

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 2 August 1983

The SPEAKER (Mr Harman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

TRAFFIC

Reynolds Road: Petition

MR WILLIAMS (Clontarf) [2.16 p.m.]: I wish to present a petition which is addressed to the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. It states—

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

We, the undersigned, residents of Reynolds Road, Mount Pleasant, wish to bring to your attention the problem of through traffic speeding along our road, causing loss of life, damage to property and general harassment such as noise, inability to leave our driveways safely, etc.

The street is not designed for the speeds occurring and loss of control of vehicles is a regular hazard. Collisions at intersections are a monthly certainty plus many more near misses, making screeching brakes and property damage a constant problem.

We want to see small traffic islands at the intersections, such as those in other streets with a similar problem. We believe this is the only way to make our street safer for our children and our peace of mind.

Approaches have been made to the Melville City Council, Fremantle Police and the Commissioner for Police and copies of this Petition have been supplied to the Minister for Police and Minister for Transport.

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

The petition bears 117 signatures, and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

(See petition No. 7.)

RECREATION

Off-road Vehicles: Petition

MR BURKETT (Scarborough) [2.18 p.m.]: I wish to present a petition from the Western Australian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs (Inc.) which is addressed to the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. It states—

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

We, the undersigned, being responsible owners of Four Wheel Drive vehicles hereby petition to have a delegate from the Western Australian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs (Inc.) appointed to the Advisory Committee constituted under the Control of Vehicles (Off Road Areas) Act, 1978.

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

The petition bears 97 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

(See petition No. 8.)

LIQUOR LICENSING (MORATORIUM) BILL

Second Reading

MR PARKER (Fremantle—Minister for Employment and Administrative Services) [2.20 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In 1981 the Liquor Act was substantially amended as a result of recommendations of a Government committee of inquiry. Many of these changes proved beneficial, but the problems confronting the liquor industry have not been solved. Sections of the liquor industry are experiencing financial difficulties due to a decline in liquor consumption on licensed premises.

Throughout the State there are many centres which are considered to be oversupplied with liquor licences.

A committee of inquiry has been appointed by the Government to review the rationalisation procedures in the Liquor Act, among other matters which are of concern to the liquor industry.

On 19 March 1983 the Government announced a moratorium on the issue of certain licences and permits which would take effect from 10 April 1983.

The prior announcement of the cutoff date was to allow prospective applicants to lodge applications with the Licensing Court before the moratorium came into effect. The purpose of the Bill now before the House is to ratify and continue the moratorium.

During a period of 12 months commencing on 10 April 1983 the jurisdiction of the Licensing Court is limited so that applications for the following licences and permits cannot be heard or granted by the Licensing Court—

Hotel Licence;
Tavern Licence;
Limited Hotel Licence;
Winehouse Licence;
Cabaret Licence;
Restaurant Licence;
Club Licence;
Store Licence;
Wholesale Licence;
Entertainment Permit;
Late Delivery Permit;
Lodgers Permit;
Unlicensed Club Permit.

The Bill provides for exceptions to the limitations placed on the jurisdiction of the court during the moratorium period. These exceptions include—

extraordinary applications referred to the court by the Minister;
applications for a licence by the holder of a provisional certificate for a licence or the removal of a licence;
applications for the removal of a licence; and, the transfer of licences between persons.

Clause 5 of the Bill allows the moratorium to be extended by Order-in-Council beyond 10 April 1984 either in relation to those licences or permits already mentioned, or specifically in relation only to those licences or permits prescribed in the order.

The Bill has the support of all sections of the liquor industry, and I commend it to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Hassell (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

PARKS AND RESERVES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR McIVER (Avon—Minister for Lands and Surveys) [2.24 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill makes two principal amendments to the Parks and Reserves Act, both relating to offences.

Under the Act an appointed board of parks and reserves may make by-laws, with the approval of the Governor, with respect to parks and reserves committed to them. Among other things a board may make by-laws relating to the regulation of traffic and rules to be observed in respect of vehicles on roads within parks and reserves.

The Kings Park Board, as a duly constituted board, has adopted by-laws which include making it an offence to drive a vehicle on a road in Kings Park in excess of 40 kilometres per hour. Modified penalties are provided.

