

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 25th August, 1977

The **PRESIDENT** (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [2.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 6th September.

Question put and passed.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Transport) [2.49 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [2.50 p.m.]: I am astounded that the third reading should be proceeded with in this manner. I might say I have travelled 230 miles out into my electorate this morning and I made a special effort to return here at the starting time of Parliament in order to hear the Minister, at the third reading stage, answer some of the questions I put to him in my second reading speech yesterday.

When I continued some of the arguments in the Committee stage I believed I was being a little hard on the Minister, because he was sitting in his seat and his adviser was sitting at the back of the Chamber, so it was difficult for the Minister to communicate with the officer as the Bill was going through the House. However, I supported the Bill at that time in the belief that this morning at least some of the questions I asked would have been studied by the department, and the Minister would have acquainted himself with the matters in questions I had asked, particularly on the financial side, and given me some satisfaction and encouragement to support the Bill.

I will say that as a member of the Government I have never opposed a money Bill, because questions I have asked have been adequately answered by the Minister concerned. In this case I do not expect any other member to follow me in what I intend to do; no doubt other members are

satisfied with the answers the Minister gave last night, or agree with the Minister that apparently the questions were frivolous. However, when the Bill is put to the vote I intend to call for a division and vote against it.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Transport) [2.52 p.m.]: The honourable Mr Gayfer raised a number of questions which came mainly from letters written by Federal members to shires.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Nobody mentioned the \$8 million or the \$450 000 to be raised on motor drivers' licences. I mentioned it.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The honourable member read those letters and asked many questions in relation to them; and indeed he actually quoted from my reply to the Shire of Williams if I remember correctly. As I understand it, My Gayfer's main concern was that country areas were not receiving enough money. Would he by interjection indicate what he thinks would be a fair amount for country areas to receive?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: In connection with this Bill I want to know where the extra money which will be raised by it is going. It is a simple question: What is the purpose of the Bill?

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH: As I explained, it goes into the funds of the Main Roads Department.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER: Where is the difference between last year's expenditure on roads and this year's expenditure—\$500 000 as against \$8 million?

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That was before this Bill was introduced.

THE PRESIDENT: Would the Minister please direct his comments to the Chair?

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It seems Federal members have been quoting amounts which they consider should be allocated to country areas and saying that the State Government is not allocating its funds in the same proportion as in the year before, so that country shires will have less money to spend on roads. I am extremely disappointed that they have been doing that. I stated in my letters to the Shire of Williams and other shires the amount of money which is being spent in rural areas, and I do not believe for one moment they are being disadvantaged.

THE HON. R. T. LEESON: You said earlier in your speech you would explain where the shires could pick up the shortfall, which is considerable

in some areas. I have not heard much about that and I think it is rather important.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I said I would explain that when we are debating the Main Roads Act Amendment Bill, because it comes within the ambit of that Bill. I said the State Government had given the local authorities statutory grants which will be covered by the Main Roads Act Amendment Bill, and that Bill will come up for debate in this House within a matter of weeks. I believe that will be the time to debate the matter. Everyone in local government knows there are shortfall funds available for the shires which receive less. Mr Gayfer already knows it, and if he wants to cross the floor it will be indicative of his attitude. He considers country areas are not receiving enough money for roads as compared with the metropolitan area. That is his only complaint.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: My complaint is you have still not answered the questions I asked in this Chamber last night.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I cannot state specifically where the money is going. The Minister for Transport has allocations prepared for him by the Main Roads Department. They are contained in a very thick volume which covers every road in Western Australia.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Would you not expect if \$8 million more is being collected that the available expenditure for roads would be \$8 million instead of \$1.5 million?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That depends on when the money is raised. As it happens, the Main Roads Department has some funds which it spends every year on, for example, acquiring land in advance for freeways. If that money has not been spent in that direction out of the allocations which have already been printed and sent to the shires, hopefully when this Bill goes through those funds can be equated again. As I said, the money would go into the Main Roads Department's funds for roads. The specific question might have related to the construction of roads. I cannot answer that at the moment, but the money will go to the Main Roads Department, and I do not think I have ever heard a rural local authority disagree with the manner in which the Main Roads Department distributes those funds.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Could you not have found that out this morning?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I have found it a particularly good department which has seldom been questioned about its integrity,

administration, or the manner in which it distributes those funds in Western Australia.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Why did the department not reply to my simple question?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Perhaps it did not. That is the answer. I have the greatest confidence that the Main Roads Department will satisfactorily handle the extra money it will receive and that the money will either be distributed to the shires for additional work, or will be put into the work carried out by the department.

I commend the Bill to the House.

As to Division

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the Bill be now read a third time. All those in favour say "Aye". Those against say "No".

The "Ayes" have it.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Divide.

The PRESIDENT: As there was only one dissenting voice, no division will be taken.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [3.00 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The principal purpose of this Bill is to amend the definition "fauna" and its usage in the Act so as to give this State clear authority to control all species of Australian wildlife when brought into this State.

Crown Law opinion indicates that the definition of the word "fauna" and its diverse usage in the Act causes much obscurity in finding the proper meaning for that term in relation to the Act.

Consequently, some, aviculturists have questioned the validity of licensing and other requirements of the regulations, particularly the new ones relating to types of aviculturists and bird dealers' licences. Recently a defendant's solicitor argued unsuccessfully that the birds involved in the case were not "fauna" within the existing definition. In that prosecution the challenge to the validity of the licensing requirement was dismissed. Nevertheless it still seems that there is room for grave doubt about

whether any particular bird or other animal is "fauna". It seems that unless the definition is clarified, the department might even have to prove that the particular birds or other animals were bred or born within the State.

A lot of trafficking in fauna is taking place. It is, therefore, essential that all States should be able co-operatively to control the keeping and movement of fauna. This should be possible irrespective of whether the species of Australian fauna involved is native to any particular State or Territory. I remember the time when one State had no control over the fresh water crocodile. The difficulties we encountered in trying to prevent poachers from other States operating here were immense. Unless these amendments are agreed to, it is likely that Western Australia will become the centre for fauna smuggling. This is the only State that does not have clear control over all Australian fauna irrespective of its origin.

The desirability of achieving greater conformity in controls over wildlife has been pointed out by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation. In its second report "Trafficking in Fauna in Australia", the committee recommended that the Council of Nature Conservation Ministers consider uniformity and adequacy of legislation between States and Territories. This should be done as a matter of urgency so that neighbouring States and Territories have legislation that is not in conflict.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Lyla Elliott.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: NINTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 24th August, on the following motion by the Hon. R. G. Pike—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

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

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [3.03 p.m.]: Mr President, I have already taken the opportunity on another occasion to congratulate you on your appointment to the office you now hold, so I will pass on to the Ministers and

congratulate those who have been appointed to act as Ministers in this Chamber.

I believe it is a pity the Premier, when deciding on his Cabinet, saw fit to reduce the number of Ministers in the Legislative Council. Over the years the situation in this place is that the number of Ministers representing the Government had been maintained at three. Last year, with the appointment of the Hon. I. G. Medcalf, the number of Ministers in the Council was increased to four, and they carried out the work of nine Ministers in the Assembly.

It is not an easy task for Ministers in this place to handle their own portfolios and to do all the work involved in handling Bills for other Ministers. They are overloaded with work, particularly if the legislative programme of the session happens to be heavy. I know from experience over the past three years that it is pretty tough when a Minister is handling his own Bills as well as other legislation, particularly when the Minister already has a solid portfolio of his own.

I was rather shocked that when the Cabinet was formed the Hon. Neil McNeill was replaced in the Ministry. As a colleague of mine in the last Ministry, and in his capacity as Leader of the House during the last Parliament, I believe he did a particularly good job. I am sure he did not deserve to be relegated to the back benches.

There is another aspect of appointing a Cabinet which I believe Premiers sometimes overlook, and that is the dispersement of Ministers throughout the State so that various areas of the State are represented in the Ministry. At the moment we have huge parts of the State which are not represented by a Minister. I do not think this is right. If we consider the present situation and take a line running from Harvey to Narrogin, we find that, with the exception of the metropolitan area and the Kimberley, there is no Minister representing that huge and very valuable area north of that line. For the purpose of my argument, I am assuming that Dale is a metropolitan seat.

I am referring to the eastern and central wheatbelt areas, the midlands area, and the Pilbara. I would say these areas represent the most important parts of the State because they return the greatest income in trade to Western Australia. I include in these areas the eastern and central wheatbelt areas, the midlands area running up to Geraldton, the Kalgoorlie region, and the Pilbara region; and those areas have no ministerial representation at all. It is a pity that when Premiers form Cabinets they do not

consider that situation and appoint Ministers from members representing the areas I have mentioned.

Over the years from 1917 to 1921 the central wheatbelt area was represented in the Ministry by my father. He was followed by the Hon. Garnet Wood, and then Sir Charles Latham; and in the Brand-Nalder Government Mr Logan represented this area in the Ministry, as did Mr Lewis. Therefore, the trend over the years has been to pick Ministers from various areas of the State so that the representation in the Ministry is equitable throughout the State.

I would like to add to the welcome extended by other members to the new members of the Chamber. Probably we will not all see eye to eye during the session; indeed, we have not done so to date. However, I welcome the new members because it is nice to see new faces. We hope those members will all settle down. Most of them seem to be settling down quite well and are becoming used to what one should and should not do in this place. I think next session we will see quite a difference in many of them.

When Mr Thompson was speaking recently he referred to the situation of the staff in the Department for Community Welfare. What he said was substantially correct, apart from a few statements. I refer to one comment in particular regarding appointment of social workers to replace those who retire. He said that when a social worker retires from the department there is an instruction that the worker shall not be replaced. That is not so, and it was not so when I was the Minister and had jurisdiction over that department. While I was Minister no instruction in that respect was issued by myself, by the Government, by the Premier, or by the Public Service Board. The appointment of new officers, providing the appointments came within the range of the 2 per cent ceiling, was left to the Minister and the director of the department.

When a social worker retired it was not always possible to obtain a replacement quickly, and sometimes an appointment was made from other members of the staff who were not social welfare workers.

Mr Thompson also referred to the case load figures of social workers, and he was not quite right in his comments on that matter. He quoted a figure of 15 to me, although he said afterwards it was closer to 70. The optimum number of cases the social workers should attend to during a week is between 60 and 80. Much depends on the types of cases and the number of social workers available.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I was quoting figures for a week. That is the case load at any time.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I am quoting the figures given to me by a senior officer of the department. He informed me the number of cases had risen two or three times. This is fairly serious in view of the fact that I knew when I was Minister that such a position existed. I took the matter up with the Premier on several occasions in an attempt to obtain more staff, but was unsuccessful because of the policy to restrict appointments within the 2 per cent ceiling.

I strongly pointed out that there were not enough special workers and there was a real risk factor that something could happen to a child which might not have occurred if there had been sufficient officers available to carry out their duties and attend to the children and their mothers. We tried to overcome this staff shortage by making ministerial appointments, and I did my utmost to see that the risk factor was kept to a minimum.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Can you explain what you think is going to happen in the department when children are referred to it by the courts?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I agree with the point being made by Mr Thompson that there is a risk factor. There is the possibility of a death occurring because of the lack of service to foster or other children. It is a risky situation when the staff are overloaded with cases and do not have a chance of seeing some of these children for months and months. As I said before, Mr Thompson is substantially correct.

I now raise a matter which has been the subject of a lot of controversy, moratoriums and similar activities; I refer to uranium mining and the production of yellow cake and the sale of yellow cake overseas. Much of what we have heard about the dangers of mining uranium and producing yellow cake is a lot of poppycock. I wonder how many members in this Chamber can remember a place named Rum Jungle. Quite a number of people who get on the bandwagon and talk of the dangers involved with the mining of uranium probably would not know that Rum Jungle ever existed. The mine existed some 20 years ago and it operated for about six years. I was there in 1957.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you glow in the dark?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: That must be the explanation!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Have you had children since?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: My children were all born before then. However, I am sure I am still able to produce more should I wish. I have never heard that any person having worked there has suffered any ill effects. I was only there for a couple of hours, so there is little chance of radiation having affected me in any way.

