spreads from left to right, and includes everything in the middle, that is because there is no effective Opposition. There is no attempt by this Opposition to develop policies, and the people on the other side seem more interested in personalities and in mudslinging.

I want to talk today about an issue of great importance to the community, both in Western Australia and in Australia generally. This issue is that of the conservation of our native forests. In the absence of comment from the other side, I will try to canvass the full range of difficulties that we face in marrying the proper and controlled economic development of our forest resources with the need to conserve them from depredation. It is a longstanding commitment of this Government that these rare and unique resources—in the south west of Western Australia in particular—should be conserved. Since coming to Government, the Labor Party has achieved a considerable amount in this area. For example, the Shannon River basin has been established as a major reserve in the south west; the southern and northern nodes of the coastal sand dune area at Whitford have been reserved for public use; 96 000 hectares of the northern jarrah forest have been allocated for recreation purposes and the whole of Star Swamp has been set aside as a major bushland, conservation and recreation reserve.

In all of these matters, the Government has taken cognisance of the need to develop and to employ. This is not a Government which reflexively excludes exploitation of natural resources. However, the Labor Party's policy quite clearly indicates its commitment to conservation. I will refer briefly to the Federal and State policies on this matter. The Federal Government's environmental platform includes a commitment to promoting revegetation and reafforestation of marginal and degraded land in order to facilitate the relief of pressure for the exploitation of native forests. That is a positive statement acknowledging the difficulties that we face. The Federal Government is also committed to stopping pro-
grammes designed to replace native hardwood forests with softwood plantations and to ensuring that licences for the export of woodchips are not granted unless certain quite stringent conditions are met. The State policy emphasises that we have native forests which are unique and valuable assets, and that we need to oppose the clearing of native forests, whether publicly or privately owned, for exotic tree species. Again, this is not done in isolation of the recognition of the economic needs of communities such as Denmark, which is the one that I propose to discuss.

In the absence of policy development from the Opposition in this area, the Government side has had to carry the whole debate. Indeed if one looks at the policies in this area offered by the Opposition, both State and Federal, one finds very little. They have systematically indulged in platitudes and have ignored environmental issues. In fact whenever Opposition members speak of people who are concerned about environmental issues, they tend to do so in a derogatory fashion—greenies in the eyes of Opposition members are people who are to be despised and set aside: We see many examples of that in debate in this place. The right-wing politicians and commentators in this Parliament and in others are trying to turn this country again into a “cranky” country. They have a greater need than most people to shout and denigrate their opponents and to make themselves unpleasant—and this includes their attitude towards people who want to conserve the environment.

As audiences lose faith in the remedies offered by people such as the Opposition, they grow more desperate. According to the ex-editor of the Sydney Morning Herald they are in effect like, “Hot gospellers trying to win confidence. Only believe and you will be saved. Don’t believe, and your kids and the whole damn country can starve to death and it will serve you right.” That is the sort of platitude which is provided in the absence of specific policy prescription.

However, I want to talk about the woodchip proposal for Denmark made by McLean’s company. Like many of the members here, over the past 15 to 20 years I have spent a considerable amount of my leisure time in the south west and have grown in that time to value that part of our State for its beauty and the contribution that it makes to our community. Unlike some members I did in fact take two weeks off over the Christmas break and spent some of that time in Denmark; I have had connections with the area in the past, through owning a piece of land there, and I still have many friends there. It is a superb place and that is one of the reasons I am concerned about this proposal.

I do not want to say at this stage whether I think the proposal should go ahead, although I have some quite strong views about the potential damage of that proposal. I propose to briefly outline the proposal as it stands. It will be the second export woodchip industry in Western Australia and it needs an export licence for 240 000 tonnes of woodchip per annum. It is based principally on the exploitation of private native forests. The area to be affected would include Denmark, parts of Manjimup, the Albany and Plantagenet Shires and possibly some State forests and other farmlands between Perth and Albany. In the environmental review and management programme—

Several members interjected.

Dr LAWRENCE: I can find the relevant pages for members opposite if they wish, but there is a fair indication in the ERMP that, in the absence of sufficient resources, 26 000 hectares will be felled over 17 years and that 10 000-odd of those would be lost as forest. Those native hardwoods would be replaced by 9 000 hectares of pine and 10 000 hectares of hardwood, principally Tasmanian blue gum. Further the proposal indicates that 110 000 cubic metres of wood might be made available—and this is from the ERMP—for second-grade logging and thinning of forest, including State-owned forest. If members read that proposal, they will find that information there. It is an integrated sawlog-woodchip operation and the revenue is estimated at some $13 million in sawn timber and some $5.5 million in woodchips in the first 10 years. On the face of it, it will be of considerable economic benefit to the State. The direct employment anticipated would be somewhere between 150 and 230, with an estimated 550 employed indirectly. To achieve this, the company would need to expand the existing mill complex at Denmark and to arrange for the material to be transported to Albany and sold to an unspecified overseas market.

Mr Laurance: Did you say you were in favour of this proposal or against it?

Dr LAWRENCE: I am against this particular development but I realise that there are always other conditions which need to be taken into
account. I am putting a view which I know is strongly held in that community and in my own electorate of Subiaco.

Several questions are raised by this proposal.

Mr Blaikie: You are the voice of the ALP Cabinet.

Dr LAWRENCE: I am the voice of a large number of people in this community who are concerned to ensure that our resources are not depleted unnecessarily for short-term economic gain. They can be Labor, Liberal or uncommitted, rural, and urban people. I speak for the people whose voices are not put by members opposite in policy terms.

One of the serious questions raised by this proposal is: Are there sufficient resources on private land, and would they be made available? Secondly, would the proposed replacement commercial plantations provide the necessary future wood resources? A number of people have questioned whether this would occur on the basis of experience with other similar projects, particularly in Tasmania.

Submissions from a variety of interested groups and conservation groups have raised a number of issues which I think are worth raising here. Firstly, there is some question that the environmental review and management programme may overstate the amount of native forest on private land. Members who are familiar with the Denmark-Manjimup area will be well aware that not all uncleared farming land in that area is forest, yet that assumption seems to have been made in the submission. The ERMP also fails to consider existing operations on private land in the region. Sawmills are already operating in the area, and not all of the timber would be available for woodchip and McLean’s sawmill exploitation.

The ERMP provides some information about the extent of the woodchip resource, waste and agricultural clearing, but a number of people have suggested that is inaccurate and that speculative claims about generation of employment are just that and are not sufficiently well-grounded in fact. The other question that has been raised is that the project’s proponents fail to seriously consider the adverse social and economic costs of the project. These are the aspects which concern me considerably.

If one looks at the value of the remnant native forest in this country one would have to agree that it is immeasurable. In this part of the world we have already lost four-fifths of our native forest. What remains is precious. It is also important to indicate that that is not simply a sentimental view about aesthetics. The native forests in this community play an important function. First, they provide for conservation of soil resources against water and wind induced erosion. As someone who spent most of her childhood in the country I can see now with great regret what farmers in the northern wheat-belt area did in order to achieve an economic return. They now regret it, and they are attempting to reclaim the land. The overclearing has had a devastating impact, not only on their ability to produce, but also on the long-term viability of much of that land, particularly in drought circumstances such as those we have just experienced. Forest, bush, scrub—whatever one wants to call it—is important in maintaining the quality of soil resources against erosion.

It also provides a wildlife habitat. We have unique species of flora and fauna in this country which will also disappear if the forests continue to be destroyed at the present rate. Forests also prevent salination of soil and water resources. I noticed recently that a doctor in Denmark joined a large group who have already complained about the salinity in the Denmark water supply. I was a member of the board of the Water Authority for some time, and I can assure members that one of the major concerns of that authority is the increasing salinity of south-west river systems, including supplies to towns such as Denmark. People in the local shires indicate that many of the complaints they receive are about water quality, and horticulturists and gardeners in the area frequently cannot use the water because it destroys their plants. The doctor I mentioned was concerned about her elderly patients with heart disease problems which require a reduction in salt intake. The salt levels are well above the World Health Organisation’s limits and are therefore, in the view of that doctor, and I am sure of the many others who examined it, not helpful to those people who have circulatory problems.

Forests also protect our fresh water resources in water catchment areas and we have controls over clearing in various places in this State in order to preserve the quality of water in our catchment areas. They provide shelter belts and are important for honey production, wood for heating, saw milling, fence posts, and other farm use.

I want to make it clear that I am not against the exploitation of forest resources. It is obviously inevitable and important that we do that in this community. It is important that forests
exist, too, for supplementary feeding during drought. Once those areas of land are cleared, they become unproductive for most purposes as far as the farmer is concerned. They provide protection for rural homes, and they are scenically attractive. One of the things that is most marked about the Denmark region is that it is a very pleasant combination of large stands of native timber in State forests and parks and rolling farmlands with scattered areas of forest. That makes it a very attractive region.

Mr Clarko: Was your family farm overcleared?

Dr LAWRENCE: Definitely.

Mr Clarko: So your education was paid for by people chopping down trees?

Dr LAWRENCE: It was indeed. I have no more shame in that than the member has. If members talk to anybody in this country—anybody in the agricultural sector—they will admit that except for a few very far-sighted individuals our heritage of clearing the land in all parts of our environment is a very poor one. My father is included. I am sure if I questioned some of the farmers here they would admit that it is a severe problem.

Mr Stephens: The member for Karrinyup is not a farmer.

Mr Clarko interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr LAWRENCE: No, he does not know. He does not understand that people such as my parents and family have spent a great deal of time and money replanting and developing salt resistant and salt tolerant plants.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! Twice within 20 minutes yesterday I had to remind members that they must keep quiet when I call for order. Members realised I was serious after the second occasion because I said I would name the next person, and members did keep quiet. I have reflected on that, and perhaps what I said was not really fair. Perhaps I will not name a member, but I will take action against anyone who decides not to take any notice of what I say today.

Dr LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I want to continue to outline what I see as the values of our remnant native forest. They include, for example, honey production and the small-scale exploitation of wood for craft and other purposes. One of the attractions of Denmark, and members who have been there recently will agree with me, is that one can purchase some excellent locally-produced wood products—crafted furniture, bowls, and artefacts of various kinds. In addition people there are employed on a fairly wide-scale basis to collect seeds and wildflowers, and to cultivate wildflowers, and there is now, stemming from Walpole, an export industry in wood, bark, small-scale jarrah production, and wildflowers and seeds which extends through large areas of South East Asia. That is not a market one would think which would be easily accessed from that part of the world, particularly as it has been done without major infrastructure and Government support. These people have gone and found a market. People in Japan do not appreciate when they are reading newspapers and unwrapping cardboard boxes that the price for that is the exploitation and degradation of our native forests. They have no indication that it comes from Australia, and it says nothing unique about our country.

The industries to which I was referring are small-scale and actually help to populate the region. One of the effects of large-scale enterprises such as that proposed by McLean's and is evident in other woodchip proposals throughout Australia is that while production and take rates increase employment actually goes down. The rate of productivity per employee goes up with the introduction of technology. If, as has happened in Tasmania, some of the land is bought by these organisations in order to plant pine and Tasmanian bluegum forests, the effect is actually to accelerate depopulation because farmers and small business people do not live in these areas; they just have bigger areas of plantations.

The small communities such as Denmark, Walpole, and Normalup can expect to lose some of their population in the long term because of the resulting effects on business.
Unlike the Opposition, I do not see any need to speak because the clock is still turning over, so I will conclude by saying that in this case the people in the community must have a great sympathy for their native resources. In the past, we have simply moved in and developed our forests at any rate and we have been little concerned about our forests, forgetting the fact that we have a responsibility to the world. There are 28,000 species of flora recorded in Australia, and 85 per cent of those species are found in Australia only. If we render them extinct, they will be rendered extinct for ever.

We must slow down the exploitation of our forests and manage them in such a way that the next generation can have access to them for the purposes which all of us consider reasonable. Anything we can do to achieve that is worth considering. I oppose projects of any kind which do not take sufficient account of the long-term effects on this unique forest environment, and which prefer to see a short-term benefit rather than preserving our resources for posterity.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [12.41 pm]: The two main issues on which I will concentrate concern the financial management of this State by the Government and the future of export development in this State, with particular reference to the Government's efforts in this area through Exim Corporation Ltd.

Firstly, I will refer to the performance of this Government in the first couple of days of this session. It has been appalling and my observation of the Government's performance was summed up this morning when I listened to the Minister for Education in a talk-back radio programme. He sounded half asleep and gave a pathetic explanation when attempting to explain the rumours that have been circulating in the Parliament, and that he thought that the Government would make them public in order to quell them. All the Government has done is to introduce a number of matters that have not been heard before. Last night the Government raised the question that Mr Brush would be charged because of the Opposition's activities. It was one of the most crazy comments I have heard from a Government member.

This Government is a very different Government from what it was in its first couple of years in office. It is not looking good, it is sounding tired, it is not positive or confident, and it seems to be on the defensive. At one time it was on the attack, but now it is on the defensive, and it is a sign of a Government which is on the way out.

A serious situation has arisen in relation to the Government's financial management, or mismanagement, of this State. The community's perception of the Government's handling of these matters is not good.

I have been a student of the political process for some time, but it is the first time that I can recall a grey cloud hanging over the financial management of this State. We did not have a grey cloud of mismanagement hanging over the Tonkin Government, but it is certainly prevalent now. For the future wellbeing and good name of this State, the Government should act very quickly to restore some of the confidence in the financial sector both at home and overseas.

The Government must now face up to reality; its plan of employing advisers to back up its lack of expertise in some areas has failed. The Premier has often admitted in this House that he does not have the experience to handle some of the issues relating to financial management. The advisers have not had the ability or the qualifications required to ensure that this State's financial matters are kept in good order.

After four years of this Government being in office, we now have an unhealthy mess and there are many examples of serious problems that have occurred because of the Government's financial mismanagement. We have scandals one after the other, and it has taken the Opposition several years to flush out some of the problems; but in the next few years many more problems will come to light.

I have expressed concern many times in this House about the financial dealings of this Government, and I have detailed some very serious cases of misappropriation of funds that have bordered on criminal negligence. Members opposite have often said, "Provide the evidence." We have done that. I will never raise an issue in this House unless I have concrete evidence to support my allegations. However, even when information is provided the Government has not taken any action.

I will refer later to some matters I raised in connection with Exim and which were ignored. I am pleased that a year or so later that subject has been raised by the Government; it has obviously become concerned about some of the things that have taken place.

Yesterday, my colleagues raised the question of the dealings of the State Superannuation Board. The Government must admit that it is a serious matter. The public's confidence in the Superannuation Board must be restored; and
that confidence has not been restored by the appointment of the new chairman. A senior, conservative operator should be appointed to restore the public's confidence, particularly that of the public servants who are concerned about what is happening to their funds. The Government has not done that and has taken a cavalier cowboy approach to the running of this State.

When the Government took office it all sounded good and was a pretty good game for members of the Government to be a part of, and they were talking and acting like a group of high fliers; but now many of their actions are returning to haunt them. I know that the Opposition will not obtain the full disclosure it requires and that it will have to flush out the many things that have taken place. However, we are a persistent Opposition and we will flush out those things that have occurred because they cannot be hidden for ever and a day.

Before I refer in detail to Exim I will refer to the first day of this session of Parliament when we heard the Governor’s Speech, and the Government's programme was outlined. It was a sad day because the Government did not make proper recognition of the serious problems that have occurred in certain parts of our economy, particularly the rural sector. No mention was made about the effect of the continuing high level of interest rates, not only on the people in the rural sector but also on business people and the public, particularly in relation to the purchase of their homes.

The Address-in-Reply speech given by the member for Victoria Park on the opening day of Parliament was one of those smart, tricky, and forced humour type of speeches in which he tried to be funny in a situation which is quite serious. He said that the Government has a programme to properly manage the State's assets, and to me that is a sick joke. The Government does not understand what is happening to the State's assets, and it does not understand the seriousness of some of the actions that have been taken by the Ministers who are responsible for the running of different departments.

Mr Peter Dowding: Is the member for Nedlands aware that when we took office the then Government did not even know what assets it held? That is how much interest previous Premiers have taken in the State's assets!

Mr COURT: I will answer the Minister's comments, but I am getting sick and tired of these people continually repeating that they properly manage the State's assets. Nothing could be further from the truth. I will cover that point in a minute, for the Minister's sake.

When there is a very serious problem in certain sections of our community, it is not the time for Government members to start being light-hearted about what we are doing in the Parliament and how we can help those people in need. The Government has relied very heavily upon a public relations machine which creates the image of a Government which is doing things like looking after the assets of this State. I will provide a few examples to disprove that image.

The Midland abattoirs sale has been a complete debacle. There is no security of lease for the stockyards, and the land has been sold too cheaply. The Government now seems to be getting into even further trouble in that respect. The Government made a big deal about selling the old Perth Technical College site and making a $20 million profit. I do not mind the Government's acknowledging that the Perth Technical College site was not being properly used as an asset by the State. I would not mind its selling that site for its market value and putting the funds into something more profitable, such as an educational facility. But what happened to the education people connected with the Perth Technical College site? The college wanted $12 million to undertake necessary building projects; it received $7 million for those projects. It was not until the printing union, the printing employers, and the Opposition started making a noise publicly that the Government got off its backside to try to provide a decent replacement facility for the printing training facility that was at the old Perth Technical College site.

Mr Peter Dowding: That is not true.

Mr COURT: It is quite true. I have been involved with the meetings and I know what the Minister did. It was not until it was aired publicly that the printing people were able to get some sort of promise about a better facility. So much for the better use of assets on the Perth Technical College site!

The Minister for Minerals and Energy knows only too well what happened with the Fremantle Gas and Coke Co Ltd. We have also seen the Anchorage debacle, and that with respect to the restructuring of the Building Management Authority. I am concerned with the way the Government treats people in instances such as the restructuring of the BMA and the absorption of the Western Australia Overseas
Project Authority by Exim. I am talking about manpower planning. What does the Government propose to do with the people employed by WAOPA?

Mr Parker: It depends on who they are.

Mr COURT: What happened in the restructuring of the BMA to all the people who were left on a limb? The Government trotts out figures of the number of people who have been got rid of. We read this week in the Press about what was happening in the computer section.

Mr Parker interjected.

Mr COURT: I point out to the Minister that I am making the speech. The Government has brought in consultants so that the number of employees in the computer section does not show up in the statistics.

Mr Peter Dowding: You are against the use of consultants, are you? You want to give people permanent jobs when they don't exist.

Mr COURT: Functions are being duplicated, and good people who had a career in the BMA have been pushed to one side because of the way this Government is handling matters.

I turn now to the Western Australian Development Corporation and its short-term money market operations. I have to be careful of what I say; I know that the WADC has issued a writ against me because I criticised it. That is becoming quite common. The Opposition seems to be cropping quite a few of these writs whenever it raises certain subjects. However, since I raised that subject there seems to have been a complete reversal of the way in which the WADC has gone about handling the investment of Treasury short-term cash surpluses. Again, the only way we found out about it was by continually trying to flush out what was happening.

Mr Peter Dowding: It is the innuendo and assertions against people's reputations that are objected to.

Mr COURT: There is no innuendo about the fact that on 10 February Mr Brush was appointed to run the WADC's operations with respect to surplus funds. It was a very responsible position. The Premier yesterday in this House told us that he knew what was going on in January. How members opposite can talk about their better management of this State's assets in view of the examples that I have raised is beyond me.

The Chairman of the WADC, in a recent speech to a Japanese Investment Mission, said—

I believe that there is a refreshing new approach to economic management in our State of Western Australia. This new approach has as its central theme two words ... accountability ... and ... administration.

Accountability? What an absolute joke! We have raised these issues over the years and there is more to come. This Government certainly has not been accountable.

We have heard a lot about the need for us to get our export act together and the need for us to get away from our dependence on some of our more traditional forms of exports. With all the talk in the last four years, not a great deal has been done by this Government.

Mr Parker interjected.

Mr COURT: I point out to the Minister that the exports this State relies on are due in no measure to the performance of the Minister or his Government.

The Government set up Exim, and it was supposed to improve the export performance of local firms. We have seen the duplication of functions with the setting up of the Department of Industrial Development, Exim, the South West Development Authority, the Small Business Development Authority, the WADC, and many other bodies. All have their own little export sections with people running here and there with nothing being achieved. Exim was to provide the panacea for all the problems associated with exporting. The Labor Government was going to have its own Government trading house; it dreamt that with this trading house we would break into international markets. But what has happened to Exim? If there have been any success stories, I would like them to be told because we have not heard of them.

We have become sick and tired of the secrecy and the manner in which members of this Parliament have been refused a full and proper disclosure of the activities of Exim and its subsidiaries. We have uncovered some activities which have not been to the benefit of the taxpayers in this State. The Government has not been brave enough to face up to solving the problem. At least the new Minister for Economic Development had the guts to stand up and say it had been a disaster; that it had been a problem.
Mr Parker: I did not say that it had been a disaster at all. I said that there had been some problems, and I stand by that.

Mr COURT: The Minister said that there had been some problems, and also referred to problems with some staff earlier employed by Exim. I will obtain the exact wording for the Minister.

\textit{Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.15 pm}

Mr COURT: With reference to the criticisms made by the Minister for Economic Development about the activities of the Exim Corporation, I quote from a newspaper article as follows—

Mr Parker yesterday blamed the involvement of “early personnel” and lack of clear strategy for the corporations problems.

Speaking shortly before he was sworn in as Minister for Economic Development, he said that Mr Gale had “very grandiose” ideas that were out of keeping with the sorts of things that the Government envisaged for Exim.

A second problem—linked with the major staff problem—was that the strategy for the new corporation had not been properly thought out.

It was good that the Minister was very frank when making those comments, but it is important that he explain the activities about which he was concerned and indicate which early personnel were the cause of some of those problems. He specifically mentioned the activities of Mr Gale; and his comments contradict the Premier’s comments about the same person.

We have a situation in which the Premier is defending a person and the Minister has said that he was the cause of many of the problems, particularly with his very grandiose ideas. I hope the Minister for Economic Development will participate in this debate and tell us about the personnel who did not perform because he has put a cloud over the heads of the other personnel. I hope he will also tell us about some of the very grandiose ideas of Mr Gale. This area of conflict was quite extraordinary—not so much because the Minister made those comments, but because the Premier later said it was not the case.

It is interesting to note that had it not been for the Opposition raising these criticisms over the last couple of years, the activities of Exim would have continued and taxpayers would have been kept in the dark, not knowing of the events taking place. In particular the Opposition outlined the problems connected with Goldrock Investments and the fact that interest-free loans were given to friends and a relative of the senior management of the corporation. We raised that matter in Parliament and the Premier answered a question and said the deal had gone through, but when the full ramifications were known, that deal was reversed.

When talking on the Sattler programme on 24 November 1986, the Premier said—

Well Howard the truth about that situation is that Richard Court is talking about a story published in the “Western Mail” in July to do with Goldrock which was a jewellery business that Exim, uh, went into Joint Venture with two private groups to establish and it had always intended to sell its equity when the business was established. Now no arrangement was made that lasted that would see that equity sold and what Richard Court’s referring to as an arrangement made to sell the equity that Exim bought and the financing of that sale of equity to the private sector people.

That deal did not last because we exposed it in this Parliament; a very complicated reversal of the transaction took place so that those interest-free loans were very conveniently brought back. That was a very serious occurrence, equally as serious as the current loan scandal in connection with the State Superannuation Board, because it involved taxpayers’ funds linked to friends and a relative being provided with interest-free loans. It is just not on.