The policing of this by-law is carried out by a ranger or other authorised person appointed by the board and in the exercise of this function the board has used a radar gun of the type approved by the Minister for Police pursuant to section 98A of the Road Traffic Act.

Acceptance of evidence obtained as a result of using the radar gun has been legally questioned however. The basis of the challenge is, firstly, that nowhere in the Parks and Reserves Act does it state that such evidence obtained with an approved type of apparatus is to be taken as *prima facie* evidence—as with the Road Traffic Act—and, secondly, that section 98A of the Road Traffic Act, refers to a patrolman, meaning a patrolman as defined under that Act.

Use of a radar gun for enforcing the speed limit in the park is favoured by the Kings Park Board both from the point of view of established accuracy and also to avoid the need for “pacing” vehicles. The sight of the radar gun in operation is also a deterrent to other potential offenders. It would not be practicable for police patrolmen to take over this function from the rangers.

The traffic branch of the Police Department has issued certificates of proficiency for the board rangers to use the equipment.

The first amendment, therefore, provides for the use of approved speed measuring equipment by a ranger or other authorised person to ascertain the speed at which a vehicle was moving and that the evidence so obtained, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, shall be *prima facie* evidence of the speed in any proceedings for an offence against any by-law made under the Act.

The amendment will provide a consistent approach to the use of speed measuring equipment and will not alter the position in relation to the offence itself.

It is acknowledged that the amendment primarily will serve the Kings Park Board and, in this re-

gard, use by other boards will be a matter for individual management decision, dependent, of course, on the board's first having an approved by-law providing for a speeding offence.

The second amendment seeks to extend the period in which proceedings against offences can be commenced from the present three months after committing the offence to six months.

Deletion of the three month limitation currently prescribed enables the application of section 51 of the Justices Act 1902 which in turn results in a six month limitation period as for most other simple offences. Not only does this provide additional consistency with other proceedings, but also it affords flexibility to boards of parks and reserves which, surprisingly, has potential benefits to the offender as well as the board.

Experience by the Kings Park Board, for example, has shown that the availability of the extended period will—

- permit a more reasonable time for an offender to offer an explanation before commencing proceedings;
- allow concessions in the time to pay modified penalties before commencing proceedings;
- ease pressure on Crown Law Department officers processing proceedings;
- improve public relations through the greater flexibility available.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Laurance.

GENERAL INSURANCE BROKERS AND AGENTS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Minister for Consumer Affairs) [2.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to alter the means by which members of the Insurance Brokers Licensing Board are appointed.

The Bill contains two proposals to alter the method of appointment. The board as presently constituted has a member who is to be nominated for appointment by the Insurance Council of Australia Ltd., and who is a person conversant with the business and operations of insurers and insurance agents. This provision, therefore, gives a direct right to the Insurance Council to nominate a particular person for appointment to that board. This Bill proposes to alter that provision slightly to provide for the Insurance Council of Australia to nominate for appointment a panel of names

from which the Minister will select a person for appointment as member of the board.

As well, the Act presently provides that a person who is a licensed insurance broker, and who is elected for appointment by licensed insurance brokers, shall be a member of the board. Recently at the expiration of the term of the first person appointed to fill this position, it was discovered that there were very few licensed insurance brokers who were natural persons who were eligible for appointment to the board. In fact, of the 70-odd persons licensed as insurance brokers, almost all are companies and, therefore, not entitled to representation in their own right on the board. The person occupying this position previously, while a director of a licensed insurance broker, is not licensed in his own right and was not even eligible for reappointment.

This Bill proposes, therefore, that this provision be amended and provide for the National Insurance Brokers Association of Australia to submit a panel of names from which the Minister may select a person for appointment. The National Insurance Brokers Association of Australia is a national body representative of all insurance brokers and was not constituted at the time of enactment of this legislation.

These provisions will ensure that the problem inherent in the present provision is no longer apparent and will not require the person appointed to the board to be licensed in his own right, although he will be required to be conversant with the business and operations of insurance brokers.