As members would know, Rum Jungle is south of Darwin. Whilst I was there the manager kindly showed us around the area. He passed a geiger counter over some yellow cake, but the instrument showed a higher reading when it was passed over the face of a luminous wrist watch. That shows what poppycock all this fuss is, over the mining of uranium and yellow cake. I believe a recent speech made by the Rt. Hon. J. D. Anthony, who is the Minister for National Resources and Overseas Trade, should be recorded in *Hansard*. I will quote nearly all of the speech because I believe it is a very good one. It clearly sets out the position of uranium mining and indicates how we have a duty to the world to provide access to this mineral.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: Did the Uranium Producers Forum put this out?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Mr Anthony's speech reads as follows—

The future of uranium development and Australian policy on nuclear safeguards and nuclear non-proliferation are among the most important issues facing the Government, the Parliament and the people of Australia today.

Last week the Prime Minister made a major and important statement on Australian safeguards and nuclear non-proliferation policy. The Parliament now has before it the final report of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry.

These are questions of supreme importance in Australia and to the international community.

The energy crisis of the last few years has had profound implications for international relations and quite clearly is of major concern to the future economic growth and well-being of mankind.

The dwindling world supplies of petroleum have made it abundantly clear that the world must turn to other sources of energy. President Carter has crystallised this problem in a dramatic way in his energy policy announcement of 20th April. The central theme of that policy, which was acknowledged by the major industrial countries at the world Economic Summit

meeting a few weeks ago, is that the world must adjust to the new realities in energy supply and usage.

If it does not do so then the world economy will be faced with precipitate and cataclysmic adjustments in the mid-1980s, the economic ramifications of which will be felt by developed and less developed countries alike.

Australia is, of course, fortunate in that we are well endowed with indigenous energy resources. Our contribution and the part we can play in this international problem, is that of a reliable and stable supplier of energy resources to those countries that are obliged to make more painful and difficult adjustments than we ourselves will have to bear.

Very clearly the major industrial countries must turn to an increased usage of coal and nuclear energy to satisfy their long-term requirements.

Australia has vast resources of coal and we have vast resources of uranium. The responsibility of Australia to the international community is real and clear.

When it was in office the Whitlam Government clearly recognised these responsibilities. Our Government also recognises them.

The use of uranium for nuclear electricity generation raises very special problems. These were, of course, very clearly recognised in the reports of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry. These same problems have attracted increased international interest in recent times.

As the Prime Minister pointed out in his statement to this Parliament on 24th May there has for example recently been an important statement by President Carter on nuclear energy in which he emphasised the need to restrain the spread of nuclear weapons or explosive capabilities without foregoing the tangible benefits of nuclear power.

The Government has received the second report of the Ranger Inquiry. The Inquiry is of course in that nature of an advisory body on environmental matters and has made a number of recommendations to the Government. But let me stress that ultimately it has to be the Government which will make the decisions on whether there should be further development.

The Government was elected by the people of Australia and it therefore has the responsibility for decision-making. The Government, being the Government of Australia, must take the whole spectrum of national interests into account in making these decisions.

It is not appropriate for me at this stage to comment in detail on the recommendations of the Fox Inquiry. There are, however, a number of issues raised by the Inquiry which are important to the debate.

It is not appropriate for me at this stage to comment in detail on the recommendations of the Fox Inquiry. There are, however, a number of issues raised by the Inquiry which are important to the debate. The importance of uranium in the world scene is well-recognised. It is already important to the economies of many industrialised countries and it is being recognised by developing countries as vital to their prospects for economic growth.

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

Mr Lewis stated there were some 500 nuclear reactors in operation at the present time. I do not know where he obtained his figures, but from my information they are well and truly out. Mr Anthony has made a statement with regard to this matter, and Mr Lewis should know that he is the man who has all the relevant information.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: How many are there?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: There would be a lot fewer than 500.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: A newspaper report published recently stated there were 1 000 in operation. I think there are about 200.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The figures which I am quoting are authentic. To continue—

In spite of the mineral exploration effort compared with that of other countries, the Alligator Rivers area already accounts for nearly 20% of the world's known low-cost uranium reserves.

More importantly in the world energy scene, the Alligator Rivers area is the world's largest uncommitted uranium province. The development of that resource could make a similar contribution to Australia as did the development of the iron ore or coal industries

in the 1960s. Naturally development of these uranium resources would have a much greater impact on the economy of the Northern Territory. Such development would provide a firm basis for Northern Territory Statehood.

A greater exploration effort would certainly result in the region becoming even more vital to the world, to Australia, and to the Northern Territory.

Putting aside these obvious benefits, let's have a look at what the Fox Inquiry itself had to say. The Fox Inquiry identified five problems associated with uranium development. But it said that the most serious danger is the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In its second report, the Inquiry set out its attitude on this issue as follows:

"We did not make a recommendation about what Australia should do about the danger. The risk was apparent and great, but international relations (including trade, diplomatic and defence considerations) were involved and a decision as to the correct strategy had to be made by those equipped to make it. We know enough of the considerations affecting resource strategy to be aware of its complexity and the impact it can have on world affairs".

The Inquiry stated:

"(A) That total renunciation of intention to supply was not justified, and was undesirable.

(B) That the options were either to proceed to supply as soon as practicable or to delay making a decision about supplying for a period of several years. In our view, a decision on the options depended largely on what was deemed to be the best strategy in relation to the matter of proliferation."

In other words, the Inquiry outlined the issues, but left it to the Government to take the final decisions. These issues have to be seen in the context of international developments.

I have particularly in mind the initiatives of the United States, Canadian and Australian Governments to the further strengthening of international safeguards arrangements. There have been extensive consultations between the three Governments on this matter.

The recent initiatives of the Carter

Administration are of particular importance. President Carter has committed the United States to the continued development of its program of light water reactors. At the same time, however, the United States Government is seeking to restrain the development of the plutonium economy. It has been made clear that Australia can play a central role in this area.

Surely there can be no doubt that, if Australia were to make its uranium resources available, the strengthening of nuclear safeguards would be greatly enhanced. And, the possibility of premature development of the plutonium economy, with its implications for nuclear proliferation, could be avoided. It is only by acting now that we can contribute to long-term global stability.

I think that is a very important statement and should emphasise to some people the reason we should mine uranium in this country. To continue—

The recent statement by the Prime Minister on our policy on safeguards will make a substantial contribution towards achieving such stability.

Where does the Labor Party stand on the issue? In an address to the United Nations the Leader of the Opposition reminded the world that the quest for resources was the oldest of all the causes of war.

The Fox Inquiry itself said:

"It may be that by supplying some countries we would help to relieve those pressures which can lead to armed conflict, nuclear or non-nuclear".

But what is the Labor Party proposing to do? It wants to withhold uranium from the world thereby contributing to a situation which, in the view of the Leader of the Opposition, can only lead to an increase in global tension. Not only would such an attitude by the Labor Party lead to tensions regarding resources—it would also contribute to what President Carter and many Governments, including the Australian Government, are seeking to avoid: Namely the more rapid development of the plutonium economy with the attendant risk of nuclear proliferation.

I was most disturbed at the scare mongering tactics used by the Honourable Member for Blaxland in commenting on the Prime Minister's safeguards statement. He rubbished the International Atomic Energy Agency. In rubbishing the International

Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, the Honourable Member has said that there is an implied reliance in the Government's policy on IAEA safeguards which, he claims, the Fox Inquiry said were next to useless.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: From what are you quoting?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I am quoting from a speech made by The Rt Hon. J. D. Anthony in the House of Representatives on the 2nd June, 1977. To continue—

I draw attention to the section entitled conclusions in Chapter 13 of the First Report of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry (Page 147). This states:

"The Commission recognises that these defects taken together, are so serious that existing safeguards may provide only an illusion of protection. However, we do not conclude that they render valueless the concept of international safeguards. We believe it is both essential and possible to make safeguards arrangements more effective".

The safeguards policy announced by the Prime Minister does, of course go well beyond existing safeguard requirements. It is directed to achieving safeguards arrangements which are more effective. It requires conditions of control and use of Australian uranium over and above just the application of IAEA safeguards, the task of which is to verify that nuclear material is not diverted from peaceful uses. These cover: careful selection of eligible customers for uranium; bilateral agreements with customer countries; fallback safeguards; prior Australian Government consent in relation to re-export, enrichment, and reprocessing; physical security. This comprehensive approach is closely in line with the recent United States and Canadian policy and it builds on the recommendations of the First Fox Report.

Of course, one important aspect of the comprehensive safeguards policy announced by the Prime Minister is a requirement for IAEA safeguards. Equally, this is an important requirement of the safeguards policy recently announced by President Carter. Like the United States we believe that the IAEA should remain a central element in nuclear safeguards systems. We will collaborate with the United States and other countries in further strengthening the IAEA.

I would most sincerely urge the Honourable Member for Blaxland, in the interest of mankind, NOT to rubbish the IAEA. The policy put forward in the Government's statement represents a practical, reasonable and effective safeguards regime to seek from countries wishing to import uranium from Australia under any future contracts. The policy goes beyond a mere acceptance by Australia of our international obligations as a party to the non-proliferation treaty. It constitutes a policy as stringent as that adopted by any nuclear supplier. It incorporates and builds on the finding of the first report of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry. It incorporates the kinds of ideas in relation to safeguards being put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, who, of course, was quite keen to see uranium developed during his period as Prime Minister.

The policy which has been announced provides a firm basis on which we can work with others to strengthen safeguards regimes in the world nuclear industry. Our policy and safeguards arrangements will be kept closely under review to take account of the future evolution of safeguards.

Let us look at some of the attitudes and policies of the Labor Party and examine them in detail. Despite the conclusions of the first Fox Report and its recommendations on Parliamentary debate, the Labor Party pre-empted any debate and formulated a fixed and unrealistic policy—so much for a Parliamentary debate. Like the Government, the Labor Party has said that existing uranium contracts should be honoured. However, unlike the Government which has not yet made any final decisions on new mining, the Labor Party pre-empted all rational discussion on these matters by saying no new mining development at all is to take place. I would point out that the Labor Party has made this statement despite the Inquiry saying that a total refusal to supply would place Australia in clear breach of Article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The most charitable view that I can make of the Labor Party's attitude is that it has been prepared by a group of incompetents.

On the one hand, it says Australia should honour existing contracts, but on the other hand it says no new mining developments. I ask: How on earth does the Labor Party expect contracts to be honoured when there

is not enough uranium at the existing mine at Mary Kathleen and in the Government's stockpile? Presumably Labor would purchase elsewhere—or renege.

I remind the Opposition that its platform says Labor will work for enrichment of Australian uranium resources in plants which are located in Australia. I pose a simple question: how does the Labor Party expect to be able to enrich Australian uranium when it right now says no new uranium mining developments?

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has alleged that this Government was intent on committing Australia to a supplier role in the western world's nuclear energy industry and that it has encouraged mining companies to enter long-term contracts for the supply of uranium including to such countries as Iran. Obviously, the Honourable member was asleep during his three years in Government. Or perhaps he chose to ignore what his colleagues were doing.

I would draw the attention of the House, including the Leader of the Opposition, to a joint press statement of 2nd November 1974 between the then Prime Minister of Australia and Japan wherein it was said:

"Mr Tanaka expressed his appreciation of the confirmation of supply by Australia to Japan of the contracted 9 000 short tons of uranium . . ."

Just two days earlier, the then Minister for Minerals and Energy—

That is the late Rex Connor. To continue—

—had the following to say in a statement entitled "Northern Territory Uranium" which he tabled in this House:

"When Australia negotiates further sales it will do so as a willing seller seeking willing buyers. IN PARTICULAR, WE WILL ENSURE THAT OUR MAJOR TRADING PARTNERS—JAPAN, ITALY AND WEST GERMANY—OBTAIN AN EQUITABLE SHARE OF THE URANIUM. WE HAVE FOR EXPORT".

Not long after these two statements were made the then Prime Minister and now Leader of the Opposition went on a long tour of Europe where he talked about uranium among other things. Presumably, he found as we do that one of the first things that foreign governments, companies, individuals want to

talk about—is Australia's uranium resources. Obviously, he was successful.

