

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 23 March 1982

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

CONDOLENCE MOTIONS

Leave to Introduce

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.32 p.m.]: I seek leave of the House to move without notice two motions of condolence in respect of two former members of the Legislative Assembly.

Leave granted.

THE LATE HON. H. E. GRAHAM

Condolence: Motion

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.33 p.m.]: I move—

That this House expresses its deep regret at the death of the Honourable Herbert Ernst Graham, a former Minister of the Crown, Deputy Premier, and Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1943 to 1973, places on record its appreciation of his long and meritorious public service, and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow and the members of his family in their bereavement.

The demise of the Hon. Herbert Ernst Graham last Wednesday marked the end of a long and distinguished career of a man who devoted a great portion of his life to public service and to the betterment of his fellow man.

As a member of Parliament for 30 years he was able to achieve many of his goals through a forthright approach to the problems he faced and by the high regard in which he was held. He was a person of very considerable ability who was possessed of an agile mind and the capacity to get things done.

Herb Graham was elected to the Seventeenth Parliament as the member for East Perth in August 1943. He later represented the electorate of Balcatta.

He was appointed Minister for Housing and Forests in 1953 in the Hawke Government, with the portfolio of Transport added in 1956. In January 1967 he became Deputy Leader of the Opposition and in March 1971 Deputy Premier, Minister for Industrial Development and

Decentralisation, and Minister for Town Planning, in the Tonkin Government.

He had previously expressed his thoughts on the appropriate age for retirement, and for some it was no great surprise when he resigned as a Minister and member of Parliament in 1973 to accept the position of Chairman of the Licensing Court.

Herb Graham will be remembered for many notable achievements in the various spheres in which he took an interest during his 30-year parliamentary career and in later life, and I am sure all will join with me in paying tribute to a man of spirit and action and in extending our utmost sympathy to Mrs Graham and family in their sad loss.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.35 p.m.]: I second the motion of condolence moved by the Leader of the House. It was my privilege to know Herb Graham for a number of years, and I held him in the highest esteem. He first joined the Labor Party in 1929, which is a long time ago. He was elected to Parliament in 1943 and served continuously until his retirement, when he became Chairman of the Licensing Court. He was a Minister for nine years and I think I would be correct in saying that in the various portfolios he held he used all his natural talents and energy to the benefit of this State. It would be very hard to find a more effective Minister who has ever graced the Government benches in this Parliament. He performed his role in the Licensing Court without fear nor favour, and he changed the whole face of the liquor industry. He was a man who, if he had an idea and he thought it was correct, pursued it relentlessly without any fear of reprisal.

I knew Herb Graham so well because he used the facilities of my office after his retirement. Despite his illness, he always maintained an active interest in things going on around him, and he never dropped his bundle. He continued to the end with the same cheeriness and determination—that was his attitude to life. This was a sad loss, and I would like to express our sympathy to his widow and those people he left behind. Members of Parliament of the calibre of Herb Graham are not often found, and I think members on the other side of the House will agree with me in that.

Herb Graham was a fiery debater. I think he held the record for the most lengthy speech in this Parliament: but the facts are that when he spoke, people listened, and he made sense. When he was Minister for Housing in the Hawke Government

he played a significant role in overcoming the shortage of housing in the difficult post-war years. He brought to the Ministry forthright determination and energy which is seldom seen in one holding a ministerial position in any Government. It was not good enough for Herb to be a prisoner of his department; he led his department.

With those words, I support the motion of condolence moved by the Leader of the House. Herb Graham will be missed for a long time by many of us and he will be remembered by his many achievements for many years to come.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [4.38 p.m.]: Normally, the Hon. Norm Baxter, who is the leader of our wee group in this Chamber, would speak at such a time. However, he has asked me to say a few words because I served for many years with the late Hon. Herb Graham in the Assembly. I had a lot of time for Herb Graham, who was a hard shooter and a tough man.

He used to make his best speeches on Thursday at 5.30 p.m. and it took me a long time to work out his reason for doing so. It was apparent that he gained a lot of publicity during the following four days because Thursday evening was the last night of the week's sitting.

Without doubt he was a tremendous adversary. I believe that he learned his debating skills in and around the metropolitan area to which he moved after living in Narrogin, where his brother still resides.

I recall that the only time I really agreed with Herb Graham in the House was during the passage of the Liquor Bill. A search through *Hansard* will show that we shared similar views in relation to the liquor laws. When I was a member of the Legislative Assembly, I spoke on many more subjects than I do here, and *Hansard* will prove that I very seldom agreed with Herb Graham on any other subject. I recall one particular argument—which lasted for over a week—about whether or not CBH would be given sole rights to use the jetty at Kwinana. The alternative was to have alumina dust over the jetty, and some of us claimed that this could have been a problem. I do not remember who won the argument in the long term—quite possibly CBH would have liked someone to share the expenses, but not at the expense of the alumina dust.

Herb Graham was a great man, and a great member of the Labor Party. One could be sure that anything told to Herb Graham in confidence in the corridor would not be repeated in the House. Secrets which were given away so freely in

small talk outside the Chamber were treasured by him. For that reason he always had my admiration.

Herb Graham typified his particular era in Parliament. I do not believe we will hear his type of debating again. Today's debate lacks the finesse that it had in the days of Herb Graham and his leader, the Hon. John Tonkin.

It had been my intention for quite some time to write to Herb and his wife and, unfortunately, I delayed for too long. I will regret this also. I am sure members of my party will agree with me when I say that although we fought many a long battle with Herb Graham, we learned to admire him. Certainly I admired him over the years I served with him in the Legislative Assembly.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West) [4.42 p.m.]: It is rare that I rise on a motion such as this because I believe it is the job of the leaders of the parties to speak. I wanted to join this debate particularly because when I came into Parliament in 1956, the late Herb Graham was a member of the Hawke Government. Shortly after joining the Parliament, I became a member of the Rights and Privileges Committee. Although we have heard whispers about this committee recently, we have heard nothing concrete about it for many years now. In those days, under the chairmanship of Mr Simpson, this was the committee which obtained small adjustments—when they were available—to the basic remuneration of members of Parliament. From time to time we would front up to the Premier to see whether we could obtain a little bit here and there. At that time I believe the base rate was about £700 a year, and this compared less than favourably with the amounts paid in other areas.

I got to know the late Herb Graham very well indeed while we both served on that committee. He fought just as hard to gain some advancement for members—who worked under very poor conditions in those days—as he fought for his party.

I was an unashamed admirer of Herb Graham, although I disagreed with practically everything he stood for on a political basis. However, I certainly admired him for the way he went about things. At one time I would say he was the most formidable debater in the entire Parliament. He was really quite superb. Even before the days of radios and loud speakers, one could hear Herb Graham in every corner of the gallery. His enunciation was clear, and one was left without any doubt at all as to what line Herb Graham was

taking on any particular matter. He was clear, he was forthright, and he was utterly determined.

Even in his personal life, Herb Graham fought adversity well. I met him in the United Kingdom when he knew he had only a short time to live. That was quite a few years ago, and right up to the last few weeks, he was as bright and as forthright as ever.

Herb Graham always referred to me as "young Graham", no doubt to differentiate me from himself—I guess he regarded himself as "old Graham" because he had been in Parliament a few years more than I. Those people who have said that the State will be the less for the loss of such a man are so right. Whether or not one was a member of his party, Herb Graham had many attributes upon which one could model oneself. Not the least of his attributes was his ability to work hard for those things in which he believed. I did not believe in some of those things, but that was beside the point. He worked for his beliefs, and he was unashamed of them. It is a matter for great rejoicing when people do not hide their light under a bushel. I have already written to his wife, Beryl, to express my personal condolences, but I would like to join with everyone here in conveying to his wife and family our very sad sense of loss as yet another friend departs this world.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [4.47 p.m.]: I would like to support this motion from another point of view. I did not know Herb Graham personally while he was a member of Parliament; I got to know him only after I became a member of Parliament. However, as an academic, I used to write *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, and in that position I read *Hansard*. In this way I got to know Herb Graham as an inspirational figure. There are some men who offer inspirational leadership to others, and to whom the final accolade of leadership is not given. Such a man was Aneurin Bevan in the United Kingdom, and such a man, I believe, was Herb Graham.

Not everybody's speeches read well, but when reading this man's speeches one realised the clarity of thought they showed. He never forgot the basic principles for which he stood, and, although some may believe we use the wrong methods, people in the Australian Labor Party believe in individual liberties and civil rights. Herb Graham was always clear about that principle. To an academic, his belief in those things came through very clearly.

It is a sad thing for the State that he never became Premier, and I think our State is the worse for that. However, the inspiration which he

gave to others stands as his memorial in *Hansard*. As long as *Hansard* remains and we have students, he will live in the minds of those who believe in individual freedom, liberty, and human rights.