The Government believes these amendments will provide greater flexibility to make appropriate and suitable appointments to the Insurance Brokers Licensing Board and ensure that the current difficulty in relation to the insurance broker member is overcome.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Thompson.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 26 July.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Leader of the Opposition) [2.32 p.m.]: This Bill will provide \$1.1 million from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$80 million from accredited General Loan Funds, and \$60 million from the Treasury to make temporary advances to maintain existing services in the State. The Opposition has no objection to this Bill, and will support it as is normal. However, this does not preclude us from making comments during the second reading

stage, and members opposite are aware of this position.

I bring two or three points to the attention of the House because little relevance has been given to them by the media in recent times. I make the point again that the admitted \$14.2 million Budget deficit by the Premier was made before his taking into account the \$20 million transferred to statutory authorities and the \$37 million earned in 1982-83, but transferred to the 1983-84 Budget. In fact, in most areas, the Treasury is in a better position now than I have ever seen it. As a matter of fact, I cannot recollect an amount of \$37 million being transferred from one year to the next for the purpose of capital works for the following year. I make that point because members opposite have said on several occasions that Treasury was left in a poor position. In fact, it was not and it was strange to hear the Premier say in this House last week that the reason he had increased charges was the parlous position in which the Treasury was left.

The Premier claims the deficit is \$14.2 million and the Deputy Premier has said the amount that will be obtained from increased charges will be \$145 million. If, as the Premier said, the reason for the increased charges was the \$14.2 million deficit, he has cheated every person who has paid accounts for electricity, gas, and water by \$10 to every \$1 of the suggested deficit. The Premier might like to comment on that aspect at a later stage. I am simply stating what he has said.

Mr Brian Burke: I will comment now. The SEC does not impinge upon the CRF. They are different accounts.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Premier said that his Government would not increase charges, but he now blames the increased charges on the \$14.2 million deficit.

Mr Brian Burke: That is another argument.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is what the Premier said.

Mr Brian Burke: The promise that we would not increase charges is one argument. What I am trying to get from you is how you can relate the SEC to the CRF.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am referring to the comments the Premier made; I am not referring to fact. If the Premier says the comments are wrong, he is arguing against himself and saying they were wrong which, in fact, they were. I will not carry on any further because I have made my point and I hope that members realise the fact that the \$14.2 million deficit, as admitted by the Premier, was not the reason for the increase in charges and taxes in the State.

I refer now to a matter concerning the member for Morley-Swan in regard to the hours, etc., of this Chamber this year. In previous years we have had consensus by way of a small committee which arranged the sitting hours and changes to the timetable, etc., of this House. Last year I sat on that committee with the member for Karrinyup, the member for Perth, and the member for Welshpool. Members of the committee worked well together and made changes which were to the advantage of this House. I believe that now the Government is trying to trample over the Opposition in order that it will not have the opportunity to debate Bills in a manner which will be advantageous and satisfactory to the community.

On 27 July, the member for Morley-Swan approached the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and advised him that the salaries Bill was to be introduced the following Tuesday and was to be debated on Wednesday. Mr Speaker, how on earth can you expect the Opposition to receive a Bill of that nature—

Mr Tonkin: That is not correct. It was Tuesday and then Thursday.

Mr O'CONNOR: According to the letter that I have seen, the days mentioned were Tuesday and Wednesday. The procedure in the past has been for the Government to give the Opposition a week's notice in relation to Bills of this kind. Is the Bill printed and ready today?

Mr Tonkin: I do not know.

Mr O'CONNOR: The member for Morley-Swan is misleading this House again. The Bill has been delayed for his own advantage because if the Bill is not printed, it cannot be introduced.

Mr Tonkin: I do not know whether it is ready.

Mr O'CONNOR: The member for Morley-Swan is a pretty inefficient Minister if he does not know that.

Mr Brian Burke: We are going to give it a second reading on Thursday. It is to be printed by then and the Opposition will have a full week to look at it before it comes back on the following Tuesday week. Were we doing what you say we are doing, it would be printed on Tuesday.

Mr O'CONNOR: We are prepared to co-operate.

Mr Tonkin: I would like to answer your comment because it is untrue. When it was put to me late last week by a reporter that it was not enough time, I had already spoken to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who said that it was complicated in areas of superannuation, etc. I said that I was prepared to consider the matter in the light of that comment. I discussed it with the Premier on

Friday and said I thought that it was far more reasonable to give you a week. It has nothing to do with the printing of the Bill. We changed our minds before we knew it would be held up with printing.