In making the second reading of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Bill on 16th October 1975, the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs—

If memory serves me correctly, this was the Hon. Les Johnson, and he had this to say—

'International assurances have been provided by Ministers that Australia will meet the uranium requirements of our major trading partners, which could amount to a total of about 100 000 tonnes of uranium . . .

The pamphlet continues—

I repeat: 100 000 tonnes. It is intriguing that in alleging that the Government was encouraging sales, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to only one country—Iran. I deny that this Government has encouraged mining companies to enter into long-term contracts for supplying uranium to Iran. However, I cannot make this denial on behalf of all recent Commonwealth Governments. I would remind the House that in March 1975, the friend and colleague of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, namely the Honourable Member for Labor, visited Iran in his then role of Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer. He was accompanied by the then Minister for Agriculture, Senator Wriedt. At the end of their visit, they released a joint statement with the Iranians which included the following sentence:

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

I need add no more to the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. This recital of statements by Ministers of the Labor Government—statements of course which would have been taken at their face value by our trading partners—leads me to question:

Why is it that while in Government Labor adopted a responsible position whereas now in Opposition, it is not only irresponsible but it is also incompetent? In office the Labor Government committed Australia to supply 100 000 tonnes of uranium. We have inherited that commitment. Now Labor want to walk away—they want Australia to abrogate Labor's commitment to supply 100 000 tonnes of uranium to our trading partners. What new information does Labor

have that the Ranger Inquiry did not have, that the Government does not have—that makes Labor say "no new mining".

I believe the best way to sum up the position presently facing Australia is by posing a series of questions. Is the Australian economy so strong that we can deny ourselves the clear economic benefits that would flow from the mining and export of uranium? Is our balance of payments so secure that we can forego the considerable boost which uranium exports would bring? There are other wider questions of more far-reaching consequences than the effects on the Australian economy. Is there going to be a nuclear power industry around the world regardless of whether Australia exports uranium? Would a refusal to supply uranium to countries which need it adversely affect our relations with those countries? Would a refusal to supply create serious tensions? Would we be in a better position to influence the course of the world uranium industry—especially in regard to waste disposal, to safeguards and to control of materials—if we are directly involved in the industry ourselves, instead of being right out of the industry?

Not only has the Government got to accept its responsibilities to the Australian people in finding answers to these questions. The Australian people must answer them in a manner which will be in the best interests of mankind.

That was a speech made by the Rt. Hon. J. D. Anthony, and it was of very great importance not only to Australia but also to the world. This matter of our future energy resources affects everyone.

I will leave the subject now as I believe I have covered enough of it in my speech. It is quite obvious that Mr Anthony and the Federal Government see not the slightest danger in producing yellow cake. Yellow cake has been produced in Australia for export in the past and it has not been proved to have affected people.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You are a real expert!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I am not an expert at all.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You are making very authoritative statements.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have just touched lightly on the fringe of the question.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Touched lightly or lightly touched!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: At least I have taken an interest in the subject and I have applied a common sense approach to it. I have had the opportunity of observing a uranium mine. Incidentally, this was an open-cut mine, and I made inquiries to find out the facts. Up to date none of the people working at Rum Jungle have shown any ill effects from radiation.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It was also said that nobody would be affected by asbestos.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Asbestos is a very fine fibre which can be stirred up with one's feet. Once this fibre gets into a man's lungs, he can develop asbestosis or some other affliction the name of which is too technical for me. But I remember some years ago Dr. Hislop showed us some slides and photographs in this Chamber of lungs affected by asbestosis. Some of the older members would have been present at the time, probably the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon and the Hon. V. J. Ferry, but not many of the others would still be in this Chamber today. Dr Hislop was concerned at that time about the effects of asbestosis upon the people who worked at Wittenoom. He had done a lot of work on the subject and he referred to this matter in the Chamber. He went to a lot of trouble to show members some x-ray slides of lungs that were affected by asbestosis.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: He did not do much about it then, did he?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It is rather interesting that this matter was raised by the ex-Minister for Health at this time, because the situation arose during the period that he held the Health portfolio. I was well aware of the ill effects upon the people who worked at Wittenoom. During the mining process these people would handle the asbestos and bring it out of the mine. The asbestos dust was very fine and it floated around everywhere. Wherever one walked the fibres would float all over the place. One would naturally breathe it into one's lungs. There is much less danger involved in the mining of uranium than there is in working with these asbestos fibres.

We are talking about a very important question and if we go along with the suggestions of the Labor Party at the present time we will be in a very bad situation in this country in years to come.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Would you like to inform us what the Labor policy is?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I think I have had my say on uranium.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You seem to have been talking about somebody else's policy; not ours.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have been talking about the views of some very important people on uranium mining. The other day I was talking to a lady whose husband is a nuclear physicist. I asked her what her husbands' views were on the subject of uranium mining. She told me it was his belief that if we did not mine uranium and sell it, it might not be worth two cents to Australia in 20 years' time.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: A very scientific survey!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I believe we should go ahead and mine uranium rather than be left as mugs on the fringe of this important development. We can all be mugs. I do not pretend to be an expert on the matter, but there are many people who do, when in fact they know nothing about uranium mining.

In the Hon. Lyla Elliott's Address-in-Reply speech she referred to meat inspection. She was so very sure that the percentage increase she quoted was correct.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I thought she spoke very well.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The percentage increase she quoted on meat inspection fees was 270 per cent and the honourable member was very sure that she was right. I would like to warn the honourable member that she should be very careful when she starts quoting figures and making this sort of statement. I was trying to work out what the honourable member did to arrive at this percentage.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: If you had trouble with "exacerbating," I don't know how you can work out figures.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I thought the honourable member might have been talking about something else. In an endeavour to discover how she arrived at this percentage, I assembled all the different figures and tried to work out the percentage in a number of ways. The Hon. H. W. Gayfer will verify that, because I spent hours in his office doing the calculations.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I thought you would have been travelling through your electorate in the middle of the night!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: There was no way I

could arrive at a figure of 270 per cent. However, after the honourable member spoke yesterday I realised what she had done. She had taken the answer to a question asked by Mr Jamieson in December, 1976, and totalled the quoted percentages of increases that were given. Those figures were: cattle 228.95 per cent, calves 525 per cent; sheep, lambs and goats 137.5 per cent, and pigs 188.46 per cent. The honourable member then divided the total by four and came up with 270 per cent. What a wonderful method of calculation. Let us have a look at this.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You spent hours trying to find out.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I am still in doubt.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Don't blame the Hon. Lyla Elliott; she probably got Mr Claughton to work the figures out.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: A statement was made in 1974 to which I would now like to refer.

Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.00 p.m.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Before the afternoon tea suspension I was about to say that in spite of the answer provided by the Minister for Agriculture to the Leader of the Opposition in another place (Mr Jamieson) and my statement to members of the 7th December, 1974, based on figures which had been supplied by the Department of Agriculture relating to increased meat inspection fees, it is clear that the figures supplied were incorrect. I am still at a loss to work out how the percentages were arrived at. It was suggested that the increases ranged from 137 per cent to 525 per cent, but there is no way that these figures could be correct.

I should like to quote to members the actual figures which applied from the date I took over the portfolio in April, 1974, to the 13th December, 1974. The meat inspection fee for a 150kg steer—that is a very low weight—was \$1.50 when I took office; 58c as at the 3rd May, 1974; and \$1.25 on the 13th December, 1974. Members can see the percentage increase for meat inspection fees relating to large cattle was not very great.

The inspection fee relating to calves averaging 68kg was 68c when I took office; 27c on the 3rd May, 1974—the interim figure—and \$1 on the 13th December, 1974.

For sheep averaging 24kg, the inspection fee applying on the day I took office was 24c, compared with an interim fee for the 3rd May, 1974, of 27c, and a figure of 38c on the 13th December, 1974. Again, this does not represent a huge increase.

The inspection fee on lambs may be one which has increased substantially. For a lamb weighing 13kg, the fee was 13c when I took office, the interim fee on the 3rd May, 1974, was 27c and the fee applying as at the 13th December, 1974, was 38c. This represents a total increase of just under 200 per cent.

The inspection fee for pigs weighing an average of 40 kilos was 40c when I took office, 32c on the 3rd May, 1974, and 75c on the 13th December, 1974. Even that does not represent a 100 per cent increase. I do not know who worked out these figures, but there is no way in which they are correct. Even the President of the Meat and Allied Trades Federation (Mr Howard King), a man whom I know personally, stated that the inspection fee for heifers and steers had increased from 38c to \$1.25 when in actual fact the increase was from 58c to \$1.25. Therefore, even he was incorrect.

There has been a great deal of speculation about these charges, and I have extracted some figures relating to the revenue the department received from meat inspection fees from 1971-72 to 1976-77. In 1971-72 the figure was \$171 520; in 1972-73 it was \$179 474; in 1973-74 it dropped to \$172 979; in 1974-75 it was \$484 000; in 1975-76 it was \$587 868; and the estimated figure for 1976-77 was \$597 000. If we compare the year 1972-73 with the estimate for 1976-77 we see that the actual total revenue increase for the period was 231 per cent, but many other factors are involved of which Miss Lyla Elliott appears to be unaware.

The actual number of cattle slaughtered in the metropolitan area in 1972-73 was 69 523. In 1975-76 this number increased by 89 517 to 159 040. For the same period the number of sheep slaughtered in the metropolitan area rose from 645 637 to 1 184 388, an increase of 538 751. The number of pigs slaughtered during this period fell from 285 193 to 251 771, a decrease of 34 422. Quite a few people left the pig breeding industry during that period, and some killings were transferred to country areas; the pigs were not all slaughtered at Robb Jetty as they were previously.

It does not matter how one looks at these figures; there is no way the suggested increase of 270 per cent can be correct. I advise Miss Elliott in future to look more carefully at the figures before making her case.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I am sorry, but I still think I am right.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Mr President, when

an irresistible force meets an immovable object, we do not get anywhere!

I should like to answer the points raised by the honourable member relating to hospital charges. As at the 1st March, 1970 the charge for a standard hospital bed was \$13.50 a day and for a single ward bed, it was \$20 a day. In September, 1971—during the time of the Tonkin Government—the charge increased to \$20 and \$30 respectively. The next increase was in September, 1974 when \$30 and \$45 respectively were charged. In August, 1975, with the introduction of the 50:50 cost sharing arrangement with the Commonwealth, the charge dropped to \$20 and \$30 respectively, but it must be remembered that the Commonwealth paid the hospitals an amount of \$16 a day for occupied beds. Therefore the actual amount received by the hospitals was \$36 and \$46 respectively.

One might say that there has been a 100 per cent increase in hospital charges when one considers the figures on an across-the-board basis. However, when one considers the actual charge to the patient, and does not take into account the Commonwealth subsidy it is a different story.

Any consideration of hospital charges must take into account the bed-day costs entailed in running a hospital. The average cost of a bed-day in the five teaching hospitals in 1975-76 was \$151.25. The average revenue per bed-day was \$27.89, requiring a payment from the hospital fund of \$125.20 per bed-day. Even when we consider the rates applying during that period of \$40 and \$60 respectively, we can see there is a big leeway to make up between those charges and the hospital fund contribution of \$125.20.

It must be remembered that the Commonwealth Government quite naturally said to the States, when the agreements were drawn up, "We look to you to cut costs as much as possible and to impose charges which are fair and equitable to the people and fair to the Commonwealth on the basis that we are contributing 50 per cent of net hospital costs." I believe it was quite reasonable for the agreement to be readjusted because of the escalation of costs during that period, but it did not amount to an increase of 100 per cent, as was alleged by the Hon. Lyla Elliott.

In the financial year ended the 30th June, 1974, the total salaries of the five teaching hospitals was \$45 864 515. By the 30th June, 1976, that figure had almost doubled to \$84 147 094 and quite naturally, this increase was reflected in all other costs to the hospitals. I do not wish to dwell on this matter; it can be seen

that during this period wages increased right across the board. In the light of the figures I have provided, I do not believe the Government has done a bad job in containing the fee increases to just under 100 per cent over the three-year period.