I do not have time to repeat all the things in which Exim has been involved, but it has been a complete debacle and the Minister will have a difficult job trying to sort out the problems still present. It is not a matter of saying that what happened in the past was bad; many of the problems are current.

Another concerning feature of the cover-up associated with Exim’s activities occurred during the debate on the Western Australian Exim Corporation Bill which came before this Parliament last year. At the beginning of the debate when I spoke on the Bill for the first time, the Government tabled the Exim report which indicated that Exim had made a small profit and that everything was rosy. When we examined that report and asked further questions, we found that considerable trading losses were involved in Exim's activities but that somewhere, out of the blue, it had earned $3
We have been through the cattle stations. I do not know what has happened about the commitment to give the Aborigines some of that land up there. The Federal Government put in $6 million. We have been through the Goldrock exercise. We have been through the tractors. We have been through building houses in Thailand. We are still going through the CATT furniture company into which Exim put over $300,000. The receiver has been called in, and that position is not looking too secure.

We have seen Exim charging consultancy fees to try to get some income. A bill for $189,000 was sent to the Department of Agriculture. Exim is charging consultancy fees to other Government departments. We have to keep asking questions so that we can find where that income is coming from. The people in the Department of Agriculture had a shock when they received a bill for those services. No doubt people in other departments will be awaiting the answers to the questions there. This seems to be the latest way to jolly up the figures—to charge consultancy fees to different Government departments which are quite capable of doing the work themselves without having to go through Exim.

In the few minutes left to me—I wish I had more time to spend on this point—I want to make some comments on what the Opposition wants to do. We wish to put a positive thrust into this export debate to show that the direction we want to take is completely different; in fact it is the exact opposite of what this Government is trying to do by promoting the export scheme through its own operations.

The Federal Government and the Prime Minister wanted to do this. It is interesting to see that Australia's share of world trade has fallen from 2.6 per cent to 1.3 per cent over the past 30 years. That has taken our world ranking from eighth to twenty-third. We have problems on the expenditure and income sides in our economy. We should look at some countries which are performing well. The Minister would know only too well, because he travels the world and he would have a good knowledge, that Taiwan's trade representation is carried out by the China External Trade Development Council. Two-thirds of its members are from private enterprise and one-third from the Government. The business sector pays for the budget and the business sector implements the export policy. We know how that country has been performing in the past three years. In Japan the private sector is represented, and that is basically what we would like to see—

Mr Parker: You are not seriously suggesting there is no major Government involvement in Japanese trade?

Mr COURT: The private sector has the main involvement. What this Government is advocating is that we get rid of the private sector, which has played the major role.

We should dismantle the bureaucracies which are currently in this field. We want to encourage the private sector to play a front-line role in the export arena. We want to hand over this State's representation overseas progressively to the private sector. We want to encourage Australian companies to become joint ventured with other Australian companies so that they can share overheads and skills. We want the Government to take an international view of trade without confusing the trade issues with the political and social issues.

Mr Troy: That is a little different from the Japanese scene.

Mr COURT: That is the approach we would take, which is the opposite of what the Government is doing.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [2.28 pm]: Before I proceed any further, I understood that the Speaker was going to read out a series of notices at the conclusion of the comments made by the member for Nedlands.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Burkett): Carry on.

Mr BLAIKIE: My comments on the Address-in-Reply will be fairly brief, and they will be in relation to an amendment to the Address-in-
Reply which will relate to the activities of the WA Exim Corporation and the Western Australian Development Corporation. The member for Nedlands raised a number of matters in relation to both organisations which will be further pursued, certainly by that member, and also by a series of other members.

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

But we regret to inform Your Excellency that in the opinion of this House the Government has neglected its duty by not providing a full and proper disclosure of the activities of companies and authorities, particularly the Western Australian Exim Corporation Limited, its subsidiaries, and the Western Australian Development Corporation.

As I have already indicated, the member for Nedlands has given a series of reasons why such a motion should be advanced, and I intend to move in yet another direction to explain my concern about the Western Australian Development Corporation and its impact on certain individuals of this State. When I talk about the WADC my comments are directly sheeted to the Premier because he is the principal shareholder of that organisation because it is a Government instrumentality. It was established by the Premier and Cabinet, although under legislation, so my remarks are directed to the Premier and the policy of his Government.

Point of Order

Mr PARKER: Do I understand that the member for Vasse has moved an amendment?

Mr BLAIKIE: I am speaking to it.

Mr PARKER: If he is speaking to the amendment which he has moved, can I be provided with a copy of the amendment?

Mr BLAIKIE: There is no need to raise a point of order; just ask one of the Clerks.

Debate Resumed

Mr BLAIKIE: The comment I want to raise in relation to the WADC and its operations certainly affects one individual, who, although a fairly small individual in the State of Western Australia, has made a contribution which I regard as of some consequence to the State. I refer to the owner of Bernies snack bar and to the Hardwick family which has been operating that business on Reserve No. A1720, which is part of Kings Park, for some 50 years. This is part of a reserve which is vested in the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority of Western Australia.

What has developed since the advent of the WADC is that the Government is ensuring that it realises on its assets, and one of the assets it has indicated it is going to realise on is that area of land on which Bernies snack bar is located. The whole basis of my thrust is an attack against the ALP policy and the direction the Government has determined the WADC shall operate in. One of the interesting things this Government does if it has in its mind to follow a certain course of events is charge off like a bull at a gate without any regard for the individuals who may be affected by its decisions. Its decision in relation to this particular reserve is certainly affecting the Hardwick family.

It is all very well for the supporters of the ALP to crow loudly about how they are going to flog off the State’s assets by using the WADC as the marketing organisation, because that is going to help the State get over its dilemma of being a very high spending Government by being able to sell off "the farm" and get some recoup from those gains. However, it does not have regard for the people concerned.

The Government has a very torrid and sorry track record in relation to some of the land that it has "flogged off" already, and I use that term in the worst of senses. We see what it has done in relation to the land known as Burswood Island. It brought to the Parliament a Bill which was a fait accompli. The Parliament virtually had to agree to allow the Burswood Island casino to go on that State-owned land which was part of an "A"-class reserve, and if the Parliament did not go along and make that agreement to allow the casino to be built there, then the State would have suffered the consequences of a loss of millions of dollars because the Government had already entered into an agreement in spirit with the developers. The Parliament was served up a fait accompli.

Mr Parker: The State got $25 million out of it.

Mr BLAIKIE: The State might have, but the point is that the Government gave the Parliament a fait accompli.

Mr Parker: No; there was considerable debate and at one stage the Opposition was threatening to defeat the Bill. The reason the
Bill went through the Legislative Council was nothing to do with a fait accompli but with the attitude of certain of your members who did not toe your line on the matter. That is the reason it went through.

Mr BLAIKIE: I was opposed to the legislation. My view would have been to seek the approval of Parliament for the change of status of that particular area of land and then, if Parliament gave that approval, proceed to the next step. The Government did not do that; it carried on in a cavalier fashion as though the land was its own. It simply went ahead with its negotiations. I am not blaming the developers. I want to sheet this home very heavily as being the way in which this Government carries on. It imagines that it owns all land in Western Australia and can do whatever it wants with it. It did that in relation to Burswood Island. I believe that was wrong and I am simply pointing out the track record of this Government.

It did the same with the old Perth Technical College site. The WADC got that land from the Education Department. It would have been very interesting if the Education Department had been allowed to sell the land off. I fail to see why it could not have done that. The Government wanted the WADC to get it. The WADC sold it off and came up with a book entry profit. However, the Education Department could have done that.

We are going to have a very interesting debate about the future of the Old Swan Brewery site, and the Government has made certain indications of what is going to happen about land in relation to Kings Park. I remind the Minister that some of that land involves seeking the approval of the Parliament. It will not do this Government any good to bring forward a piece of legislation where the Government has committed the State to follow certain directions and the Parliament is then forced to follow along with a fait accompli.

Mr Parker: There is no proposal to put any land relating to the Swan Brewery—

Mr BLAIKIE: We will wait and see because there certainly have been some very wide indications to date. When the WADC came into operation one of the charges the Government gave it was to realise on realisable assets of the State through the sale of Government-held land, and to improve the return from that land.

In relation to the Hardwick family, there is a Press release in *The Australian* written by Peter Terry and headed “Political dogma in Burke’s hamburger”. It goes on to say that the Premier said he intends to make Government services lean, hungry, and cost-efficient. It continues—

It may not rest too neatly with union featherbedding, but Mr Burke has drawn up a long-term strategy. “It really is an amazing situation,” he says.

“Government Ministers have been in the position of company directors who go along to their annual general meetings and say to shareholders: ‘Look, we don’t know the value of the company. We don’t know where the assets are located. We don’t know how much they’re worth and we don’t know what is being done with them.’

“Do you know what we found the other day? Do you know who owns Bernies Hamburger Snack Bar? The National Parks Authority! At the very worst, we could have all been having cheap hamburgers.”

Mr Burke intends to use his newly-created West Australian Development Corporation to ensure Government assets are being run efficiently.

Presumably, the cheap hamburgers are to see it stays within the bounds of socialist ideals.

That was one of the first indications the Hardwick family had that the Government was setting up to move in on its lease.

Mr Parker: He was in the paper recently saying he hadn’t paid his rent.

Mr Clarko: Is that the reason why you are acting?

Mr Parker: Don’t you think he has an obligation to pay his landlord? You are saying someone can occupy land without paying rent to the owner of the land. He said in the paper that he was behind in his rent.

Mr BLAIKIE: I would suggest that before the Minister impugns the integrity of people by saying they do not pay their rent he go and check their situation.

Mr Parker: I am just relying on his remarks in the newspaper. He said he had not paid his rent.

Mr Clarko: He was quoted as saying that, wasn’t he?

Mr Parker: He was quoted as saying that.
family finds itself in today. Those circumstances were brought about by the actions of this Government, which have put the family in great difficulties.

Mr Parker: He also said they had had the best February they have ever had.

Mr BLAIKIE: On one hand the Premier indicates that the Government finds out that it owns Bernies hamburger bar. On the other hand the same comment indicates that the Government is going to realise on its assets.

A further article appeared in the Sunday Independent on 29 July 1984, which prompted the proprietors of Bernies hamburger bar to write to the National Parks Authority. That letter, dated 1 August 1984 and addressed to the secretary, stated—

Dear Sir,

On the 27th July, 1984 a phone call was received at this office from a journalist with the Sunday Independent Newspaper, claiming that having spoken to your authority, she was advised that "a more appropriate use" of the above area was being negotiated.

This information was subsequently printed in the Sunday Independent Newspaper on the 29th July, 1984.

The pressures placed on me by family and staff after the publication on Sunday, have caused me great concern. They like myself are of course worried about the future of their families in these times of harsh unemployment and can rightly expect some assurances from me. With these concerns in mind I submit the following:

He wanted to know just what the National Parks Authority was going to do. Surely to goodness, if the Government was going to stage a midnight raid on Bernies to seize the land back from the Hardwick family, it could have had the common decency to say to the family, "We want a far greater return on the assets you have", or something of that nature, but at least it could have advised them.

Mr Parker: Do you think that the people of Western Australia, who are the people we are talking about, are getting an adequate return on the land?

Mr BLAIKIE: I think the Government of this State must treat people in a fair and proper manner, as would be expected in any commercial venture. Simply because the Government has might and right, and has the Western Australian Development Corporation onside, that does not give it the right to do whatever it wants to do. I point out to the Minister that I have simply indicated one family, which runs Bernies hamburger bar, which happens to be a well-known landmark. I believe the treatment this family has received from the Minister and from the WADC has been quite immoral and wrong. If the Government is going to take over the land and cancel the lease, why does it not go to see the people and tell them what it proposes to do?

At a meeting of the Perth City Council on 21 August 1984 there was an approach from the Under Secretary for Lands on behalf of the Department of Lands and Surveys, as it then was, regarding the possible sale by the Government and subsequent development of portions of the subject lots. Those subject lots were Mounts Bay Road, the site of Bernies. At that meeting the Perth City Council finally resolved that—

During discussions members agreed not to support the recommendation and that the Department of Lands and Surveys should adhere to the normal procedure.

I do not have time to go through all this now, but I will table the papers so that members may see what the abnormal procedure was that the Government was suggesting ought to happen.

Mr Parker: Namely, what?

Mr BLAIKIE: I will table them—the Minister can have them. The Perth City Council said that if the Government wanted to acquire the land or change the zoning of the land it should do so by normal procedures and not in the way it had requested. So it was on 21 August 1984, some three weeks after Bernies had written to the National Parks Authority.

Also, there was an investment seminar which was addressed by the Chairman of the Western Australian Development Corporation, Mr John Horgan. He indicated the structure of the WADC, what it was involved with, what it would do, and its projections for the future. One of Mr Horgan's comments was that it would carry out the policy of the Government. He lauded the Premier's vision and foresight, particularly into the private management of Government assets. He said the WADC was also going to look at getting a far more attractive return on its assets. When the question of land was referred to in his speech, Mr Horgan indicated, "We are going to get a better investment from land than we are getting. Don't tell Bernies about what we intend because I still like getting my hamburgers." I can assure the
Minister and members of this House that there is a tape-recording of the speech because it was a public investment seminar.

Mr Parker: That was a joke.

Mr BLAIKIE: Here we have a company trying to carry out its business, and the landlord is not telling the company what its intentions are but is using threats of subversion.

Mr Parker: Is anyone suggesting that the lease arrangements they have are going to be breached?

Mr BLAIKIE: I do not know how they manage to carry on their business. In any event, those are the circumstances in which this family finds itself. When it tries to get support from financial institutions with which the family has been trading normally, the family finds itself running into trouble. The family has heard on the grapevine that the WADC is going to flog off the land, and that the Government will support that.

Mr Parker: Is that an unusual position for a leaseholder to be in?

Mr BLAIKIE: It is an extremely unusual position. If the Minister is in charge of this situation at least he should have had the decency to explain to the family concerned what those proposals were. But he did not. As far as I am aware, up until this time the Minister has not done that at all.

Mr Parker: It is a normal way for leaseholders to be treated.

Mr BLAIKIE: It is not the way I do business, and if that is the way the Minister and the Government do business that is the reason their party will go out of Government.

On 26 February 1987 Messrs McLeod & del Piano, acting for the Hardwick family, wrote to the Manager, Property Division, WA Development Corporation, 28th Floor, 197 St George's Terrace, Perth, in relation to 140 Mounts Bay Road, Perth. Amongst other things, the letter stated—

Our clients have recently heard rumours the substance of which has been confirmed by a representative of the W.A.D.C. Mr T. Hilliard. That the W.A.D.C. is seeking to push through legislation in the autumn session of Parliament pursuant to which the front portion of the abovementioned land, being the portion of land occupied by the Bernies Drive-In Restaurant, is to be excised from the remainder of the land and subsequently rezoned to enable the front portion of the land to be sold by the W.A.D.C. as a development site.

Our clients are extremely concerned at this prospect, as their livelihood depends on the continued operation of the Bernies Drive-In Restaurant business and they have instructed us to act on their behalf in this matter. Accordingly, we request that you provide us with a full written outline of the W.A. Development Corporation's proposal in relation to the land in question as a matter of urgency to enable us to further advise our client in this matter.

I would be perfectly happy to table these letters for the edification of members. That letter was written on 26 February 1987. A further letter was written on 3 March 1987.

Mr Parker: What is the nature of the lease existing on the land?

Mr BLAIKIE: I will get a copy of the lease for the Minister if he wants; no doubt he can get his own copy.

Mr Parker: Mr Hardwick's only protection is his lease, as with any other leaseholder in the State.

Mr BLAIKIE: Mr Hardwick also wrote to the Department of Conservation and Land Management, again after Press publicity, and a reply was sent back to McLeod & del Piano, solicitors.

The reply in part said—

This Department's position in respect of this property has been fully discussed with Mr M Hardwick. The situation is that whilst the property is currently under the Department's control, the Western Australian Development Corporation has been requested to take any necessary action to maximise the return to the State from the property. As to the details of any such plans I can only suggest that you obtain that information from the WADC.

That information was requested mutually on 27 March from the WADC, and to date there has been no response from them. The first request came from the lawyers on 26 February. The lawyers have written four letters up to 27 March without receiving a reply.

This is a family which has been in business on the site for some 50 years. I do not deny that the family has had some difficult financial circumstances in the last 12 months but, in my judgment, those financial circumstances have been exacerbated by the actions of this Govern-
ment and the WADC in indicating that they will sell off the lease the family has. That is the first point.

Mr Parker: They cannot sell off the lease. They are protected by the lease. They are in exactly the same position as everyone else who has a lease in the State.

Mr BLAIKIE: The Minister knows full well that his Government will do whatever it wishes, notwithstanding what the Minister is now saying. The Minister will achieve what he wants to achieve.

In the few moments left to me, I will indicate the level of the standing Bernies has in the community. I refer to a letter from the National Trust of Western Australia.

Mr Parker: I do not think Bernies is a National Trust establishment. You cannot be serious.

Mr BLAIKIE: This letter was written by John Roberts, who is the Chairman of the Council of the National Trust of Western Australia. If the Minister wishes to criticise John Roberts, he will find a few people in this Parliament will take him on. This letter was written well before the difficulties with the WADC. The letter said—

The news in the “Sunday Independent” that Bernies is classified by the National Trust has been noticed with interest.

While it would appear that this has been achieved without the normal painstaking assessment procedures of the Trust we can nevertheless warmly applaud the public spirited action of the owners in having the property recognised in this way and we can foresee far reaching benefits for the public as classification generally assists in the retention of buildings and it presumably follows that the company will be able to continue to provide its essential service to its customers—many of whom are undoubtedly Trust members.

The “Independent” article mentioned the commencement of trading in 1939 and the writer clearly recalls stopping off at Bernies during army leave in the later years of the war and picking up a hamburger or other welcome snack which was hard to find in Perth in those days.

His final paragraph says—

As we consider it fitting for owners of classified buildings to be members of the Trust I am taking the liberty of enclosing some literature and would draw your attention to the provisions for Life, Sponsor and Benefactor membership.

This is one very simple example of the WADC and the Government using their muscle to have a person shifted from a valuable site. I warn the Minister that if the Government proceeds on that course and seeks the cooperation of the Opposition on this issue, it will find itself in a hard-pressed public debate.

I do not believe the Hardwick family has been treated fairly at all. More importantly, the cavalier manner in which the Government has treated this family goes against all good commercial and business sense. The Government should be condemned for this and for its actions in relation to the WADC, which is another indictment of how little regard the ALP has for business ethics. I urge members to support the amendment.

MR LIGHTFOOT (Murchison-Eyre) [2.54 pm]: In supporting the amendment to the Address-in-Reply, I express my total opposition to the involvement of a Government in what is quite rightly the realms of free or private enterprise. As I speak, I trust this House will see the reasons I express that view. It must be patently obvious to most members of this House that the Government has had a litany of broken attempts to establish itself as a bona fide trader through Exim and the WADC. With respect to Exim, the State Government has invested $7 million. One might call it a wholly-owned subsidiary of the people of the State. The Federal Government also placed some $6 million in Exim, making a total of $13 million. Yet, the books that were lodged at the end of December—which were subsequently returned from the Corporate Affairs Department because of insufficient fees and required a fine to be paid—showed a $54500 profit on investments of $13 million.

In commercial terms, that is a less than 0.5 per cent return on the money invested. That is not surprising. Governments have no right to interfere in that particular realm of free enterprise. The same thing happened in the Federal sphere when that little man in Canberra, Mr Hawke, tried to muscle in when he was leader of the ACTU. He led its membership through the most devastating period in political and industrial history in our nation when he tried to establish petrol stations and a retail store in Melbourne. We have witnessed those failures. Yet this Government, in its egotistical way, tried to oust that little man and is suffering the same fate.
One cannot possibly attract a Government with the sort of people who are in free enterprise and expect to get the best men. One simply cannot do it. It is an equation that does not work.

The Exim Corporation received about $2.8 million in extra interest. We do not know what that interest is. Perhaps the Minister, who is so vocal, will be able to tell us when he has his chance where that $2.8 million interest came from and what it was for. Was it used to camouflage some of those figures and to try to cover up the ineptness of the appalling histories that the Exim Corporation and the WADC have? Where did that $2.8 million come from in those books that are yet to be lodged with the Corporate Affairs Department with another cheque because they were lodged incorrectly in the first place? It is another small manifestation of Government when it interferes in the realms of free enterprise. One cannot have extra union leaders, ex-trade union secretaries and like interfering and thinking, all of a sudden, they can run some business that has taken the people in that sphere years to build up sufficient expertise to run. It is not on. It does not matter how big one's head is, one cannot do it.

Dr Gallop interjected.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: The member on my left would not know. He is a perpetual schoolboy, has never grown up, and is never likely to grow up as long as he persists in being on the socialist side of this House.

Despite that $2.8 million in extra interest, the Exim Corporation had no money on deposit, or at least only $350,000 of the cash and other assets, including those which were outstanding. However, the corporation managed to earn $2.8 million in extra interest. How can that be? It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the State. Where did the funds come from? The company earned less than 0.5 per cent on its $13 million capital structure. Even at 15 per cent, it would need a capital investment structure of around $21 million in order to earn that $2.8 million. This matter is of great interest to me. Where did that $2.8 million come from? If we can find that out, will it balance up in the books? The money could not have materialised from thin air, unlike a lot of other business such as that in respect of the Anchorage profits and the profits relating to the old Perth Technical College site. Perhaps it could; perhaps it is another one of those things which, with some socialist magic, has been plucked out of the air and put into Exim's books—those rubbery books and those rubbery figures.

I am sure the media will also be interested to learn where that money came from. Since that was lodged on 31 December 1986, there has been interest shown as to where the money came from. There obviously has been plenty of time to "cook the books", to adjust the figures in order to explain where the money came from. There are some very good chefs on the other side when it comes to cooking the books. The Managing Director of Exim, Mr Williams—there have been so many that I cannot keep up with the name changes—was asked by a journalist where the interest came from and his reply was, in effect, that that information was confidential. Here we have a wholly-owned subsidiary of the people of this State—using taxpayers' money—which is run by the Government, and yet the man in charge says it is confidential. The people of this State, who are the shareholders in the Western Australian Development Corporation and in Exim, are not allowed to know where this money comes from. It seems to me that we are seeing more and more cover-ups. They are never ending.

Mr Williams will have to account for his reply in the future, if he has not already done so. That this matter should be confidential when it relates to a company which is owned by the people is really too much for me to comprehend. What is the problem? Why must it remain hidden? Why is it confidential? Mr Williams, when asked about the matter of interest being confidential, said in the Australian Financial Review on 19 March—

"I don't really want to get into a discussion on that," he said. "It's a commercial thing which belongs within EXIM and comment creates speculation which is not positive."

I cannot see why that figure should not be explained and was not explained at that time. What is the cover-up for? On my last inquiry, the annual report had not been lodged, although it could have been since then. That could have attracted a fine, and this is an instance of the Government's malpractice and ineptitude. I would like the relevant Minister to explain why it was not lodged on the due date, why the extra interest was incorporated in the accounts of Exim, and where it came from.
Once again that figure of roughly $13 million in investment—cash investment from the State and Federal Governments—showed a profit of $54 500, which is also a suspect figure because it is less than 0.5 per cent return on the investment. However, there was a return of $2.8 million in special interest shown.