Mr O'CONNOR: I think the Opposition has shown that it is willing to co-operate.

Mr Tonkin: You were not here on Thursday. I would question that.

Mr O'CONNOR: Last week the Government asked us to handle the Firearms Amendment Bill and we co-operated immediately. It went through the House in one night, which is fair enough. In relation to Bills of that nature, we have no objection, but with Bills that are of importance to the community it is necessary for us to talk to the community and I believe in these instances the Government should give the Opposition at least a week.

Mr Tonkin: I was quite prepared to change my mind and I do not remember your ever saying that you were prepared to change your mind.

Mr O'CONNOR: Maybe I have not been wrong.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to continue with his remarks.

Mr O'CONNOR: Members on this side of the House realise that some Bills are required to be debated as a matter of urgency and, if the Government is serious on this basis, we are prepared to assist and co-operate. Traditionally, there has always been one week in which to consider a major Bill and the Government should have the courtesy to make sure that the Opposition continues to have that time.

We can then go through the Bill. Members opposite know that these Bills are complicated and that we have to go through them and get advice from other people. I am asking the Government to make sure that, in future, we have ample time.

Mr Tonkin: I agree.

Mr O'CONNOR: I thank the Minister.

The other point I want to mention relates to the use of the gag. The Government has indicated it proposes to use the gag in connection with a couple of Bills. I think the guillotine possibly will be used on a salaries and wages freeze amendment Bill and an electoral Bill. It is unwise for the Government at this stage to state that it will use the guillotine, because we have given no indication that we will go on all night and day about the legislation. We want adequate time to debate it and it is not unreasonable to ask that of the Government in connection with these issues.

We have been concerned that question time in this House has been made rather farcical. Questions are not being answered in a way that allows the public of this State, the Opposition, or the Press to understand what the Government is doing. It permits the Government to hide away money it is spending extravagantly that should be drawn to the taxpayers' attention. I say this sincerely because I have a list of 29 questions I have asked this year. The answers to them are just a brush-off, to say the least.

I asked question 125 relating to appointments to the Premier's Department. The question was diverted by the Premier replying that he would be making a statement to the House in due course. That is not good enough. It is not difficult for the Premier to obtain an answer to that question so that we can see what money is being wasted in this State and tell the taxpayers who are responsible for providing it. We have a responsibility.

Mr Brian Burke: What number was it?

Mr O'CONNOR: Number 125. The answer is that the Premier will be making a statement to the House in due course. That is not the only one, and I turn now to a few others. I asked the Premier question 129 regarding persons employed by the Government who have been or are ALP members, or union officials. The question was not answered. The Premier indicated he did not keep a list of people who had ALP affiliations. I suppose that means he would not know whether Tom Butler, or McGinty, or Thomas were those sorts of people. It means we now have to ask individually about all those people to get the answers to the questions.

Mr Davies: We learned to answer questions from the previous Government.

Mr O'CONNOR: I asked question 131 which relates to new Government passenger vehicles, and the answer was that the information is being collated and a reply by letter will be directed to my office.

Mr Brian Burke: Excuse me, that answer came straight from the department. They said they could not answer it until the next day.

Mr O'CONNOR: They are the sorts of answers we are getting, and I believe they are totally unsatisfactory.

Mr Brian Burke: That one is not. It takes a long time to collate that information.

Mr O'CONNOR: Okay, I accept that. I do not want to take up a lot of time on this subject.

I asked a question regarding the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet, and the provision of a political adviser. The answer was that the Prem-

ier would be making a statement to the House in due course. I cannot believe it is difficult for the Premier to get information regarding the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet. It is just a fob-off, and, without doubt, the question should have been answered.

I asked question 135 regarding overseas visits by Ministers and the Premier replied that I should put my concern in writing, and name specifics. He would not give the people of the State any detail on travel by Ministers.

Mr Brian Burke: That is what your Government did.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am talking about the Premier's Government.

Mr Brian Burke: You did the same thing.

Mr O'CONNOR: I asked a question about the balance of Government trust funds and was given a smart answer. Now the question will have to be asked again. A question was asked of Mr Bryce about the breakdown of the \$200 000 cost of redecorating his office. The answer was that the office was not refurbished. I ask the Premier now: Will he tell me and the public that no alterations or work have been done on the Deputy Premier's office?