I refer now to the speech made by Mr Ferry; he complained about the fact that although the Harvey Hospital had been promised extensions, to date these have not been carried out. It is true that extensions are proposed. As a matter of fact, the plans were in the process of being drawn up when I was Minister.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You did a very good job.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: However, as usual, lack of finance was our big problem, and one of the things which affected our financial situation was the cyclone which hit Port Hedland, involving the department in an expenditure of some \$3 million during the financial year to which Mr Ferry referred.

When one is working on the Budget of \$38 million, an amount of \$3 million out of the blue like that is not easy to find. Unfortunately some jobs like those had to be delayed, and became subject to the availability of funds at a later stage. I would say that Mr Ferry has not had a bad go in his province. He has a regional hospital at Bunbury, a new health centre at Busselton, a new hospital commenced at Busselton and extensive alterations and improvements at Yarloop during the period I was Minister. Improvements were made at the Margaret River Hospital as well as at many other hospitals in the State. Never in the history of the West had such a great hospital development programme been entered into and continued than the programme implemented during the years 1974 to 1977.

I know Mr Ferry agrees with me and is very happy about the situation; but he must speak on behalf of his constituents as we all do. I wish him luck and trust that funds will be available for his hospital.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I place on record the courtesy you extended to the south-west.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I thank the honourable member. With those remarks I conclude my speech and support the motion.

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [4.17 p.m.]: I wish to take this opportunity to convey my sincere congratulations to you, Mr President, on your elevation to the position you now hold. We have known each other for quite a while and our friendship has been close. We have had a mutual respect for each other which I am sure will continue.

When we were winding up the affairs of the previous Government I indicated that after the election, you, Mr President, would be representing many of my electors due to the boundary changes. I found from the comments they made to me—many of them are old friends—that they are completely satisfied with their representative, a situation I am sure will continue for many years.

I would also congratulate the Leader of the House for his election to the position he now holds. I am sure we can look to him to exhibit the qualities of leadership we know he possesses. I would much rather be observing them from this side of the House than from the other side, but we cannot all be fortunate enough to be on this side.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: He does not look too bad from this side.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: My congratulations go to other members who have been elevated to senior positions in the House or party following the last State elections, and also to all new members on their election to the House.

I wish to convey a special word of congratulation in the absence of the Hon. Neil McNeill, an old friend and my co-member in the Lower West Province. The results he achieved in the election are worthy of the highest commendation. The electors indicated that he has their absolute faith and trust, again a situation I am sure will continue during the years he decides to represent them in this House.

I was also very happy to see re-elected two other friends and colleagues who serve the people of the Lower West Province in another place; that is, Cyril Rushton and Richard Shalders. The ballot boxes proved that they are trusted and respected and the greatly increased majority, particularly in the Murray electorate, reflects the wonderful job they are doing and the wonderful rapport Mr Shalders holds with his electors.

Members of Parliament have a serious responsibility to their electors and from time to time we have the opportunity to exhibit the fact that we are able to handle this responsibility. The welfare of our electors must at all times be uppermost in our considerations and in the way we conduct ourselves and handle problems which arise within our electorates.

If there is something wrong in our electorate, something which we fear may pose a risk to our electors or endanger their welfare in any way, we have a responsibility to find out and if something must be done about that matter; it is our responsibility to do it.

We also have another responsibility to our electors, which is to quite clearly advise them on

any controversy which reflects upon their welfare. I emphasise that we must state quite clearly if something which has been indicated is a threat is not a threat to them and will not endanger their welfare.

I intend to do that today and to state my personal stance regarding a controversy which has flared in a section of my province. I quote from a Press statement by Andrew Mensaros, Minister for Fuel and Energy, issued on the 18th August. The article reads—

Talk of uranium tailings constituting a health risk to Rockingham residents was absurd, the Minister for Fuel and Energy, Andrew Mensaros said today.

"There is no health risk," Mr Mensaros said.

"The controversy which has been stirred up on this matter can have its basis only in ignorance or mischief."

He goes on to say—

"The quantity of radiation involved is so small that it could not even be compared with the normal day-to-day levels in the environment to which every citizen is exposed."

In fact when tests were carried out by officers of the Health Department it was found that in the shire clerk's office there was a comparable radiation reading with that which is bandied about as being a health risk to the people of Rockingham—my electors. Referring to the tailings from the treatment—and I will come back to this later—the Minister indicated that—

... the miniscule quantity of radioactive material remaining in the tailings from treatment of the small quantity of ore is contained in a storage area constructed to receive nickel wastes.

Over recent days, and even weeks, we have heard a lot of emotional talk about dangers and possible health risks. Quite a controversy has been stirred up and it was prominently featured in the local newspaper; that is, the *Sound Advertiser*. It is also being featured prominently in the *Daily News*.

This controversy—the one which the Minister for Fuel and Energy refers to as having its basis in ignorance and mischief—reminds me clearly of another controversy which occurred about 18 months ago when I had occasion to make comment. It will be recalled that I asked questions regarding the alleged radiation from gypsum deposits in Cockburn Sound. It will also be recalled that the answers I received, based on expert opinion from Government departments,

was that there was no danger whatever. In fact there was no radiation whatever apart from natural background radiation.

But still the controversy continued, as it does now. Still my electors were told they were in danger. They were deliberately scared and attempts were made to put fear into their hearts regarding their own welfare, the welfare of their children and, no doubt, the welfare of their children's children as a result of hereditary effects of radiation.

At that time I was persuaded by my constituents to state clearly my situation, as I do today. When one represents the people one must find out the truth and present that truth. If someone points out to us that what we have said is not the truth then we should admit it. If that happens to me I will be man enough to stand up and say I was wrong. However, this does not occur often because I generally take the bother to be properly informed. I seek the advice of recognised experts; people who are employed in the field and do the work for a living. They are the people whose word I can accept because I do not know better than they do and I do not pretend to know better than they do.

In the same newspaper to which I referred a moment ago, I stated—

I would like to state that I am completely satisfied with the assurance given by the Minister that there is no danger due to radiation from the gypsum deposits in Cockburn Sound. It has been shown quite clearly that the radiation present is that of natural background radiation, the same as will be found in any object around us.

Referring to the person who had made the claims I went on to say—

I challenge him to publish any facts he has regarding radiation in the Sound and to state his sources of authority. He claims that the water is radioactive, but he does not know whether it is radioactive enough to harm people. I suggest that he finds out, and then quite clearly states the truth, that is, that there is no danger due to radioactivity from the gypsum deposits in Cockburn Sound.

I concluded by saying—

I am sure we would all be relieved if he would stick to the facts regarding the gypsum deposits and stop scaring our community with repeated unnecessary and unfounded outbursts regarding radioactivity.

That matter died and now we have the current one regarding radioactivity. Again I have sought

assurances from those who carry the responsibility in this matter and I have been told there is no danger. Again I have received the assurance from those in authority. I doubt that anyone would care to claim that a man of the calibre of the Minister for Conservation and the Environment—the Leader of the House—would tell me something which was untrue in this regard. I doubt that anyone would claim that the Minister for Fuel and Energy would tell untruths in the matter.

Why then is there a controversy? Why are the people in my electorate being caused this worry and stress about their health and the health of their children? We find a very strange situation. When these tests were carried out in 1973-74 we had a Tonkin Labor Government in office and Ministers in that Government had the responsibility which is now that of the Ministers to whom I have referred. The man in charge of industrial development at that time was a man I regard as being highly respected throughout the community—that is, Don Taylor. Again, I do not imagine anyone would suggest Don Taylor is not a highly respected member of Parliament.

In the portfolios of Health and Environmental Protection we had Ron Davies, again a man who is very highly respected by people of opposite philosophies as a person of integrity.

If those men through their ministerial responsibilities made decisions which put the health and future of the people of Rockingham at risk, I am sure being men of integrity they would stand up and say so. They would stand up and take responsibility for their actions. I do not believe they will do so because I do not believe they made any decisions which would put the health of the people of Rockingham at risk. I believe they carried out their responsibilities as Ministers in the manner one would expect, just as our current Ministers carry out their responsibilities in the manner we expect.

I am quite prepared to take the word of our Ministers, which they give me on the advice of departmental officers who would be giving the same advice to Labor Party Ministers if there were now a Labor Government in office. Those officers do not give political decisions; they give facts, and the facts show clearly there is no danger whatsoever to the people of Rockingham from those minute amounts of tailings which were disposed of in a storage area.

If we look back on this emotional campaign we hear talk of the tailings being dumped on the outskirts of Rockingham. What purpose does that kind of talk achieve? They were not dumped; they

were placed in a disposal area and all the strict regulations governing the control of radioactive minerals were adhered to.

I believe a public meeting is to be held at Baldivis tonight to discuss the matter. I will not be attending it because, frankly, I do not see anything for the meeting to discuss—not in regard to radiation, anyway. It might care to discuss parliamentary responsibility; it might care to discuss the truth; but I doubt that there is much to discuss about radiation.

Although I will not be attending the meeting tonight, I sincerely hope the Press will attend it because I think the true facts of this matter should be aired clearly for all to read, know, and understand. The fact is there are no risks to the people of Rockingham due to radiation from those tailings. If I am proved wrong I will be man enough to stand up and say so. That is a commitment to this House and to my electors.

The hour is growing late and other members wish to speak to the motion. I would like to speak about the more pleasant things which are happening in my electorate, but I will take that opportunity later on when we are discussing Bills which give us an opportunity to speak on a wide range of subjects.

I support the motion.

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [4.34 p.m.]: I have spoken quite often in this House since the opportunity for the usual formalities of congratulating people and so on has passed, but as this is the time one is allowed to say what one may, I extend to you, Mr President, my hearty congratulations. I believe you will bring a fresh approach to this House and that you, of all members in this Chamber, are the most likely to be impartial. As you are a person who is diligent in his job as a member of Parliament, I know you will be diligent in the new job you have undertaken. I congratulate you very sincerely. We differ on many political matters, but as my co-member in the South-East Metropolitan Province you have been a tower of strength in times of trouble and have gone out of your way to introduce me into community organisations, for which I am most appreciative.

Other formalities and congratulations would perhaps be a little out of order as I have had the opportunity to convey them personally to the members in this Chamber who have been honoured.

I would like to air a few matters during the Address-in-Reply debate. I am mindful of the fact that it is desirable that we conclude the debate

before the adjournment, so I will endeavour to keep my remarks short.

One matter particularly disturbs me, as I have myself been in the position of having little power and influence in the community. Because of the way in which nature has endowed me and abilities which genetically I have been able to have ascribed to me, I have climbed from a position of little or no power or influence to a position in the most important decision-making body in this State, although it is difficult to measure the amount of power and influence one has in this place.

It therefore pains me that the media, many of my colleagues, and certainly many members of the Government are inclined to think we are living in a world in which all people are like us and are able to have access to the law and the amenities and facilities which are available in the community.

I was prompted to bring up this matter by an article in *The West Australian* a few days ago when the 2 per cent national wage increase was announced. The journalist who wrote the article made the great mistake of saying that because average weekly earnings were \$200 the increase would give most workers an extra \$4 a week before tax.

The figures are readily available from the Bureau of Statistics and they show that some 71.4 per cent of the people in the community earn less than \$200 a week. When we break that down we find 61.3 per cent of adult males and 91.9 per cent of adult females earn less than the average weekly earnings. That amounts to a lot of people—to most of the people. When we look at those figures in conjunction with the flat rate of income tax, which was recently announced, we find the figures of the Commissioner of Taxation show that more than five million people will come into the 32 per cent tax bracket. So to all intents and purposes, most income earners in this country will be paying income tax of 32 per cent of their salary.

I will not labour that matter; I think the figures speak for themselves. We should remember them when we go out into the big world which we claim to know all about. We go to meetings of community organisations and think we know all the problems in the community, but we should remember most people in the community are short of financial resources and, in this economically orientated society of ours, they are usually also short of other things which give them power and influence in the community.

There seems to be proliferating in the

community great emphasis on the proposition that private enterprise is always right. We had a very good illustration of it in the matter of the Colgate-Palmolive application to the Prices Justification Tribunal for increased prices, in which the company claimed the full cost of its advertising. The tribunal said, "You cannot just advertise willy-nilly and give away gold-plated cakes of soap. This is just not on. You must justify expenditure on advertising. Therefore we must have a look at the content of that advertising." The tribunal was rebuked by the Federal Government, but we see in this morning's newspaper that the tribunal stuck to its guns and has allowed in its determination as to the price increases it will allow only two-thirds of the amount for advertising claimed by the company.