In an article in the same edition of The Australian Financial Review, the Premier said—

... he was still “extremely pleased” with the corporation and dismissed the criticism as due to “teething problems”. They are more like giant cavities in his Government’s smooth image.

It is a bit like the “duck” analogy. Under one of the greatest Premiers of this State, Sir Charles Court, we were, as Mr Burke quaintly put it, as a State supplying three ducks while the Government was taking one duck. That was part of the machinery that was being put into place so that the Government could show the business world—the commercial sector—of this nation how to get 10 ducks. The motivation for doing that was so the Government could take three ducks. To continue the analogy, it seems that now the commercial world is supplying one duck and the Government is taking one duck. When are the 10 ducks going to materialise?

Like great cavities which are unattended and are growing larger and larger because they have not received the right attention, the situation is growing worse. We have a basic philosophy, a structural plank, in which this socialist Government—which like all socialist Governments has a bragging swagger, probably as a result of euphoria at coming into power after so many empty years on Opposition benches—has found it easy to set up a corporation in order to make money. All one has to do is set up a corporation, use the taxpayers’ funds to do so, then entice someone from the public sector in there, go as hard as possible, and make a big quid. That would be very easy because there is plenty of money out there for everyone.

Socialism can survive only by fraud; it cannot survive by trying to compete with the public sector, the free enterprise sector. It can survive only by pulling strings, by cover-ups, by using rubbery figures. Eventually—thank God for the Westminster system—it will come out. It is starting to come out now; it is busting out all over. The fabric of this socialist Government is being torn apart, and it is easy for everyone to see through that rending to the incompetency and the fraudulent activities of this Government. It does not matter whether that socialist country is Russia, China, Bulgaria, or East Germany, it cannot survive. People are too keen to work for themselves; they want the incentive to work for themselves, and of course this Government has not given them that incentive. It has hooked itself to the band wagon that the Court Government set in motion in respect of the goldmining industry. It is riding the crest of that wave of success. Australia is now the fourth biggest producer of gold, a long way after South Africa.

Mr Parker: You are talking nonsense.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: The Government ought to change its record in the commercial world.

Mr Parker: The record speaks for itself. Look at the growth of the gold industry under this Government and compare it with the previous Government’s record.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: In answer to the interjection, I had the pleasure of being the foundation Chairman of Southern Goldfields, quite a successful goldmining company now. I guess there is an analogy between myself and Sir Charles Court, if I can be so brash as to draw one, because while he set the wheels in motion for the State to draw success from the goldmining industry I certainly set them in motion for Southern Goldfields. I started the company from scratch, which was no mean effort for a simple boy from the bush. I spent a great deal of my life there. I am pleased to say that everyone connected with the company has been successful, and obviously there is jealousy and antipathy from members on the other side of the House because they did not get any shares. They saw how easy it was to do it. They thought that when they got into Government they would emulate Lightfoot and start a corporation and make a big quid. They failed miserably.

Mr Brian Burke: We did not know Robert Nelson and Richard Ladyman.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: I know of Robert Nelson, perhaps not as well as the Premier. Obviously he has more friends, and we will mention some of them later. Some of his associations with some of his bosom pals will come out. I understand Mr Robert Nelson is associated with the bottom-of-the-harbour Slutzkin deals. As I have said in this place before, neither I nor my family and companies have ever been involved with Robert Nelson or Slutzkin or bottom-of-the-harbour, tax minimisation, or tax evasion deals. I cannot say it any more plainly for the Premier, nor can I say it in a better forum because it is recorded for all time. Perhaps that
will shut up the Premier. He talks about denigration in this Chamber, and perhaps he will be a little more accurate when he says things, and we will not have to take up the gauntlet he throws down and challenge him for his inaccuracies.

Any denigration in this Chamber starts with the Premier who will be disgraced in history as perhaps the only Premier of this State who will never serve out a full term. He does not get any support from his Ministers. They are backing away from him at a rapid rate. One fellow from Kalgoorlie will inherit the throne and not anyone else on the front bench. The Ministers are deserting their leader at the moment when he needs them. They are all culpable and share the blame. The Premier may take a high profile but some other Ministers are the intellectuals, as they say, and the blame must be apportioned.

Members opposite should not get me excited like that because it does not do anyone any good to shout.

To return to the Anchorage deal. It seems to me there is some ambiguity surrounding that deal. I have here what is alleged to be a flow sheet of the capital structure, profit and loss, and assets of Mr Robert Martin's Accord Nominees Pty Ltd. It refers to "profit share North Fremantle Quay development". That was before it was given the name of the Anchorage, for which Richard Ellis has a big sign down there saying "Sole selling agent". It has not even been approved by the Fremantle City Council yet! This is another deal the Government is involved in. The lowest sworn valuation is given as $30 million.

**Points of Order**

Mr PARKER: Can I ask the member to table the document from which he is quoting?

The SPEAKER: I suppose strictly speaking the Minister can ask whether the member would like to lay the document on the Table of the House for the balance of today's sitting, but there is no Standing Order under which he can be instructed to do so.

Mr PARKER: I would ask the member whether he would be prepared to lay the document on the Table for the balance of the day's sitting.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: The answer is no.

**Debate Resumed**

Mr LIGHTFOOT: If that figure for the lowest sworn valuation is true, is it alluding to a document; is it self-accorded?

Mr Peter Dowding interjected.

Mr LIGHTFOOT: The Minister can try to shut me up now, but I will only talk later. He will prolong the pain. This shows a profit of $17.5 million. That is, it must have been bought by a subsidiary of the Superannuation Board and then sold to the board to create a profit of $17.5 million so that the profit share to Mr Gary Jones would be $4.25 million; and Mr Martin was to receive $5.375 million.

**MR PARKER (Fremantle—Minister for Minerals and Energy) [3.16 pm]:** I have been listening with some interest to the comments of members opposite, and as usual the Opposition has not been able to get its act together on this matter, as is the case with every other matter in which it is involved. We have seen the amazing spectacle of the member for Nedlands speaking in this debate and forgetting to move an amendment at the conclusion of his speech. We then saw the even more amazing spectacle of the member for Vasse, that great financial analyst, deciding he would take over the moving of the amendment and submitting an amendment which I am not sure is in order. It says at the top "Member for Nedlands to move", and then refers to "amendment". I do not know what that is. We will be kind and say that he meant "amendment". I do not know whether the spelling error is that of the member for Vasse or the member for Nedlands. At the bottom of the amendment is a signature which I understand to be that of the member for Vasse, despite the fact that it says at the top that the member for Nedlands is to move the amendment.

I admit it is a trivial point, but it is yet another example of the Opposition's inability to get the simplest matter together and to be able to use the procedures of the House in any way to its advantage. The amendment does not go to the substance of the matter, to the extent that there is any substance at all. I suggest the substance is as trivial as the point that has been raised. It shows the inability of the Opposition to even remotely come to grips with any of the major issues facing the State, let alone to observe the practices and procedures of the House.

Mr Brian Burke: All the member for Murchison-Eyre wanted to do was to blame Exim for being two days late in putting in a report.

Mr PARKER: I will come to that and deal with that question.
The member for Nedlands in his speech during which he was supposed to move an amendment talked about the need for accountability and management of manpower and the enhancement of export performance. The facts are that in a whole host of areas, not just the traditional areas of economic activity in this State, but including them, Western Australia’s export performance in the last three or four years has been nothing short of outstanding, particularly when compared with the performance during the last few years of the Government of which he was a member for a brief time. It has been an outstanding performance compared with that of other States, particularly Queensland and Tasmania. The Government expressed a desire in Opposition, and has been implementing it since coming to Government, to diversify this State’s economic base, not by abandoning the traditional strengths of our economy, but by enhancing them and using those strengths to move into new and diversified areas. We have been extraordinarily successful by any standards one would care to lay down.

Mr Lightfoot: Don’t be stupid.

Mr PARKER: I am not being stupid. Why does the member not look at the figures and see what the truth of the matter is? I understand that the growth and development of the wildflower industry with the sale of information and assets to the private sector is going at pace.

We saw the extraordinary performance by a member of the Opposition, the member for Vasse, alleging that somehow or other Bernies hamburger bar was a place of significance with the National Trust of Australia. I do not know what the nature of the lease arrangements are between Bernies hamburger bar and the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority. I also do not know what the return from that lease is. Undoubtedly, though, by any stretch of the imagination, it is a valuable piece of real estate. I, like the gentleman who wrote the letter to which the member for Vasse referred, have had some enjoyable experiences at the hamburger bar over the years.

I think it would be very strange to expect that, no matter what were the lease payments which were sustainable by a hamburger bar, they would be nothing like the return on the capital that one would expect from a piece of land of that nature.

Mr Hodge: The return is $15,000 per annum.

Mr PARKER: I have been advised by my colleague that the return from that land is the princely sum of $15,000 per annum.

Mr Hodge: And he is behind in his rent.

Mr PARKER: I heard that, but putting that to one side, and taking into consideration the buildings on either side of the hamburger bar, I would be very surprised if $15,000 per annum was an adequate return for that land. I would be happy to be corrected by any valuation that anyone could supply to me to disprove that statement. If it were part of Kings Park and used for park purposes, it would have a different intrinsic value to the State. However, it has nothing to do with Kings Park except that it happens to be on one of the same lots of land.

That is an extraordinarily low rate of return. As I said, I do not know the nature of the lease. It may well protect Mr Hardwick or whatever is the name of the person who owns the area concerned. I do not know who holds the lease. It may be that the lease protects him for a period. He is the person who entered into the lease and conducts his business on the basis of whatever lease is in existence. If he does not have an adequate lease, that is his problem. If he is in breach of the lease, that is his problem as well. If he created the breach, that is also his problem. I do not know; all I am saying is that, if he has his lease and is working in accordance with it, he will be protected by it.

Mr Hodge: It expires shortly.

Mr PARKER: I have been advised that the lease expires shortly.

Mr Court: What about good tenancy legislation?

Mr PARKER: The member for Nedlands was strongly opposed to any interference by the Government with tenancy legislation in the marketplace when the Parliament was considering the retail shops legislation. The member for Nedlands defended to the hilt the decision of National Mutual to refuse to automatically renew the tenancies of shop owners in the Warwick Shopping Centre. It is all very well when his mates want to engage in private sector activities, receive returns on their capital, and deal in whatever way they like with tenants in shopping centres. That does not matter; they can make as much money as they like, as far as the member for Nedlands is concerned. When the people of Western Australia, through their elected Government, want to obtain an adequate return from land which they own—

Mr Court: It was an adequate return.
The SPEAKER: Order! I wonder whether I might prevail upon members to hear me out for about 30 seconds. I wonder whether it would not be more appropriate for members to consider interjecting when a member is being provocative and not endeavouring, as they have been for the last couple of minutes that I have been in this Chair, to shout him down when he is putting his point of view. I think that would be fair and reasonable.

Mr PARKER: It seems to be considered by the Opposition to be a legitimate aspect of the system when people with whom the Opposition has allegiances in the private sector want to maximise the returns on their assets. When the people of Western Australia, through their elected Government, want to do the same with their assets—apparently in this case the lease is shortly to expire—the Opposition proposes to take action. That situation is no different from the position that any other leaseholder throughout the State might find himself in in a free enterprise system.

The member for Murchison-Eyre spoke about socialism. I do not think he understands the meaning of the word. He also spoke about free enterprise and I am sure he does not understand the meaning of those words. As far as he is concerned, what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander.

We have had the ludicrous proposition put to us that the area should be declared a National Trust area. That is laughable. It may be that somewhere at the back of that property is secreted a building of National Trust proportions.

Mr Peter Dowding: Isn't it a caravan?

Mr PARKER: I thought so. I do not know the full extent of what is on the property. However, I find it hard to believe that the National Trust, a worthy and reputable organisation, would seriously consider classifying Bernies as a National Trust area. The mind boggles. However, if the National Trust is considering the area, then that says a lot more about the National Trust than about anything else. There are good people in the National Trust and I cannot imagine that they would even flirt with the idea.

The member for Murchison-Eyre came into the argument, as is his wont on these matters, complaining about the Exim Corporation and, in particular, complaining about the fact that Exim, as he put it, had lodged late returns. I have two points to make on that. Firstly, Exim has now lodged its returns. Secondly, Exim initially attempted to lodge its returns within the normal time required for the lodgment of returns but the Corporate Affairs Department advised Exim that it was concerned about some aspects of those returns and asked it to reorganise some of the reporting mechanism to enable the department to understand it. It was not an unusual procedure to enable Exim to conform to the standards required by the department. The lawyers for Exim duly complied with the request and I understand there have been ongoing discussions about the sorts of things the department wants to see in the lodged returns. Those conditions have been complied with and the returns have been lodged.

Some disagreement still exists between the Corporate Affairs Department and Exim Corporation in that regard. Because Exim was aware of criticism it chose not to challenge, without prejudice, the views of the Corporate Affairs Department in court, but to lodge both returns and payments on the basis of the views of the Corporate Affairs Department.

Mr Court: And in the process to sue one of our members.

Mr PARKER: The point is that Exim has complied fully with the requirements of the Corporate Affairs Department.

The member for Murchison-Eyre advised the House that he has been involved in the corporate sector for some time and as a result of his experience he might like to tell the House, by way of interjection—he has made reference to the experience of members on this side of the House on several occasions—whether he feels it is a normal, untoward, or wrong practice for companies to be involved in the late lodgment of returns. Is it a frequent practice or is it something in which only a few socialist companies are involved?

Mr Lightfoot: You have done research into the companies, have you not? Your research would tell you whether or not they have.

Mr PARKER: I am not talking about the companies in which the member for Murchison-Eyre is involved. The member has made an assertion that it is some heinous crime on the part of Exim to lodge late returns.

Mr Lightfoot: It is a manifestation of ineptness.
Several members interjected.

Mr PARKER: I see, it is a manifestation of ineptness! I would like to refer to the manifestation of ineptness in relation to the member for Murchison-Eyre. The member talks about "ineptness". He is a director of Eureka Minerals Pty Ltd and other companies and has been for many years.

Several members interjected.

Mr Laurance: You spent 90 per cent—

Mr PARKER: Mr Speaker, I seek your protection because I have only four minutes in which to complete my speech.

The SPEAKER: Because I am so friendly with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition I am not going to take any further action.

Mr Lightfoot: For 10 years.

Mr Court: Tell us why Exim has been a failure. You have had 20 minutes in which to tell us.

Mr PARKER: Ten years ago—in 1977—the member for Murchison-Eyre was a director of Eureka Minerals which held its annual general meeting on 31 May 1977. Would members like to know when that annual report was lodged with the Corporate Affairs Department? It was lodged in January 1980, more than two years later. Ineptness, I agree. Perhaps it got lost and fell down a drill hole at the Kalgoorlie racecourse. Who knows where it was? It certainly was not at the Corporate Affairs Department.

Mr Brian Burke: Did they get it on time the next year?

Mr PARKER: We will see. In 1978 the annual general meeting was held again on 31 May—obviously a popular date on which to hold annual general meetings. The return was lodged with the Corporate Affairs Department on 22 January 1980—18 months later and the same day on which the 1977 return was lodged. Perhaps it also was lost and fell down a drill hole.

If I were to take the view of the member for Murchison-Eyre when he refers to the activities of Mr Brush and others, perhaps the reports were not only lodged on the same day, but they were prepared on the same day. There may be a possibility that these reports were signed a year apart. Someone could have altered the type face and printed the figure "8" instead of "7".

I want to give members another surprise. In 1979, also on 31 May, another annual general meeting of Eureka Minerals was held. The report was lodged not in January 1980, but July 1980—still 14 months later. After 1979, 31 May fell out of favour for the holding of annual general meetings. Obviously the member for Murchison-Eyre decided he had given that date too much of a bash because in 1980 and 1981 the annual general meetings were held on 30 September. Following on from what I said earlier it would come as no surprise to members to know that the 1980 return was not lodged until September 1982, two years later, and the 1981 return was not lodged until 1983. The member for Murchison-Eyre is an example of inept management at its worst. Considering what the member for Murchison-Eyre said about Exim, and comparing him with Exim, he makes Exim par excellence.

MR LEWIS (East Melville) [3.37 pm]: I support the amendment moved by the member for Vasse. It is obvious to this Parliament and the people of Western Australia that this Government does not want to expose the truth about Exim Corporation Ltd. There is a reason this Government is not prepared to disclose within this Parliament answers to legitimate questions asked by the Opposition.

The Opposition has a responsibility to the people of Western Australia to ask questions of the Government and not to sit in this place and be harangued and abused by the Government for asking legitimate questions. What we have heard from the Minister for Minerals and Energy in the last 20 minutes is absolute rot and he has now left the Chamber. He did not give one reason why he abused and criticised Exim.

Mr Court: And the staff in it.

Mr LEWIS: Yes, and the staff. It is a corporation of this State under the stewardship of the Premier and it has a disgraceful record. The responsibility for Exim was shifted sideways and it has become the responsibility of the Minister for Minerals and Energy to try to pick it up. Perhaps the pressure is too much for the Premier and he has not been able to handle it. He looks a little thin these days. Perhaps that is the reason.

The Government will not explain to this Parliament the reason it will not answer the legitimate questions asked by the Opposition. Yesterday afternoon the Premier was floundering
at question time when trying to answer questions. He was devoid of any answers and he was absolutely speechless. He did not answer one question that was legitimately asked. Corporations and organisations have been set up under the leadership of the Premier. It appears that he has some hangup. He became a politician and Premier and apparently has a burning desire to become a greater entity by becoming a wheeler and dealer.

That is all very well, but before people start wheeling and dealing they have to learn how to do it. It cannot be done simply by becoming a Premier of the State. It would be interesting to know how many of those sitting on the Government benches have ever made a dollar in their own enterprises. I hear no response from them. Perhaps a dollar has been made touting racebooks at Gloucester Park. Perhaps the Premier has had a little bit of experience in small business, and that is real small business!

Mr Clarko: How many winners did he pick?

Mr Brian Burke: On one occasion there was a four-horse race at Ascot. There was an odds-on favourite and the third or fourth horse in the betting was at odds of 40:1. We tipped the 40:1 horse and it duly won by a length and a half. Before you go criticising Punter’s Guide, you should remember that lots of people have reason to be thankful for it.

Mr LEWIS: I accept that and record it in the Hansard of the Parliament that the Premier has had some experience in small business.

The point must be made that the Minister who now has the responsibility for Exim did not want to talk about it. He did not want to explain the reasons for his outburst about how Exim got off to a bad start and had staffing problems and a few disasters. By contrast, the Opposition for two days has legitimately asked questions, the answers to which the public of Western Australia is entitled to know. The Government should not be involved in any corporation or agency the activities of which cannot stand up to public scrutiny.

The Labor Government presently operating the Treasury bench forgets that the money it is spending and investing does not belong to it; it belongs to the citizens of Western Australia. The Government is accountable to the citizens of Western Australia. Thus when legitimate questions are asked in the Parliament they should be answered with candour. However, members of the Government sit there in their closeted, covert, secretive way muttering among themselves and will not explain anything.

Yesterday the Premier was absolutely exasperated. I think he made the weakest speech I have ever heard in this Parliament. I have only been here a while, but that speech was weak and the people who were listening to it in other rooms thought that the Premier was sick. He may have been a little off-colour yesterday, but I suppose he has had reason to be so with everything tumbling around him.

Mr Brian Burke: I did my best.

Mr LEWIS: It was either that or the Premier had something to hide.

Mr Brian Burke: Not to my knowledge.

Mr LEWIS: The Premier was either unwell or he had something to hide.

Mr Brian Burke: I feel quite well. I do not know of anything I have to hide or that may be hidden from me, and I did my best. It is not very becoming of you simply to criticise me for doing my best. I don’t criticise you for doing your best.

Mr LEWIS: I try to do my best all the time.

Mr Brian Burke: And I am not critical of you.

Mr LEWIS: Not at the moment.

Mr Carr: We appreciate your shortcomings.

Mr LEWIS: The point I would like to make is that the Government has a responsibility to answer questions. It has a responsibility to explain to the Parliament the goings-on and the reasons for things happening. The Government acts as trustee of the State’s finances. As trustee it should be prepared to answer legitimate questions. It should not hide the nefarious business affairs of some of its so-called corporations behind the secrecy of Cabinet, or Executive Government. It should come out in the open with full and public disclosures.

When I took my first job I was asked for my credentials, including references concerning my character, honesty and application to work. It seems that with this Government the only thing needed to be appointed to a senior Government position is to be a friend of the Premier and a friend of the Labor Party. The Government seems to have forgotten the age-old tradition of requiring prospective employees to prove their credibility. Their credibility, their background and honesty should be demonstrated and the willingness of people to vouch for them as good men and women true should be ascertained. That has been forgotten
by this Government. The Government has put into senior positions in these corporations—with a few exceptions—friends and cronies to do its bidding. It has done so because it has this hang-up that if it puts in career civil servants to perform these tasks it will not have their first fidelity. It all gets back to fidelity and trust. Unfortunately, this Government has forgotten that the first responsibility of public servants is to the Government of the day, not to the Government of convenience.

I certainly do not want to touch upon personalities, but Mr Gale himself said that he was invited to join Exim by the Premier.

Mr Brian Burke: But Mr Gale is not a Labor Party person.

Mr LEWIS: He may not be a Labor person; I do not know.

Mr Brian Burke: He is not a crony of mine.

Mr LEWIS: I ask the Premier whether Mr Gale had the necessary credentials, the bona fides, to be appointed to a position such as that.

Mr Brian Burke: Yes, I think he did.

Mr LEWIS: That is the Premier’s opinion; unfortunately, it is not mine.

Mr Brian Burke: Well, we disagree on that.

Mr LEWIS: I believe that it is not the opinion of many other Western Australians.

It would seem that any hail-fellow-well-met person who comes and cracks a joke with the Premier gets a good job.

Mr Brian Burke: He did not come and crack a joke with me; I had not met him.

Mr LEWIS: I would like the Government to answer some legitimate questions, especially about Exim. The questions that should be answered are: What investments does Exim have? Is it not a Government corporation; are not this Parliament and the citizens of Western Australia, the shareholders of Exim, entitled to know what is going on? Secondly, I would like to know what losses Exim has incurred and the circumstances of those losses. The public are entitled to know who works for that corporation. Is it so covert that no-one is allowed to know? After all the corporation is owned by the citizens of Western Australia and we, as their representatives in this Parliament, are entitled to answers. We should not be lampooned for asking questions. We want to know whether any other interest-free loans have been given to people in Exim and if so, to whom?

We also want to see the financial statements of Exim, WADC, the State Superannuation Board, and all the other side companies attached to Exim. Why are the details not publicly available? Why are they not accountable to this Parliament? Why are they seen only by the eyes of Cabinet members?

I believe that anything the Government does should stand up to public scrutiny and it is despicable that, because the Government has a few problems, it is hiding the facts by not answering questions and it is keeping that information from the Parliament.

Mr Brian Burke: You pick on people because they have problems.

Mr LEWIS: Everyone in this world from time to time has problems.

Mr Brian Burke: Why not talk about theirs instead of ours all the time?

Mr LEWIS: That is a flippant, stupid thing to say. The Premier should look to the Press Gallery and ask for applause again. He is getting weaker every day of the week.

Mr Brian Burke: I am thin and I am old.

Mr LEWIS: It might be because of the Premier’s diet; certainly his wisecracks have diminished in stature. Obviously the Premier cannot handle the pace.