Mr Brian Burke: That is absolutely true.

Mr O'CONNOR: None at all?

Mr Brian Burke: None to my knowledge whatever. I think you are mixed up because the Deputy Premier has been shifted into the office made up for the director general.

Mr O'CONNOR: No money has been spent?

Mr Brian Burke: On the director general's office.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is where the Deputy Premier is now?

Mr Brian Burke: Yes, but that is not his office.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Premier has defeated his argument.

Mr Brian Burke: He has shifted to the eighth floor. I did not answer the question because implicit in it was the statement that \$200 000 was being spent. I was not going to agree to that under any circumstances because it is wrong.

Mr Clarko: It is \$198 000.

Mr Brian Burke: No, it is \$124 000. I will tell you shortly about some of the money you spent on offices.

Mr O'CONNOR: These are the ways in which the Government is avoiding answering questions to which the public are entitled to answers.

Question 200 was asked of the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services. It related to the \$55 000 cost of refurbishing an office. That figure was given in the Press. A smart answer was given to that question, and not the type of answer one would expect from a member of the Government. A further question—201—was asked regarding appointments to the office of Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet. The answer given was that the Premier will be making a statement to the House in due course.

Question 202 to the Minister representing the Minister for Industrial Relations related to new appointments, wages, and cost of equipment. The question was diverted with an answer which said that the Premier would make a statement to the House in due course.

These answers are not difficult to obtain. They should have been given to the House so the public know what is happening, instead of the Government's being secretive about the substantial amounts of money it has been spending to its own advantage in different areas.

Question 203 to the Minister Assisting the Minister for Economic and Social Development related to appointments, wages, and the cost of equipment. The answer was that the Premier will be making a statement to the House in due course. The same answer was given in relation to question 204 which sought information about ministerial advisers. A question in three parts was asked of the Minister for Consumer Affairs, and related to the appointment of Mr Shea.

Mr Tonkin: The Minister for which?

Mr O'CONNOR: Consumer Affairs.

Mr Tonkin: Mr Who?

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Shea.

Mr Tonkin: What has he to do with the Minister for Consumer Affairs?

Mr O'CONNOR: I am sorry, the question was to the Premier. I skipped one relating to a survey of food prices.

Question 267 to the Premier asked about the appointment of Mr Shea.

Mr Tonkin: Dr Shea?

Mr O'CONNOR: It says here, "of Shea". The answer to part (4) of the question which relates to the cost of his appointment was diverted. We are entitled to get this information. Is it because the Government is afraid and is trying to cover up?

Mr Brian Burke: No, it is not.

Mr O'CONNOR: Then why does not the Government answer?

The answer to question 270 says that in due course the Premier will make a statement to the House regarding the list of duties and salaries of various positions. Question 271 sought a list of various persons on the Government payroll. No answer has yet been received. Question 272 to the Deputy Premier relates to the designation of staff and the answer was that the Premier will make a statement to the House in due course. Another question to the Minister for Fuel and Energy received the same answer. I request that this document be tabled so that members of the Press can see what is happening with regard to these appointments.

Mr Hassell: That is only the beginning of the story.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is right.

The SPEAKER: It is in order to table the document for the information of members.

Mr O'CONNOR: It shows very clearly that this is a secretive Government. It has plenty to hide and it is not prepared to come out and give us and the public of the State information to which we and they are entitled.

I say again, guillotine procedures are not required in this House. Reduced hours should be achieved by consultation, as has occurred in the past. As I say, we had a committee of four—the member for Perth, the member for Welshpool, the member for Karrinyup, and me—deciding the hours. Of course, the membership of such a committee could be altered, but we should have two members from each side discussing variations to hours. The committee could then seek agreement with the various parties.

I make a further request that we be given ample time to debate legislation, although the Government has assured us of some co-operation on this matter. If question time is to be cut down, if the guillotine procedures are to be used, and if the hours are reduced so we have insufficient time to debate Bills, that is an infringement of the rights of this House. I ask the Government to take these matters into account. Mr Speaker, I request permission to table these documents.

(The documents were tabled for the information of members.)

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [2.51 p.m.]: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, Mr Premier.