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): Before I put this question, I would like to add one or two comments in support of the motion. I met the late Herb Graham in 1965, and I was pleased to have had the opportunity to witness his ability as a member of Parliament until 1973, when he retired. I would like to endorse the remarks of all those speakers who have referred to his various attributes.

He was certainly a great orator. Indeed, one member said he was probably the greatest orator this Parliament has ever had, and I would agree with that. Herbie Graham had great powers of persuasion when he spoke. As the Hon. Graham MacKinnon said, when Herbie Graham spoke, everyone knew he was speaking, and frequently when listening to him I had to pinch myself in order that I be reminded that I was on the opposite side to him. Such were the powers of persuasion of the oratory of Herbie Graham.

Herbie Graham was a very efficient member of Parliament and I extend my sympathy to his wife and the members of his family.

I call upon members to rise in their places to indicate their support for the motion and pay tribute to our late colleague.

Question passed, members standing.

THE LATE MR EWART RUNCIMAN

Condolence: Motion

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.52 p.m.]: I move—

That this House expresses its deep regret at the death of Mr Ewart Runciman, Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1962 to 1974, places on record its appreciation of his meritorious public service, and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow and the members of his family in their bereavement.

This motion results from the demise on 14 December 1981 of Mr Ewart Runciman, a former member of the Legislative Assembly.

Ewart Runciman was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 15 July 1907. He came to Western Australia as a boy and was educated at Scotch College.

He spent many years farming in the Boyup Brook and Pinjarra districts prior to being elected to Parliament. He was elected to the Twenty-

fourth Parliament as member for Murray in June 1962 in succession to the Hon. Ross McLarty.

He retired in 1974 and later served on the Peel Inlet Authority as Deputy Chairman. He was one of the founders of the Farmers' Union.

Ewart Runciman was a quiet worker, dedicated to the causes of primary industry and the interests of the State. He was very popular with all who knew him. There are many in the community and wider interests he represented who have cause to appreciate his efforts on their account.

On behalf of this House I wish to extend our utmost sympathy to Mrs Runciman and family in their sad loss.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.54 p.m.]: I second the motion of condolence moved by the Leader of the House.

Ewart Runciman was a member of Parliament when I first arrived here, and it would be wrong for me to say I knew him well, although I did know him. I was always impressed by his kindness. He was a very quiet man and was always willing to have a chat with anyone. I am aware of some of his activities in the Pinjarra district and the esteem in which he was held there.

Ewart Runciman was not the sort of person to speak ill of anybody. I saw him occasionally after he left the Parliament in 1974. He was always the same friendly person that he had been during the time I knew him as a member of Parliament.

I should like to convey to Ewart Runciman's widow and family our deep regret at his passing.

THE HON. NEIL McNEILL (Lower West) [4.55 p.m.]: I support the motion moved by the Leader of the House and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. Ewart Runciman was a very good friend of mine and a close colleague. As the Leader of the House said, Ewart Runciman succeeded the Hon. Ross McLarty as the MLA for Murray and it was in that capacity that I came to know him well.

Indeed, Ewart Runciman brought with him to this place a great many of the characteristics of his predecessor. In many ways, they were similar types of men and I have no doubt it was some of those characteristics which endeared him, as they did Sir Ross, to the people of his electorate.

Ewart Runciman was active in a great many areas, not the least of which was the primary industry with which he maintained very close and dedicated contact during the years of his life. Ewart expressed a very genuine, sincere, and caring concern for his electorate and, more

particularly, for the people in it, because at all times he was a family man and a very kind person. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition who said Ewart was an extremely friendly man who would not think ill of anyone.

Ewart Runciman deserves to be remembered not only in the Murray electorate, but also throughout the State, because he had a long and abiding interest in a number of fields. The initiative of Ewart Runciman in many areas will result in considerable achievement as the years go by. I shall mention four of the matters in which Ewart Runciman was involved, because he should be remembered particularly for his activities in connection with them. I shall not necessarily list these four matters in order of priority.

Firstly, Ewart Runciman had a great belief in the electorate of Murray and was vitally interested in what happened there. He was greatly concerned about the successful development of Mandurah and made persistent representations as to the necessity to provide an adequate highway into and out of the town. He was very concerned also that a further bridge be provided in the Mandurah area.

Secondly, Ewart Runciman maintained a lasting interest in the forest areas in the region. Along with myself, he was the first to raise the issue of dieback in the jarrah forests. He was genuinely concerned about that matter and he laid the foundations for the growing movement to conserve the jarrah forests.

Thirdly, as the Leader of the House mentioned, Ewart Runciman was involved with the Peel Inlet Management Authority. Indeed, that authority was Ewart's brainchild. He saw the need for a body, representative of the Murray electorate and the shires within it, designed to look after the interests of the region served by the Peel Inlet. Ewart Runciman was instrumental in establishing the first advisory committee which was the predecessor of the Waterways Commission and the Peel Inlet Management Authority. Therefore, it was most fitting that, after his retirement from Parliament, Ewart was appointed as a member of that authority. If for no other reason, Ewart should be remembered for the great contribution he made in that area.

Fourthly, as a result of his rural background, Ewart had a passionate interest in farming generally and the whole-milk industry in particular, because at that time it was the most important industry in the region.

I am sure members recall seeing Ewart on many occasions walking around this Parliament expressing his serious concern for the problems

encountered by the people in his electorate. His years in the Parliament were not lengthy in comparison with the years of some others, but he brought great kindness and sincerity to this place of a kind from which this Parliament can only benefit.

I join with the mover and the seconder of the motion in conveying my deep sympathy to his widow Flora, his two daughters, and other members of his family in the bereavement we all have suffered.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [5.01 p.m.]: The Hon. Neil McNeill admirably expressed the sentiments of all who knew Ewart Runciman. I served with him during all the 12 years he was a member of this Parliament, and I knew him exceptionally well. On three or four occasions I travelled interstate with him and I very much appreciated his logic at all times.

I quite agree he was a kindly and quiet man, but above all he was genuine and honourable. So few people seem to have those characteristics, and those who wish to attain them rarely succeed.

Ewart Runciman served his district extremely well; nobody would know that better than the Hon. Neil McNeill and other members representing southern areas. Ewart also served the Legislative Assembly extremely well, and I for one remember the great interest he took in debates in that place.

Death comes to all of us sooner or later. Ewart has passed on, but nobody could earn more respect during a stay in Parliament than he did. I certainly hope that when it is our turn, we will go out with similar accolades.

THE HON. G. C. MACKINNON (South-West) [5.04 p.m.]: I very much want to convey to Ewart Runciman's wife and family the feelings I have about Ewart's passing. After the death of Sir Ross McLarty I was charged with the responsibility of giving some attention to the Murray electorate, and at the time of Ewart Runciman's election I passed to him a number of matters affecting that electorate. I was associated with Ewart when the Peel Inlet Management Authority was being established and during the time he was a member of that authority.

Once someone became a friend of Ewart he was a friend forever. Mary and I often called to his house at Mandurah to see either Ewart or Flora, or both.

I echo the sentiments expressed about that kindly gentleman whom I regarded as a pleasure to know. I regard it as a pleasure that I was in a position to call him my friend, quite apart from being his associate. I join with all members in assuring his wife of our heartfelt sorrow at his passing.

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [5.05 p.m.]: I was not fortunate enough to serve with the late Ewart Runciman; he retired before the election which brought me to this place. However, after his retirement and especially in recent years I had contact with him because of his association with the Peel Inlet Management Authority. He showed himself to be an uncomplicated person; someone who knew what he was doing and why. He served his community well in that position, and I am sure he served his electorate in a similar way.

He will be sorely missed by the people of Mandurah, not only as a result of his work as a member of Parliament, but also as a member of the community after his retirement from Parliament. I too support the motion.

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): I endorse the comments made about our late colleague, Mr Ewart Runciman. As already mentioned, Ewart Runciman was a quiet man, but he was as well a most understanding and compassionate person who represented his electorate competently and efficiently. I too extend my sympathy to the members of his family.

Question passed, members standing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL: CLERK

Retirement

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): I advise members that following the retirement of Mr John Ashley as Clerk of the Legislative Council and Clerk of the Parliaments on 26 February 1982, His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council appointed Mr L. A. Hoft to act in the position of Clerk of the Legislative Council and Clerk of the Parliaments as from 2 March 1982 until a substantive appointment is made to that position.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Millstream: Petition

On motions by the Hon. Peter Dowding, a petition bearing the signatures of 122 persons requesting that environmental decline at Millstream due to pumping for water supplies be avoided, was received, read, and ordered to lie upon the Table of the House.

(See paper No. 103.)

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE*Motion: Leave to Introduce*

THE PRESIDENT: (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) Honourable members, more than one hour having elapsed since the time fixed for the meeting of the House, the leave of the House will be required in order to deal with motion No. 1 on the notice paper. Is leave granted?