The Minister for Minerals and Energy blamed the early personnel of Exim; he said the early staff were no good and that the corporation lacked strategy. They really did not know what they were doing. The corporation was born in haste as part of the Premier’s insatiable desire to become a corporate person. The Premier has a hang-up about associating and rubbing shoulders with the corporate people of this State. He has some sort of paranoia in that he has to be seen as a wheeler and dealer. He is a failed purveyor of racing details and tips.

Of course, there were the very grandiose schemes of Mr Gale and that was another reason Exim did not go very well. The Premier said that the staff worked extraordinarily hard and with enthusiasm. What did they work hard on? Making losses? That is all they achieved. Let us consider the losses: Goldrock, the debacle with the export of flowers, the cattle deals in the north west, the failed tractor deal in Merredin and the housing in Taiwan. Do I have to continue? They are all losses.

Then there is the extraordinary $54,500 profit on a capital of $13 million. There is an extraordinary interest factor which no-one can explain because Exim had no money to invest.
It is incredible how a company could make interest of $2.8 million on invested cash of $350,000. The Government cannot explain that, yet its members profess to be wheelers and dealers in business.

I now quote from an article which appeared in The Australian Financial Review and stated the following—

Exim refuses to comment on the source of such funds. The managing director, Mr John Williams, said the report had been audited and that the matter of the interest was "confidential".

Exim is a Government corporation, yet it was said that the matter of whether it received interest was confidential, and that that information should not be available to this Parliament and the citizens of Western Australia, whose money it is. The article continued—

"I don't really want to get into a discussion on that," he said. "It's a commercial thing which belongs within EXIM and comment creates speculation which is not positive."

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.57 pm]: I commend this amendment to the Chamber. The amendment reads as follows—

But we regret to inform Your Excellency that in the opinion of this House the Government has neglected its duty by not providing a full and proper disclosure of the activities of companies and authorities, particularly the Western Australian Exim Corporation Limited, its subsidiaries, and the Western Australian Development Corporation.

Any responsible member of this House would have to support that amendment. We shall be watching the Minister for Minerals and Energy.

In commending the motion to the House I refer to three people. Firstly, this State and this Parliament owe a debt of gratitude to the member for Nedlands. He has assiduously worked through the maze and network of double-dealing surrounding this Government's corporations. He has tried to sieve through and find out the facts the public should know. He could not use the traditional source, this Parliament. The traditional role of this place has been subverted so the member for Nedlands decided to go digging and he found the ground was very fertile.

If it were not for his efforts I do not think the taxpayers of this State would know anywhere near as much as they do about the business disasters of this Government. We have much to thank him for. It is not as though the task was made easy for him; he was threatened and he had a writ slapped on him to try to prevent him from finding out what the public wanted and had a right to know.

It was a cry in the wilderness for a long time because no-one would take up this issue. The Press in Western Australia, befuddled by the Premier, his Press corps, media monitoring unit and his other slick organisations, did not listen to the member for Nedlands.

I want to pay tribute to one of the journalists who did some homework and who managed to get a run on all these business disasters. That is Jenni Hewett. She wrote a major article in The Australian Financial Review of Thursday, 19 March. It was headed, "Burke's Model of Private Enterprise is Stalling". More than that; it has stalled.

Mr Peter Dowding: What was the date of the last event on which she criticised Exim in that article?

MR LAURANCE: I am not sure.

Mr Peter Dowding: Well, you ought to be sure; you are about to refer to the document.

MR LAURANCE: I will give the Minister a chance to see whether he supports his Minister for Minerals and Energy.

Several members interjected.

MR LAURANCE: I will have the opportunity of question time for the Minister. In addition to that major article headed "Burke's Model of Private Enterprise is Stalling", a headline with which members opposite will all agree, Exim has lost a lot of taxpayers' money.

The article goes on to describe a doleful history of burnt fingers. Are members opposite proud of this record? This is their Exim. It has been involved in Goldrock Investments. Do they support interest-free loans to members of the family running that show on their behalf—on our behalf; on behalf of taxpayers? Is that the idea of members opposite—the Government being involved in enterprise?

Which member opposite would say it was a good show? Which member would set it up tomorrow? Members are obviously answering me but they will have to speak up. I cannot hear them. They are embarrassed. They do not like Goldrock Investments.

The Minister did not answer this question. He spent 20 minutes talking about the business successes of the member for Murchison-Eyre. The Government is transfixed by that member.
The Government cannot run the State for worrying about what he is doing. What are members opposite doing with Exim? The Minister criticised them, which is not a bad start.

Members do not want to talk about Goldrock. Let us talk about Favonius Nominees, which lost $291,000 last year. Which one of the members opposite is impressed with that performance? Which member would support Favonius Nominees?

What about Acremaster Marketing? That is in the first stage of insolvency. Let us turn to another company, Linate (Asia) Ltd. This is a winner. It was involved in a joint venture with a housing deal in Thailand. It too collapsed, involving a loss of $95,000 last year. Are members opposite in favour of that?

Mr Peter Dowding: Do you not want to see risks taken?

Mr LAURANCE: I am asking the questions. Are members in favour of Linate (Asia) Ltd? They are the Government. They are running this State. Is Goldrock Investments their success as a Government? Is Favonius Nominees? Is Acremaster Marketing? Does this Government want to go down in history as the Government which brought in Acremaster? Do members opposite want to be known as the Government which brought in Linate (Asia) Ltd?

What about CATT furniture? Eighteen months ago it owed $300,000 to the people of this State. Now it owes $3 million.

Mr Peter Dowding: What are you suggesting?

Mr LAURANCE: What about Waltzing Matilda?

Mr Peter Dowding: What do you say about CATT furniture?

Mr LAURANCE: I am suggesting that it is in liquidation. I am saying it has gone broke. It is the Government's company.

Mr Peter Dowding: What are you saying about it?

Mr LAURANCE: I am asking if members opposite are proud of it. They will not answer the question anyway. Is the Minister proud of it? Why did he not say how proud he is of CATT Corporation Ltd? Members opposite know all about Mr Lightfoot's companies, but what about that corporation? We all owe a debt of gratitude to Jenni Hewett. She documented all these business failures for the world to see; every one of them. We have not finished with them yet. We will come to Waltzing Matilda in a minute.

Where are these fantastic successes? What are they? It is all right for a businessman, because he takes a business risk, but the Government is taking taxpayers' money and pouring it down the drain.

Here we have an amendment to the Address-in-Reply. Members opposite are not denying any of these things, so obviously they support it. Are they going to reject the amendment and defend the Premier, or are they going to defend the Minister for Minerals and Energy who says the staff of the corporation are all deadheads, people who should not be there?

Mr Peter Dowding: He did not say that.

Mr LAURANCE: Yes, he did. He said they were the wrong people to employ.

Mr Parker: I did not say that. Read what I said!

Mr LAURANCE: Is the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in favour of this? Does he support the Premier or the Minister for Minerals and Energy? What about the Minister for Tourism? Is she going to come out in favour of Mr Gale or of the Premier? What about the member for Scarborough? Whom is he going to back—the Premier or the Minister for Minerals and Energy?

Several members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: There members go! Not only have there been serious financial disasters, but also the Government now is split over it. The Premier thinks these people are good. The Minister for Minerals and Energy gets up and says, "No, they are not, it was a mistake." The Premier has time and time again said what a wonderful thing it was for the State that Exim and the WADC were set up. The Minister, who has taken over responsibility—to his credit it is the first honest thing that has been said about these corporations—said they should not have been run by those people. Are members going to say, "What we did was wrong," or are they going to hide behind the Premier—a Premier who is looking worse and worse every day? Members opposite are looking scared. When the Premier laughs it is a half-laugh. Members opposite do not know whether to back him or to back off. They have big problems.

Mr Gordon Hill: You are a joke.

Mr LAURANCE: What about the Minister? Does that mean he supports the Minister or the Premier?

Mr Gordon Hill: There is no inconsistency.
Mr LAURANCE: The Minister is supporting all these people and all those companies which were set up. Which one does he like best? Let me tell members about a couple of others. Exim cattle properties. They have denied it when we have told them. They are in great strife; members opposite have enormous problems as a Government. They have received $6 million for one reason: Because the Prime Minister's son happened to be involved.

Point of Order

Mr PARKER: Mr Speaker, I take exception to the comments made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. There is absolutely no truth in his comments in respect of this money. The comments about this Government and about a member of another House of Parliament and action he might take are objectionable.

The SPEAKER: I will take the same action that I took yesterday with the member for Murchison-Eyre, and that is, at the end of what I say I hope that the member will withdraw, although I am not going to instruct that that happen.

Mr LAURANCE: I respect your ruling and say that I do not believe what I have just said to be unparrliamentary and I fervently believe it to be the truth; therefore it would not be right for me to withdraw, even though you have asked me to, and in most circumstances I would if I felt that—

The SPEAKER: I have not asked you to.

Mr LAURANCE: No, you have not but I would like to be able to—

Mr Pearce: The decent thing would be to withdraw.

The SPEAKER: I will be a little more clear. I have not asked you to withdraw. What I have done is suggest it would be the gentlemanly thing under the circumstances.

Debate Resumed

Mr LAURANCE: We will have to agree to disagree on that because what I have said I do not believe to be unparrliamentary and I certainly do not believe it to be untrue; I believe it to be true. Further, when we accused the Government this year and said that the money came not only to Western Australia but also came with strings attached, every one of the members over there, including the Premier, denied it continually until we held up a copy of the Budget papers in the Federal Parliament, which said, “We will give $6 million to the State as long as you give us one quarter of those properties back again.”

So there were strings attached and there are still strings attached. The Government has not met its part of the deal and it cannot, and that is why it is in trouble. The $6 million is still owing and the land has not been made available and the Government cannot make it available. We have said, “You have got big problems.” Members opposite have said, “We have not. It is all wonderful. Mr Gale, Mr Easton, they are all wonderful people, doing a wonderful job, making money.”

We know they are losing money. They cannot manage their affairs and they were not appropriate people. The Minister told us so. That is the record of this Government. It should be supporting this motion. If members opposite were decent, honest people in Government they would support this motion today because their record is abysmal. Not only have they ruined the finances of this State, but they will not even own up to it. That is this Government's record. It is not only Exim, the most enormous debacle in the cattle industry of this State that has ever taken place, but another one, Waltzing Matilda.

Just before the last election, the Premier went up there and said, “This project has failed under the Liberals but under Labor we will get it going. Exim has introduced a partner to make it go. You will have a huge resort hotel, hundreds of people will be employed. It is going to be on the edge of Lake Argyle. It is going to be fabulous. We have introduced Mormac Corporation.”

A highly reputable businessman in this town said, “I will go and do business with them”—and the Government has given an imprimatur to these people—“I will go and see Mormac and contract to do some business for them.” He has bought a facility that he was going to use, and Mormac paid him, paid him with a cheque for $550 000 made out on the Westpac
Banking Corporation. I have still got a photocopy of it here. It is dated 29 April 1986, nearly a year ago. It still has not been honoured to this day. It is not $5 000; it is $550 000. It is from a company which was introduced with a fanfare from the Premier, who indicated that with Exim this wonderful project would go ahead. The corporation's chief is still overseas. The cheque has never been honoured.

That is the Government's record, and when we bring these things out all members opposite do is stand and talk about the member for Murchison-Eyre. What a farce. What a disgraceful Government. Get out of office and do is stand and talk about the member for Murchison-Eyre. What a farce. What a disgraceful Government. Get out of office and give some reasonable, decent people a go. That is what this Government has to do. Members opposite might struggle on until 1989, they might try to put it off behind their Premier, who is wasting himself away there, worrying the hell out of himself with all his mates going bad all around him. If members opposite did the reasonable thing, they would resign and get out while the going is good, before any more of these things fail. That is how bad it is. The people of this State deserve a decent, honest Government. We have got good people of this State deserve a decent, honest, open, clean Government. We have got good people. We have got good. decent, responsible people, not people that the Government's Minister has to get up and bury. He poured a bucket on them. He said they were the wrong people, they should never have been there, they got involved in things they should not have been in.

Did members opposite hear him? Did they miss that? Do Government members want me to tell them again? That is their Minister. It is not I or the member for Murchison-Eyre; it is their Minister telling them they were crooked deals by wrong people. Was he wrong? Did he make a mistake? There is no answer. That is the Government's performance: Goldrock, Catt Corporation, Exim cattle properties, Waltzing Matilda. I could keep going; hundreds of them all over the place. Government members will not tell us what they are doing because they cannot, they are embarrassed by them. The Government has been defeated in this area, it has been disgraced. It should get out.

If members opposite have any backbone at all, they will support this amendment.

MR COWAN (Merredin—Leader of the National Party) [4.18 pm]: The National Party is probably as much responsible for the continuation of the Western Australian Development Corporation and Exim as the Government is because it was on our vote that this corporation was able to survive in this State. It is appropriate that I make some comments about this amendment. Dealing with the first part of the amendment where the Opposition has stated that in the opinion of the House, the Government has neglected its duty by not providing a full and proper disclosure of the activities of companies and authorities, can I just say that in my 13 years' experience in this place I have not detected any change in the level of disclosure from one Government to the other. It has been pretty much the same.

In the case of the specific area which the Opposition is talking about—the Government not disclosing the activities of Exim Corporation and its subsidiaries and the Western Australian Development Corporation—I am happy to say I have found the people involved in the Western Australian Development Corporation and Exim perfectly reasonable when it comes to disclosing information about their operations. Whenever I have had a request to put to these people, their door has been open and they have been prepared to give me and members of my party the facts about what they are trying to do.

Mr Laurance: I agree with what you have said, and I have had people who have had the same experience as you, but there are businessmen who have run foul of these companies, these bad decisions, who have gone to these people and said, "I am losing money. I am owed money," and they have been told, "That is too bad. You cannot ask me about that. I am the new managing director. I am a wonderful person. I will tell you what you want to know, but do not ask me about any of those bad deals you have done before." That is very difficult for people.

Mr COWAN: All I can say is that is none of those people has come to me and told me about that problem. It is fair to say that we have an interest in at least three of the operations about which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has spoken, because of the very nature of our party. We certainly had an involvement in the Acremaster Marketing situation, and the full story cannot be told by referring to the involvement of Exim Corporation with Acremaster Marketing. Acremaster Marketing was at the point of bankruptcy and was in a position where there had been a foreclosure and a manager appointed to the company, so it does not surprise me at all that the involvement of Exim failed to prevent that company from being wound up. I do not think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can blame Exim for the difficulties experienced by Acremaster tractors. They had serious difficulties long before
Acremaster Marketing was established as a joint venture with Exim Corporation, and the Acremaster venture did not deviate from the path it was moving down in terms of its going bust.

Mr Laurance: But if all the other companies I mentioned were successful and Acremaster tractors, because of its particular circumstances, was the only failure, we would not be bringing this motion forward today.

Mr COWAN: I will repeat that Acremaster was a failure before Exim Corporation became involved, so the Deputy Leader of the Opposition cannot blame Exim for that failure.

Mr Laurance: If you take that one out, it still does not make Exim look very good.

Mr COWAN: I am going to try, through progressive discussion, to take some of the others out as well.

The initial wildflower marketing venture was indeed a failure, and the credit for Exim Corporation backing off from that initial venture must go to the member for Darling Range and the people he represented, in that he, by public exposure, was able to point out to Exim Corporation that he thought it was making a mistake. However, the Opposition must concede that the new approach by Exim Corporation to wildflower marketing will be successful. Everyone has spoken about the initial approach of Exim Corporation to wildflower marketing as being a failure, and it was; but what about the subsequent attempt? No-one has talked about that, and the reason for that is that the current attempt seems to be working reasonably well. It is providing those people involved in cut-flower production an opportunity to expand their overseas markets, and that really is one of the objectives of Exim Corporation.

Mr Court: What company is that?

Mr COWAN: I cannot tell the member the name of it. All I know is that they are assisting people in the industry with their marketing expertise. They might not even have formed a company, but they are allowing those people already involved in the cut-flower industry to produce, and are assisting them with their marketing arrangements.

Mr Court: I do not think Exim is involved. I thought Universal Waldeck took over the concept. However, I could be wrong.

Mr COWAN: I think the member for Nedlands will find that Exim is involved.

I turn to yet another area where the Opposition has stated that Exim Corporation has been wasting taxpayers' funds. It relates to the cattle stations the corporation bought in the Kimberley. My understanding is that the previous owner—the person from whom Exim Corporation purchased the properties—was faced with a very simple choice. He was faced with the substantial cost of upgrading the quality of assets on that station in order to comply with the Government's BTS scheme, or he had the opportunity to sell. It was a very simple choice for the previous owner. It meant that if he wanted to stay on the property he had to fence the property, and in doing so, he had to make sure that those areas fenced were well-provided with water. The cost of providing those assets and rebuilding them as they once existed was enormous, but it was absolutely necessary if the station country was to be declared tuberculosis and brucellosis-free.

The owner decided that the capital cost was too great, and put the properties on the market. I question whether anybody, other than perhaps a corporate organisation, would have been in a position to buy those properties. I say also, with my limited knowledge of the pastoral industry, that the last thing the Kimberley wanted was yet another corporate owner. I am sorry that the Minister for Water Resources and member for Kimberley is not here because he would have been able to tell us precisely what the position is in relation to that. However, I think I am right.

So the position is that the previous owner had a decision to make, and made the decision to sell. I am pleased it was Exim Corporation that purchased the land because, if it maintains the plan it has for the property and if it carries out the necessary improvements so that the property becomes TB and brucellosis-free by 1992, the property can be sold. It is ludicrous to say that the property should be starting to realise funds at this stage, because the property cannot be sold. At least, I would think it cannot. Very few people would be interested in purchasing any of that property until the improvements have been carried out and the property declared free of TB and brucellosis.

None of that can occur, as I understand it, until early into the 1990s; so we must wait a little while and then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can ask whether Exim made the right decision, whether it has lost money, and whether it has made a contribution to the pas-
toral industry in the Kimberley. I think he is being premature in putting forward the argument today.

Mr Laurance: They are in deep trouble today.

Mr COWAN: Why is that?

Mr Laurance: They won’t be able to proceed this year.

Mr COWAN: Why can they not proceed?

Mr Laurance: They haven’t any cash or money.

Mr COWAN: Can I point out that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition cannot substantiate that.

Mr Brian Burke: If you want to apply that test to what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says—that is, whether he can substantiate it—he would be struck dumb because he has never been able to substantiate it.

Mr COWAN: I do not want to get into that, but I point out to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that I question very much whether he is accurate in saying that there are no cattle on those stations.

Mr Laurance: I am not saying there are no cattle, but they need cattle to trade to get out of their cash-flow problems.

Mr COWAN: But last year the cattle turn-off from those properties was greater than it has been in the last 12 years, and the price for the animals was higher than it has ever been. In fact, in the latest venture of live cattle sales to Indonesia, the prices match the Fremantle cattle prices.

Mr Laurance: Are you quite happy with what has been happening up there?

Mr COWAN: I am quite satisfied they are doing a good job.

Mr Laurance: Have you spoken to any pastoralists in the Kimberley? A lot of them have said to me they are worried about what is going on up there.

Mr COWAN: I have not spoken to many of them—I do not think there are many of them there. But those I have spoken to are satisfied that the corporation is working well on its cattle stations. They can see the number and quality of the improvements constructed in terms of fencing and watering points. No-one can deny that. The fencing has been done; it is there for people to see. The waterholes and watering points have been constructed and are there for people to see. No-one could be critical of that. To be fair, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition should wait at least until Exim Corporation begins to put the properties back on the market; then, if there is a sale, we will see what capital gain there is. Then we will be able to see whether or not Exim Corporation can recover some of the investment that has been made.

In all cases, particularly with property, one does not make enough money out of the turnover or sale of stock to satisfy any repayment. The repayment has to come when one sells the property. The capital gain associated with that is where one will make the profit and balance the books.

Mr Laurance: That is doubtful. It cost the Government a debt of $8 million, they got $6 million from the Commonwealth, and they still cannot make it up.

Mr COWAN: I think they will. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will have to wait until the property is sold. In that price he is talking about the purchase price of the land. I do not think anyone expected to make enough money on the pastoral property, knowing the value of improvements that had to be made. An enormous distance of fencing had to be undertaken. Having purchased the property and then having to add to that the capital cost of fencing, water points, and all of those things, I do not think anyone would have expected them to make substantial trading profits on the turnover of cattle. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition waits until the land is disposed of or sold and then comes back into this House and tells us it was a failure, I might agree. But I do not think I will because I think he will find there will be a capital gain.

Mr Laurance: It will never get to that. That is just a prediction.

Mr COWAN: Again, that is a matter of opinion. I think I am right and I will be reminding the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when the sale takes place.

Mr Laurance: We will take a gamble on that.

Mr COWAN: Some comment has been made about the cost of some of the work that has been carried out by Exim in the Kimberley which has been charged against the Department of Agriculture. I do not think one can blame the WA Exim Corporation. I think one could blame the Government itself in not making it very clear from the start that wherever employees of Exim Corporation were undertaking work that was outside a commercial proposition in the Kimberley, it was charged against either the industry as a whole through
the Department of Agriculture or against the Consolidated Revenue Fund. It is as simple as that.

The only mistake made in that respect was that the Minister for Agriculture or the Premier did not make it very clear that wherever officers of the corporation were to undertake work outside a commercial responsibility on those stations, such as a regeneration programme for the Ord River and some of the live cattle markets into South East Asia, particularly Indonesia, those areas should be considered as a broad concept for the whole cattle industry. They are not confined to that area.

The same could be said of the property cattle sales. They were of benefit to the entire area. Many of those were duties undertaken for the whole of the Kimberley and the Kimberley cattle industry. They quite rightly should have been charged against the people of Western Australia through the Consolidated Revenue Fund or more specifically, as was done, against the Department of Agriculture.

The only mistake that was made is that the Government did not signal its intention beforehand. There could have been no outcry.

Mr Laurance: The only way they could make Exim make a profit is to charge out to the other Government departments.

Mr COWAN: In this case, those were reasonable charges to apply against the Department of Agriculture.

Mr Laurance: That is not what the Director of Agriculture felt.

Mr COWAN: He did not say that at all.

Mr Laurance: He did not know.

Mr COWAN: Yes, that is the problem with this Government. Once those charges were outlined to him, I am sure he would have had to accept them. I am sure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will find, it had been stated quite clearly beforehand, that where the corporation went outside its commercial duty, that charge would be appropriated against the Department of Agriculture. Had Mr Halse known that before and not afterwards there would never have been a question.

Mr Laurance: My guess is that Exim owes the Government departments a lot of money.

Mr COWAN: That is up to us to find out.

Mr Laurance: That is difficult with this Government.

Mr COWAN: It is no more difficult with this Government than with any other. I am not making excuses for those people but it is no more difficult getting information out of this Government than the previous Government. The people in the bodies referred to in this amendment stated specifically that they do not disclose the activities and operations of the WADC and the WA Exim Corporation. I have found that whenever I ask them anything, they provide the information.

I conclude by reminding the Premier that last year he argued for an amendment to the Act which allowed for accountability of the board of Exim and the WADC and we felt that that amendment should be put in place. We have an understanding with members opposite, and I hope that is honoured because it does seem to me that the corporation needs to have some accountability built into its statutory authority. That is the legislation which gives it the power to operate.