During this debate I would like firstly to comment on a matter of concern to Western Australia and to businesses throughout Western Australia, and secondly to refer to a matter of concern to the

electors of Murdoch and their safety, and my own safety, as I am one of those people.

Firstly, the Government will remember the attitude of the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Economic Development and Technology and in particular the commitment his Government gave prior to the election, that it would support Western Australian companies tendering for work with State Government agencies, and with companies tendering on major resource development projects.

Firstly, while in Opposition the present Government was very critical of the fact that we, in Government, were not vigilant enough in the supervision of this matter; that is, the amount of work going to local companies. Secondly, members will recall that great play was made of a particular carpet contract and the then Opposition's criticism was that not enough preference was given by us as Government to Western Australian companies. Thirdly—and the Deputy Premier was very critical in this area—the then Opposition said that we did not give enough support to high technology companies. Finally, the then Opposition said we were paying too much attention to companies which were establishing an office in Western Australia only for the purpose, so called, of gaining Western Australian recognition, and hence work classed as Western Australian.

Before I go on to give my reasons for believing that the commitment is now in doubt, and before I outline some details for the Government in an area where I hope it will soon take action, I would like to review our performance in Government in that area. I would like to refer members of the Government to question 261 which I asked last week. In the reply to that question they will see that the North-West Shelf Gas project has seen a commitment to Western Australian companies of 61 per cent of the project at this stage—in the order of \$800 million.

Mr Davies: Does that mean all the goods were manufactured here or—

Mr MacKINNON: That means that the goods were actually manufactured here, or the work completed here; I will come to that definition later and explain it to the Minister and the Government.

Secondly, our approach during all that time was to examine the details of any complaints we received about these contracts. Several complaints were received by us that we were not being vigilant enough in ensuring the local content of each contract. We considered each complaint in detail, and we replied in detail to each complaint.

Thirdly, we ensured that where possible there was close liaison with the design engineer between Government and industry in regard to each particular project. We were working also to ensure, especially in the area of Government contracts, that the specifications—which are translated into tender documents—did not exclude local companies. As members are aware, a tendering company could easily be designed out of a project order by the mere drawing up of the specifications.

Fourthly, we had knowledge of the work industry in Western Australia could complete and I endeavoured to try to gain a good knowledge of the workplace by making personal visits to companies throughout Western Australia to ascertain exactly what they were committed to and involved in so that hopefully, we could ensure their best participation. We endeavoured as far as possible to ensure that the major contractors had a good knowledge of the workplace and we spent a good deal of money providing reports to the companies involved, especially in the engineering sphere in this State. We had plans in hand to improve on that process.

In view of all of that, I would like members to examine the Government's performance relating to a specific contract in this area. I express concern at the Government's attitude and the Premier's attitude in particular to the examination of a particular complaint and raise points which I hope will be seen as constructive criticism. I hope in this way that we can help future contractors in their efforts to obtain more work for Western Australians, because if our industry gains contracts, that means jobs.

The contract to which I refer happens to be a tender for the Dampier-Perth natural gas pipeline project and it is for the instrumentation equipment relating thereto. As I understand it, that means the contract is for the supply, installation, and commissioning of the instrumentation to measure pressure and temperature in the line. I am advised the contract has a value of approximately \$1.75 million to \$2 million, but as most members are aware, extras would be added to that contract in the course of its completion. The total value of the contract will probably turn out to be between \$3 million and \$4 million.

I have given the contract and tender background so that members have an idea of exactly what was involved in it. As I understand it, 64 Western Australian companies attempted to pre-qualify. Four companies were actually accepted, and of those four, one only was Western Australian owned and located.

Mr Davies: Who is responsible for that? Does the SEC do it itself, or does the Government oversee it?

Mr MacKINNON: This is taken care of by the engineers consulting to the SEC—Fluor/Maunsell. As I understand it the SEC, through Fluor/Maunsell sent out all the tender documentation asking companies to tender. It is an area of concern to me that the tender documentation was sent out on 9 May together with a covering letter—so this information would have been received by the companies on 10 or 11 May—but tenders closed on 10 June which was a very short period of time in which to prepare a complicated tender. As I have seen, the tender document of the company to which I am referring is approximately two inches thick and it required a great deal of work by that company. I believe this short period of time in which to submit the tender caused some of the problems. This is a matter to which the Government should address itself, particularly as the SEC, as I understand it, following the submission of the tender on 10 June, made various approaches to the company, both by letter and by telephone, in relation to queries regarding the contract. I hasten to add—and I will come back to this point later—no effort was made to contact the principals of the company to ask them to come in to discuss details of the contract. No effort was made either by representatives of Fluor/Maunsell or by senior officers of the SEC to visit the premises of this company to determine what it could and could not do.