Point of Order

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Mr President, could I ask which clock you are taking your time from? The clock above your head shows five past 10.

THE PRESIDENT: Order! For the information of the honourable member, I am not able to see the clock above my head. I am using the one on my wrist. I assure honourable members that more than one hour has elapsed since the time fixed for the commencement of the meeting of the House.

Debate Resumed

THE PRESIDENT: Leave of the House will be necessary in order that we might deal with the motion appearing on the notice paper. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Motion

On motion by the Hon. Neil McNeill, leave of absence for six consecutive sitting days of the House granted to the Hon. Margaret McAleer on the ground of parliamentary business overseas.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY*Motion*

Debate resumed from 18 March.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.51 p.m.]: Before I commence my reply to the Governor's Speech, may I congratulate the new member for the South Metropolitan Province, the Hon. Garry Kelly, on his magnificent win in the recent by-election in that province.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Hear, hear!

THE HON. D. K. DANS: I know he will be in this House for many years to come.

I congratulate also the new office bearers on the Government side—the Hon. Mr Pike, who has been elevated to the Ministry, and the Hon. Mr Knight, who has taken over the duties of the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet. I offer my commiserations to those members who lost their positions. However, as all of us know, that is

one of the exigencies of the parliamentary system or, more specifically, the party system, which is bestrewn heavily with anti-personnel land mines. That is a fact which none of us should forget.

I want to refer to a number of matters which are of fundamental importance to this State. I turn firstly to the Governor's Speech, which contained a number of issues which beg comment.

Notwithstanding the answers to some of the questions asked tonight, I note with concern that the Western Australian Government has completely abrogated its responsibility to the increasing number of unemployed people in this State. On preliminary figures, the number of persons looking for work at the end of February totalled 46 100, or 7.5 per cent of Western Australia's work force. This was significantly above the national rate of 7 per cent; and it represented a 22.5 per cent increase over the previous 12 months.

In relation to teenage unemployment in Western Australia, in February 1981 the figure was 19.2 per cent, and it now stands at 21 per cent. That compares unfavourably with New South Wales, with a figure of 20.2 per cent; Victoria, with 19.6 per cent; and Queensland, with 16 per cent. In the 12 months to the December quarter, the growth recorded in the State's employed labour force was less than 0.5 per cent. National employment grew by four times the figure for this State. Western Australia's 0.4 per cent employment growth contrasted sharply with figures of 3.5 per cent for Queensland, 1.6 per cent for New South Wales, 1.2 per cent for South Australia, and 1.1 per cent for Victoria.

The bottom has fallen out of the labour market in this State, and the sooner members of the Government become aware of that and show some concern and responsibility, the better it will be for the State's economy and the social conditions of the unemployed. I have said before that the State, and indeed the country, will rue the day when high levels of youth unemployment are maintained consistently.

It is a measure of the Government's lack of concern for and lack of interest in the unemployed that the Minister with responsibility for employment saw fit to make no public comment in relation to the appalling figures in February. In line with his apparent decision not to provide members with ready access to the few Press releases he produces, the Minister seemingly chooses not to be held accountable, and gives one the impression that he believes that if the figures are ignored, the problem will mysteriously vanish.

No doubt that prognosis explains the Minister's unwillingness to reply immediately to my question without notice on Thursday last. One would have thought that a Minister in the portfolio of Labour and Industry would have had that information uppermost in his mind if he really was concerned and worried about the unemployed people in this State.

Nowhere in the Governor's Speech can we find mention of alternative strategies or new policies designed to create employment. Nowhere do we find the slightest suggestion of the acceptance of any previous employment strategy, if indeed there ever was one.

I have asked a number of questions in this House, and I have spoken on a number of occasions, imploring the Government to come forward with some strategy for sticking by the unemployed people in this State. I do not think the Government ever has had a strategy. I do not think it ever has thought of one.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Are you going to tell us yours?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have a long time to go. If indeed the Government ever had a strategy, it may need to be modified, given that it has proved to be a dismal failure. By his interjection, I take it that the Minister for Labour and Industry is saying, "We have no strategy, but if you care to, Mr Dans, at a later stage in your speech, outline one for us and we may take it up".

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That is not what I said at all.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is how I interpreted the interjection.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You have got a fertile mind.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Of course, the buck continues to be passed backwards and forwards.

Incorporated in the Governor's Speech is the view that all this State Government is prepared to do is to encourage an expansionist economic strategy by the Commonwealth. In other words, what it is doing now is what it has been doing for some time—it is trying to talk up the economy. I noticed that in the replies to some of my questions tonight I was told about all the things that are in the pipeline. It is an awfully big pipeline and there is an awfully big blockage in it.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Before the dinner adjournment I was talking about the Government's continuing to endeavour to talk up the economy and saying that one gets rather tired of hearing of the things that are supposedly in this

mythical pipeline. I said there must be a massive blockage. Let us hope the Government comes forward soon with some method of unblocking the pipeline.

The Governor's Speech makes no mention of work force planning and employment creation at the State level. Members will recall that when the Tonkin Government came into office unemployment was at a very high level. I recall being almost commanded to go to meetings in the Kwinana district attended by a thousand people. Other members of Parliament had similar experiences. Jack Hallett, who was then the Federal Country Party member for Canning, also attended, to his credit. I remember the very hot time those people gave us. We went about creating employment and soaked up a fair amount of unemployment, not at high levels of remuneration; but at least the local shires were encouraged to take on more labour. In fairness, the economic circumstances then were a little different from today, but that is no excuse, because when the Fraser Government came into office it did so on the phoney assertion that it was a very good economic manager, far better than any Labor Government would ever be.

What do we find today? Australia is heading for the highest deficit since federation and has record levels of unemployment, growing day by day. If one looks at the daily Press even it says, "The news is gloom." One day someone from one of the trading banks says, "Things are coming up nice and rosy", and the next day says, "It is all bad news." In this atmosphere, the Government makes no mention of work force planning and job creation at the State level, nor of work force retraining schemes. It is as if the Government recognises no obligation at all initially to face the reality of the appalling unemployment situation in this State and then produces no employment initiatives. It is no good trying to shuffle this responsibility over to the Federal Government. The Government of Western Australia is part and parcel of the political party which is in power in Canberra. It embraced with open arms, with alacrity, with the playing of trumpets and the banging of cymbals, the so-called new federalism.

Perhaps when the Minister opposite condescends to get to his feet and address this issue he may care to provide this House with an answer to a question which has been nagging me for some time. While the Government is sitting around hoping for the upturn in the global economy, what are the ever-increasing number of unemployed persons in this State supposed to be doing? I am very sure that when the Minister

replies he will be able to answer that very simple question.

I turn to the education problem referred to by the Governor. In drawing attention to the projected 12.4 per cent increase in the allocation to education this financial year, the Governor indicated the Government's determination to maintain its commitment to the development and training of young Western Australians. In case members opposite share the tendency of the Minister for Labour and Industry to ignore reality, I remind them of the trauma, anguish, determination and, probably, sweat that went into the campaign in this State by both parents and teachers to enforce at least a semblance of that commitment referred to above.

In line with the confrontationist approach which has always been and will continue to be used by this Government, threat after threat and insult after insult were waged against those within the community who dared to suggest that educational services should continue to be maintained at least at the previous year's level. To ensure that members opposite are not too overwhelmed by the previous Treasurer's apparent generosity, it should be noted that in answer to a question I put to him, last year's Minister for Education refused to commit himself as to whether the allocation did in fact represent an increase in real terms.

I refer to a most important matter mentioned by the Governor and also by the member for West Province in moving this vote of thanks. It is a matter very dear to my heart; that is, industrial relations in this State. The Government's record of handling industrial relations in this State has been dismal. I have referred earlier this evening and on numerous occasions previously in this House to its confrontationist approach, its insensitivity to industrial concerns, and its complete unwillingness to analyse rationally the condition of industrial relations in this State. There were some fine examples of that during 1981 in relation to education cutbacks, legislative changes to both the Workers' Compensation Act and the Education Act, and what WA shipowners referred to as a lack of compromise and conciliation. I refer to the disastrous stoppage in the Port of Fremantle when the Government refused to allow a slow-on to the port workers, which had traditionally been the case. The Government won no friends on the waterfront on both sides of the industrial coin. With the new Minister for Labour and Industry being apparently a keen advocate of the "gung ho" approach to industrial relations,

the future from the point of view of more positive approaches does not look great.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That's true.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: There was the example of the tragic laundry workers' dispute which was continually fanned by provocative threats and reprisals. I refer members opposite to comments expressed in *The West Australian* editorial of 6 February, as follows—

Mr O'Connor's new Administration has made an inauspicious start in the field of industrial relations with its handling of the laundry workers' dispute. Scenes of women being brought from a picket line by policemen have given the two week old Administration a heavy-handed image that it will find hard to live down.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: If I passed the *Sunday Independent* editorial to you, would you read that one as well?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Minister for industrial relations not only does not know how to handle industrial relations, but also it has not occurred to him that I happen to be making this speech. I am reading the quote. The Government's handling of the dispute by declaring constantly that drastic action was about to be taken, was clumsy. It fostered an atmosphere of violence and confrontation. That, in the end, was what it got. To this one can add the complete insensitivity of a Minister for Labour and Industry who publicly boasts that he drove through a picket line. It is in the context of his track record that I want to consider comments on the Governor's Speech made by a member for the West Province.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: What a shameful speech that was!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: When I heard the speech, I must confess I thought that someone had written it for the member. It was difficult to comprehend. Then when I read it in detail, I was not so sure. If I was confused when I heard it, I was more confused when I read it.