The National Party, as supporters of the WADC and the WA Exim Corporation, recognise that, like any other entrepreneurial group, these bodies can make mistakes. We recognise that they have made mistakes and we have not changed our view in any way, shape or form. They should be given the opportunity to continue and provide a service to those people who cannot readily obtain those particular services. We oppose the amendment.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Treasurer) [4.38 pm]: I too wish to oppose the amendment and in so doing touch upon one or two of the matters that have been raised by some of the Opposition speakers during the debate.

I note with approval the contribution of the member for Merredin. Quite clearly, that contribution comes from a member who is part of the Opposition and a member who has had ample reason to question Exim about its activities in areas that are primarily his concern as the Leader of the National Party.

During this debate, as in no other, we have been treated to a precise reflection of the hypocrisy and duplicity of the Opposition because, as you Sir, will be aware, in terms of specific support for the statement I have just made, we all witnessed and heard the member for Murchison-Eyre pillory Exim Corporation and its officers for the late lodgment of a company return. We all heard the member for
Corporation when they had been far less re-

would attack the characters of officers of Exim
date they should have been lodged.

week late, but that return after return was

business. that

officers of Exim were delinquent, so much

time he said about Exim Corporation in that

thing he said about Exim Corporation. We heard

go on at great length about the incompetence of

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Murchison-Eyrc accuse those people of being

inex, negligent, and, more than that, delin-

quenlt in their duty.

We heard the member for Murchison-Eyre
go on at great length about the incompetence of

those people in Exim Corporation. We heard

take the characters and attempt to dissect

those people in Exim Corporation. We heard

accomplish this member who lectures the Government

this member who lectures the Government

on the same date-and the

held

on the same date-and the

returns themselves were false because, as

we have seen, there was a rash of annual gen-

eral meetings all held on 31 May—different

years, but all held on the same date—and the

returns that flowed from those annual general

meetings, up to 2½ years late, were then lodged

on the same day.

So how can we in this place be expected to

place any credence in the word of a man who

would attack the characters of officers of Exim

Corporation when they had been far less re-

sponsible for omissions far less serious than has

the member for Murchison-Eyre? Let us look at

this closely. Not only was the member for Murchison-Eyre responsible for the late lodg-

ment of the returns, it is also highly likely that

the returns themselves were false because, as

we have seen, there was a rash of annual gen-

eral meetings all held on 31 May—different

years, but all held on the same date—and the

returns that flowed from those annual general

meetings, up to 2½ years late, were then lodged

on the same day.

So let us not hear any more humbug from

this member who lectures the Government

about free enterprise—a member who went

bankrupt yet who now wants to attack the

characters—

Mr Laurance: Your bloke went to gaol. Your

Minister did the dirty on you when he told us

what these people are like. Are you saying he

was wrong?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Is it not strange that the

Opposition can dish it out; it is just that it is taking so long for

the possessors of evidence to bring it out. I

encourage members opposite to bring it all out

because they will not deter me from saying

what I want to say. They cannot threaten me

into silence because they will quickly learn that

if they want to attack the characters of people

in Exim Corporation for doing things which the

member for Murchison-Eyre also has done, I

will raise the matter with them redoubled in

spades. Members opposite can raise whatever

matter they like; they can say whatever they

will welcome it—even encourage it—

because the more members opposite say, the
deeper is the hole that they are digging for

themselves; everybody here realises that.

However, let me say this: In the first week of

this parliamentary session what have we seen?

On day one the Opposition was thoroughly

boxed around the ears and the Opposition is

incapable of—

Mr Laurance: He got you on the ropes; he

has been here only a year and he is on the back

bench; but he has you on the run.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: On day one the Oppo-
sition was alleged to be incompetent; and was so

incompetent as to lead off question time with a

strategy that fell over before the first question

was answered. Then the Opposition, not

possessing an alternative strategy to slot into its

place, asked a series of disjointed questions

that did not follow any particular matter and

excited not even the curiosity of the most

interested observer in the packed gallery. In

fact, the Leader of the Opposition, when asked
by a disinterested observer how the Opposition went on day one said, "Not too well; well, about five out of 10 at the most." I think the marks have been scaled upwards.

What did we see on day two? We saw the "shock-horror" revelation of a statutory declaration which the member for Murchison-Eyre has been passing around for four months. The only person who does not have a copy is Amelia Earhart, and she disappeared 50 years ago. That was the "shock-horror" of the Wednesday effort by the Opposition and the debate collapsed by 9.15 pm, having been contributed to by as many Government members—because we have some sense of the nicety of things—as Opposition members. If Government members had not spoken in the debate, we would have been home for dinner. That was day two.

Mr Laurance: Day three and you are still shouting to catch up.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Day three and I am still fighting to be heard.

Mr Lewis: You poor old man.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am an old man; I have been at this game for a long time.

Mr Clarko: Too long: it's a bit like the Ugle argument.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member for Karrinyup and I would be the only ones who can remember the Ugle argument. It is really casting pearls before swine: the member for Karrinyup and I should have a beer and talk about it—it is really wasted on these people.

Mr Clarko: I thought you fumbled more for words yesterday than at any time in the years you have been here.

Mr Pearce: I'd be a bit careful about raising things like Ugle; some of the young Turks on that side will be eying your seat.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I think the member for Armadale is right.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The young Turks are indeed eying the seat of the member for Karrinyup. I have seen the sideways glance of the member for Dale; I have seen the covetous gaze of the member for Darling Range; and I have seen the energetic jealousy of the member for South Perth—all of whom are seeking, in the absence of any ability, to be promoted to the leadership position.

So we turn from yesterday's performance and we come to the desultory performance today when the mover of the amendment, the man charged with the responsibility after five months' preparation—not a last-minute marriage of convenience as something arose—of pinning back the Government's ears on the question of Exim Corporation, forgot to move the amendment. What did the Opposition do? There was a toss-up between the member for Vasse and the member for Murchison-Eyre, and they said to the member for Vasse, "It is Hobson's choice, it's true, but you have got the guernsey." The member for Vasse stood up—he was not even going to speak on the amendment—and spoke for half an hour or so on Bernies hamburger bar.

Mr Laurance: You were beaten by flower power and you will be beaten by hamburger next.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We will make mincemeat of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The member for Vasse with his corpulent appearance obviously loiters about Bernies a great deal. We had half an hour of Bernies hamburger bar—half an hour's justification for an asset worth in excess of $1 million which is earning $15 000 a year, and that $15 000 is in arrears. So we have these paragons of free enterprise—like the member for Murchison-Eyre who attacked Exim because it lodged a return a day or two late, yet he has not lodged one for I do not know how many years—attacking the Government because its return on assets is $15 000.

Mr Lightfoot: The return on assets in Exim is 0.4 per cent.

Mr Clarko: You will do a better deal with Bernies than with the Midland abattoirs.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We have seen that these paragons of private enterprise cannot attend to their own affairs. They want to support a return on assets, which is in arrears because the rent has not been paid, and it represents 0.015 per cent or something of that nature. We do not apologise for seeking a better return on assets, and in the five minutes left to me—Mr Blaikie interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I will talk about all sorts of things. I am old, and sometimes I get crotchety. I can remember the days when Sir Charles Court really would give us something to go on with. He would have been ashamed of the ragtag collection on the other side of the
House. Sir Charles Court would have had them all there with their coats on talking sense, with the exception of the member for Murchison-Eyre whom he would not have had in the party.

Mr Laurance: You cannot beat him.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have said he is too tough for me. I am a touch frightened of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, too.

Mr Laurance: I will make allowance for that.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We do our best but the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is very judgmental.

We have absolute confidence in the integrity and character of those people who are efficiently managing Exim Corporation. In particular we draw members' attention to two programmes we think will prove to be of great advantage to the State. The first is the business migration programme on which Exim is actively involved, which we think will bring to our State many people with the ability to invest and expand the economy through that investment.

The second thing we are very interested in is the educational services aspect of the activities of Exim. We believe the propagation of that activity will mean a great financial return on one hand, and on the other the sort of recommendation which will ensure Exim and Western Australia progress as a result of the experiences of people who are educated here.

I want to say one or two things about the WADC and the mealy-mouthed way the Opposition regards its activities. It was not until we had the WADC that this country got a gold coin programme. Where is the credit where it is due?

Mr Lewis: Top marks!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Credit where it is due from the member for East Melville who has a certain breadth of personality, but at the same time the member for Murchison-Eyre is trying to destroy the programme.

Mr Laurance: No. he did not. He asked whether the coin contained Western Australian gold.

Mr Lightfoot: I asked you to say you would not use southern African gold.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: He is still doing it! The gold coin programme is an example of this State minting the legal tender of the nation and adding value to a product which we produce in the main for this country. The name of Australia is spread across the world and on each of those coins there is a potted history of at least a part of our nation. What do we get from the Opposition? A niggardly response in some cases, with the exception of the member for East Melville's compliment about the activities of the WADC, and outright hostility from the member for Murchison-Eyre.

The WADC played a leading role in the rejection of the gold tax contemplate by the Commonwealth Government. Where is the credit due to the WADC for that? What about the headquartering of the IBJ Australia Bank in Western Australia? Was not that a good thing?

Members opposite are destined to spend as long on the Opposition benches as they spend being negative and destructive about the characters and personalities of Western Australians who seek to do anything to serve the public interest.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [4.52 pm]: What a shameful performance by the Premier and the Minister responsible for Exim. The Minister for Economic Development now has the responsibility for Exim but the Premier had responsibility when all these disasters were taking place. All the Premier can do to justify and try to explain away the problems which have arisen is to resort to gutter tactics. What a state of affairs we have reached when the Premier has to yell and scream and rant and rave and heap personal abuse on the member for Murchison-Eyre.

All we are seeking to do in this amendment is to get the Minister for Economic Development to tell us why he saw it necessary to openly and publicly criticise the activities of the Western Australian Development Corporation Ltd. Why did he not justify saying that he blamed the involvement of early personnel and lack of clear strategy for the corporation's problems? He cast a slur on all the people who were employed at Exim. Why has he not explained in this House today what was meant by that statement?

He also said that Mr Gale had very grandiose ideas that were out of keeping with the sorts of things that the Government envisaged for Exim. We have asked him to explain what were those grandiose ideas. We have not heard the Premier or the Minister speak at all about Exim's activities. We and the public are expected to sit back and take that for granted.
In this House last year we named two people whom we believed should not have been involved in giving interest-free loans to friends of theirs, and in one case to a relative. I ask the House to remember what happened to those two people. Did we get to the stage we have reached with the Superannuation Board affair where members of our party have made a decision to make sure the public knows what is going on? Do members know what happened to those two people? One was appointed to a very senior position on the Public Service Board—promoted to that position—and one was promoted to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. That is what the Premier has done without a word of explanation in this House today or response to the serious questions we have raised.

Mr Parker: That comment is not true. The person you referred to who has gone to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet came from that department. He was appointed to it by your rather when he was Premier, and he was on secondment to Exim from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. He returned there, not on a promotion I understand.

Mr COURT: So the Minister supports it; he wants two bob each way. He does not mind making public criticisms but he will not stand in this House and explain what is happening. We have asked him how Exim earned $2.8 million in interest when it did not have the funds. That is a simple question. Did the Government put money in from some other operation? That simple question has been asked a number of times and the Minister has still not explained it today.

I make it clear to the House that because the Government refuses to tell us what is happening, not only with Exim and its subsidiaries, but also with some of these other funny corporations it has set up around the place, it is making matters worse for itself. We will keep delving in order to find out for the public what the Government is doing.

In conclusion, I repeat that we have witnessed a shameful performance by the Minister and the Premier. They were responsible for the debacle that has occurred and for the complete lack of accountability in the operations of that body and its subsidiaries and we have not received any explanation. This matter will go on until one day the whole thing will come out.

I urge members to support the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 15
Mr Blaikie  Mr Lightfoot
Mr Bradshaw  Mr Mensaros
Mr Clarko  Mr Rushston
Mr Court  Mr Thompson
Mr Crane  Mr Tubby
Mr Hassell  Mr Watt
Mr Launrice  Mr Williams

Noes 28
Mrs Beggs  Mr Marlborough
Mr Bertram  Mr Parker
Mr Bryce  Mr Pearce
Mr Brian Burke  Mr Read
Mr Burket  Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Carr  Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Cowan  Mr Stephens
Mr Peter Dowding  Mr Taylor
Dr Gallop  Mr Trenorden
Mr Grill  Mr Troy
Mrs Henderson  Mrs Watkins
Mr Gordon Hill  Dr Watson
Mr Hodge  Mr Wilson
Dr Lawrence  Mr Thomas

Pairs
Ayes  Mr MacKinnon
Mr Spriggs
Mr Cash
Noes  Mrs Buchanan
Mr Bridge
Mr Evans

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion Resumed
Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House).

HEALTH
AIDS: Ministerial Statement
MR TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie—Minister for Health) [5.06 pm]—by leave: Only a few years ago, none of us had heard of AIDS. The first cases were not diagnosed in the United States until 1981, and in Australia in 1982.

For a while, it then seemed that AIDS was a disease limited to specific high risk groups. Even when we knew that this was not necessarily the case, there was still some hope that the vast majority of those infected with the AIDS virus would survive.

Now, however, the picture is much more sombre. We know that AIDS is the major new public health challenge of our time. It demands not only urgent action, but also dramatic changes in our attitudes and practices. And it is a disease about which we are still learning; we do not yet have all the answers.

My purpose in making this statement is to draw public attention to the magnitude of the AIDS problem, and its yet greater potential
magnitude; to launch some new educational materials; and to provide the public with the best advice we can offer at this stage.

As I have already indicated, neither I nor anyone else can claim to know all the answers about AIDS. We learn something new about the disease almost every day, and so far most of what we have learned is frankly depressing. There is no cure for AIDS. Its spread is likely to be more rapid than was originally expected. And more of those infected with the AIDS virus will die than was originally estimated.

It is therefore incumbent upon us all to recognise that in facing this great new public health challenge we must adapt to constantly changing circumstances and knowledge. This has already resulted in some fairly dramatic changes in community attitudes and behaviour. We already speak much more freely of some practices than would have been the case a few years ago, and while we must at all times be vigilant that civil liberties are not infringed, AIDS raises a number of delicate ethical issues that may ultimately require controversial decisions as to what is in the best interests of the community.

I can, for my part, pledge that in dealing with these decisions I regard and will continue to regard AIDS not as a political issue, but as a public health problem.

AIDS is simply too important to be treated in a partisan political manner, and I am hopeful that my view on this will be shared by my colleagues in other parties.

Mr Clarko: You have to put the story across clearly. Only four per cent of people with AIDS are heterosexual.

Mr TAYLOR: At this stage, that is the point of the campaign. It may be a figure of only four per cent at the moment but the percentage is increasing rapidly.

Mr Clarko: It should be emphasised that 96 per cent of people suffering from AIDS are not heterosexual. Great emphasis should be made of that side of the argument.

Mr TAYLOR: That is so at the moment and that is the whole point of this exercise: We are not just talking about a very small proportion of the population.

Mr Clarko: The point I am arguing is that homosexuals and bisexuals are the prime people involved in AIDS.

Mr TAYLOR: I am happy to talk to the member for Karrinyup about it.

Mr Clarko: That is the essence of my argument.

Mr TAYLOR: I will seek at all times to make available as much information as possible and where time permits, to consult as widely as possible.

I advise the member for Karrinyup that I am more than happy for him to have a briefing from the former Executive Director of the Department of Public Health, Dr McNulty. He will give the member the information that was given yesterday to the shadow Minister for Health and the National Party.

I will also be distributing a pack of information materials on AIDS and WA AIDS prevention activities to all WA members of Parliament.

I wish to explain the following points—

(1) What is AIDS?
(2) What is the extent of the problem?
(3) What is the likely extent of the problem?
(4) What the general public should know and do.
(5) How WA is responding.
(6) How we are cooperating with the Commonwealth.
(7) Launch of the new Western Australian educational materials.

(1) What is AIDS?—Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is a disease caused by a virus which breaks down the body’s defences against other infections. AIDS is primarily transmitted by sexual intercourse but can also be spread through infected blood, by sharing intravenous needles and syringes. The virus can also be transmitted from an infected mother to a baby during pregnancy.

There are three categories of AIDS. With category A, the immune system is severely damaged. The evidence so far is that category A AIDS is uniformly fatal.

In category B, the AIDS virus has started to affect the immune system, and the person develops symptoms similar to those seen in severe glandular fever—such as rapid weight loss, night sweats, persistent diarrhoea, and swollen glands.

Category C AIDS describes those who are infected with the virus, and who can pass it on to other people, although they have no significant symptoms. Many of those infected remain in category C for a long but indefinite period,
perhaps for life. All those people with category C AIDS can, however, pass the virus on to others.

In developed countries, AIDS was at first thought to be a disease of homosexuals and intravenous drug users only. It is now clear that this is not the case. We know that in Africa equal numbers of males and females are infected.

In Australia only one per cent of cases thus far result from heterosexual transmission, but this figure is bound to increase. In the United States it is estimated that heterosexual transmission will account for 10 per cent of all AIDS cases by 1991.

(2) What is the extent of the problem? In Australia up to 25 February 1987 there had been 407 cases of category A AIDS, with 214 deaths. There are an estimated 2 000 category B cases, and at least 6 000 category C. In Western Australia, the figures are 25 for category A, with 12 deaths; over 120 category B, and an estimated 450 category C. In this area, Australia and Western Australia lag behind some other countries, but there seems little doubt that the figures will become worse. In Australia already more than 7 000 people are infected with the AIDS virus. All these people are probably infectious for life, and they can pass the infection on to all their sex partners.

In the US, there are already more than 30 000 people with category A AIDS, and there have been more than 16 000 AIDS deaths. The US Surgeon-General estimates that already approximately 1.5 million people are infected with category B and category C AIDS. Around the world, there have been more than 100 000 category A AIDS cases, and probably between five and 10 million people are infected with the virus.

(3) What is the likely extent of the problem? We now know enough to be sure that the problem will become worse for at least the foreseeable future. The United States Public Health Service figures predict a tenfold increase in the number of cases of AIDS virus infection in the next five years. This means that in Western Australia by 1991 we could have a total of 250 category A AIDS cases, more than 1 000 category B, and more than 3 000 category C. This may indeed be a conservative estimate. It was previously thought that somewhere between five and 10 per cent of those with category C AIDS would progress to the fatal category A. Current estimates now range from 35 per cent upwards.

Unless preventive measures to which I shall refer later are heeded, the above estimates for Western Australia could be very conservative indeed.

AIDS is not a cheap disease. It is estimated that the cost to the community of each category A patient in Australia is about $30 000, and each category B patient, over $3 000. Even the cost of an AIDS antibody test and the associated counselling services is estimated at $40. So now, and for the foreseeable future, AIDS is likely to be a very substantial burden on many of our services.

(4) What should the general public know and do? It is crucial to the prevention of AIDS that the general public should be well informed about this disease. As I have already said, there is no cure. For the moment, our only hope lies in prevention. AIDS can be prevented. We know how AIDS can be prevented. It can be prevented if we all recognise the facts, and adopt some simple rules.

People who do not have sex at all, and do not share needles or syringes with others are not at risk. There is no risk for anyone who has only ever had sex with one other person, provided that person has also not had sex with anyone else who could have been infected. There is no risk from ordinary social contact such as handshaking, hugging, kissing, sharing food and cutlery, sharing work equipment, playing sport, or swimming in the same pool.

Since the introduction of both careful donor screening by a rigorous questionnaire and the AIDS test for all donated blood, the blood transfusion supply is now safe. It is also impossible to get AIDS by donating blood.

Provided similar precautions—testing and donor screening—are followed for transplants and the donation of sperm for artificial insemination, there is no significant risk of being infected by the AIDS virus through these procedures. But it remains true that people who have sex with more than one person are at risk. The greater the number of sexual partners, the greater the chances that one of them will have the AIDS virus.

The AIDS virus can be transmitted through vaginal and anal intercourse between a man and a woman if one of them is infected. The greatest risk for men remains that from male to male anal intercourse. This situation will change as the disease spreads in the community.
Although bisexual men have been known to pass the infection on to female partners, by far the greatest risk thus far to heterosexuals in our community is from infection passed on by intravenous drug users. Overseas studies show that the virus is very effectively transmitted by sharing needles and syringes, and that many infected drug users pass the virus on to their sex partners.

If an individual is at risk, or could put his or her partner at risk, a condom should always be used during sexual intercourse. Condoms can help prevent the AIDS virus infection.

Needles or syringes should never be shared.

It is ironic that the development of AIDS will probably do more to promote the old-fashioned virtues of chastity, monogamy, and avoidance of illicit drug use than any education programmes we might have devised otherwise. The messages for the public must be that, combined with advice that if they are to have more than one sexual partner, they should both try to know as much about their partners as possible, and use condoms. It is particularly important to encourage personal responsibility. No-one will get AIDS unless they take certain risks.

It is a further irony that even in the unlikely event of too much activity being carried out in this area, the worst possible consequences will be a prevention of many other sexually transmitted diseases, much drug abuse, and many unwanted pregnancies.

It might be tempting for many of us to moralise about the impact of AIDS on our community. I believe that thus far, however, politicians have generally avoided this temptation and I intend to avoid it also. The messages stand for themselves.

(5) So how are we in Western Australia responding? We have been liaising closely with other Governments and health authorities in an effort to take all the appropriate action.

We have been providing treatment for those affected, through our health care system, with particular focus on the sexually transmitted diseases clinics and the Royal Perth Hospital Immunology Department. We have established an AIDS advisory committee. We liaise particularly closely with the National AIDS Task Force, chaired by Professor David Penington, which is the major national medical authority on the subject.

Research programmes have been established in Western Australia, again in association with colleagues elsewhere. The Health Department has also worked in close liaison with the WA AIDS Council to ensure the availability of appropriate educational and counselling services.

At this stage I pay tribute to the positive and cooperative manner in which so many organisations and individuals have responded to the challenge of AIDS. Medical and community organisations have all played their part, and there has been a refreshing willingness to set aside other interests and concerns to ensure the best possible coordination of State activity.

One of the most important thrusts has been, and must be, educational activity. Through the health promotion services branch of the Health Department and in collaboration with other organisations, an AIDS education programme has been developed.

The activities generated include programmes directed towards the general public and specific target groups; regional AIDS committees have been established to service major country centres; a wide range of brochures, posters and stickers have been produced and are being distributed; in cooperation with other organisations, a programme of AIDS education for the Aboriginal community has been developed; and posters and publications in different ethnic community languages are being distributed.

The Education Department, supported by the Health Department, has developed comprehensive materials to complement classroom teaching.

The first WA AIDS information line was set up as long ago as 1985. It is worth recalling that even this long ago, the telephone information line received 10 000 calls within the first week. Staff have been seconded to work specifically on AIDS.

We will also be cooperating closely with the Commonwealth Department of Health and the National Advisory Committee on AIDS with the new media education campaign to be launched shortly. We are, for example, increasing the number of central telephone lines for the recorded AIDS service from 10 to 40, in addition to the regional service. We are installing a 20-line, 24-hour personal counselling service, which will be staffed by specially trained volunteers, more than 200 of whom have been trained to staff this service. Resources available to all relevant areas are being increased to meet the anticipated demand.
Although our activities have probably been as well-handled as anywhere else in the country, there are certainly no grounds for complacency. I have no doubt that we shall have to develop further measures in this area.