Miss Elliott touched on the salmonella problem in Victoria. We heard from the Government benches a great deal of defence of the companies involved, and I believe Government members are prepared, without justification, to defend private enterprise at any price. On the other hand, they are prepared to attack workers at any price.

I turn to another matter which concerns me; that is, the deterioration in the eyes of the community of the prestige of the police. This is a very unhappy situation. When I first came to Western Australia early in 1969 I was extremely impressed by the police in this State. I had visited other States and had lived in New South Wales since I was born, and in many respects I was critical of the police in New South Wales. Having been associated for many years with peace demonstrations, I had experienced some very unhappy incidents and I had much criticism to offer. When I came to Western Australia I found the police were quite impartial in the way they treated demonstrators. Anyone who misbehaved in a crowd was more likely to receive attention from the police than were the people walking in marches.

I was very impressed, indeed. So it is with great concern that I notice the Police Commissioner has come out with the sort of advice to the members of his force which is conducive to their having a mental set and a feeling of antipathy when they get into a situation of having to supervise crowds. I noticed a letter in the Press on the 19th July from a former police superintendent, Mr Lloyd Menhennett, replying to a letter from four Leederville readers who had complained about the right of the police to search premises. Mr Menhennett went on to explain that more than 200 years ago in England there had been a determination by Lord Halifax concerning the use of warrants to search premises. He explained

there must be a specific thing the police wanted to locate when they entered a house, and it must be designated by a magistrate. The police cannot enter a house looking for drugs and then take a publication they feel they may be able to use at some later time against a person because of his political affiliations.

I shall quote a portion of Mr Menhennett's letter which may nullify the comments made by the Commissioner of Police in the *Police News* and in the annual report for his department—comments that may be influencing policemen to be less impartial and after all, they are there to help the people as well as to administer the law. I quote as follows—

Professor Amsterdam, in the U.S., has written: "The greatest danger against an individual possessed by every State is police power. The use of that power determines the degree of freedom of slavery in that State. Few issues are more important to society than the amount of power it permits its police to use without effective control."

I shall not argue that the control and supervision of the Police Force are not good, but I am saying there is a danger that the fairly loose sort of talk and less than impartial type of advice the commissioner has given is likely to create a psychological set which is deleterious to the good relations that obviously obtained in the past in this State at the time and obviously before I arrived here.

I will now refer to an attitude that is pervading this State—one of putting economic growth above all else, above people, and above nature itself. We had an English professor Schumacher visiting us recently and I would advise all members to read his book *Small is Beautiful*. He congratulated Australia on not being as polluted up till now by the economic growth syndrome as has affected other countries more industrialised than ours. He warned Australians not to get sucked into that sort of racket.

That brings me quite aptly to the matter raised by the Hon. Norman Baxter. It really frightens me when I see how readily people in this top decision-making body accept what is handed to them. I realise the Hon. Norman Baxter is aspiring to be president of the Anthony fan club for he gave us a great diatribe today on a speech delivered by Mr Anthony!

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We found it exacerbating.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Probably the Uranium Producers Forum printed it and met the costs. It was a piece of propaganda, so I shall

attempt to produce evidence from people who are involved in producing propaganda which endeavours to make the people in our society stop and think. That should have been done when the asbestos mine was first opened. Mr Baxter was good enough to hand me an argument on a plate in bringing this matter forward.

If people had been prepared to stop and listen and gather information, instead of being so easily satisfied as Government members are today, they could have prevented many tragedies that befell the men who mined the asbestos. Those of us who have seen people die from asbestosis and similar lung diseases know what a horrible death it is.

I have other evidence from the report of the 23rd World Conference on Science and World Affairs at Pugwash. That report specifically refers to the place Mr Baxter thought everyone had forgotten; that is, Rum Jungle. The report states—

Besides the effects of mining on man, there are the effects on the surrounding environment. What happened to the uranium mine at Rum Jungle, NT, is a good example. The uranium deposits at Rum Jungle were discovered in 1949 and were mined until 1971. The extraction of uranium from ore results in a sand-like waste material, called tailings, that have to be safely stored in large tailings dams to prevent their release into the environment. The tailings contain radioactive radium plus heavy metals such as copper and manganese which are poisonous when released in large quantities. Unfortunately, the mining company at Rum Jungle didn't plan on the Northern Territory "wet". The tailings dams overflowed, the poisonous materials escaped and destroyed fish and plant life along the Finnis River. An environmental study done by the Australian Atomic Energy Commission—

One could not say that the commission was a lobby against uranium mining. To continue—

—states that pollutants will continue to leach from the Rum Jungle mine for the next 100 years.

It frightens me when I listen to people like the Hon. Norman Baxter and the Hon. Ian Pratt who say they are satisfied with the present arrangements.

I do not hold myself out to be an expert but I do hold the belief that we do not need to mine uranium. We do not need it and that is the important thing. The Government's attitude is one of putting the economy first, people last, and nature at rock bottom. We do not need such a

philosophy but I will go into that at a later opportunity. There are ways we can conserve and produce energy, and there are ways we can undertake research into controlling waste from nuclear mining which is necessary and should be controlled.

As for the sort of twaddle about which Lang Hancock speaks on radon gas, and on why there are no great dangers, I will quote another piece from this world conference report. It states—

The dangers of radon gas inhalation were brought to light in a study done by journalist Amanda Spake on 100 Navajo Indians hired to work in the Kerr-McGee uranium mines in Arizona in 1954. Twenty-one years later, 18 Navajo miners had died of lung cancer and another 21 were feared doomed. Prior to that time, lung cancer among the Navajos was rare.

I do not quote from sources that have not been authenticated and extensively examined. The Hon. Norman Baxter has gone to Rum Jungle on a short visit and then says nothing untoward has happened to him. Detailed scientific investigation is what we should promote, demand, and be falling over backwards to ensure that the problems arising from asbestos mining will not happen again with uranium, which is a mineral known and acknowledged to be dangerous to mankind.

I will not delay the House much longer but I thought those points should be considered by members in relation to the future welfare, health, and good management of our State and its residents.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [4.56 p.m.]: I was surprised when the Hon. Grace Vaughan sat down. I was going to ask her if she was against uranium mining. I was not sure and a little confused so perhaps I will ask Mr Cooley later.

Firstly, I congratulate you, sir, on attaining your present position. I agree with the comments made by previous speakers and add that it had been your ambition to get where you are. I believe that with the ambition that drove you to your goal, you will do all in your power to be the best President we have had for many years. I do not begrudge any man the ambition to succeed, but there are few who attain certain positions and are able to acquit themselves well. I have no doubt about your ability in this regard.

I would like to congratulate the Hon. Bob Hetherington on his appointment as Deputy Leader of the Opposition. To say the least I was surprised that the previous speaker, who has

brains protruding everywhere, was not appointed. I thought she would be the likely candidate. Somehow or other the Hon. Bob Hetherington did the most amazing thing I have ever seen, and jumped clean over her without any trouble at all.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a very vocal person and would appear to have studied for a lifetime to take on his position. I noticed the nonchalant manner in which he threw his Press cuttings onto the table to the Hansard reporter. It usually takes a lifetime to obtain that skill and he must have practised the act for many months. It is nice to see him there and I am sure he will learn a lot; most likely we will too. He mentioned he was accustomed to debating and speaking to people who would listen to him, and I believe he is entitled to respect from them.

I can recall an incident that occurred many years ago as I was walking down the corridor of Parliament House, and this story will apply to another member I shall refer to later.

I was walking down the corridor a few years ago—I think it was after the 1965 election—and I had with me a new Country Party member of Parliament who bore cuts that had not healed; he still had the scratch marks on his arm. As we went past the table at which there was Bert Hawke, John Tonkin, Herbie Graham, and one other Labor member I cannot recall, they said, "Good morning, Mick". I said, "Good morning, Bert", but my companion did not say a word. Bert Hawke said, "Who is that?" but my companion did not reply. Then Bert's voice rang down the corridor—"Never mind, Mick, we tame lions here". That is what will happen to all the desires and ambitions of some new members. Only a few make it, like the President, but it is good to see them here. In time one mellows and becomes complacent like I who am prepared to accept anything that comes along.

Turning to the other side of the House, I should like to congratulate the Leader of the House (the Hon. Graham MacKinnon). Again his appointment was a shock. I do not doubt his ability. I have worked with him and always admired him as a decision-making man when he was Minister for Health and Minister for Education. But I did not think it was possible to see him rise to this position, because I did not think changes would be made. However, they were made and I was rather surprised. But we could not have a better Leader of the House. We might get as good a man but we certainly could not get any better.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I don't know!

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I did not quite

expect Mr Lewis to make it this year. I was talking about the Hon. Graham MacKinnon; I am pleased to work with him and I know he will acquit himself very well.

The Hon. David Wordsworth was moved from a position alongside me on the back bench into the position he now holds, and David will acquit himself very well; there is no doubt about that. He might be a bit tender because of a clash we had a while ago, but that does not matter! I know he will acquit himself well, because I know the man.

The amazing thing about that clash is that during the three years the Hon. David Wordsworth and I spent together we argued all the time about transport matters and I am sure I would have had him as a supporter in the recent call for a division if he had been on the back bench.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: We all change.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I fully realise the position in which he was placed, but I miss him; that is all I say.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Let us hope he learns something about transport where he is.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: For sure! I come now to the Hon. Neil McNeill. I have known the Hon. Neil McNeill for more than 30 years, which is a long time. He and I went to boarding school together. I know his sincerity and I know the man. I am very sorry to see him deposed from his position as Leader of the House to the back benches. We do not like to see this sort of thing happen, and it is very rare. I consider that he did a good job. He was very pleasant to work with and again I was very surprised, as were many people, that he was relegated to the back benches. I am not taking anything away from the Hon. David Wordsworth, but I thought that if he had been relegated from his position as Leader of the House he might have slipped back one place and still been a Minister. But no, he was put on the back benches.

I thought it was possible that he might have had a chance to occupy your seat, Sir, because he had been a senior Minister of the Crown. But that was not to be. Then I thought that such a responsible person with years of service in the Ministry and in the Federal Parliament would possibly be Chairman of Committees and Deputy President. But no, that did not happen and he was turned out literally to pasture. I want to record my appreciation of the three years I served with him. I did not agree with him all the time but I thought he did a good job and I congratulate him on the term of the office he served in this House.

I come now to the Hon. Mr Baxter. I see that

he has suffered the same fate and is sitting on the back benches at present. He is writing a very interesting piece of history there because this is the first time since 1913 that the National Country Party, while in Government, has had neither a Minister of the Crown nor a person in an office of some rank in this House. That is no doubt because of our declining numbers. We have never had more than eight members in this House since 1913, and during the last term of office we had only three. This time we have improved, rather beautifully, by one which gives us four. But we seem to have slipped a little in the popularity stakes with our colleagues.

The message I am trying to get across to members is that we can strive with all the ambition in the world and reach the positions we want to reach, but after we have left those positions for a while we are a forgotten identity. We can strive hard to work in our own particular sphere but the amazing thing is that if we have not got the numbers we do not seem to get anywhere.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Don't we know it!

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: We are in a worse position than Mr Thompson's party is in but my point about our party is still a good one. However, Mr Baxter was not offered the position of Chairman of Committees. He has served in this House for 25 years, he was a Minister for three years, and he was Chairman of Committees for 11 years, but he was not offered that position. I fully realise that it would have been a big slice of cake to hand off the table to the National Country Party. They did give a crumb off the table—they elected me to the Printing Committee!