The Hon. P. G. Pandal: It was a very good speech, and he was critical of both sides.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It was for him.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I do not know why anybody should praise him.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If an attempt is being made to analyse the whole plan of industrial relations in this State, rationally, sincerely, and especially honestly, it needs to be acknowledged that blame for the present poor conditions cannot be attributed solely to one of the parties. Even the

Minister for Labour and Industry would believe that.

In a letter to *The West Australian* of 18 November the President of the Perth Chamber of Commerce (Mr Ken Court) said—

It is about time that senior managers woke up to the fact that they too are to blame for the chaotic state of industrial relations in this country.

Industrial relations is not all bad news. Had we paid as much attention to time lost through industrial accidents as we have paid to time lost through industrial disputes, not only over the last few years, but also over many years past, and had we done something about that matter, we might be on the right track today.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We certainly don't want to compensate them too much.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Man days lost through industrial accidents amount to something like 2½ times the man days lost by industrial disputation. Unless it is accepted that two parties are involved in every dispute, any supposedly meaningful attempt to examine labour relations is a sham.

The reference to industrial relations in the Governor's Speech is tantalisingly brief. As expected, it projects a very myopic view of industrial concerns. The state of industrial relations in Western Australia depends almost exclusively on the outcome of salary and wage determinations by wage fixation tribunals. That is what the Governor said. That view hardly presents itself as a panacea for industrial relations problems. There was no mention of consolidation or of any sector of the community other than one which is subject to wage fixing tribunals. The hypocrisy of this view is almost enough to turn one's insides. How many instances has this House seen of non-acceptance of the decisions made by these same tribunals?

Two cases which come to mind are the one applying to nurses in 1980 and the State wage indexation decision of last September. All manner of threats were made to the effect that retrenchments would be necessary if the Government were to accept the tribunal's decision. One wonders when this Government last recognised that any wages and salary claims were justified.

The previous Premier did, of course, recognise that other sectors of the community had a role to play—I give him credit for that. However, he did not exactly make a crusade of drawing the community's attention to it. I would like to quote from page 33 of the transcript of the confidential

proceedings of the Premiers' Conference which was held in Canberra on 13 August last year.

The Hon. P. G. PENTAL: It couldn't be very confidential.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr Pental, it has been quoted in Commonwealth Parliament.

The Hon. P. G. PENTAL: It still cannot be very confidential.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Sir Charles Court alluded to the fact that there had been some increases within the trade union movement. He said—

But in private enterprise we need to consider the literally indecent increases in executive salaries.

Further on he said—

I now come to some of the executive salaries being paid. They are absolutely crazy. They might not be considered in the figures but they do cause resentment. A great mass of people today are not getting a fair go.

Let us hope the complete situation can be examined. I hasten to say that, given the intransigence of the Government and in particular the attitudes of the Minister for Labour and Industry, I have serious doubts that hope will be realised.

While the reference to industrial relations in the Governor's Speech may have been tantalisingly brief and unassuming, comments by the member for West Province were long on rhetoric and superficial in their analysis. To quote the member—

The greatest need today is not for job killing, but for job making.

Although it sounded as though he was involved in some kind of hunt in India or Africa, given the abysmal record of this Government in providing continued employment, and given the scapegoating process being employed by this Government, and especially the Premier, such a comment is pitiful. Members of the Opposition can only trust that the hollowness and hypocrisy enshrined in that cliché will haunt the Government through to its demise at the next election. I will keep reminding members of the Government of that comment.

I will remind members opposite that it was on that issue that the Liberal candidate for the South Metropolitan Province waged his campaign in the recent by-election in which he was soundly defeated with a significant swing against the Liberal Party.

One of our popular members, Don Taylor, gets a record majority in parts of the South Metropolitan Province and it is to Garry Kelly's credit that he topped even Mr Taylor's figures.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: His opponent mounted a pretty scurrilous campaign, of course.

The Hon. D. K. DANKS: He may hear more of that by way of libel, from the waterside workers.

The Hon. P. G. Pendl: He probably learned it from you.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: His own nastiness came from himself.

The Hon. D. K. DANKS: I will not comment on it. Mr Pendl is welcome to him.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Indeed you are.

The Hon. D. K. DANKS: Let Mr Pendl take him to his bosom. He is his kind of person, not my type of person.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Mr Pendl is not like that.

The Hon. D. K. DANKS: I do not know.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He might clutch the odd viper.

The Hon. D. K. DANKS: The new member for the province will no doubt have more to say on that at a later date. I commiserate with the member for West Province if his comments reflect a sincerely held view. He said—

If the legislation is so deficient that it cannot provide relief without the insertion of further and more onerous penal provisions, a new and acceptable system... must be found.

Mr Pendl said that was a very good speech.

I would remind the member for the West Province, in case it has slipped his memory, that onerous penalties already exist in this State's legislation. I would remind him also that it is our understanding that Western Australia, alone amongst the States, has given the Federal Minister for Industrial Relations unequivocal support for his intended tough new pieces of law, despite widespread criticism of the proposals by industry and unions. Of course, we all know Mr Viner is trailing his coat to the Democrats, and I will have more to say about that during this session.

The member's pie in the sky analysis is symptomatic of this Government's *ad hoc* approach to most issues. Government members have a tendency to mouth statements without having done the necessary "thinking through" part of the process.

The member talks about "imposing responsibility". How on earth does one "impose responsibility" on parties?

He also talks about "limiting the legislative environment", yet his Minister is currently looking around for ways to increase the legislative environment.

Moving the Address-in-Reply was a very important event for the Hon. Neil Oliver—it is an important event for anyone. However, he made a statement regarding the limiting of the legislative environment, and yet the Minister is looking at ways to increase the legislative environment. I would suggest that the Minister for Labour and Industry has some consultation with the member for the West Province. That would be a good point at which to start the consultative process.

He talked glibly about enterprise unions obviously without having thought through the basic problems associated with the proposal. These include a proliferation of unions at a time when most commentators on the Australian industrial relations scene agree that there is a need for a reduction in the number of unions through amalgamation.

It is also a fact that a general move towards industry unionism would be strongly resisted by unions and would be impossible to achieve without massive coercion. Not just unions recognise the problems. In a recent submission by a major Australian employer, the following comment was made—

One thing which is clear is that in the Australian context any programme to achieve in the short term substantial and general change in the basis of trade union structures, such as would be involved in a move to industry or enterprise based unions, would produce strong trade union resistance. If any progress resulted, it would be likely to be marginal in extent and relatively long term in achievement.

This is not a statement made by left-wing directors, or managing directors who are secret members of the Labor Party. It is the BHP submission in relation to the restricting of Australian trade unions in 1981. I would imagine that BHP knows what it is talking about. I might not have agreed with what it has done, but I must give it credit for having well informed staff.

The platitudes are present in the member's speech, but the substance is lacking. He should be asking his colleague, the Minister for Labour and Industry, what steps he intends to take to promote a more positive attitude between employers and employees. No doubt the whole question of the

condition of industrial relations in this State will be kept to the fore as part of a dishonest process by the Government of scapegoating for negligible employment growth and a depressed economy, reflecting the cumulative effect of the budget policies of the Commonwealth and State Governments.

The Opposition's position is clear in this regard: Stable industrial relations will not be achieved by confrontation, "gung ho" attitudes, and punitive legislative changes. It is only a matter of time before the people of this State come to recognise that.

If anyone has a bent on the subject of the history of this country he could go back to the early 1900s when we had Master and Servant Acts and people were denied the privilege of leaving the employ of their masters. There were such Acts as the combination Acts, the dog collars Act, and others, and they all ended up in the one place, with no-one, in the long run, winning. We have to recognise that. At the same time there are a number of deeper underlying factors influencing industrial relations than just wages, and this is one of the things we should be working on.