(6) Cooperation with the Commonwealth campaign: Next Sunday, 5 April, the National Advisory Committee on AIDS, chaired by Ms Ita Buttrose, will launch a national media education programme on AIDS. This will entail television, radio, and Press advertising, and it will offer telephone advice.

We aim to cooperate as closely as possible with this campaign. We have geared ourselves to provide the telephone counselling and other services necessary to meet the demand that will undoubtedly be generated. We expect a substantial initial demand, and will try to ensure that all our services can cope with this.

There will certainly also be a substantial demand for the AIDS antibody test. A letter sent to all doctors, jointly signed by the President of the Australian Medical Association (WA Branch), the Chairman of the WA AIDS Advisory Committee, and the Commissioner of Health, advises on criteria for eligibility.

The AIDS antibody test is indeed appropriate for those in high risk categories. It is, however, no more than a snapshot. There will certainly be many of the "worried well" seeking the AIDS test, and it is to be hoped that they will limit their demands. I hope also that their medical practitioners will recognise the importance of adequate counselling both before and after an AIDS antibody test.

(7) Launch of materials: In addition to the substantial range of educational activities already under way in this State, the health promotion services branch of the Health Department has produced a special range of new publications. These are for the general public and for specific target groups. The publications I am now launching include two posters and six leaflets. The posters are for the general public and focus on clear messages about the prevention of AIDS.

The leaflets are entitled: "AIDS—the Facts"; "AIDS—Live With the Facts"; "Straight Talk About Sex and AIDS"; "Drugs. Alcohol. and AIDS"; "AIDS—How to Make Sex Safer"; "When a Friend or Relative has AIDS"; and "AIDS and Your Work Place". Some of these are designed for the general public, while others are aimed exclusively at specific target groups, and are intended to ensure a well-informed public, and above all a public that is well-informed about prevention of AIDS.

All our publications are based on the theme, "AIDS—Live With the Facts". This is based to some extent on the experience of the United Kingdom campaign, the theme of which was, "AIDS—Don't Die of Ignorance".

Mr Hassell: They are not like those AIDS Council leaflets, are they?

Mr TAYLOR: No, they are not.

We are also working on the preparation of television and radio commercials which we hope to make available for community service time in a matter of weeks, to complement the national media campaign activity.

I hope very much that all these publications will achieve a wide distribution. Many are being translated into languages other than English. Specially translated versions of our television advertisement are also being made.

Additionally, we are developing plans for a substantial Aboriginal education programme on AIDS following the success of a video for Aboriginal communities and other materials that have already been produced and widely distributed.

The theme of our education programme is, "AIDS—Live With the Facts". The facts are disturbing, even frightening. We still know all too little about the natural history of AIDS, and we cannot yet predict with any accuracy just how large the problem will become. All we can state with certainty is that the problem is already with us, it is substantial, and it will grow.

It is therefore incumbent upon any Minister for Health to draw the sheer potential magnitude of this problem to the attention of Parliament, and of the community at large. It is my responsibility to alert members to this, to alert them to the behaviours which result in transmission of AIDS, and to advise them of the action that can be taken to reduce its spread.

As we learn more about the transmission of AIDS, so further action will undoubtedly become necessary. There will not always be time to consult, but I shall certainly make every effort to do so as widely as possible. Recent developments should leave one in no doubt that AIDS must be seen as a major public health problem in Western Australia, as much as anywhere else. We now know that it is a disease of heterosexuals, as well as homosexuals and in-
travenous drug users: we know that there is no cure or vaccine, and that great care regarding sexual activity and condom use can assist in the prevention of AIDS. If we as a community do not heed the preventive messages, nothing is more certain than that AIDS will spread, and that we shall be faced with hundreds, even thousands, of AIDS deaths in this State alone.

I cannot bring members an optimistic message. The position is indeed sombre, and without a vaccine the future for many of our young people is indeed bleak. We hope that our educational campaign, complementing as it does that of the national media campaign, will slow down the spread of this fatal infection. Until an effective vaccine is discovered, we shall need the help and support not only of health and related professionals, but also of all responsible members of the public. With such support from the community, I believe that we can prevent this major and dramatic new threat to our health from turning into a catastrophe for the people of Western Australia.

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [5.25 pm]: The Opposition believes that the Government's approach is the right one. The problem of AIDS will grow to mammoth proportions. It is right that the Government should branch into educational and advertising programmes to help prevent the spread of AIDS. Many more people will be affected by the disease in the future. A considerable number are already affected by this insidious disease and we must consider the potential cost to the community. In his statement, the Minister mentioned the cost of treating people affected by the AIDS virus. It is not an inconsiderable amount and as more people contract the disease the cost to the community will increase greatly.

The Opposition believes that the approach to the AIDS programme should be bipartisan and not political in any way, shape or form. This could be the disease of the decade; some people have said that it is the disease of the century. I think that polio was perhaps the disease of the century and it certainly had a disastrous effect. I vaguely remember that when I was very young the Health Department instigated various programmes to try to prevent people from contracting polio. Fortunately, a vaccine was discovered shortly afterwards. We can only hope and pray that the researchers come up with a vaccine and a cure for AIDS; but at this stage it appears that such a cure or vaccine is a long way off. In the meantime, we have to come up with a programme that will prevent the spread of the disease.

It appears that sexually active people can reduce their chances of contracting the virus by the use of condoms. It worries me that not everyone will use this method. It is a bit like drinking and driving. Certainly a number of people are prepared to take the risk of drinking and driving and I am sure that some sexually active people will be prepared to take the risk of not using condoms.

We should also consider an exchange programme for syringes and needles. I am sure that the Government will consider such a programme.

I am disappointed in the literature that was distributed by the WA AIDS Council. Each member of Parliament received copies of that literature the other day.

Mr Taylor: That literature was a year old.

Mr BRADSHAW: It was still available. It seemed to me that the WA AIDS Council was getting its aids and its AIDS mixed up, because it certainly dealt with many sex aids. I do not believe that should be a function of the AIDS Council. Even though the Minister said that the literature was a year old, I point out that it was still available from the AIDS Council.

It is to be hoped that the AIDS campaign will result in fewer unwanted pregnancies, fewer sexually-transmitted diseases and possibly a reduction in drug abuse because people will have a much greater awareness about the dangers of using other people's needles and syringes. They may therefore not get caught up in drug addiction.

The Opposition supports the campaign as long as it does not promote homosexuality as a normal practice.

I would like to quote from an article which appeared in The Weekend Australian on 28 March in which Professor David Penington is quoted as saying—

Australia could no longer afford the luxury of permitting the defence of homosexual rights or the "moral right wing" to frustrate more stringent controls to help stop the spread of the AIDS virus.

I certainly concur with that comment. I hope that no stone is left unturned in an attempt to curb the spread of AIDS and that the campaign is very successful. It will be carried out on a bipartisan basis.
COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Council Personnel

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

LAPSED BILLS

Restoration to Notice Paper: Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request that the following Bills be restored to the Notice Paper—

1. Main Roads Amendment Bill.
2. Business Franchise (Tobacco) Amendment Bill.

[Questions taken.]

House adjourned at 6.03 pm
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

POLICE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS

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

(1) Has the Government completed its review of police telephone systems?
(2) Was a diverter telephone system investigated?
(3) If so, what were the recommendations?
(4) What areas of desired improvement did the report reveal?
(5) What new initiatives will be taken in police communications this year?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) The question of improved telephone communications is constantly under review.
(2) Yes.
(3) Analysis of the result of the survey, completed in March 1987, is pending.
(4) See answer to (3).
(5) Initiatives to be undertaken in police communications are a matter for consideration within the context of the forthcoming Budget.

AGRICULTURE

Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation: Farm Water Supply Loans

39. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Will he assist farmers by reducing the interest rate on the $60,000 farm water supply loan, available through the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation, to four per cent?

Mr GRILL replied:

Low interest loans are already available through the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation. It is not proposed to offer loans at four per cent for this purpose where the current concessional interest rate is 3.5 per cent below bank overdraft rates. As I have indicated publicly, I would like to see a further concession made to give an incentive for farmers to develop on-farm water storage. I shall be taking this matter up with my colleagues as part of the formulation of the next Budget.

AGRICULTURE

Farm Debts

40. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What is the average debt per farm in Western Australia?
(2) What is the average debt per farm hectare in Western Australia?
(3) What percentage of Western Australian farmers have loans from the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) Recent data on farm debt in WA is available from the WA Farmers Federation recent members' survey. On this survey of 539 farmers throughout WA, the average debt per farm at June 1986 was $151,965.
(2) The data from the survey showed the average debt per farm hectare in Western Australia at June 1986 was $70.68.
(3) Approximately 2,600 WA farmers have loans with the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation. The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that there were 16,612 farming establishments in WA in 1985-86. On these figures, approximately 16 per cent of WA farmers have loans with the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation.

ENERGY

Fuel Franchise Levy: Water Carting

43. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What action has he taken to follow up his suggestion at the public meeting in Pingrup that farmers carting water should be exempt from paying tax on fuel used for that purpose?
Mr GRILL replied:
Since the Pingrup meeting I have been overseas, but I will be raising the matter with the Minister for Transport.
While it was indicated that I personally favoured the exemption from full tax, I also acknowledged that there could be difficulty in implementing it.

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT
WA Exim Corporation: Undertakings

95. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Agriculture:
(1) What work was being undertaken by Western Australian Exim Corporation on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and referred to by the managing director of Exim, Mr Williams, in the Farmers Weekly on 11 February 1987?
(2) Is it correct, as indicated by Mr Williams, that the work being done by Exim could have been undertaken by the Department of Agriculture?

Mr GRILL replied:
(1) (i) Reconstruction of the West Kimberley pastoral region;
   (ii) Ord River regeneration area;
   (iii) alternative domestic and overseas beef marketing;
   (iv) exporting of live cattle;
   (v) Kimberley cattle feedlot experiment in south west of State;
   (vi) rangeland regeneration trials;
   (vii) TB and brucellosis eradication for pastoral industry;
   (viii) Land Act interpretation;
   (ix) resumption of ALCCO leaseholdings;
   (x) Kimberley Pastoral Industry Consultative Committee.
(2) Yes.

"JOHN CURTIN"
Charter: Cost

112. Mr COURT, to the Premier:
(1) What was the cost to the Government of chartering the John Curtin?
(2) Over what period was it chartered?
(3) Were additional costs incurred for catering, entertainment, etc?
(4) If yes to (3), what were those costs?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:
(1) The basic cost of the charter was $350,000, and the arrangements also provided for the payment of running costs which totalled approximately $26,000.
(2) The contract was executed in October last year for the period 1 November 1986 to 28 February 1987.
(3) Yes.
(4) The Government adopted a policy that the vessel should be used as much as possible to encourage the State's economic, commercial, and tourism development. This meant the MV John Curtin was utilised as frequently as possible, even when official VIP guests were not on board, carrying a total of about 1,100 people. The vessel's passengers included business people attending the PacRim conference, other business visitors from interstate and overseas, tourism representatives from overseas, representatives from other Governments, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, State Governors and Premiers, and members of the State Opposition parties.

The cost of catering is estimated at about $50,000.

AMERICA'S CUP
Charter Vessel: Tenders

113. Mr COURT, to the Premier:
Did the Government call tenders for the chartering of a VIP vessel for the America's Cup period?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:
No. At the time the decision was made there was an expectation that special security arrangements would be needed to cater for VIPs attending the America's Cup as the Government's guests. Advice to the Government was that these security arrangements could not be guaranteed by chartering seats on commercial charter vessels.

The Government accepted advice that the most appropriate method of achieving the special security arrangements was to have a vessel dedicated to the task. Clearly, because of the sc-
curity implications, it was considered impractical for a tender process to be adopted.

The Government took advice from people with considerable knowledge of the charter boat industry and the boat building industry before deciding to charter the MV John Curtin.

AGRICULTURE

Farmers: Average Annual Income

114. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Are statistics available to the Government showing the average annual income for Western Australian farmers for the years 1984-85 and 1985-86?

(2) If yes, what are these figures?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) The question does not define “average annual income”. Does it mean farm income or a combination of farm and off-farm income; gross or net income? I have taken income to mean net farm income. If this is not what was intended, could the member specify what he means by income?

Published data are available on net farm income from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics for the years 1984-85 and 1985-86. These are separated into several broad industry categories. The major category “Broadacre Industries” includes the majority of WA farms.

(2) Using the BAE’s data for all broadacre industries, the average net farm income figures are—

(a) 1984-85—preliminary survey estimates $39 500.

(b) 1985-86—projected survey estimates $5 900.

STOCK

Midland Saleyard: Lease

141. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it correct that the Government has now entered into, or will enter into, a 15-year lease on the Midland saleyard?

(2) If yes, what is the total amount of rent payable by the Government over the full term of the lease, including any option term?

(3) Will the Government make the lease document public?

(4) If not, why not?

(5) Did he mislead the public in announcing in October 1986 that “access to the Midland Saleyard has been protected under a detailed lease agreement”, when no lease agreement had been entered into at that time?

(6) If no to (5), can he explain why his statement was not misleading?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) Yes. There is agreement, in principle, for a 15-year lease.

(2) For the first six years at $1 per annum and thereafter at a rate to be determined by negotiation between the WAMC and Pilsley Investments.

(3) and (4) I can see no reason it should not be made public in due course.

(5) No.

(6) There is nothing contained in my statement of 7 October 1986 that can be construed as misleading. I would
remind the member that a memorandum of agreement to lease has been executed and is protected on the title by a caveat.

FISHERIES: ROCK LOBSTER

Boat Licences: Purchases

145. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Fisheries:

(1) Are foreign-based and owned companies or individuals eligible to purchase and own rock lobster fishing boats and rock lobster pot licences?

(2) If yes, how many have been purchased in each of the last three years?

(3) Are any applications being considered for purchase at this time?

(4) If yes, how many?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) The rock lobster fishery operates in both State and Commonwealth waters. A condition under the Commonwealth Fisheries Act for limited entry fisheries reads—

This licence shall not be transferred to any proposed transferee who is not resident of, or a company registered in, Australia.

(2) to (4) See (1).

AGRICULTURE

Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation: Rehabilitation Grants

146. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) How many applications have been received in each of the years—

(a) 1985;
(b) 1986;
(c) 1987.

for the $8,000 rehabilitation grant from the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation?

(2) How many applications in each of these years have been successful?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) (a) Nil;
(b) six;
(c) 31 to 31 March 1987.

(2) (a) Not appropriate;
(b) three;
(c) 11, with seven applications to be decided.

ANIMALS: CRUELTY

Penalties: Amendment

149. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is he considering amending the penalties for cruelty to animals?

(2) If yes, when is the legislation proposed to be amended?

Mr CARR replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) I would hope to be in a position to introduce legislation to amend penalties in the current session.

HEALTH: AIDS

Mosquito Transmission: Research

150. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Health:

(1) As AIDS is a disease which can be spread by contaminated blood between humans, has there been any research carried out to establish if the mosquito is capable of transmitting the AIDS virus in the same way it is capable of transmitting the myxomatosis virus between rabbits?

(2) If yes, what are the results of the research?

(3) If no to (1), are there any plans to carry out this research in the near future?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The national AIDS task force has made the following statement with respect to AIDS and mosquitoes—

The AIDS related virus belongs to the retrovirus group NO retrovirus has been shown to be transmitted by or to proliferate in mosquitoes. Blood carried by mosquitoes may give rise to deposition on the skin of another individual if the mosquito is killed: such blood is external to the mosquito bite and is not introduced into the skin in the course of that second bite. Transfer by this means would, therefore, not occur. Furthermore, epidemiological studies
in the United States including areas such as Florida with a high prevalence of mosquitoes have provided no evidence of spread of the disease by this means.

This has since been supported by research undertaken by the Division of Vector-Borne Viral Diseases of the US Centers for Disease Control, and by an appraisal of transmission of AIDS in Africa performed by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

(3) Not applicable.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Apprentices: Hairdressers

151. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment:

(1) Is it intended to change the qualifications required for a hairdresser to engage and train an apprentice hairdresser?

(2) If yes, will he provide the reasons for such a change and details of the proposed change?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The Government has decided to implement a single hairdressing trade in 1988, and the industry now has to advise what qualifications and facilities an employer should have to train apprentices in the future.

The reasons for the change, are following representations originally from the ladies' hairdressing sector for one trade, and that there is a large degree of commonality in the skills of the existing separate trades for men's and ladies'.

This decision also follows the trend established in Victoria, where similar arrangements have been implemented.

The details of the changes are being worked out in tripartite discussions with the industry.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Apprentices: Hairdressers

152. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment:

(1) Is it intended to relocate the apprentice hairdresser facilities currently located at the Mt Lawley Technical College?

(2) If so, will he provide reasons for and details of the proposal?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

This question has been incorrectly directed. The matter has been referred to the Minister for Education, and he will reply to the member in writing in due course.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Unroadworthy: Work Orders

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

(1) How many motor vehicles were found to be unroadworthy and therefore made the subject of a work order during the following periods—

(a) 1 July 83-30 June 84;

(b) 1 July 84-30 June 85;

(c) 1 July 85-30 June 86;

(d) 1 July 86-31 December 86?

(2) In providing the statistics, will he distinguish between those motor vehicles made the subject of a work order as a result of police inspections of motor vehicles at licensed motor vehicle dealers' premises and those found unroadworthy at other than licensed dealers' premises?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) Vehicles issued with work orders in the specified periods are as follows—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Work Ordered at Licensed Motor Vehicle Dealers</th>
<th>Police Work Order</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) 1/7/83—30/6/84</td>
<td>5,457</td>
<td>21,368</td>
<td>26,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) 1/7/84—30/6/85</td>
<td>5,131</td>
<td>21,099</td>
<td>26,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) 1/7/85—30/6/86</td>
<td>4,752</td>
<td>17,694</td>
<td>22,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) 1/7/86—31/12/86</td>
<td>1,954</td>
<td>11,207</td>
<td>13,161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Answered by (1).
EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL
Yokine: Land Sale

155. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Education:
(1) Has he given consideration to a request to sell portion of the Yokine Primary School site?
(2) If yes, will he advise the area of the land to be sold and the purpose for which the land is to be used?
(3) Who is the purchaser of the land and what was the sale price?
(4) Has the sale of this land been discussed with the Yokine Primary School staff or Parents' and Citizens' Association, and if so what was their response?
(5) Is a concept plan available to indicate the location of the proposed buildings on the land to be sold?

Mr PEARCE replied:
(1) Yes.
(2) 0.55 ha.
(3) The Carmel School. The price is still to be finalised.
(4) The staff and the Parents and Citizens Association were advised of progress on the matter last month. The P & C association has indicated it is dissatisfied.
(5) No.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL
Yokine: Parking Facilities

156. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Education:
(1) Is he aware of concern expressed by the Yokine Primary School Parents' and Citizens' Association on the lack of adequate parking facilities at the school?
(2) If yes, what action has been taken to alleviate this problem?
(3) Could he say if any action has been taken by his department to have the entrance driveway to the school widened?

Mr PEARCE replied:
(1) to (3) The concern is not so much that of inadequate parking, but of inadequate access and the limited area for picking up and setting down of students. These matters are ones for the school to resolve through the minor works arrangements.

MOTOR VEHICLES
Fire Fighting Trailers: Third Party Insurance

157. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:
(1) Is it a fact that farm fire fighting trailers require third party insurance and a recording fee in addition to a licence fee?
(2) Has he been approached by concerned farmers to have the fees abolished?
(3) Does he intend to abolish the fees?
(4) If no to (3), why not?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:
(1) The member is referred to the Road Traffic Act and regulations made thereunder.
(2) No. However, I understand the department has been approached by farmers.
(3) No.
(4) The reasons for instituting the fees initially remain valid.

ROADS: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SCHEME
Fire Services: Role

158. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Transport:
(1) Is it intended to vary clause 47 of the State road transport emergency assistance scheme which clearly requires the fire service to act as lead combat authority in road rescue operations?
(2) If yes, will he provide the reasons for and details of the proposed changes?

Mr TROY replied:
This question has wrongly been addressed to the Minister for Transport. It has been referred to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and he will answer the question in writing.
EMERGENCY SERVICES: STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Rescue Operations: Role

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

(1) Is it intended to change the role of the State Emergency Service and that of the fire service in Western Australia in respect to rescue operations?

(2) If yes, will he provide the reasons for and details of the proposed change?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) and (2) This matter is not yet determined.

POLICE OFFICER

Assassination: Aboriginal Frustration

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

(1) Is he aware of a newspaper report in The Western Mail on 28 March 1987 in which it was claimed that a former executive officer of the Aboriginal Legal Service believed that black frustration could lead to the assassination of a policeman?

(2) What action has he taken to verify the comments made in the report?

(3) Is there any basis for the claim that black frustration could lead to the assassination of a policeman, and if so what action has he taken to protect police officers and their families?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) and (3) I have not received any advice from the Commissioner of Police to the effect that there is any substance whatsoever to the allegation. It is my confident expectation that the commissioner will draw to my notice any matter which he believes requires the attention of the Government.

ROAD

Servetus Street: Traffic Volume

162. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Planning:

(1) Is he aware that the volume of traffic has built up to approximately 25 000 per day on Servetus Street between the intersections with Shenton Road and North Street?

(2) In view of the difficulty experienced by residents, the resulting situation, and the proliferating traffic problems created in the Mt Claremont area, and in view of the repeated request by the Nedlands City Council which was supported by the Main Roads Department, is the Government going to proceed with the reconstruction of Servetus Street on the new alignment as a matter of urgency?

Mr PEARCE replied:

This question has been wrongly addressed. I have referred it to the Minister for Transport, who will reply in writing to the member.

EDUCATION: STUDENTS

Secondary Allowance: Government Payment

163. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Is the Government paying out the difference between unemployment benefits—that is; $50 per week for 16-18 year olds—and the Commonwealth secondary allowance—that is; $40 per week for those whose parents do not earn more than $15 745 per annum—to parents of students between 16 and 18 years of age?

(2) Does such payment start from the day the student reaches the age of 16?

(3) How much does the Government pay to parents who earn more than $15 745 but less than $23 894, being the limits of the phased-out means test, per year?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) No.

(2) and (3) Not applicable.
POLICE OFFICERS

Statistics

164. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) Does his department have information about the number of police officers per thousand of the population during the last five years in—
   (a) other States of Australia;
   (b) Switzerland;
   (c) France?

(2) If so, would he make this information available?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) (a) Other Australian States—1981 and 1985 only;
   (b) Switzerland, no;
   (c) France, no.

(2) Yes.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Fatalities

165. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

What was the number of total fatal road accidents calculated per thousand of population in each of the last five years—
   (a) in Western Australia;
   (b) in Queensland;
   (c) in New South Wales;
   (d) in the Federal Republic of Germany;
   (e) in Switzerland;
   (f) in France?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Western Australia</th>
<th>Queensland</th>
<th>New South Wales</th>
<th>Federal Republic of Germany</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
<th>France</th>
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<td>226</td>
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<td>170</td>
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<td>186</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>NK</td>
<td>NK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MOTOR VEHICLE LICENCES

Personal Plates

166. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

What is the reason behind the Government's policy to have the letter “P” mandatorily figured on personalised motor car registration number plates, as opposed to some other more expensive plates where no designation “P” is required?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

Personalised registration plates incorporating the letter “P” were introduced on 1 August 1975. The letter “P” was used at the time in order that the widest range of plates could be made available to the public. By appending the letter “P” this enabled the issue of plates with the same characters as those already on issue. If the “P” was to be removed from personalised plates, then the range of prefixes and numeric characters available would be significantly reduced.