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Is that why the printing is so bad now?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: When I went to the first meeting of the present Printing Committee I found out that it was the first held since 1974; so that will be a very arduous committee, indeed. However, the National Country Party has a name in *Hansard* and that is something of which, I suppose we should be very grateful.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are you subject to takeover offers from the House Committee?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: That is another matter. We thought that even if we were not able to muster enough admiration from our colleagues to be given your seat, Sir, the seat of the Chairman of Committees, or even deputy to you, we might have been offered one berth on the House Committee or even the Standing Orders Committee. But when I look at the Standing

Orders Committee or both Houses I see that not one single National Country Party representative is on it. I suppose it does not matter, but it does seem that we are gradually being eased out; in other words, we are getting the message. We still do not believe we are finished in the legislature of Western Australia and I can assure the House that the wheel will turn some day, and when it does turn possibly we will be able to cut the cake up ourselves. I congratulate most sincerely everybody who has been elected to office and I believe this House will get along admirably with the people who are running its various committees and the House itself.

On a more serious note I should like to pay tribute to the late Jack Heitman. I served with him in local government 22 years ago when I was a young man. I do not think there was a committee of our combined parties on which I have served in the 12 or 14 years, or however long I have been in this place, on which Jack Heitman and Roy Abbey did not also serve. One gets a lot of admiration for the people one works with, and even last year when we arranged the first group tour through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Jack Heitman was with me on that occasion. His passing is a terrific loss. He was not standing again for election, but it is pretty tough on his wife to think that Jack had booked a world tour and then suddenly was chopped off a month before they could get on the boat.

One can do a lot in this House and suddenly it can be all up. When one leaves this Chamber, after two years or even 12 months, nobody seems to know that one was even here. If someone dies in office, 12 months later many people in the electorate ask, "Who was he?"

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That happened even to Winston Churchill.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: It happened to Winston Churchill and to many other fine figures. It happens to even the greatest of them, as Mr Dans has said.

I also pay my respects to my former room mate, Tom Perry, who has retired. Tom Perry was a sincere and honest man who served his electorate well, and Tom knows my admiration for him.

Roy Abbey was another great chap—the same sort of man as Jack Heitman was—who worked with terrific honesty and sincerity. He was the sort of man from whom one could expect a fair answer and a great deal of co-operation at any time. He used to live in a very good electorate; that was most likely what made him that way.

We have also lost from our ranks the previous

President, Sir Arthur Griffith. He served for 25 years in this Parliament. I think Mr Baxter is also in his 25th year and so he joins the old men's home. I think you, Sir, and I are the fourth and third longest-serving members in this House but as I am a lot younger than you, Sir, I expect to be here for a considerably longer time!

Whilst considering others who have left I must make mention of Stan Dellar. Stan was here for six years. He was a young man who gave up his career in private life, came here for six years, and then went out. These are the chaps for whom I feel sorry.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I do not!

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I think the honourable member will when he sees the same happening to somebody else. He was lucky enough to defeat Stan Dellar, and I am using Stan Dellar only as an example. If one is elected to this House at the age I was elected—at 34 or 35 years of age—one is just at one's peak in business or academic pursuits and in a position to get somewhere. At that stage in life one's children are young and one should be at home appreciating their company. Then suddenly six years in office is thrown out of a man's life, and without any superannuation or other benefits at the end of that term he has to go back to pick up where he had left off.

It is very difficult for a member who has served six years in this House to go back into "civvy" street, as it were. I have seen it happen to a few members. I have also seen marriages break down and, more particularly, I have seen fathers return home as complete strangers to their children. The years between 35 and 41 cover a very important stage of the life of any family.

I do not think the public fully realises the problems associated with serving as a member of Parliament. I do not comment in any derogatory manner on the honourable member who interjected recently, but I do feel a pang of remorse for Mr Dellar, and I feel he will have some difficulty in setting himself up in another sphere.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you know that the same thing happened to his father, David Dellar?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: That is a great pity, but it has also happened to other members.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is one of the realities of political life.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I am not being political; I am being honest. The situation in the Legislative Assembly is different where members

serve for three years. Nevertheless, when we stand for Parliament we know what we are taking on, so I suppose one should not really feel remorseful. The consequences of our actions rest completely on our own shoulders.

I sincerely congratulate all those members who won positions in this House at the last election, because I am quite happy with each win at an election. The last result was very good, especially from the point of view of members on our side. I sincerely congratulate Wyn Piesse and Tom McNeil. The National Country Party had three representatives last year, but we now have four.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You will have a few more after the next election.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: That is a 33 per cent increase, and any increase helps.

I will now mention a matter I have been tossing around in my mind for a long time. We often talk about the expenses involved in running this State, and we also discuss the cost to the various parties and members of Parliament during election campaigns. I believe we should give serious consideration to a four-year term in Parliament for the Legislative Assembly, and I would have to add the only way to maintain the status quo would be the introduction of an eight-year term for the members of the Legislative Council. I realise that my suggestion could quite easily bring forward a few cat calls.

I do not believe a Government can achieve enough during a three-year term. During the first year it is still implementing the policy of the previous Government. During the second year the Government makes its changes, and during the third year those changes start to warm up; and then "outski", and another Government comes in.

I know the term of office in Tasmania is five years, and it looks as though that State will revert to a four-year term. I believe that is a healthy compromise. To take the matter further and look at it from the public point of view, I believe the electors are absolutely fed up with elections.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not know about the public, but the politicians are.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: They are fed up with the conservatives.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: The situation may be brought about by the conservatives, but I have heard it from members on both sides of this House. I am not trying to be political; I believe that because of the terrific costs involved and the vast distances we have to travel, more thought should be given to my suggestion. I attempted to

get a figure on the cost of the last election, but I was not able to obtain it.

I believe the time is close when the electors will begin to think about longer terms of office for members of Parliament. I will not go into the long list of reasons which I have with me, but merely mention two points. Firstly, a longer term of office will provide the incoming Government—no matter from which side it comes—with an opportunity to implement its election promises. Secondly, I believe there would be a terrific saving to the people of the State—the cost of an election.

The cost of elections is one of the reasons members of Parliament are continually rubbished. I believe that with a longer spell between elections the people will be more pleased to see us at election time. I hope that all political parties will look at my suggestion in a sensible manner, not just “this side of the House” but also the Opposition.

I believe the term should be no shorter than four years. It is time for a change—time to really look into this matter. Of course, the appropriate time to introduce it would be during the term of the present Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Would you agree to a change in the Constitution to effect a change in the term of members of the Legislative Council? What about a four-year term?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: No, I said a four-year term for the Legislative Assembly and an eight-year term for the Legislative Council. I do not suggest that members should be elected for life, as is the case in some States. I am looking at this matter objectively, and to retain the status quo the terms of office should be eight years instead of six, and four years instead of three respectively.

I am aware that the Leader of the House wishes to speak for three-quarters of an hour, so I will be brief in my reference to my last point. Yesterday, I asked the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Works the following question—

- (1) Has a feasibility study been carried out into the possibility of piping water either from the Ord River and/or the Fitzroy to supplement southern agriculture and metropolitan water supplies?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is “Yes”—
 - (a) what are the findings; and
 - (b) what was the estimated cost of such a project at the time of the study?

The Minister replied—

- (1) A desk study has been carried out to establish the order of costs to bring water from the Kimberleys to the South West.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) The order of cost study was based on a pipeline capable of supplying 60 million cubic metres per annum, which is approximately one-third of the current consumption in the metropolitan area. The calculated cost was \$2 500 million.

That was not an idle question. I believe that eventually water will have to be piped either from the Ord River or the Fitzroy River to supplement southern agricultural and metropolitan water supplies. It is not an impossible proposition. I would not express an opinion as to whether the water should come from the Ord River or the Fitzroy River. Mr Tozer tells me that whereas the Ord has a capacity of one million cu secs, the Fitzroy has a capacity of one and a quarter million cu secs. He also tells me a gap in the Fitzroy can be dammed to hold back more water than the Ord River Dam, and there are half a dozen sites on the Fitzroy.

We saw quite a bit of those rivers when we were in the north, and we realised the water is up there and not down here. The water shortage can only become more acute in the lower half of the State. We know that rivers are to be dammed in the southern half of the State, and that more dams will be required quickly. We also know that the problem of the supply of water is a hardy annual, and it is talked about by many people. However, has there been an examination of the possibility of connecting the Ord River or the Fitzroy River to the metropolitan area?

A pipeline is to be constructed from Dampier to the metropolitan area to transport gas. The reason I have asked my question is that when I was in Canada a few years ago, there was talk about piping oil and water across the prairies and over the mountains to the port. It is possible to mix different products in the ore pipeline.

The expenditure of \$2 500 million could be considerably lessened if my suggestion was adopted. I hazard a guess the proposition has not been looked at. The next question is, “If not, why not?” It seems to me that the logical answer is sticking out a mile. Surely water and gas can be mixed, and then separated at the end of the pipeline. An expensive refinery may be necessary, but it has already been stated that a pipeline will be constructed from Dampier to Perth. If that pipeline is to be constructed, why in heaven’s

name has there not been research into the possibility of piping water from the Ord River or the Fitzroy River to the southern part of the State by means of the gas main from Dampier?

Perhaps it is a cranky idea, and perhaps the Minister will tell me where my idea is wrong, and why it cannot be carried out. However, I know the possibility has been examined in other parts of the world, and that it can be done. Before it is too late, and before the agreement has been signed with the four major oil companies for the construction of the pipeline, let us look at the practicability of hooking water into the pipeline even if we do not do that now. Let us make sure that the pipeline is constructed in such a manner that it will be able to carry water in the future. It might be that in 20 years' time the pipeline will be of no further use for the piping of gas; who knows? At least, if it is constructed to convey both gas and water, we will do something for the future generations of this State. It is my firm belief that water is as important to this State as is the export of gas. We have considerably more scientific information at our disposal than had C. Y. O'Connor, and we should be far-sighted enough to look ahead at the possibility of following my suggestion. I ask the Minister to take my suggestion to Cabinet.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Which Minister?

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Of course, I meant the Leader of the House. I assure the Leader of the House that nothing in this world is impossible if one wants to do it. I firmly believe there should be a feasibility study into my suggestion.

When I asked my question I thought I might have been told that a feasibility study had been carried out, but had that been the case the reply would have stated it. I support the motion.

Personal Explanation

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Under Standing Order 76, Mr President, I seek leave to again be heard to explain myself in regard to a material part of my speech which has been misunderstood.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member can make the explanation provided he is brief and to the point.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: It has become abundantly clear from speeches made during the last few days that many members consider, from my remarks during the speech I delivered last Tuesday, I am opposed to the trade union movement.

Anything I have said either in this House on Tuesday, or at any other time, or any action I

have taken, has not been designed to denigrate unions.

My speech had two main thrusts. One was that the use of the strike weapon to resolve disputation is both unlawful and futile, and that strikes are completely destructive in nature. There is nothing constructive and nothing helpful about a strike.

The second thrust of my speech was criticism of the trade union leadership both at an on-site level and in some instances at a State level. My criticism was quite specific, and certainly it was not aimed at the movement as a whole as has been construed by some members who have spoken.

I support a strong and virile union movement with strong leaders, but I do not support the actions taken during a recent strike. I said this on Tuesday. I do not condemn unionism. To illustrate the silliness of the Opposition construing that I was criticising unionism: The Opposition criticises actions of Governments, both here and in Canberra—

Point of Order

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Sir, on a point of order, the Standing Orders provide that a member may be heard again if some material part of his speech has been misquoted or misunderstood. However, a member should not introduce new material, and I submit that is just what the honourable member is doing.

The PRESIDENT: I will suggest to the honourable member that if he wishes to proceed he must adhere to the provisions of the Standing Orders. He may not produce any new or debatable matter.

Personal Explanation Resumed

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Thank you, Sir. I understand the ruling you have made, and I understand the Standing Order referred to. Clearly it is essential to substantiate something in some cases. I intended simply to say that if the Opposition opposes actions of the Government it does not mean that it opposes the structure or the principle of government. Mr Gayfer opposes the actions of the Government sometimes, but he is not an anarchist and he does not oppose the structure of government. I wish to substantiate my claim that I was misunderstood. This morning I heard Commissioner Kelly hand down his determination.

Point of Order

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I must rise again on a point of order, Sir. Whatever Mr Tozer

heard this morning is definitely new matter. This was not discussed at the time Mr Tozer was making his speech.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Getting under your skin a bit!