Briefly, I would like to turn to the fiasco that is called the Multiplex drama. The fact is that Multiplex Constructions Pty. Ltd. put up on one of its construction jobs, some signs saying that only industrial trade unionists need apply for positions. I well remember that in 1979 when amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act were wheeled into this place, members on this side, including myself, warned the Government, that what it was doing was really quite stupid. Of course, at that time, the cry was different; it was "Compulsory unionism." The fact was that there had never been compulsory unionism.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Tell that to some of the people on the sites.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I will come to that. Existing legislation at that time adequately dealt with the situation for a number of years, and still does in the Commonwealth sphere, although Mr Viner seeks to tamper with it. The Commonwealth legislation—the Conciliation and Arbitration Act—deals with the question of preference, and I suggest that members should read it because at one time there was no way out for conscientious objectors. Whilst it provided for preferences it did so for the simple reason that it was a means for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes. That is what conciliation and arbitration is all about.

In 1948 the State arbitration court, of its own volition inserted into awards a preference clause, which I think was a fair thing. It simply said preference would be given to unionists. Any man who did not want to join a union and who had genuine cause for exemption could go along to the commission and put his case.

If the person was granted exemption, he paid into the court a sum of money equivalent to his union fees. I cannot remember whether this money was then paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund or whether it went to charity.

At the time this legislation was introduced into the House, the Government was warned by employers, unions and industrial observers about what would happen. My comments on this matter appear in *Hansard*. I said those who were well versed in the ways of industrial matters, particularly the big employers, would say to a potential employee, "We will not have you on the job if you do not belong to a union."

Although the Government is aware that position has existed since, the legislation was passed in this place, it has done nothing about it. Then the Press took a photograph of a sign on a Multiplex building site and now we see a headline in the Press, "Government acts on closed shops." I do not hold the Government responsible for the headline, of course, but I would like to point out that 98 per cent of the closed shops in Australia are closed because the employers want them that way.

For example, is not the stevedoring industry a closed shop?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Of course it is.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Who is it that wants the closed shops—the employers?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Of course they do.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Who are parties to the closed shops? The employers, the unions, and the Commonwealth Government. The maritime industry is another closed shop.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Tell us about the BLF. I am a bit mystified about it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not know a great deal about it.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are the only one who does not.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: No-one can stand here in this place and prove to me that the Builders' Labourers Federation is a closed shop union. Anyone who says that does not know what he is talking about.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Let us just say that the BLF forces people to join it. You know that and I know it. It uses stand over tactics of the worst possible kind.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I would like to inform this Chamber of the hypocrisy of the Government. Something has been happening under the very nose of the Government, and the Government did nothing until the Press put a spotlight on it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Just tell us a bit about the BLF.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: He does not want to talk about that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am making this speech, Mr Masters, and I will continue to make it. I have in my hand a copy of the *Industrial Gazette* dated Wednesday, 24 February 1982. It refers to a consent agreement registered in the State court, and it commences as follows—

IRON ORE PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

(Goldsworthy Mining Limited).

Award No. 43 of 1981.

BEFORE THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION.

No. A43 of 1981.

Between Goldsworthy Mining Limited, Employers and The Australian Workers' Union, West Australian Branch, Industrial Union of Workers; Amalgamated Metal Workers' and Shipwrights' Union of Western Australia; Australasian Society of Engineers, Moulders and Foundry Workers, Industrial Union of Workers, Western Australian Branch; Electrical Trades Union of Workers of Australia (Western Australian Branch), Perth; The Western Australian Carpenters and Joiners, Bricklayers and Stoneworkers Industrial Union of Workers; The Operative Painters' and Decorators' Union of Australia, West Australian Branch, Union of Workers; The Plumbers and Gasfitters Employees' Union of Australia, West Australian Branch, Industrial Union of Workers; The Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Union of Workers of Western Australia; Transport Workers' Union of Australia, Industrial Union of Workers, Western Australian Branch, Unions.

I will not go through the whole consent award, but I will turn to clause 36. I will address my remarks to the Deputy President (the Hon. V. J. Ferry) and in particular to the Minister for Labour and Industry. I would like the Minister to recognise that this is a legal document.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It has no relationship to the 36 faceless men!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Minister does not like the truth. Clause 36 commences as follows—

36.—Utilisation of Contractors.

(1) (a) As a pre-condition to work to be done on site that is let by the Company to a Contractor, the employees of any such Contractor will be required to be or become members of an appropriate union, prior to their commencing such employment on site.

(b) An "appropriate union" as referred to in this subclause shall not, where it is proper to so interpret, necessarily only mean a union who is party to this Award.

So it goes beyond the unions who are the respondents to this award. The clause continues—

(2) (a) Where it is necessary for the Company to retain the services of a Contractor to perform work that would otherwise be or is normal to be performed by employees covered by this Award, the Company will give prior notice of the fact to the Union concerned.

(b) In the event of Contractors being utilised for a period in excess of two weeks, the Company will provide the Union with a list each fortnight of the employees.

(i) In the first instance so employed as per subclause 2(a); and

(ii) Subsequent variations thereto.

(c) No employee employed by the Company will suffer any detrimental effect in respect of his normal earnings, job security or available reasonable hours of work by reason of the employment of Contractors' employees in such circumstances.

That is the law; there is no preference clause in there. When the Government introduced its amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act in 1979, it was trying to smash a peanut with a steam hammer. Even if the Government further amends the Act, what will it really do? It will do nothing at all. On the radio this morning I heard the Premier say that we cannot do anything about contracts which Multiplex has signed already. However, he went on to say that the Government will be able to do something about future contracts which Multiplex may enter into with the

State Government. The Premier said that the Government would enforce the policy of the employment of non-unionists.

We have heard a great deal about the rights of workers. I have never heard of a person who did not want to become a union member and who approached a prospective employer and said, "I do not want to join a union; in fact, I hate the unions so much that I am prepared to work for half the award rate. I do not want any of the conditions enjoyed by the unionists." Of course such people want all the benefits without any of the responsibilities.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: What about subcontractors? Why should they be forced to join an organisation in which they have no interest?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have just read from a document which deals with subcontractors. I do not like to say this, but is the Minister for Labour and Industry so dumb that he cannot understand that? If we are talking about rights, has not the employer the unfettered right to employ only unionists if he wants to?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Or non-unionists if he wants to.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am talking about—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I am just asking you.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Minister's case is against Multiplex.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: My case is against any organisation—not just Multiplex.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Then why did not the Minister do something about the agreement which appeared in the 24 February edition of the *Industrial Gazette*? Goldsworthy Mining Ltd. had one of the worst industrial records in the Pilbara. In the past three or four years we have hardly heard from this company—it probably has the best industrial record in the Pilbara now.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: Do you think that company will close down shortly?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not think Mr Kober would like to hear the Hon. Mr Moore say that. Goldsworthy Mining Ltd. hopes to continue for a number of years.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: The Goldsworthy mine is just about finished.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am telling the honourable member that, without any changes, Goldsworthy Mining Ltd. hopes to be operating for another five years.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: Not at Goldsworthy.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am talking about Goldsworthy Mining Ltd.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: You do not know what you are talking about.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I want the honourable member to go on record as saying that the company will be closing down shortly.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I am saying what the company has said publicly.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It has not been said publicly. On the one hand the Ministers are trying to talk the economy up, and on the other hand the honourable member is trying to talk it down.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: The Goldsworthy mine is nearly closed down.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am saying that Goldsworthy Mining Ltd. is quite confident it will be operating for at least another five years without any changes in its existing circumstances. One of these days the Government will be able to tell us that the decision has been made already to halt the North-West Shelf project, that is, if it has the intestinal fortitude.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Are you saying that decision has already been made?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is what we have been hearing around the traps.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The company would be very pleased to hear you say that!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It is equivalent to the statement just made by the Hon. Mr Moore.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The duplicity of this Government knows no bounds. Somewhere along the line the Press saw some little notices on a Multiplex construction site.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Don't blame the Press.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The legislation that was introduced to solve these problems is being used in a perfectly legal way. Can anyone say that this *Industrial Gazette* is a false document? Can Mr Masters say that?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I will make my move when it is necessary.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Minister has very little ice to slide on, and he knows it.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Time will tell.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: A few years ago amendments were introduced to the Industrial Arbitration Act and those amendments took from the officers and staff of Parliament House certain rights. That is what the Government thinks of rights.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Be consistent.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Took away?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Yes.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: All that they did not have?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Took away.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: No way!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I would like Mr Lewis to look at *The Statutes of Western Australia*, 1979; I am looking at page 1475 which refers to the Industrial Arbitration Act. The amendment I am referring to was to delete a section and to insert the following—

in any matter of the suspension from duty in, discipline in, dismissal from, termination of, or reinstatement in, employment of any person as—

- (i) an employee who is a Government officer within the meaning of section 96;
- (ii) a person who holds an office for which the remuneration payable is determined or recommended pursuant to the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act 1975;
- (iii) an officer or employee in either House of Parliament—

(1) under the separate control of the President or Speaker or under their joint control;

That refers to the attendants here, and the officers. To continue—

- (II) employed by a Committee appointed pursuant to the Joint Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly; or

They have no recourse to law. They do not have the protection of a union. They can join a union, but they cannot have an award. The Government has excluded them, and yet it talks about people's rights.