Subsequently, as I understand it, the company received advice that the tender was to be let to Foxboro Pty. Ltd., an American company. I am not critical of that company or of its operation, but merely of the way in which the tender and the complaint were dealt with.

Subsequent to that date, on 18 July, the company forwarded a telex to the Premier, and a copy of the telex was sent to the Leader of the Opposition and to me because the company was known to me in my previous position as the Minister for Industrial, Commercial and Regional Development. The telex expressed the company's concern to the Premier about the fact that the decision had been made. I give the Premier credit where it is due; his response to the telex is dated 22 July, so at least it was a prompt reply. However, I am critical that such an important contract for such an important young Western Australian company was given only scant regard in a letter which was just short of a page long. Obviously, the company was not satisfied by the answers.

I will now go through the points made by the Premier in the letter to which I have referred, to

explain the points made to me by the company. The company is called Control Engineering W.A. Pty. Ltd. and it is 100 per cent Western Australian owned, as I indicated previously. In the Premier's response to the company, he said—

The successful tenderer also has the required experience relevant to the work required for this project.

The principal of the company, the managing director (Mr Jim Abbot) wrote subsequently to the Premier. The letter is dated yesterday, and the Premier has not yet received it. The letter refers to the company Foxboro Pty. Ltd., which was the successful tenderer, as follows—

Foxboro do not have an installation and commissioning division but are a marketing company who subcontract all major installation work. Control Engineering specialise in this work and, in fact, are the only specialist instrument installation company in W.A.

The implication behind the Premier's comment is that Mr Abbot's company does not have sufficient experience. I will outline the lengths to which Mr Abbot has gone in an effort to ensure that the company had sufficient experience. Firstly, he entered into a joint venture with overseas principals in an effort to ensure that he had the right backup and expertise. One of those companies was IMI Overseas, which is a subsidiary of ICI—hardly a company that could be said to lack experience or credibility. The second company with which he entered into a joint venture was Rosemount Instruments, a company not known to me, but one which has been involved, apparently, in the installation of transmitting equipment. The company has been used worldwide on every major pipeline project and, in fact, on every major Australian pipeline project. In addition, the principal of Control Engineering has been involved in installing this type of control system at the BP Refinery in Western Australia. It seems, then, that the local company should not have missed out on experience; it would be hard to accept that that was the reason.

Let us examine the second reason the Premier gave for the company's missing out. In his letter, the Premier said—

The State Energy Commission also advised that the successful tenderer has a sizeable Western Australian office from which this project will be engineered and managed and in fact, was able to offer a Western Australian content comparable to that offered by your tender.

That point brings to mind some criticism levelled at us as a Government by both the Premier and

the Deputy Premier. In his letter, the Premier used the words "has a sizeable Western Australian office". I remember the Premier being critical of us in Government by saying, "Here you are, letting a contract to a company which, in effect, is only a Western Australian office". In our case, of course, that never occurred. Here we have the Premier saying exactly the opposite of the words that he had mouthed to us only months prior to that.

Let us consider whether the Western Australian content is comparable. Firstly, Control Engineering is the only company in this field with a sizeable local workshop of its own. I am advised that has not been checked by any of the engineers working on the tender. Secondly, while the local content in this case may have been comparable, I am advised that no check was made, particularly by the engineers, that the local content specified by the company was, in fact, correct. If I am correct in my assessment, a close examination would have indicated that the local content has been under-estimated by the Western Australian company. That is a mistake made by the company; I am not blaming the Government for that mistake. However, it appears that more vigilance was needed; more strenuous efforts should have been made to assist the local company.

A licensing agreement has been entered into by the company with an overseas manufacturer. Had the tender been successful, the company would have assembled the control mechanisms for this contract. As a logical next step, it would then have entered into the manufacture of the instruments in Western Australia. In itself, that would have tremendous benefits.