The PRESIDENT: Order! I believe the honourable member is taking advantage of the Standing Order to introduce matter that goes beyond what is provided for in the Standing Order. I suggest to him that if he wishes to continue making his explanation, he should make it as briefly as he can. Again I say to him he is not to introduce any matter that was not a part of his speech which was misquoted.

Personal Explanation Resumed

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Thank you, Sir. I mentioned the items which were, in fact, the main thrusts of the whole long speech I made on Tuesday night: What I am saying is that although Commissioner Kelly made those points today, it does not mean that Commissioner Kelly is not for the unions.

Point of Order

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I must rise on a point of order under Standing Order 76, Sir. With respect to the Chair, and to you, Mr President, if this is to continue we will have debates *ad infinitum*. Commissioner Kelly is not a member of this House; he stands in his own right as a Commissioner of the Industrial Commission of Western Australia. This could go on for ever.

The PRESIDENT: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition; it can go on for ever. I will give the honourable member one final opportunity and I will be very strict about it. If he has anything further to say, and if his comments come within the provisions of Standing Order 76, I suggest that he say it and forget about bringing in anything that has nothing whatever to do with what he said previously.

Personal Explanation Resumed

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Sir, I think I have made my point. In fact, what I said on Tuesday night was not in criticism of the trade union movement; it was in criticism of certain actions taken and I wished to make that explanation to the House.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

THE HON. G. C. MACKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [5.35 p.m.]: As many members well know, previous Leaders of

this House, in closing the debate on the motion, answered practically every single item raised in the debate. It reached the stage where it became almost traditional, and over the years the reply to the motion became a very arduous burden indeed, and one which probably served little purpose. Perhaps a query raised by Mr Tozer would be of no interest to Mr Dans, and, although probably such debates furthered our education, a great deal of time was wasted. I see no point being served in continuing this custom. One very eminent predecessor of mine, on the occasion of closing the debate for the 12th consecutive time, said—

It may not be a bad idea if the custom is changed next year.

In the particular "next year" the people had a slight aberration and the Government was defeated. So things went on very much as they did before.

Nevertheless, I intend not to continue the pattern, and already some members will have received answers to the questions they raised. I have forwarded queries to the departments concerned and I hope that all members will receive replies as soon as possible. This course has not been possible on all occasions.

Sometimes members are constructively critical and these comments can be forwarded to the departments concerned. I have referred these matters to the departments, and in the fullness of time members will receive replies to their queries.

Naturally I hope to respond to some of the matters which affect my own portfolios, but my two colleagues will not do so on this occasion. We have made very good progress, and we will see the finish of phase 1 when we adjourn tonight.

I have congratulated already all the new members, but I would like to take this opportunity to compliment them on the speeches they have made. In this first short effort there have been a number of opportunities for members to speak. Some members have commenced their stay in this Parliament very quietly, while others have commenced with a little more verve and they have taken the opportunity to speak more than once. It is not for me to say which is the better course.

I have been impressed by the standard of debate, and I believe it augurs well for the general tenor of our deliberations in the future. I am sure the Chamber will profit from the presence of these new members, and that we can look forward to some keen debates.

We have had a little more than our usual spate of points of order at this stage, and I hope this trend does not continue with quite the same enthusiasm we have seen in the first few weeks.

However, sometimes members need to know what is happening.

For about eight years I was Deputy Chairman of Committees in this Chamber, so I am aware, Sir, of the excellent overview you have from your seat. I am sure that already you have noted mentally some new members who will make first-class representatives of their electors.

I notice that Mr Dans found little joy in the Governor's Speech. Perhaps he tended to be a little overawed by the occasion and the colourful sight of the judges sitting just in front of him.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You would have to be joking!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am pretty certain that he missed several pages of the Speech. I have the relevant pages here, but I will not read them out because in due course the honourable member will realise he was mistaken.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Maybe the copy of the Governor's Speech I have omitted a few pages.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Perhaps it did. One matter raised by Mr Dans caused me serious concern. This was the omission of the Mayor of Fremantle from the list of people invited to the reception given by Her Majesty the Queen on board the Royal yacht *Britannia* on Monday, the 28th March of this year. I asked immediately for an explanation, and I received it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It was a very serious matter.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I was quite alarmed about it. The invitations were issued from Canberra, and in strict order of protocol. The invitation was posted to His Worship and Mrs McKenzie at their last recorded address, and this practice was followed with all the invitations.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Fair enough.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It happened that the last time I attended a ceremony at Fremantle, I sat alongside His Workshop and he told me he had recently sold his apartment and had purchased a house in Applecross.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Just around the corner from me in Attadale.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This may be the reason for the nondelivery of the invitation. All addresses were checked with the current telephone directory. The invitation contained a request for a reply to be forwarded to the Commonwealth Director for the Royal Visit in Canberra. Subsequently it was learned that Mr and Mrs McKenzie's invitation had been returned to the Canberra address by the postal authorities.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Thank you for the information.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: In these circumstances there was no way that the protocol officer in the Premier's Department knew that the invitation had not been correctly delivered by the postal authorities. No-one would want to deliberately snub Mr McKenzie.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: No-one said it was deliberate.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am informed that it is a protocol requirement to send Royal invitations to the private address of the invitee, and not the business address, except in the case of officers serving in the defence forces. I do not know the reason for this requirement.

Mr Dans raised another matter concerning remarks made by the Minister for Labour and Industry relating to deregistering the Transport Workers' Union and the fact that the Minister was to see the President of the Commonwealth Industrial Commission, Sir John Moore. I have sought the advice of the Minister in this regard, and I have been informed that no talks took place between him and Sir John Moore during Sir John's recent visit to Perth. Deregistration is not a matter for Sir John as president of the commission, but rather a matter for the Commonwealth industrial court.

I would like to refer to a matter mentioned by Mr Baxter in regard to the Hon. Ron Thompson's remarks about the Department for Community Welfare. I would like to comment on this matter, because Mr Baxter was the Minister in charge of that particular department, and many of his comments were quite factual.

We know that there is a shortage of staff. I think all members will remember that the Hon. John Williams was the Chairman of the Honorary Royal Commission into Drugs and Alcohol. One recommendation of the commission was for the appointment of six, seven, or eight psychiatrists. I laughed at that and Mr Williams wanted to know why. I explained that for the last six years an item had appeared in the Budget for the Mental Health Services in this State for an additional five or six psychiatrists, but these positions could not be filled although the department advertised world wide.

Perhaps Mr Thompson does not know, but I happen to know that the Medical Department helped the University of Western Australia to set up a social welfare training section in an endeavour to obtain more social welfare workers.

These social workers are unavailable. As soon as they are trained they are snapped up so quickly

that it is very seldom they find their way into Government work.

I have a tremendous number of comments which I could offer to the Hon. R. Thompson, but under the circumstances I will not. In effect, he commented on work loads and this is always a matter of opinion. He mentioned the standard work load, but the officers in charge of the department know of no such standard. They say that 70 cases a week is a fairly heavy work load. Nevertheless, like most generalisations, many of the Hon. R. Thompson's comments were right, because we are dealing with an unfortunate situation exacerbated—sorry, Mr Baxter, I also find it an excellent word—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That word intrigues me.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: —by the fact that the special staff are quite frequently difficult to secure.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: The word "exacerbate" has a cutting sound about it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes. As one might expect, we had our little bit to say on the great uranium debate. It seems to me to be a matter of opinion depending on which scientist one happens to follow. For myself, I believe that we are in a situation where we rely tremendously on energy. As we can see, all the electric lights are on. I also happen to believe that we are in a hiatus with the development of new technologies to take over from the fossil fuels, and we will without doubt need uranium for a period.

People tell me there is a grave risk involved in the mining of uranium. I should like to assure members it presents far less risk than pneumonia did up until the discovery of penicillin in 1935. In other words it is all relative. Because so many of these diseases have been cured, we now look around to find a horror situation and then exaggerate it. It is a great pity that arguments such as this tend to take on totally political flavours. What worries me is that our major competitors in the field of progress—I am talking about the socialist states of China and Russia—are probably quite exempt from the sort of restriction on the use of uranium as a fuel that we in this country have to work under.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They have large populations, of course.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There are about 800 million people in China, and Russia has about the same population as America has.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They can burn up a few and they won't be missed!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The

honourable member can say that, but I do not believe it. I was a little intrigued by the comments of the Hon. Grace Vaughan. She spoke about the deterioration in the regard held by the public for the Police Force, and then commenced to criticise statements that had been made. In other words, to exacerbate the denigration—I can use long words too—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you know what they mean? I do not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I even know what they mean. The Hon. Grace Vaughan in her remarks about the Police Force was exacerbating the denigration of its prestige. I believe that a person who has, through hard work, earned a position of authority and trust, as the Hon. Grace Vaughan has, should not make such comments. People who take the opportunity given to them to participate in public protests which clutter up the streets and, of themselves, tend to lead to situations where violence can occur quite spontaneously, should not then denigrate the authority which has to bring that violence under control. Of course, that authority is the police and this is precisely what has happened.

I believe the most disgraceful piece of reporting I have seen for a long time was that which appeared in the *Daily News* where an account was given of the actions which took place at the Liberal Party conference at Murdoch University. I was present, therefore I know what happened. This report spoke of the police kicking people who were down, and that sort of thing. It just was not true.

As I say, the honourable member's criticism is the sort of thing that leads to a lessening of public regard for the police because she is a person in a position of authority, as she has admitted quite honestly, and I agree with her.

I am sure Mr Gayfer will not mind if I do not comment on his speech, although I could. However I do believe that his proposition of a four-year term is worth looking at. I shall get our secretary to send this proposition on to the Chief Secretary. It is something we would have to talk about. I would not like to get up in this Chamber, argue about it, and then force it through a debate on numbers.

Speaking about numbers, I would like to quote to the Hon. H. W. Gayfer a comment made by, I believe it was, Mr Daly. He is a very well-known ex-Labor member and a colourful character in Canberra. He was asked what he believed to be the most important thing he had learnt in 20-odd years in Parliament. His answer was, "To count".

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is our Fred.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That was the most important thing he learnt in Parliament.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It helps you to survive in your own party; that is what he meant.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Another suggestion put forward by the Hon. H. W. Gayfer was that a pipeline be built and utilised for conveying water when it is no longer required for gas or oil. I believe that proposition is worthy of note. There are, of course, some pipelines which do not work. I believe one of the problems is that insufficient gas can be stored; therefore the flow would have to be continuous. However, the proposition that a pipeline should be built in such a way that when it is no longer needed for oil or gas it can be used for water is well worthy of consideration.

I believe the other points which have been made can be answered subsequently. The Hon. Margaret McAleer made the point that she believed eight months was too long for the House to be in recess. That point is well made, but this happens only once every three years.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: It will be once in every four years if you and Mr Gayfer get together.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is right; it would be once in every four years, so perhaps we do not need to bother about it. Most of the points that have been made can be answered subsequently.

I thank members for the interest they have displayed in this debate. I am quite sure that the ladies and gentlemen of the Opposition will appreciate it when I say I am not quite so grateful for the amendments that they moved. I thought we could well have done without them, because of the interest in the debate on the motion in general. Nevertheless, it has been an excellent beginning to the session and I hope that the same interest prevails over the next few months. I would also like to thank members for their assistance in enabling the session to reach this stage where four most important Bills have been passed and the Address-in-Reply has been completed.

*Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

Presentation to Governor

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [5.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the Address-in-Reply be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the

President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.56 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE EDUCATION

Australian Schools Commission

107. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

(1) Has the Minister been advised of any changes to be made to the structure and functioning of the Australian Schools Commission?

(2) If so, what are the changes to be made?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

HEALTH

Fluoridation of Water Supplies

108. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) On what dates was fluoride introduced into the various water supplies in Western Australia?

(2) Have any of the terrible predicted health problems occurred to people drinking the water?

(3) Will the Minister name—

(a) any advantages that are now evident; and

(b) any disadvantages or harmful effects that now are evident?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) Metropolitan area January, 1968

Supply from Wellington Dam January 3rd, 1968

Supply from Mundaring Weir January 4th, 1968

Albany area July 1st, 1969

Geraldton area August 1st, 1969

Collie (Mungallup) area November 19th, 1969

Manjimup area November 26th, 1969

Esperance area July 28th, 1971

(2) No.