I refer members to volume 4 of *Hansard*, 1980, where they will see a speech made by the Hon. Norman Baxter in which he indicated he was astounded at what the Government was doing. The Government is not even consistent.

One cannot take seriously the utterings of this Government which is in deep trouble. The Government uses the guise of industrial relations and disputation as a salable and bankable commodity to divide and confuse the people. The Government has made a song and dance about Multiplex—I do not hold it responsible for the so-

called closed shop situation—but one month previously, without even a bleat, it allowed the court to register a document with a multiplicity of unions. Indeed, it went further and said, "Even if those unions are not respondents to this award, these conditions will apply."

The Government should stop its double dealing and it should try to do something to encourage job creation projects in this State. The Government should do something constructive in the areas of industrial relations. The majority of workers in Western Australia have never been involved in a stoppage. If the Government produces some sort of plan of action designed to bring about more harmonious industrial relations, which we all desire, I will be one of the first to hop on the bandwagon and support it.

The course being steered by the Government at present is a very dangerous one. It is fraught with the same kinds of problems which were contained in the much lauded amendments passed in 1979. Tonight I could have produced the *Hansards* and quoted all the flowery phrases and comments made previously by the Hon. Gordon Masters. I was interested to read in the Press that he, the Minister for Police and Prisons (Mr Hassell), and the present Premier were the architects of the move made in 1979. It seems to me the then Minister for Labour and Industry (Mr Grayden) is now saying, "It was not me. I wash my hands of it. I am among the innocents and now I will tell all. I am not nearly as bad as you think."

If one cares to examine the history books, one will see that sanctions and the persecution of workers do not work. If these tactics worked, we would not be arguing about the matter today, because all the problems would have been solved years ago.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Mr Wran has it solved!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: There is no argument—Mr Wran has his problems.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Wouldn't you think the activities of the BLF constitute persecution and threats?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am not talking about the BLF.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: They are a major force in Australia and you know it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not know enough about the BLF to make any comments in that regard. It is an area in which I have never been involved.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That is a very safe stance to take.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: What does the Minister for Labour and Industry know about the BLF?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I know a few things.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Someone has told the Minister for Labour and Industry something.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I know a lot about the BLF.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: What does the Minister know about the BLF?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I will stand up and tell you.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Whatever the Minister has to say would be unsubstantiated.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I am very pleased you smiled when you said that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I know nothing about the BLF.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Not much you don't!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I know nothing about the BLF and that is a fact.

The Government is going the wrong way about solving industrial problems. It should return to the situation which obtained previously, with the preference clause which was inserted by the courts and which did an admirable job for many years. It enabled people who did not want to belong to unions to adopt such an option legitimately and remain employed. However, that is not the case now and the Government will not change the situation unless it adopts a sane, sensible policy. The employers are interested in getting on with the job and making profits. They will not toady along with amendments passed in 1979. The record of the Government in the field of industrial relations is an abysmal failure and the document in my hand which contains the amendments passed by the Government in 1979 is living proof of that. The court interpreted the law in a way different from the Government's interpretation, and the court was probably right.

The Government should endeavour to bring together the parties involved in industrial disputes. If the Government adopts the course I recommend, all the problems will not be solved overnight. However, after using other methods for approximately 100 years we are still at square one. We have not moved far from the old Master and Servant Acts or the combination Acts.

If the Government produces a sensible package, the Opposition will be the first to support it.

I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. P. G. Pental.

CORONERS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney General) [8.23 p.m.]: In accordance with Standing Order No. 16, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

A District Coroner recently drew my attention to the situation which occurs where a coroner, who may be entirely satisfied as to the cause of a person's death, becomes aware of facts touching on the conduct of some other person in relation to that other person's trade or profession.

At present there is nothing in the Coroners Act, or relevant law, to suggest that a coroner is entitled to express an opinion as to matters outside the scope of the inquest that may have come to his notice in the course of his duties. It is therefore difficult for him to bring the matter to the attention of the authority or body having the responsibility of supervising the particular profession or trade.

Whilst there may have been no apparent criminal negligence on the part of the person involved, there could be occasions where the unsatisfactory features of a case should be referred to a statutory body responsible for control of the profession or trade involved.

Section 43 of the Coroners Act provides that a coroner shall not express any opinion on any matter outside the scope of the inquest, except in a rider. The rider does not form part of the decision or findings and it is considered not to be an appropriate way to overcome the situation referred to.

A further difficulty may arise where a coroner decides—as he may do—that an inquest is not required, but there is some question relating to the conduct of a person which ought to be brought to the notice of a statutory body supervising or licensing a particular profession or trade.

It could be that whilst the questionable conduct was not directly related to a person's death, there were factors which warrant further examination by the body responsible for that particular profession, such as the Medical Board or the Pharmaceutical Council of Western Australia.

It is, therefore, proposed to amend the Coroners Act to authorise a coroner to report incidences of possible professional or other misconduct to an appropriate body, where he considers that to be desirable. It would then be up to the professional or other authority to investigate the matter in accordance with its precepts and practices.

The power to refer the conduct of a person to a professional or other appropriate body is intended to be discretionary, having regard to the evidence given or any other information received by the coroner in the course of his duties.

Finally, I would add that the Bill defines the body responsible for a profession or trade as one empowered by Statute to register, license, or approve a person to carry on a trade or profession and one which has the power to impose punitive measures.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. J. M. Berinson.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [8.26 p.m.]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Members of Parliament: Lobbying

THE HON. J. M. BERINSON (North-East Metropolitan) [8.27 p.m.]: As we all know, lobbying is an integral part of the political process. Some politicians regard it as a nuisance and sometimes it is. On the whole, though, it is a useful part of the process and an important source of factual material in a readily understandable form.

While lobbying is normally directed to persuading members to the lobbyist's point of view, it can also be useful in fortifying one's opposition to that point of view, and a constructive example of the latter case has crossed my desk this week.

At the risk of wearying members who may also have received it, I propose to quote in full this letter from Northbridge Business Promotions, which comes under the signature of Mr G. E. Summerhayes and which reads as follows—

In regard to the Report of the Backbench Committee on Gambling under the chairmanship of Hon. R. J. L. Williams M.L.C., which we understand will be considered by The Parliaments later this week, we wish to submit some salient points for your earnest consideration.

You will learn from the contents of the Report, that this organisation prepared an in-depth submission to the Williams Committee, demonstrating the correlation between the essential economic viability of Northbridge traders, and the existing tolerated gambling institutions in our precinct.

We would commend to you that, before you commit yourself to a decision about the future direction of gambling in Western Australia you read the submission referred to.

Northbridge NEEDS the gambling institutions, to aid the progress we are achieving in this precinct adjacent to the Central Business District, and the heart of the restaurant and nightlife industry of this State, so vitally important to the growth of Perth and in particular synonymous with the tourism industry, the development of which is an important objective of the Government of Western Australia.

The gambling institutions are CATALYSTIC to our growth; they are well-conducted by ethical proprietors under constant supervision and control of the W.A. Police, and fulfilling a particular need among a class of ethnic and gambling-orientated people, to whom these institutions are functional to their societal existence and mode of entertainment.

Consideration by The Parliaments of the proposition to LICENSE such institutions is, in our opinion, valid and a step towards a revenue source well capable of assisting the State Treasury. In addition, we can say that the existing proprietors are willing and able to UPGRADE their premises to a more appropriate and attractive configuration, and to CONFORM to all requirements of the Government, as in the past.

Northbridge Business Promotions sincerely seek your personal interest and support towards these institutions, all of whom are Members of this organisation, and bona fide businessmen in their own right.

I find the gall of this letter really quite impressive. For a start, self-proclaimed and continuing criminals are converted by the stroke of a pen into so-called "ethical proprietors". Not only that, but also we are asked to reward them for their past and continuing illegalities by some sort of preference in any future licensing system.

There is really no point to answering these outrageous propositions in detail; they condemn themselves on their own. For my part I would have thought the present gambling proprietors would be the last to be considered under a regulated system, and certainly not the first as is suggested in the letter. I say that in spite of the fact that on my approach to the question we would have to reject such profound insights as that these proprietors are "fulfilling a particular

need among a class of ethnic and gambling-orientated people, to whom these institutions are functional to their societal existence"—whatever that means. We would have to reject also the generous offers to "upgrade their premises to a more appropriate and attractive configuration"; that is a cost which I for one am not prepared to pay.