There are approximately 1000 personalised licence plates currently on issue which, if it were not for the letter “P”, would have characters exactly identical to registration plates issued by local authorities.

Special registration plates, such as vehicle make plates and name plates, do not require the letter “P” as plates which can be approved for issue are unique and do not clash with the lettering and numerics of normal issue registration plates.

ENERGY

Electricity Power Station: Collie

167. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

Has the Government finalised the purchase of Coolangatta Farm near Collie, as announced by him, as a site for a new power station?

Mr PARKER replied:

The question is based on a false premise.

ENERGY TARIFFS

Increases

168. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

What increases in State Energy Commission fixed charges and tariffs have been imposed in the past 12 months?
Mr PARKER replied:

The last general increase was on 18 June 1986 when most tariffs, including fixed charges, increased by 12 per cent. Demand tariffs increased by eight per cent.

FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE CO LTD
Charges: Increases

169. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

(1) How have gas charges been increased to the former Fremantle Gas and Coke Co Ltd customers now that the State Energy Commission has taken over?

(2) What has been the percentage increase in the total bill—fixed charge plus tariff—for an account that could be considered average?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) Since the takeover, customers of the previous Fremantle Gas and Coke Co Ltd pay the standard State Energy Commission tariffs.

(2) I refer the member to my response to question 1231 of 14 October 1986.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES: PUBLIC SERVANTS
Shareholdings: Bans

170. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

(1) Is he still considering bans on shareholdings by public servants, as he indicated on 6 March 1987?

(2) If so: on what basis will the ban be imposed?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) and (2) As stated publicly previously, this matter will be considered in conjunction with the proposed code of conduct currently being developed by the Public Service Board.

HEALTH: HOSPITALS
Planning: Discussion Document

172. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Referring to question 1216 of 1986, has a final plan yet been produced following the circulation of the discussion document “Planning for Acute Hospital Services in the Perth Metropolitan Area to 1996” for comment?

(2) (a) If so, does that plan incorporate requirements for hydrotherapy facilities;

(b) if so, what recommendations were made in that regard?

(3) What action is the Government taking with respect to those recommendations?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) No.

(2) (a) No;

(b) not applicable.

(3) See answer to (1).

COMPANIES AND SECURITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Establishment

173. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

(1) Has the Companies and Securities Advisory Committee yet been established?

(2) If so, how many times has the committee met?

(3) Is the committee considering proposed legislation that would lead to the scrapping of the requirements for businesses to register their business names?

(4) If so, has their report yet been completed?

(5) What were the recommendations contained in that report?

(6) What action is the Government intending to take on that report?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) No.

(2) to (6) Not applicable.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS
Ranford-Warton Roads: Installation

174. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Transport:

When is it anticipated that traffic control signals will be installed at the intersection of Ranford Road and Warton Road in Canning Vale?
Mr TROY replied:
Work has already commenced, and it should be completed by the end of the month.

EDUCATION: STUDENTS
Safety House Scheme: Support

175. Mr MacKINNON, to the Treasurer:
   (1) What support has the Government given to the Safety House Association of Western Australia since its inception in 1983?
   (2) Has the Government received a request from the association for further financial assistance?
   (3) Has a decision yet been made with respect to that request?
   (4) If so, what was that decision?
   (5) If not, when is it anticipated a decision will be made?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:
This question had been incorrectly addressed to the Treasurer. It has been referred to the Minister for Community Services, and she will answer the question in writing.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS
Farrington-North Lake Roads

176. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Transport:
   (1) How many reported accidents have occurred at the intersection of North Lake and Farrington Roads, Coolbellup, in the 12 months to—
       (a) 30 June 1983;
       (b) 30 June 1986;
       (c) the six months to 31 December 1986?
   (2) Has the Main Roads Department plans to install traffic signals at this intersection in the near future?
   (3) If not, when is it anticipated that traffic signals will be installed at this location?

Mr TROY replied:
(1) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>(c)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total accidents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-angled</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear-end</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only significant increase in accidents reported is in the rear-end category, which is not susceptible to control by traffic signal provision.

(2) and (3) No. However, recent major construction undertaken by the City of Cockburn to dualise this section of North Lake Road and incorporate protected right-turn storage in the median is expected to reduce the incidence of rear-end collisions.

LAND

Releases: Fitzroy Crossing

177. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Lands:
   (1) What land has been developed or released by the Government in the two years to 30 March 1987 in Fitzroy Crossing?
   (2) For what purpose was the land released?

Mr WILSON replied:
(1) and (2) One motel site and thirteen light industrial sites. Although the motel site was released in October 1985, the only applicant withdrew and the site is about to be re-released.

Nineteen residential lots are also shortly to be released, nine of which have already been pre-allocated to Homeswest, and possibly three others will be allocated to the Government Employees' Housing Authority.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Canning City Council: Inquiry

178. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Local Government:
   (1) Is there currently any Government inquiry or departmental inquiry into the—
       (a) City of Canning; or
       (b) City of Gosnells?
   (2) What is the nature of those investigations?

Mr CARR replied:
(1) Yes. Departmental investigations in respect of both councils are current.
(2) They relate to allegations of breaches of the pecuniary interest provisions of the Local Government Act in both cases, and to unauthorised expenditure in respect of the City of Canning.

PRISONERS
Income Tax Returns

180. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

Referring to the Minister’s answer to question 1729 of 1986, are prisoners precluded from completing and lodging income tax returns with the Federal Commissioner for Taxation?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

No.

MOTOR VEHICLES: GOVERNMENT
Officers: Entitlements

187. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

(1) What Government officers are entitled to Government cars with private non-Government plates?

(2) Who authorises the issue of private rather than Government plates for those vehicles?

(3) What are the conditions that have to be met to allow the issue of the private licence?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) to (3) The longstanding policy is that private number plates are made available on request to permanent heads and other officers of the special division in the Public Service and their equivalent in other areas of the public sector.

Private number plates may also be issued for security reasons or where the vehicle concerned is used for special purposes of a sensitive nature where confidence is necessary.

In addition, private plates may be issued in certain cases where extensive use is made of the vehicle on Government business conducted out of normal office hours.

Each submission for private plates must be endorsed by the Minister concerned before referral to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who has the responsibility for approval.

WA EXIM CORPORATION
Trading Activities: Losses

210. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

Can he confirm that Exim’s trading activities for 1985-86 resulted in a loss of over $4 million after taking into account interest credited to but not earned by Exim and the effect of stock revaluations?

Mr PARKER replied:

No.

WA EXIM CORPORATION
Financial Problems: Personnel

212. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

Referring him to an article in The West Australian of 17 March 1987 in which he is reported to have said, “early personnel” were to blame for the financial problems of the Western Australian Exim Corporation, and given that many millions of dollars in public funds has been lost by Exim, will he—

(a) name the “early personnel” to whom he referred;

(b) indicate what action has been taken against those people;

(c) confirm or deny that Mr Brian Easton and/or Mr Keith Gale is one of those to whom he referred?

Mr PARKER replied:

(a) The question is based on a false premise.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) I referred to Mr Gale.

TRANSPORT
Bus Services: Connolly

213. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) What is the current position regarding bus services to the suburb of Connolly?

(2) Is there a bus service for residents other than the fastworker buses?
(3) If not, does he intend to provide such a service?
(4) If he does not intend to provide this service, why not?
Mr TROY replied:
(1) Selected trips on the route 727 fastworker service extend to a terminus on Hodges Drive near St Michaels Avenue.
(2) No.
(3) As from May 1987 the current service will be augmented by extending route 393, 394, and 395 buses to the terminus near St Michaels Avenue and the provision of a further bus stop in Caridean Street near Hodges Drive.
(4) Not applicable.

MR LEN BRUSH

Writs
214. Mr MENSAROS, to the Speaker:
What was the date when he first asked for the writs in the so-called Brush affair, the no knowledge of which made him decide to disallow a question by the member for Murchison-Eyre?
The SPEAKER replied:
The Leader of the Opposition provided me with copies of the writs on the morning of 1 April 1987.

HEALTH

Foodstuffs: Ionizing Radiation
215. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Health:
(1) What is the policy of the State Government on the proposed use of ionizing radiation for food preservation?
(2) Will he provide a list of products currently available in Western Australia that have used the radiation process?
(3) Are there any plants operating in Western Australia and, if not, has the Government received any applications for the establishment of plants in this State?
Mr TAYLOR replied:
(1) The Government has given a commitment not to proceed on this matter until it has had the opportunity to examine the report of the Australian Consumers Association investigation into food irradiation requested by the Commonwealth Government.
(2) No products treated by this process are permitted for sale in WA.
(3) No. I understand a company did complete a feasibility study for establishment of a plant but has now decided not to proceed.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Substance Abuse: Expenditure
217. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Health:
Will he provide details of proposed expenditure of $910 000 from State and Federal Government sources reportedly to be used against the abuse of substances by Aborigines?
Mr TAYLOR replied:
An amount of $919 000 has been made available to combat Aboriginal substance abuse. This money will be distributed as follows
$35 000—Staff
$390 000—Grants to Aboriginal organisations
$302 500—Prevention programmes
$45 000—Review of current Aboriginal alcohol services
$117 500—Aboriginal Alcohol and Substance Abuse Advisory Committee
$29 000—Not yet committed

LAND

National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority: Members
218. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:
Who are the members of the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority, their terms of office, dates of appointment, and representative interests?
Mr HODGE replied:
I refer the member to the Government Gazette of 20 March 1987.
WA EXIM CORPORATION

Consultancies: Cost

219. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

(1) What companies and persons were retained by the Western Australian Exim Corporation as consultants during the year ended 30 June 1986 and referred to in the 1986 annual report?

(2) What was the total cost of retaining the services of the above consultants?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Premier. It has been referred to the Minister for Economic Development, and he will answer the question in writing.

WA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Involvement: Tourism

222. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Tourism:

(1) Is the Western Australian Development Corporation directly involved on a financial basis with tourism in Western Australia?

(2) If so, what is the extent of its commitment of public funds?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1) and (2) The Western Australian Development Corporation's prime objective is to promote economic development in Western Australia, and this may involve projects which are complementary to the promotion of tourism. Questions concerning specific Western Australian Development Corporation activities should be directed to the Minister with responsibility for the Western Australian Development Corporation.

"JOHN CURTIN"

VIP Passengers

226. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

How many VIPs were taken out by the Government on its VIP vessel John Curtin and over what dates?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

Nearly 1,100 during the charter period. See my reply to question 112.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS: PRICE WATCH

Director: Appointment

233. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

(1) With regard to the appointment of the director of the price monitoring unit, was the position advertised, and if so, where and when?

(2) If not advertised, why not?

(3) Other than a high public profile, what qualifications were sought in the successful applicant?

(4) How much over and above the publicised salary of $80,000 for two years' employment is allowed for travelling and other expenses?

(5) Is the private use of a motor vehicle included in the employment conditions?

(6) Will he provide details of the proposed $250,000 expenditure?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) It is a temporary position for a fixed term and advertising was not required.

(2) See answer to (1).

(3) Extensive experience in all facets of the media, including investigative journalism.

(4) Any travel would be subject to normal Public Service awards, rules, and regulations.

(5) No.

(6) Approximately half of the proposed budget has been apportioned to the cost of newspaper space, and with the director's salary the remainder has been apportioned to associated costs in the Department of Consumer Affairs.

SHOPLIFTING

Increase

236. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

(1) Is he aware that the incidence of shoplifting recorded by five major retailing companies in Western Australia has risen by 12 per cent in the past four years?

(2) Is he also aware that the Retail Traders Association has produced a video for use in schools on shoplifting
which the Education Department will make available to schools, but not compulsory?

(3) Will he seek the cooperation of his colleague, the Minister for Education, in having the video, subject to its suitability, included in school curricula or required to be shown in all schools?

(4) If not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Minister for Consumer Affairs. It has been referred to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services for reply to the member in writing.

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRY

Fraud

237. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

(1) Is he aware that most, if not all, other States have a registry of financial interest in motor vehicles to prevent the fraudulent sale of a vehicle while it is still under hire purchase or other commitment?

(2) Has consideration been given to establishing a similar registry in Western Australia?

(3) If so, when is it likely to be introduced?

(4) If not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) At present there are registers in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

(2) Yes.

(3) Legislation is planned for the current session of Parliament.

(4) Not applicable.

HEALTH

AIDS Council: Members

240. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Who are the members of the Western Australian AIDS Council Inc?

(2) How are they elected or appointed?

(3) Does the Western Australian Government support the council and its work?

(4) What grant was allocated for 1985-86 and 1986-87, if any?

(5) What payments, if any, have been made to the council, and when, since 1 July 1985?

(6) Is he aware of any grant to the council from the Commonwealth, and if so what are the details?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

(1) Any member of the public can join the Western Australian AIDS Council.

(2) By subscription.

(3) The Western Australian Health Department works closely with the WA AIDS Council to ensure effective education programmes for both the general public and specific target groups.

(4) 1985-6—$57 000.

1986-7—$88 000.

These payments are cost-shared between the Commonwealth and State Governments on a 50-50 basis.

(5) and (6) As above.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Promissory Notes

241. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

What was the amount owed by the State Energy Commission of Western Australia in the form of promissory notes at—

(a) 30 June 1983;

(b) 30 June 1984;

(c) 30 June 1985;

(d) 30 June 1986?

Mr PARKER replied:

(a) $81 000 000;

(b) $81 000 000;

(c) $156 000 000;

(d) $169 000 000.

ECONOMIC PLANNING COUNCIL

Establishment

242. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

(1) Is the Government planning to establish an economic planning council similar to the Federal Government's EPAC organisation?
(2) If so, what is the suggested composition of such a body?

(3) What will be the Budget allocations required to service such a body?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) to (3) The member is directed to the Premier’s Press statement of 16 March 1987, which is tabled.

(See paper No. 87.)

MINERAL: COAL
Stockpile: Size

243. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

(1) What is the present volume of the coal surplus at Collie?

(2) At what rate is the coal stockpile increasing?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) The Collie coal reserve stockpile is now managed as part of overall coal handling operations. Since the State Energy Commission adopted a policy of accelerated gas burning in its power stations at the end of December 1985, the total coal stocks have increased from approximately 866 000 tonnes to 1 748 000 tonnes at 25 March 1987, representing a surplus of about 882 000 tonnes above the December 1985 level of coal held in stock.

(2) The rate of stock build-up depends on the demand for electricity and use of gas in power stations. The average rate over the past 14 months has been 60 000 tonnes per month.

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES
Time Lost

244. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment:

What are the criteria used to calculate time lost through industrial disputes?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

The figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics relating to time lost through industrial disputes are contained in the bureau’s catalogues 6321.0 and 6322.0. Both of these catalogues contain explanatory notes which explain the criteria upon which the statistics have been compiled.

WA EXIM CORPORATION
Emanuel Pastoral Leases: Aborigines

245. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:

What arrangements have been made by the Western Australian Exim Corporation to provide one quarter of the Kimberley Emanuel pastoral leases for Aborigines?

Mr PARKER replied:

No arrangements have been made.

MR BRIAN EASTON
WA Exim Corporation: Lake Argyle Resort Hotel

246. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:

During his employment by the Western Australian Exim Corporation, was Mr Brian Easton in any way associated with efforts to secure the establishment of a new resort hotel at Lake Argyle?

Mr PARKER replied:

Yes.

MR BRIAN EASTON
WA Exim Corporation: Association

247. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:

(1) Is Mr Brian Easton in any way whatsoever associated with the Western Australian Exim Corporation?

(2) If so, in what way is he associated?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

WA EXIM CORPORATION
Debts: Catt Corporation Ltd

248. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:

(1) Is it correct that Catt Corporation still owes the Western Australian Exim Corporation some $280 000?

(2) Was Mr Keith Gale in any way involved with Catt Corporation during his employment by the Western Australian Exim Corporation as a consultant?
(3) What effort is the Western Australian Exim Corporation making to try to minimise the loss of these public funds?

Mr PARKER replied:
(1) Yes.
(2) Yes.
(3) Exim is involved in arrangements aimed at making Catt Corporation a profitable business.

MR KEITH GALE

Government Employment

249. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:
(1) Is it correct, as indicated by him in the *Sunday Times* of Sunday, 29 March 1987, that Mr Keith Gale is still employed by the Government or a public instrumentality?
(2) If so, what are the details of Mr Gale’s employment?

Mr PARKER replied:
(1) I have not made any such indications. In fact there were no comments from me in the article referred to at all.
(2) Not applicable.

WA EXIM CORPORATION

Employees

250. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:
(1) What number of persons currently employed by the Western Australian Exim Corporation have commenced their employment since 1 September 1986?
(2) Were public applications called for all the positions created and filled within the Western Australian Exim Corporation since 1 July 1986?
(3) What is the total number of persons employed by the Western Australian Exim Corporation and its subsidiary companies?

Mr PARKER replied:
(1) All current employees of the Western Australian Exim Corporation were employed by the corporation when the Western Australian Exim Corporation Act 1986 was proclaimed in February 1987.
(2) No.
(3) 89, of whom 68 are employed by subsidiaries in the pastoral industry.

WA EXIM CORPORATION

Subsidiaries

251. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Economic Development:
Would he please supply a list of the subsidiary and affiliated companies and bodies associated with the Western Australian Exim Corporation?

Mr PARKER replied:
The member is referred to the list which follows—

- The Western Australian Exim Corporation Ltd
- W.A. Livestock Holdings Ltd
- Cherrabun Pty Ltd
- Christmas Creek Pty Ltd
- Margaret Downs Pty Ltd
- Rarriwell & Meda Pty Ltd
- Beef Air Navigation Co Pty Ltd
- Elsa Transport Pty Ltd
- Emanuel Buildings Pty Ltd
- Farnley Pty Ltd
- Favorius Nominees Ltd
- Western Australian Investment Advisory Services Ltd
- WA Education Marketing Organisation Ltd
- Western Australian Extractives Ltd
- WA Marine Marketing Ltd
- Linate Asia Limited
- WA Exim (Hong Kong) Ltd
- Goldrock Investments Pty Ltd
- Goldrock Marketing Pty Ltd

TRANSPORT: SHIPPING

Roll-on Roll-off: Project Evaluation

255. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:
(1) What economic studies, feasibility studies, and project evaluations were undertaken in respect of the roll-on roll-off shipping operation of Stateships?
(2) Who undertook those studies and when?
(3) Did they indicate profitability, and if so when was that profitability projected to occur, and what return, expressed as a percentage of total investment cost—including State Government investment cost—was projected as achievable?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) The Stateships services are maintained with ships designed for lift-on lift-off operations using ship-board cranes which are fitted on all of the ships, or shore-based container gantry cranes where these are available. Two of the ships are fitted with stern ramps which have limited application for motor vehicles, etc., and access by the means is confined to one deck in each ship.

Regarding the ships currently employed by Stateships, studies for the original charter of two ships, MV Pilbara and MV Koolinda, were conducted and adopted during the Opposition’s period in office. Studies for the acquisition of MV Irene Greenwood, as a replacement vessel for MV Kimberley, were adopted by the Government. The Government has improved and extended these charters on the basis of subsequent studies.

(2) The studies were undertaken by Stateships and referred to the Western Australian Department of Transport and Treasury Department for consideration prior to adoption.

(3) No. The studies generally indicated the impact on the cost of maintaining Stateships services under various options.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

Sun Exposure: Study

256. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment:

(1) Has any study been undertaken within his department under any legislation related to industrial health and safety of the long-term effects on construction and other workers of repeated exposure to the sun on outside workers?

(2) What guidelines, regulations, or award provisions relate to this matter?

(3) What recommendations have been made by his department to employers or employer bodies or unions?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

(1) If the member is referring to sunlight-induced skin cancers, no.

(2) and (3) None.

MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Service Delivery

57. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs:

(1) To what extent is the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission currently engaged in service delivery?

(2) What arrangements have been made for service delivery by the commission?

(3) What is the current annual cost of those areas of activity?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

(1) The Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission is not engaged in service delivery programmes.

(2) and (3) Not applicable.

HOMESWEST

Mortgage Loans: Unemployed Persons

260. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is an unemployed person eligible for a housing mortgage loan from Homeswest?

(2) (a) If yes, is there any contingency as to the length of unemployment and job history to qualify;

(b) how does Homeswest appraise the applicant’s ability to repay the loan, and

(c) what are the current interest rates that apply to the loans?

(3) Have long-term recipients of unemployment benefits been granted housing mortgage loans by Homeswest?

(4) If yes to (3)—

(a) how many in 1984-85;

(b) how many in 1985-86;

(c) how many to date in 1987?
(5) Is a percentage of the value of the property required as a deposit to qualify, and if so what is the percentage figure?

(6) Is a recipient of unemployment benefits entitled to the first home owners' grant?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1) Homeswest has income-geared loan schemes available for low income people. As social security payments simply represent income, persons receiving social security are eligible. However, there is no "special" scheme for people on unemployment benefits. The member should be aware that such people have an "as of right" ability to apply for rental housing. From Homeswest's operational viewpoint, home purchase is a more attractive financial proposition since responsibility for such expenditure as maintenance, rates and taxes, etc., are assumed by the purchaser. There are, additionally, intangible benefits to providing access to home loans in that people entering into home ownership tend to have their aspiration levels raised and generally seek to improve their position. It should also be mentioned that Homeswest has a senior citizens' purchase scheme which allows aged pensioners to enter into home ownership. This involves essentially the same principle as providing access for unemployment benefit recipients.

(2) (a) Answered by (1);
(b) an applicant's outgoings are not to exceed 30 per cent of income;
(c) the current interest rate on loans given by Homeswest is 13.5 per cent.

(3) and (4) No specific record is kept of "long-term" recipients who have obtained loans. However, this does not deny that some have been assisted.

(5) A deposit of 10 per cent of the value of the property is generally required. However, this may be reduced to $500.

(6) While the first home owners' scheme is a Commonwealth Government-administered scheme, I am advised that if a recipient of unemployment benefits satisfies all requirements of the scheme, source of income is not taken into account. The member should check this with the relevant Commonwealth department.

ENERGY

Electricity Connections: Bonds

261. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Minerals and Energy:

(1) Does the State Energy Commission require a deposit, bond, or bank guarantee in advance to be paid by all new commercial businesses prior to the connection of an electrical service to the premises of that business?

(2) How is authority granted for such a charge?

(3) If yes to (1), why does this apply only to commercial connections?

(4) Why does this procedure apply only to commercial enterprise and not to all services, including domestic?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) The State Energy Commission has for many years required a security deposit—which may be in the form of a bank guarantee—for all new commercial and industrial accounts. The deposit does not have to be paid prior to connection but must be paid within 14 days.

(2) Authority is granted by section 62(10) of the State Energy Commission Act 1979, as amended.

(3) and (4) Security deposits are not now required from domestic customers.

MIDLAND ABATTOIRS LAND SALE

Select Committee: Evidence

262. Mr LEWIS, to the Speaker:

(1) Has the evidence of witnesses to the Legislative Assembly's Select Committee appointed to inquire into the sale of the Midland Abattoirs Land in closed session, pursuant to Standing Order No. 373, been destroyed?

(2) If yes, could he say—
(a) on whose authority the evidence was destroyed; and
(b) under what Standing Order of the Assembly was the destruction made?
The SPEAKER replied:

(1) Evidence which was taken in camera has been destroyed.