- (3) (a) Examination of primary school children has revealed considerable reduction in dental caries over the period since the introduction of fluoridated water supplies.

- (b) There are no evident harmful effects.

ABATTOIRS

Slaughtering Fees

109. The Hon. T. KNIGHT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the average killing cost of a steer, 227 kg-272 kg, in each of the Australian States?
- (2) What is the killing cost of a comparable weight beast in Britain, Canada, America and New Zealand?
- (3) What is the average killing cost of lamb and mutton in each of the Australian States?
- (4) What is the killing cost of comparable weight animals in Britain, America, Canada and New Zealand?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) The Western Australian Meat Commission has advised that the average carcass weight for beef killed at the works is 188 kg for which the slaughtering fee is \$25.10.

The slaughtering fee for beef in the 227-272 kg range would be \$28.13 for a 250 kg animal.

The current slaughtering fees at the interstate service works are:-

\$27.75 per head at Samcor (S.A.) for carcasses over 159 kg;

\$29.24 per head at Homebush (N.S.W.) irrespective of the carcass weight;

\$26.60 per head at Cannon Hill (Qld) irrespective of the carcass weight.

- (2) This is not known.

- (3) W.A. Meat Commission

		Samcor	Home bush	Cannon Hill
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Lamb	3.54 (local) 3.18 (export)	3.45	3.43	3.62
Mutton	3.64 (local) 3.36 (export)	3.45	3.43	3.62

- (4) This is not known.

110. This question was postponed.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Uniforms

111. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

- (1) Where are the uniforms tailored that are worn by—
 - (a) policemen and women;
 - (b) railway employees;
 - (c) firemen; and
 - (d) other Government employees?
- (2) (a) Is the material manufactured in Western Australia;
- (b) if not, where?
- (3) What is the cost per uniform for the finished article of—
 - (a) labour; and
 - (b) material?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) (a) Policemen—Adelphi Tailoring Co., Pier St., Perth.
Policewomen: M. & M. Johnson, Wellington Street, Perth. (*Both subject to annual tender*)
- (b) Adelphi Tailoring Co., Pier St., Perth.
- (c) Tunics and trousers worn by permanent and volunteer officers and firemen—

	Perth (Adelphi Tailoring Co.)
Shirts	Perth (Roland Smith & Co. Pty. Ltd.)
Boots & Shoes	Perth (Regina Footwear Pty. Ltd.)
Caps	Perth (Grose Bros.)

- (d) As these are many and varied, could the honourable member give specific examples, and I shall endeavour to obtain the answers for him?

- (2)

<i>Policemen/Policewomen</i> (a) No.	<i>Railways</i> (a) No.	<i>Firemen</i> (a) No.
(b) Material is supplied from New South Wales for standard uniforms, and Melbourne for shirting material (produced in Japan)	Melbourne	Tunics & trousers—manufactured in NSW (by John Vickers)
		Fire Tunics—manufactured in all-wool in S.A. (by Onkaparinga)
		Shirts—synthetic material from Japan
		Boots & shoes—Australian leather.
- (3)

<i>Policemen/Policewomen</i>	<i>Railways</i>
(a) Standard uniform (male).....\$75.88	Winter
(b) Standard uniform (male).....\$43.73*	(a) \$68.00
(*including tie, socks, and cap)	(b) \$21.00

Standard uniform (female)....\$101.50
 Standard uniform (female)....\$76.52*
 (*including gloves, hat, handbag,
 pantyhose)

Summer
 (a) \$28.00
 (b) \$18.00

(3)

Firemen			
	Labour	Material	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Tunic & trousers.....	67.18	32	99.18
Fire Tunic.....	62.52	26	88.52
Shirts.....	N/A	N/A	6.25
Boots.....	N/A	N/A	22.00
Shoes.....	N/A	N/A	14.00
Caps (incl. Badge).....	N/A	N/A	12.00
			(average)

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Country Broadcasting

112. The Hon. T. McNEIL, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that—
 - (a) regional radio stations 6GE and 6KG, through station 6PM, placed restrictions on race broadcasting and TAB information as from the 1st September, 1977;
 - (b) the TAB requested further consideration of the restrictions in view of the Eastern States daylight saving plan, and having failed to receive a reply, has subsequently withdrawn its land-line subsidy to 6GE; and
 - (c) radio listeners in the Geraldton region can no longer receive mid-week racing broadcasts or TAB information from 6GE as a result of the subsidy withdrawal?
- (2) What action is intended to rectify the situation?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) (a) No.
 (b) No.
 (c) No.
- (2) Not known—answered by (1) above.

EDUCATION

Career Guidance

113. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

What action, if any, is the Government taking—

- (a) to offer more career guidance in schools;
- (b) to improve services available to young people making the transition from school to work?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Fifteen careers advisors, with industrial experience have been appointed to five country high and ten district high schools which did not possess guidance officers.
- (2) A pilot project to emphasise career awareness has been initiated in one metropolitan and in five country high schools.
- (3) A senior master has been transferred to the Curriculum Branch to write a careers education "Course" for year 10 students. This course will form the basis of experimental work in 1978 in a wide sample of high schools and will be trialled in third term 1977.
- (4) "Work experience" programmes in high schools have been actively encouraged.
- (5) An educational programme for unemployed youth, administered by the Technical Education Division commenced on 25th July with an initial grant of \$40 000 from the Commonwealth Department of Education.
- (6) A manpower planning panel consisting of representatives of the Education Department, local government and industry was established in the Eastern Goldfields early this year.
- (7) A guidance officer has been seconded to the University of Western Australia to conduct a research project to survey "Employer Attitudes to Schools and School Leavers".
- (8) Pre-apprenticeship programmes are run by the Technical Education Directorate and provide courses for approximately 450 young persons each year from an applicant group of approximately 2 000 persons.
- (9) Department of Employment and Industrial Relations is operating a number of short-term careers planning courses for teachers, guidance officers and youth education officers.
- (10) Commonwealth funds are being used to provide "work experience" and careers awareness to both boys and girls from the Pilbara.

- (11) The Research Branch of the Education Department is currently trialling a short careers awareness course for 14 year old students. It is also investigating the use of computers to assist in careers guidance and to provide up-to-date careers information.
- (12) The Education Department is supporting and encouraging the development of alternative courses for year 11 students in senior high schools. Most of these courses have the easing of transition from school to work as their key theme.

ROAD TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

Radar Guns

114. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Police:

How many radar guns are carried in each RTA patrol car?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

Normally one.

FIRE BRIGADES

Insurance Cover

115. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

Further to the reply to my question No. 76 on Thursday, the 18th August, 1977, under the heading "Compensation for Accidents—(1) Death by Accident" reads \$500—this is obviously an error—what is the amount?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

The schedule in question forms part of the personal accident insurance for junior reserve members of volunteer brigades. A junior reserve member may be between the ages of 11 and 16 years and is prevented by the Regulations from attending fires. The \$500 death benefit, which is under review, is intended to cover such funeral expenses as may be incurred by the parents in the event of the death of a junior member whilst engaged in brigade activities. For the honourable member's information, volunteer members are entitled to full benefits under the Workers' Compensation Act as if they were permanent employees (according to

regulation 190 of the Fire Brigades Act, 1942-1972) and are covered under the Board's employers' indemnity policy.

EDUCATION

Programme for Unemployed Youth

116. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) What funds have been allocated to this State from the Australian Grant Program for Unemployed Youth?
- (2) How are the recipients to be selected?
- (3) What measures are being taken to ensure the funds are effectively spent?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) \$60 000 for education programme for young unemployed.
- (2) (i) Checked by Department of Employment and Industrial Relations for eligibility.
(ii) Aptitude tested by counselling service of Technical Education Division.
- (3) (i) The responsibility for the programme has been allocated to a superintendent of education in the technical education directorate.
(ii) A full-time officer has been seconded to monitor and co-ordinate the programme.

EDUCATION

Student Loans

117. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Government giving consideration to the introduction of a system of loans for post-secondary students?
- (2) Has the State Government or any of its agencies made a submission to the Commonwealth Government Committee on Student Loans on the desirability of introducing a system of student loans?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No. Neither the Government nor the Western Australian Post Secondary Education Commission has made a submission. The same applies to the Tertiary Education Commission which was replaced in December, 1976, by the Post Secondary Education Commission.

EDUCATION

Technical and Further Education Commission

118. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government made representation to the Australian Government to establish a Technical and Further Education Commission separate and distinct from the proposed Post Secondary Education Commission?
- (2) If not, does the Government agree with the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia that a TAFE Commission is essential to achieve the necessary improvement in this sector?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) No. In any case the Tertiary Education Commission and its three councils have been established and in operation for several months.
- (2) No. On the contrary Western Australia, in establishing the Western Australian Post Secondary Education Commission has taken the view that technical education belongs with university and advanced education for planning and co-ordination purposes within a single framework.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Accounting Procedures

119. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the criticism made of Local Government Accounting Directions 1965 as reported in the article "The \$140 000 question for Stirling Council" in the *The West Australian* on the 23rd August, 1977?
- (2) If so, is the Minister taking action to have these Directions amended?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. The report of the criticisms is extremely vague, however, any submission containing specific proposals will receive consideration. The accounting directions are currently under review.

URANIUM

Markets

120. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of—
 - (a) reports of strong opposition to the construction of nuclear power stations in West Germany;
 - (b) reports that the political party presently in government in West Germany is likely to adopt a policy against the construction of nuclear power stations;
 - (c) reports of successful legal action against the construction of nuclear power stations in West Germany which have already been given government approval to proceed?
- (2) (a) Are companies seeking to develop Western Australian uranium resources depending on the West German market for the viability of their development;
- (b) if not, on which countries are they depending to provide a reliable market for their uranium?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) Yes, I am aware of certain facts although would not draw necessarily the same conclusions the honourable member implies.
- (2) (a) and (b) This is a commercial question. I suggest the member approaches the companies concerned for information. A company's market is a matter for the company concerned.

URANIUM

Markets

121. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the Government investigated the potential market for Western Australian uranium?
- (2) If so, has its investigations revealed—
 - (a) the number of nuclear power stations constructed;
 - (b) of those constructed, the number which have failed to become operational?
- (3) Will the Minister advise the number in each case of (2) (a) and (b) above?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) No. Marketing is the responsibility of the company involved as with other mining ventures.
- (2) (a) and (b) Answered by (1)
- (3) Answered by (1).

PRE-PRIMARY CENTRES

Premises and Enrolments

122. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

Further to my question No. 95 of the 23rd August, 1977—

- (1) How many pre-primary centres constructed by the Government under its pre-primary scheme are now in operation?
- (2) How many pre-primary centres formerly affiliated with the Pre-School Board are now operating under the Government's pre-primary scheme?
- (3) (a) How many pre-primary classes other than those referred to in (1) and (2) above, or in answer to my previous question, are being conducted by the Education Department; and
(b) will the Minister provide me with a list of places and premises at which these classes are being conducted?
- (4) How many children are enrolled respectively in each of the group of centres or classes referred to in (1), (2) and (3) above?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) 72.
- (2) 63.
- (3) (a) 58 in rural school integration programme.
(b) Details relating to all three categories of centres are tabled herewith.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 200).

- (4) Enrolments in (1) 3 125; (2) 2 632; (3) 550.

PRE-PRIMARY CENTRES

Aides

123. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many aides are employed in Education Department pre-primary centres?
- (2) Of these, how many have—
 - (a) qualified for the Child Care Certificate;
 - (b) attended a course of training as a pre-primary aide conducted by or on behalf of the Education Department;
 - (c) some other qualification suitable for this type of employment;
 - (d) had no formal training for this type of employment?
- (3) What is the salary range for each of the groups of people referred to in (2) above?
- (4) What is the duration of the course referred to in (2) (b) above?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) 210.
- (2) (a) 23.
(b) 210.
(c) Some are known to possess other qualifications such as nursing, but this information is not available other than in personal records.
(d) Nil.
- (3) Trained aides, that is, group 2(a) above: \$7 312-\$9 612. Untrained aides are paid on an hourly rate \$3.39 during the past five years of service and \$3.44 after five years.
- (4) One day per term each year.