More serious is the message conveyed by this letter, not just between the lines but quite explicitly. Mr Summerhayes obviously is speaking on behalf and on the advice of the present illegal gambling operators. In that capacity he feels able to refer to these proprietors as being under the constant supervision and control of the Western Australian Police Force; not only that, but also conforming to all requirements of the Government. What the Government likes to express euphemistically as containment is in this letter much better and accurately set out as a deliberate flouting of the law with the knowledge and consent of all relevant authorities, starting with the Government itself.

It is not this letter which makes a mockery of the law—that is fairly and squarely the Government's doing. Its continued inertia on this matter, going as it does to the most fundamental questions of law and order, is shameful and

intolerable, and whatever else one might think of Mr Summerhayes' letter, the least which can be said in its favour is that it makes this outrageous position so crystal clear.

*150th Anniversary of
Legislative Council:
The Hon. J. M. Brown*

THE HON. P. H. LOCKYER (Lower North) [8.33 p.m.]: The House will recall that on the final night of Parliament last session I cast by way of interjection some reflection on the capacity of the Hon. James Brown as a member of the committee handling the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Legislative Council. I must convey to the House that I was misinformed, and that it is with deep regret I remember the comments I made. I take this opportunity to apologise publicly to the honourable member for the comments I made.

I make it clear that I make this apology not under the direction of any person, but as a result of my own conscience.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Spoken like a man.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.34 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

AUSTRALIAN IRON AND STEEL PTY. LTD.

Retrenchments: Effect on Kwinana Region

1. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

With respect to the forthcoming AIS retrenchments at Kwinana, I ask—

- (1) To what extent is the Minister's department monitoring the likely effect on the Kwinana region of the impending retrenchments?
- (2) In view of the offer of assistance made by his predecessor in the portfolio (see answer to question 701 of 11 November 1981), will the Minister give details of the form of assistance which his department will afford those workers made redundant?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Senior officers of the State Department of Labour and Industry and Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs commenced discussions with the management of AIS as early as November 1981 with a view to providing assistance in placing apprentices and other staff in alternative employment. This work has continued, with the result that 59 out of 61 apprentices have been suitably placed in alternative employment and are continuing their apprenticeships.
- (2) State and Commonwealth Government officers are continuing to work with AIS in interviewing, advising and assisting other workers who are yet to be retrenched. Every effort is being made to find alternative employment for these workers.

FUEL AND ENERGY: PETROLEUM EXPLORATION

Greenough Shire: Damage to Farm Properties

2. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is the Minister aware—

- (a) that petroleum exploration companies have damaged farming

properties in the Greenough Shire without making adequate compensation;

- (b) that a farmer who received inadequate compensation last year and refused the same company entry this year, was threatened by telegram with defending his action in the Supreme Court; and
- (c) that Pancontinental Petroleum Ltd., by acting in this manner, could have contravened section 20 of the Petroleum Act?

- (2) If "Yes" to (1), what action has the Minister taken to rectify the situation?

- (3) If "No" to (1), will the Minister investigate the problem?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) to (3) I am advised that there have been inquiries to the Department of Mines seeking advice on this matter.

The question of entry onto private land, and compensation to owners and occupiers, is provided for under sections 16 to 20 of the Petroleum Act.

Basically, the protection afforded to private property owners is that compensation must be agreed to prior to any exploration operations taking place on private land, but that either party has recourse to a Local Court for determination of the amount of compensation. Provision is also made in section 19 for compensation in respect of further damage.

I have asked to be kept informed of any difficulties in the Greenough Shire.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Premier's View

3. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister representing the Premier:

- (1) Has the Premier's attention been drawn to a reported statement in *The West Australian* of 12 March 1982, by one acting as his spokesman, claiming that there were "heartening aspects" in the WA February unemployment figures?

- (2) Is the report correct, and if so, are the sentiments an accurate reflection of the Premier's view of this State's appalling unemployment situation?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The report is correct in pointing out that there were two heartening aspects in the Western Australian unemployment figures. Western Australia was the only State to record an improvement in unemployment for the month of February 1982, with a decrease of 600 in unemployed persons seeking full-time employment. Western Australia was also the only State to register a decrease in part-time unemployment, with a decrease of 400.

It was also encouraging to notice that the main reason for improvement in the unemployment figures was a reduction in the number of unemployed young people, as more school leavers were absorbed into the work force. During February the number of 15-19-year-olds looking for full time work decreased by 7.8 per cent.

The State Government is concerned at the level of unemployment. However it is confident that the unemployment situation in Western Australia will be favourably influenced over the coming months as various major development projects create more employment opportunities. For example, there is a fairly large amount of work on stream from the Worsley project and this is expected to continue to provide additional employment opportunities for some time. Similarly, the giant North-West Shelf gas project and the Dampier-Perth gas pipeline will continue to provide employment for more people during the year. Alcoa is in the process of finalising a feasibility study for a \$1 000 million chlor-alkali industry in Western Australia which, if the project proceeds, would provide further employment opportunities in this State.

POLICE: TRAFFIC PATROL OFFICERS

Country Towns

4. The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police and Prisons:

- (1) How many traffic patrol officers reside in a country town, whose main duties are based in another country town, requiring additional travelling to carry out their duties?
- (2) Is it necessary from time to time to send patrol officers based in the metropolitan area to country towns to check drivers' licences, etc.?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Two.
- (2) No.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

North-West Shelf: Pipeline

5. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

With reference to a Press statement issued by the Minister for Fuel and Energy on 9 February 1982, concerning the State Energy Commission and their fostering of regional participation in the Dampier-Perth natural gas pipeline, would the Minister advise—

- (1) Has a decision been made on which company will be the prime contractor for the construction of 14 water reservoirs along the Dampier to Perth natural gas pipeline?
- (2) If "Yes" to (1), which company was successful?
- (3) If "No" to (1), when will it be announced?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) No. It is expected that tenders will be called for construction of the water reservoirs for the Dampier to Perth natural gas pipeline by mid-April.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) It is planned that a contract will be awarded in June 1982.

ABATTOIR: ROBB JETTY*Staff Reductions*

6. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Will the Minister detail the full extent of staff reductions since October last, at the Robb Jetty abattoir, indicating the category of worker?
- (2) What is the total number of persons now employed at Robb Jetty?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Wages employees—70 retrenched
25 resigned
Supervisory staff—7 retrenched
Office staff—5 resigned
- (2) As at 22 March 1982—397.

TROTTING: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TROTTING ASSOCIATION*Contributions to Country Clubs*

7. The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Could the Chief Secretary ascertain and advise the House of the amounts of contributions made by the Western Australian Trotting Association to all of the country trotting clubs in the State for the financial year ended 30 June 1981, in respect to—
 - (a) race subsidies;
 - (b) winter subsidies;
 - (c) country benefit; and
 - (d) administration costs?
- (2) What charge, if any, was made to country clubs for administration costs not included in (1) (d)?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE replied:

- (1) (a) \$86 725
(b) \$20 575
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| | \$ |
| (c) (i) Country benefit fund | 6 000 |
| (ii) Racecourse development fund | 50 002 |
| | 56 002 |
- (d) A total of \$261 299 was expended by the WATA for administration costs incurred on behalf of country trotting clubs.

(2) Nil.

Note: The foregoing statistics are for the 1980-81 trotting season which ended on 31 July, 1981.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT*Increase in Western Australia*

8. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Has the Minister's attention been drawn to the most recent unemployment figures?
- (2) If so, is he fully aware that the WA February unemployment figure represents an increase of 8 500, or 22.6 per cent in registered unemployed in the previous 12 months?
- (3) Is he fully aware too that this 12 month increase is the greatest proportional increase amongst the mainland States?
- (4) In view of the above, and the fact that employment growth in the year to December quarter, 1981, was a mere 0.4 per cent, what new proposals does this Government intend putting forward to provide employment?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. However, the latest employment figures for February 1982 showed that Western Australia was the only State in which unemployment fell when compared to the position in January 1982. Significantly, the reduction in unemployment was attributable to an 8 per cent improvement in youth unemployment.

The Government is concerned with the level of unemployment, but notice must be taken of the trend toward a shorter working week and the wage explosion of the last few months. Such developments impact very hard upon employment opportunities in the State.

- (3) Yes. February unemployment figures are invariably seasonally high but unemployment in February 1982, while above the level of February 1981, is lower than the level of unemployment in February 1980 and 1979.

- (4) Next to Queensland, this State over the last two years has had the highest employment growth performance of all the States. Thus while the January 1982 employment figures did not indicate any growth over January 1981, the pattern was radically different in January 1981 and January 1980 where in both instances employment growth over the 12 months was the strongest of all the States and in the order of twice the national average.