(2) (a) and (b) On my authority, based on longstanding practices of this House.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Country Newspapers: Policy

263. Mr COWAN, to the Premier:

(a) Does the Government have a policy relating to the use of country newspapers in its various paid advertising and promotional campaigns?

(b) If yes, what is it?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(a) and (b) The Government's policy is that wherever possible and appropriate, country newspapers are used in such campaigns.

SMALL BUSINESS

Rural: Inquiry

265. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Small Business:

(1) When will he make publicly available the ten-month old report of the inquiry into rural small business?

(2) What action has he taken in response to its recommendations?

Mr TROY replied:

(1) and (2) I refer the member to my response to his question without notice 13 of yesterday's date.

EDUCATION

Tertiary Administration Fee: Non-payment

266. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

(1) What is the policy at each of the tertiary institutions in relation to enrolled students who do not pay the $250 administration fee by the due date?

(2) Is each of the institutions carrying out its policy?

(3) What percentage of enrolled students at each of the institutions have not paid the fee or made some other arrangement that is acceptable to the institution?

(4) What evidence, if any, is there on the effect of the $250 fee on enrolments?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) University of WA—Enrolments have been cancelled.

Murdoch University—Enrolments are not complete until the fee is paid. A late fee is being imposed.

Western Australian College of Advanced Education—If not paid by this week, registration is cancelled unless a formal deferral. Many students are waiting on Austudy. A late fee is imposed; also a late enrolment charge.

Curtin University of Technology—Under the legislation and the enrolment rules of the institution, students cease to be enrolled at 1 April if the fee is not paid.

(2) University of WA—Yes.

Murdoch University—Yes.

Western Australian College of Advanced Education—Yes, unless they have a formal deferral.

Curtin University of Technology—Yes. All students who have not paid cease to be enrolled. The Curtin Council will meet on 8 April to review its position.

(3) University of WA—96 out of 10 000; approximately one per cent.

Murdoch University—100 to 200 out of 4 700; between two per cent and four per cent.

Note: The wording of the question should refer to students who have applied to enrol.

Western Australian College of Advanced Education—700 to 800 out of 12 000; approx. six per cent.

Note: This does not include withdrawals.
Curtin University of Technology—

As at 1 April when payments were processed, 2,000 out of 13,600; approx 14.5 per cent.

(4) University of WA—

Not great, but a definite decrease in "not for degree" enrolments: a decrease in part-time, especially for higher degrees.

Murdoch University—

Uncertain of impact. A study will be conducted.

Western Australian College of Advanced Education—

Some transfer to full-time and a marked reduction in part-time.

Curtin University of Technology—

Movement of part-time to full-time, but this is also a continuation of a trend already occurring: and evaluative study is being undertaken to identify how much of the movement is related to the fee.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Gnowangerup Property Purchases

269. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Services:

(1) Has the Department of Community Services purchased property in Gnowangerup in the 1986-87 financial year?

(2) If yes, where, why, and how much for?

Mr WILSON replied:

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

EDUCATION
District High Schools: Phasing Out

271. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

Is it the Government's intention to phase out, or significantly alter, all or any of the district high schools?

Mr PEARCE replied:

There has been no change in Education Department policy in respect of district high schools, and no changes are under consideration at present.

TOURISM
Visitors: America's Cup

272. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Tourism:

(1) What were the actual numbers of—

(a) overseas;

(b) interstate,

visitors to Western Australia during the America's Cup period?

(2) What were the statistics for the same period in 1985-86?

(3) What was the estimated value of the America's Cup to the Western Australian tourist industry?

Mrs BEGGS replied:

(1) to (3) The actual numbers of overseas and interstate visitors to Western Australia during the America's Cup period are not yet available. The America's Cup Office has commissioned the Centre of Applied Business Research at the University of Western Australia to collate all the
material on the impact of the America's Cup, and this study will be published in due course.

SPORT AND RECREATION: CAMP
Noalimba: Government's Proposal

273. Mr COWAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:
Will he table the Government's proposal for Noalimba, including the changes to staffing levels?

Mr WILSON replied:
Staff details of the Noalimba proposals have not yet been finalised. Once they become available, I will inform the member in writing.

ENERGY
Solar Energy Research Institute: Murdoch University Transfer

275. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Mines and Energy:
(1) What are the details of the transfer of the Solar Energy Research Institute of Western Australia to Murdoch University?
(2) What financial commitment, if any, has the Government made to funding the project?

Mr PARKER replied:
(1) Four SERIWA internal research staff are to transfer to Murdoch University. The researchers will continue to work at the Bentley research centre until the Murdoch University research facilities are available—expected 1988. External funding for the various projects has been transferred to Murdoch University by arrangement with the external funding organisations. Equipment necessary to undertake these projects is to transfer to Murdoch University.
(2) To assist in the transfer, SECWA will meet the normal salary costs for the four staff for the transition period up to 31 December 1988, and will provide up to $46,200 for operating costs. Thereafter Murdoch University will meet all the costs.

Note: SERIWA was staffed by SECWA personnel on secondment.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL
Karragullen: Demountable Classrooms

278. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:
Is it intended to replace the long standing demountable classrooms at Karragullen Primary School with a permanent building in the next financial year?

Mr PEARCE replied:
No.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL
Byford: Assembly Area

280. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:
When is it expected a covered assembly area will be constructed at Byford Primary School?

Mr PEARCE replied:
Consideration will be given to such provision in a future capital works programme. The priority of Byford will be assessed in relation to the needs of all schools at that time.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL
Armadale: Construction

281. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:
(1) When is it expected the new Armadale Primary School will be ready for use by staff and students?
(2) To which school is the mobile covered assembly building to be transferred?
(3) Has any action been taken to guarantee retention of the historic old jarrah tree in the present Armadale school's grounds when the land is transferred to a developer?
(4) If no to (3), will attention be now given to retention of this tree?

Mr PEARCE replied:
(1) The beginning of term 4.
(2) Gwynne Park Primary School.
(3) and (4) The purchasers of the site are aware of the significance of the tree. Detailed proposals are not available.
EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL
Roleystone: Reconstruction

284. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

When will the Roleystone Primary School building to replace the classrooms burnt down in 1986 be ready for occupation by students?

Mr PEARCE replied:

It is expected construction will be complete by the beginning of term 4.

EDUCATION
Duties Other Than Teaching Time

286. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Education:

(1) What is current Government policy on duties other than teaching time?
(2) Do all agreements relating to duties other than teaching time have a common date at commencement?
(3) Is there any facility for agreements relating to duties other than teaching time to apply retrospectively?

Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) The current Government policy on the provision of duties other than teaching time is contained within the staffing policy which allocates a "basket of resources" to primary and secondary schools; and it is at the school level that decisions are made concerning the distribution of the allocated resources. However, the staffing formula for primary and secondary schools includes a provision for duties other than teaching time for all teachers.

In secondary schools the individual teacher is involved for some 80 per cent of the week in face-to-face teaching. The remaining five and a half hours available for duties other than teaching is a result of the specialist teaching programmes and the level of education pursued in senior high schools. The division of face-to-face teaching and duties other than teaching has not altered for secondary schools since its establishment in the early 1970s.

In primary schools, the staffing formula has provided for up to one hour duties other than teaching time per week since the late 1970s. Following negotiations with the Teachers Union, the availability of duties other than teaching time for primary teachers was increased to up two hours in January 1986. It is stressed that the availability of duties other than teaching time is a school level decision. However, any primary teacher aggrieved at the allocation of duties other than teaching time may appeal to a joint department-union monitoring committee for investigation.

(2) It is assumed that the question relates to the application of duties other than teaching time in schools. The agreements and policy mentioned previously do have a common date of commencement; it is the beginning of each school year. The educational programme of a school is basically set on an annual timetable, so it is necessary to use the commencement of the school year as the common date.

(3) The question is difficult to interpret. However, it is assumed that it relates to a teacher who does not receive the allocation of duties other than teaching time mentioned in question (1). As mentioned previously the allocation is a school level responsibility. I believe that schools are scrupulously fair in the allocation of duties other than teaching time to all staff. In any case a primary teacher may appeal to the monitoring committee for redress. The agreement relating to duties other than teaching time does not apply retrospectively.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

WA EXIM CORPORATION
Independent Inquiry

15. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Economic Development:

(1) Will the Minister allow the early activities of the Western Australian Exim Corporation Ltd, which he recently criticised, to be fully investigated by an independent per-
son, an independent body, or the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee?

(2) If yes, would the results of the investigation be made public?

Mr PARKER replied:

(1) and (2) I have been sitting in this Chamber all day and for the last three days of this sitting. It has been quite extraordinary to note the way in which the Opposition has attempted to raise issues without any substance to them and without producing any evidence whatsoever.

For some time after the formation of the Exim Corporation the Opposition sought to obtain information about its activities and sought to suggest that the Minister then responsible for the Exim Corporation, the Treasurer, should be accountable in this place for all its day-to-day activities. In response to those sorts of suggestions from the Opposition the Treasurer introduced legislation into Parliament which meant that Exim would become a statutory authority instead of being set up as a private company through the corporate affairs system.

One would have thought that would have been welcomed by the Opposition and particularly by the Liberal Party. However, as the Leader of the National Party said during the course of his remarks this afternoon, had it been left entirely to the Liberal Party, Exim would not have become a statutory authority instead of being set up as a private company through the corporate affairs system.

In other areas I am perfectly prepared to ensure that when certain matters are resolved the Opposition and the public will have access to information about them, as would be the case, for example, with the State Energy Commission, another statutory authority under my control.

Today the former Leader of the Opposition, the member for Cottesloe, asked me two questions about Exim Corporation which I answered frankly and gave the information he sought. A number of questions were answered in precisely the same way, disclosing all the information sought. Exim is now a statutory authority of this Parliament. I can assure the Opposition that information which is rel-
evant, public, and not of commercial confidentiality, will be made available to the Parliament.

HOUSING PACKAGE

Effect

16. Mrs WATKINS, to the Minister for Housing:

What is the likely effect of the Federal Government’s recently announced housing package on the building industry in Western Australia?

Mr WILSON replied:

Some members will be aware that I have already publicly expressed my disappointment at the Commonwealth Government’s housing package. While providing some positive change to the first home owners’ scheme, which will be of particular benefit to home buyers in Western Australia because of our low home construction costs, it failed to address the evident need to attract investors back into the private rental market and to at least maintain funding for public housing.

However, this package must be considered very generous by comparison with what we could expect from a Federal Liberal and/or National Party Government. A Howard and/or Sinclair Government would have eliminated direct funding to housing in the States, thus terminating all new construction for public housing and dashing the home ownership aspirations of low-income Western Australians, if one goes by their recently announced policy, which was quickly supported by the State Opposition.

Under that policy, at best, the States would only be able to meet their public housing debt servicing commitments and provide for some form of inadequate maintenance of their housing stock.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: This is the second time I have had to be super-friendly to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition today.

Mr WILSON: I am glad that members hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition being so vociferous in support of this Federal Liberal housing policy.

The coalition’s policy totally abrogates responsibility for the universally accepted Commonwealth responsibility for the income maintenance role of public housing.

Low and moderate-income Western Australians would be denied access to public housing assistance and would have no alternative but to pay unaffordable high rents in the private rental market—high rents because the Liberal Party has no clear policy to stimulate the construction of rental housing. In fact, it has no clear policy on housing at all, except for its intention to eliminate public housing.

The housing industry is characterised by its vulnerability to macro-economic influences, and thus needs a stabilisation policy. Nowhere in the coalition’s housing policy statement is there any evidence of such a policy.

As such their almost non-existent housing policy is based on luck rather than concrete policies, and a Federal coalition Government would mean a reversion to Fraserism when housing, with all its social economic impacts, was left languishing at the end of the queue.

TEACHERS UNION

Officers

17. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education.

(1) What does he understand by the statement attributed to him in the Sunday Times of 1 March 1987 which reads—

“The leadership of the Teacher’s Union had been reduced to incompetence and dishonesty by internal divisions.” WA Education Minister, Mr Pearce.

(2) If yes, will he provide the use of specific examples of incompetence and dishonesty of the Teachers Union leadership?
Mr PEARCE replied:

(1) and (2) This is certainly truly attributed to me. It was made in the context of a set of circumstances where I produced on behalf of the Government the better schools report and initiated discussions with the Teachers Union which for reasons I referred to in that quotation, was involved in the discussion with me. The officers of the union were attending meetings with me and senior members of the Education Department to discuss the report, and at the same time they were publicly maintaining a posture that no such discussions were taking place.

That reached a bizarre climax on my birthday, 24 February. No cards were forthcoming from the Opposition. A specific meeting was held to discuss the implementation of the report. The Teachers Union said it would not further discuss the report unless I ordered the Director General of Education to withdraw a letter he had sent to principals outlining ways in which the report would impact on them. I naturally declined to order the most senior public servant in the Education Department to withdraw a letter he had sent to all his principals. I said the Teachers Union was welcome to continue with the discussion, but not on the basis of demands of that kind. whereupon they stormed out of the meeting.

The next morning there was a statement that the discussions had broken down because I had refused to listen to them. That is a dishonest statement of the circumstances. It was doubly dishonest because that very morning they had spent two hours in a working party with the Director General of Education and other senior people. A 12-point agenda for discussions in the future was established. When I was approached by the Press I had to say that this was the most bizarre set of circumstances I had ever had. Here I am setting up negotiations with the union on an agreed agenda, and at the same time the union is saying not only that I will not listen, but that no discussions are taking place.

When the next meeting was held a few days later I insisted that a photographer from the Education News attend the meeting and take a photograph so that we could demonstrate that meetings were being held. The Teachers Union withdrew from the meeting rather than have members photographed in the meeting.

Mr Clarko: With you?

Mr PEARCE: I was not involved in the meeting myself; it was being chaired by the Director General of Education. The reason is simple. The Teachers Union executive was at that time split down the middle over what should happen with regard to the report. Half wanted to reject it and half wanted to negotiate. They were negotiating for the half which wanted to negotiate but pretended it was not for the half which did not want to negotiate. It was this division of the Teachers Union which led it to dishonesty and incompetence. This is the worst possible way in which to represent the interests of its members. The union was half-in and half-out, instead of sitting down properly to negotiate on behalf of its members to discuss the better schools report.

I am pleased to say that as a result of a phone call I subsequently made to the President of the Teachers Union and an offer I made to him with regard to a new start to the negotiations, I was able to resume discussions at a reasonable level. There was consultation and—fingers crossed; if the member for Karrinyup was closer I might have tried to touch wood—these discussions are continuing and I hope will be fruitful.

I do not resile from the statement I made at the time. It was a very truthful and accurate statement about what was happening.

EDUCATION

Special School: Carson Street

18. Dr GALLOP, to the Minister for Education:

Could the Minister outline the Government's position in relation to the Carson Street School?
Mr PEARCE replied:

Because of the new approach in what used to be called special education where more and more we are sending mildly handicapped children to normal schools supported by specially qualified teachers and aides, the number of children in our old, traditional special schools is now diminishing.

As a result of that diminution of numbers the department is looking at rationalising special schools, particularly those where the facilities are far below what would be required in a modern school of that kind.

The Carson Street School was originally the old Millen Primary School, designed without any of the specialist facilities required. It had already been subject to representations from the Hospital Service and Miscellaneous Workers Union, who were dissatisfied with the working conditions of their members.

As a result of the declining numbers—two years ago they had 80 students, this year I think they have 56, next year it is believed they will have 31, and the year after that the number should be below 20—the decision was made to investigate the possibility of closing the school, selling the site, and using the money to build up to seven education support units in surrounding schools. That would provide a placement for some of the children from Carson Street. Others would be placed in surrounding special schools, in some cases closer to their own homes, as places become available due to the run-down in numbers there.

That approach has not been greeted kindly by some parents at Carson Street School. I have made the offer that if there are enough students to maintain the school into 1988 I am prepared not to have it closed at the end of the year, but equally we are not prepared to spend $300 000 in order to keep it going for another year or two.

Each of the parents will be individually counselled by members of the Education Department about the options for their children. As far as possible, parents' wishes will be observed.

The position is that that school will close ultimately because there will be no students left in a relatively short time. I am prepared to extend the closure date past the end of this year if that is the wish of parents when they look at all the options, but we are not going to spend $300 000 to prop up an old system of special education in a decrepit facility which will ultimately have to close. If parents are prepared to put up with what they have for a year or two longer, it may be possible to accommodate them.

SPORT AND RECREATION

Rowing Regatta: Larrikinism

19. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

With the advent of the Public Schools Association head of the river regatta which will be rowed this Saturday, an event enjoyed by tens of thousands of responsible citizens, what action is the Minister taking to ensure that larrikinism by outside elements in small boats, which has previously disrupted and intimidated patrons viewing the regatta from moored pleasure boats, is controlled and abated?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

I believe that we have a very competent water police unit which, despite the opposition from the members of the Opposition last year when this Government gave authority to the water police to expand its services and we constructed a new facility in Fremantle, has continued to perform a very worthwhile function in Western Australia. I do not take any action in relation to operational duties. I am not going to direct police in operational matters, as would the Opposition, as they have made plain to this House on many occasions. The Opposition has shown that if it were ever returned to office in this State, then the Police Force would really be a political Police Force.

It is not my intention to direct the police in operational matters; that is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police. The member ought to know that because I have told
him that many times over. I have every confidence in the Police Force to do their duty to look after the people that the member represents at the regatta this Saturday.

I would suggest that if the member for East Melville has any information regarding the possibilities of the regatta being obstructed in some way, he ought to make that information available to the police.

ENVIRONMENT
North Lake

20. Mr MARLBOROUGH, to the Minister for Environment:

Is the Minister aware of algal bloom and odour problems being experienced at North Lake and, if so, what is being done about it?

Mr HODGE replied:

I am fully aware of problems at North Lake and have just given approval for a collaborative study between Murdoch University and the Environmental Protection Authority to measure the nutrient loading in waters entering North Lake. This information will make it possible to define the size of the problem and to develop techniques to overcome it. Remedial methods will be tested in the study, and it should be possible to apply the results to other wetlands in the area.

AGRICULTURE
Rural Adjustment Schemes: Interest Rate Subsidies

21. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Of the recently announced $6.1 million that was made available by the Commonwealth for rural adjustment schemes, what proportion will be made available for direct interest rate subsidies as opposed to new money?

Mr GRILL replied:

I cannot give the member a complete answer but I indicate that probably the vast majority of it will be used for the interest rate subsidy situation rather than for more loans, probably as high as between 60 and 70 per cent, or something of that nature. I might need to clarify that figure later on.

PLANNING
Bernies Hamburger Bar

22. Dr WATSON, to the Minister for Economic Development:

Can the Minister advise to what degree the owner of Bernies hamburger bar has fulfilled his obligations to the owner of the property he leases, and to other bodies on whom he is reliant for premises?

Mr PARKER replied:

I am advised that the owner of the hamburger bar, which is Verticordia Holdings Pty Ltd, is in arrears to the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority to the tune of some $16,000, which is more than one year's rent payable to that organisation.

In relation to the State Energy Commission, he is in arrears to the tune of $4,577, and portions of that have been outstanding and the overall balance has been at about that level of between $3,000 and $4,500 at various stages for at least the last 13 or 14 months. On no fewer than six occasions in the last 12 months he has been subject to cut-off action, which he has averted by paying a few hundred dollars off the account at that time, but at no stage has he been in credit or in balance in his account during that period of time.

I understand the amount outstanding to the Western Australian Water Authority is of the order of $6,000, and that similar circumstances apply to that.

MR LEN BRUSH
Charges: Opposition Pressure

23. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) Does the Minister have any evidence to sustain the allegations made by the Minister for Education in the debate yesterday that the Opposition has put pressure on the Police Force to ensure charges are laid against Mr Len Brush?
(2) If yes, will the Minister reveal that evidence to the House?
Mr GORDON HILL replied:
(1) and (2) It is not my business to collect evidence. I support the comments of the Minister for Education.

SUPERANNUATION BOARD
Anchorage Development: Payments

24. Mr LIGHTFOOT, to the Treasurer:

Has he authorised or is he aware of any payment to Mr Robert Martin and/or Mr Garry Jones or their respective companies from the State Superannuation Board in the form of profits or reimbursements of capital with respect to the proposed Anchorage development?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:
I am not aware of any payments, and the member should know that I would not be informed of any payments because it is not my role to authorise payments by the State Superannuation Board in respect of its investments. I understand from interjections from the member for Murchison-Eyre, among others, that he says a payment of $2 million has been made, or some amount of that nature. I cannot confirm that is the case—that has not been reported to me, apart from the way in which it has been conveyed by members of the Opposition making general statements—but neither would it be the case that I should have to approve that sort of payment.

I take the opportunity also of trying to clarify once more for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and for the member for Murchison-Eyre in particular that under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, I am not required to approve individual investments by the Superannuation Board, and neither was the previous Liberal Party Treasurer, who followed the practice of approving the global applications for investment approvals that were forwarded to him by the State Superannuation Board.

That is the situation as I understand it, and as far as The Anchorage is concerned, I cannot say that I have been told of any payment that the member is talking about, except in so far as I have heard reports from time to time by people like the member for Murchison-Eyre and others who make these sorts of allegations.

Can I also clear up once and for all another of the misinformations expressed by the member for Murchison-Eyre when he said that the State Superannuation Board has invested in El Caballo Blanco. He said that five or six times and I pointed out to him he was wrong when he said yesterday that Brockley Investments had invested in El Caballo Blanco. I have been informed since then that the State Superannuation Board has no investment in El Caballo Blanco.

Mr Lightfoot: What about Brockley?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I said yesterday that I am told Brockley Investments has no interest in El Caballo Blanco.

Mr Lightfoot: But the Superannuation Board has investments in Brockley?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Yes, the Superannuation Board has investments in Brockley but Brockley has no investment in El Caballo Blanco, and the Superannuation Board has no investment in El Caballo Blanco. Yet the member for Murchison-Eyre spent how long in talking about this haemorrhaging investment?

Mr Lightfoot: I said that, whosoever investment it is, I will find out.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member will find out? I am telling him.

Mr Lightfoot: You don't expect me to take your word for it?

Mr Laurance: You are saying the Superannuation Board is not connected in any way with El Caballo Blanco? That question is on notice today. What's the answer?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: What I said was, it has no investment in it. I cannot say whether it is connected. I do not know. I will answer that question, but I am trying to clarify what I have said.

Mr Lightfoot: You sound as though you are equivocating on it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am saying I am informed there is no investment in El Caballo Blanco by the State
Superannuation Board. Secondly, I am saying I am informed that there is no investment in El Caballo Blanco by Brockley Investments. Yet that was the basis of the member for Murchison-Eyre’s whole speech.

Mr Parker: Except for the evidence he produced.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Except for the evidence. As I said, only Amelia Earhart lacked that evidence.

Mr Laurance: He has not been naive and foolish, though. He has been very adept. But your friends have been very naive and foolish and have had to resign.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not underestimate the member for Murchison-Eyre. I see him as a future leader of the Liberal Party; I really do.

Mr Bryce: I think he sees himself in that light.

Mr Parker: I think he sees himself as a future Prime Minister.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I can hear it now: “Prime Minister Lightfoot today said that he had not been late in lodging his company returns but that Exim Corporation had.” Also, whenever I speak on a car telephone I always make sure I do not make any sense.