In short, the pattern in the 12 months to January 1982 is a departure from the trend over previous years of high employment growth in Western Australia.

While the unemployment problem is a source of serious concern to the Government, it is important to bear in mind that with a world-wide downturn in economic activity and employment, unemployment in the United States is in the order of 9 per cent, United Kingdom 12 per cent, Italy 9 per cent, Canada 8.25 per cent; even West Germany is experiencing its highest unemployment rates since the end of World War II.

The last 12 months have seen a significant deterioration in economic activity in the economies of our trading partners which has affected this State's export performance.

It is hoped that an upturn in the United States economy will occur later this year and, with a pick-up in commodity prices, production by existing producers in this State can be expected to improve. The State Government's policy of encouraging resource development will continue to be in the central thrust behind job creation in this State, both in a direct way and through the multiplier impact of these projects on the economy. For example, this Government's faith and hard work to get a sugar industry operating in the Ord River is close to reality.

Other projects expected to result in an increased demand for labour in the short term are—

The Dampier	Wagerup gas
pipeline;	
the	Worsley alumina
project—	employment in this project

is expected to peak over the period July 1982 through March 1983;

Ashton joint venture diamond project;

construction of Muja "D" power station;

Wagerup operational staff are expected to be recruited from the latter half of 1982.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN: MINISTER FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

Press Releases

9. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) How many news releases have been released by the Minister since he assumed the Labour and Industry portfolio in January 1982, and in what capacity were they made?
- (2) As there are no news releases in his name presently in the Parliamentary Library (at 18 March), is it his intention, unlike his predecessor, not to provide such information to the library?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Fifteen as Minister for Labour and Industry, and four as Acting Minister for Primary Industry.
- (2) No. There has been no request from the Parliamentary Library for inclusion on the news release mailing list for the office of the Minister for Labour and Industry since it was re-established as a separate unit with news releases no longer being mailed from Premier's Department.

The library has now been included on the mailing list, back copies of statements supplied and copies provided for the member's information.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Legal Responsibilities

4. The Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Attorney General:

- (1) Is he aware of the recent media reports in which the Federal Attorney General (Senator Durack) indicated that

members of Parliament could be legally responsible for the advice they give to constituents?

- (2) In view of the wide implication of that statement to members of this Parliament, will the Attorney investigate the report and the general subject raised with a view to providing members with advice on this subject?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) and (2) The member has written to me about this matter, so I am aware of the type of question involved. I have also received a similar request to advise members of the House from the Hon. Tom Knight. As I understand it, the situation is that it is always very dangerous for anyone to give advice—even if it is free advice—on matters which do not particularly concern him.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: It is sometimes even more dangerous for a person to accept that advice.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: This has been well illustrated in a recent case before the High Court of Australia involving the Parramatta Town Council. There, a council employee was held responsible for supplying to a developer information in relation to a town planning or zoning scheme. Whether or not he was under a duty to do so, I do not know. I would strongly advise members that unless they have some particular obligation in the matter, they would be most unwise to advise their constituents in relation to matters which are not specifically within that obligation. Some members do have certain obligations arising out of their activities in other spheres.

I am aware of the Federal Attorney's comments as recorded in the Press and I believe there is a lot of justification for his advice that one should not give advice. However, if a person gives advice in a negative form—such as I am now doing—I think he would be exonerated. My advice is that members should await the result of an inquiry I have made to the Crown Solicitor, and I will be glad to make it available to them.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT: AGNEW CLOUGH LTD.

Wundowie Vanadium Plant

5. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the decision of Agnew Clough Ltd. to close the vanadium plant at Wundowie, I ask—

- (1) Was any alternative employment offered by Agnew Clough Ltd. to the reportedly 90 workers retrenched?
(2) What form of assistance was afforded the 90 retrenched workers by the Department of Labour and Industry?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) and (2) I know the department was very much involved and concerned with the events to which the Leader of the Opposition refers. Quite frankly, I do not have the detailed figures, so in that event, I ask him to place his question on notice.

HOSPITALS: LAUNDRY AND LINEN SERVICE

Strike: Use of Strike Breakers

6. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

I refer the Minister to his use of strike breakers in relation to the laundry workers' strike and ask—

- (1) Is it a fact that each strike breaker was paid in excess of \$100 for participating in the picket break-through?
(2) What was the total wages bill paid by the Government in respect of the strike breakers used on that Friday morning, 5 February 1982?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) I wish to make a couple of comments on this point to enlighten the Leader of the Opposition and the House. Firstly, I made the decision that certain action would need to be taken. We recognised that the union had been deregistered, that its award had been suspended, and that dismissals had occurred. We recognised also that approximately \$5 million-worth of dirty linen was under threat. People from all sections of the community volunteered to perform, if necessary, three shifts of 10 hours each, and the Government employed the volunteers on that basis.

An arrangement was entered into whereby the Government agreed to pay the volunteers \$100 a day for a 10-hour shift, which could fall on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. Members should bear in mind these people were on standby for some time; they represented a special force required in any salvage operation the Government might mount.

- (2) I have not received any details relating to final billing for transport and the like; no doubt these will come forward in due course.

HOSPITALS: LAUNDRY AND LINEN SERVICE

Strike: Use of Strike Breakers

7. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

I ask a supplementary question of the Minister—

- (1) Was the \$100 a day paid to the volunteers in excess of the daily rate normally received by workers in the performance of their duties over a 10-hour period?
- (2) If so, by what amount?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) As far as I understand the situation, most certainly the \$100 was in excess of the amount normally payable to regular laundry workers. However, I say again that we were faced with an emergency situation requiring action on the part of myself, as the Minister, representing the Government in the interests of the public generally.
- (2) I am not sure how much more it would be; but I will find out the answer and pass it to the member in writing.

COURTS: LEGAL AID COMMISSION

Funds

8. The Hon. J. M. BERINSON, to the Attorney General:

- (1) Has the Attorney General noted the concern expressed by the Director of the Western Australian Legal Aid Commission that a new Commonwealth formula could result in a substantial reduction of funds for this State?
- (2) Has the Government received any official confirmation of the subsequent assurances attributed to the Federal Attorney General that no reduction is contemplated?
- (3) If not, what is the Government's understanding of the present position?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

I am indebted to the member for supplying details of these questions, the answers to which follow—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The funding of the Legal Aid Commission is the subject of a current agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments. There is no suggestion, so far as I am aware, of any likelihood of the Commonwealth funding being reduced. In answer to the concern expressed by the Director of the Western Australian Legal Aid Commission, the Commonwealth Attorney General has indicated that the Commonwealth Government does not contemplate any reduction.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

Federal and State: Variation

9. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Chief Secretary:

I draw his attention to the fact that the number of people enrolled on the State electoral roll is substantially fewer than the number of people enrolled for the State on the Federal roll and ask—

- (1) Is he concerned about this discrepancy?

- (2) What action, if any, does he propose in order to achieve full enrolment in this State?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I intend to uphold the determination in regard to this matter that has been made by the coalition parties in this State, and I intend to stick quite definitely to the proposition that the State of Western Australia will provide and complete its own electoral rolls.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You have not said how!

ELECTORAL ROLL

State Enrolments

10. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Chief Secretary:

Is he satisfied that the State Electoral Office is doing all in its power to ensure that the State electoral roll includes all eligible voters within the State of Western Australia?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE replied:

The State Electoral Office is very diligent in its pursuit of enrolments on the State electoral roll. The member would know, as would all members of the House, that we will always have a variation in rolls as between the Commonwealth and the State when they are conducted by separate organisations.

ELECTORAL: ROLLS

Federal and State: Variation

11. The Hon. J. M. BERINSON, to the Chief Secretary:

My question is supplementary to the two previous questions—

- (1) Accepting that one can reasonably expect a discrepancy when two separate rolls are current, how does he account for the fact that the discrepancy is always in the direction of fewer electors on the State roll than on the Commonwealth roll?

- (2) Since this is a uniform pattern throughout the State, would he not accept that this is an indication of less action by the State office than the Commonwealth office in respect of this vital activity?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The figures and the enrolments on the electoral roll are as they are.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: They could not be what they are not.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: It may well be, if the reverse was the case and the Commonwealth electoral roll had fewer enrolments than the State, a similar question would be asked.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Except that we would ask it at the Commonwealth level.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: The answer is the one I gave before; that is, this State, under the current Government, intends to maintain the right of the State to have its own electoral roll.

ELECTORAL: ROLLS

Federal and State: Variation

12. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Does he regard a variation between Commonwealth and State enrolment numbers as satisfactory?
- (2) If so, will he tell the House whether he would regard some variation as unsatisfactory and, if so, what variation he would regard as unsatisfactory?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE replied:

- (1) and (2) For a new Minister, the Opposition has had a very fair innings. I ask that the question be placed on notice.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Dead right!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Wait until tomorrow!