The question of the Western Australian content highlights the fact that very little, if anything, was done to check if the content was correct. If it was not checked in the case of the local manufacturer, I doubt if it was checked in the case of the international companies that were successful. I believe the Government has a responsibility to check on the local content.

The third point made by the Premier was as follows—

I share your disappointment at being an unsuccessful tenderer for this project. However, the State Energy Commission has advised me that, of the four tenders received, your tender was the most expensive and did not offer special benefit to warrant recommendation over the other lower priced tenders.

That calls a couple of points into question. Was the price within the 10 per cent preference offered by the Commission to local tenderers? It is hard

to know, because I do not know what was the winning tender. The Government has a responsibility to check that and advise the House whether the State Energy Commission is still operating under the price preference clause. If not, was any check made to ensure that apples were being compared with apples? Was Foxboro's tender similar to that of Control Engineering? Did Foxboro include equipment that was cheaper or inferior in some way to that of Control Engineering? What did Control Engineering include in its tender which meant that it was not competitive? Was any assessment made of the future benefits for Western Australia if Control Engineering won the tender?

The exercise calls into question the Government's sincerity. It made a statement last year about its commitment to ensuring local content and local participation by Western Australian companies in resource development projects. The points of concern warrant better than a less-than-one-page response from the Premier to Control Engineering. They warrant investigation from the point of view of the company. If the Government has a commitment to high technology industry, here is a classic example of a high technology company which warrants support. It warrants more than a few phone calls from the consulting engineer to see whether it had a role to play in the future development of this State. It is important that this is recognised, because obviously the company will tender for future work on this project. If it is given the same treatment next time, the same thing will happen.

I query the shortness of the tender period. Why was the company given less than a month to complete its documentation? Why were no visits made to the company to check on its ability to perform the contract? Why was no explanation given to the company as to the meaning of the preference clause? Why was it not assisted to improve its local content, if possible, bearing in mind that it was the only Western Australian-based company involved?

Thirdly, the situation questions the Premier's pre-election commitments in an area in which he was very critical previously.

Fourthly, it brings into question the whole issue of safety. Have the stringent requirements of this tender been met by the cheapest tenderer? Is the gas pipeline a potential bomb? Does Foxboro Pty. Ltd. have adequate worldwide experience in the installation of these major systems to give the commission confidence that it has made the right decision? I hope so.

Fifthly, this situation calls into question the Deputy Premier's fixation with his visit overseas

and his grand plans for new industries. In my view, the Deputy Premier should concentrate initially on encouraging and stimulating the development of local industry. It is best to look after one's own backyard, before gallivanting around the world.

I raise these questions and give you, Sir, examples of where, since coming to power, this Government has failed miserably to tackle any problem which has occurred in relation to industry.

The examples are as follows: Phillips-Merredin does not have a commitment from this Government. A private person has taken over the company. The Government has given no commitment whatsoever to continue to support that company in any way.

By its limited commitment to the Manjimup cannery, a commitment which is designed to last only 12 months, the Government has foreshadowed that that company will probably be the next one on the chopping block.

Esperance Meat Exporters Ltd. is another company from which support has been withdrawn by the Government. Vickers Hadwa had to close. All that the Government indicated is that the relevant department is looking at the matter.

Finally, we have the situation surrounding BHP at Koolyanobbing. Here we see the Government's best efforts to rip some more money off BHP for that project. What is to be done about the situation? As a result of prices control instituted by this Government, and policed by the Minister for Consumer Affairs, major oil companies in this State have deferred decisions to make further investments in this State because of the limitations placed on their profits.

That is hardly the right sort of decision to encourage the economic climate, and the situations I have outlined do not represent the sorts of decisions which encourage employment. Where we should see a commitment to local enterprise and industry, we in fact see it being sold out.

Finally, where the Government has made a commitment, it has done so in non-productive areas. I have given a classic example where the Government could have made a commitment to a small, local company—a company with good prospects for future growth which for a relatively small investment would pay handsome dividends by creating job opportunities in the future—but because it was so preoccupied with the reopening of the Fremantle-Perth railway line, which will lose money for evermore, it failed to take this opportunity.

The Government has made a commitment to its advisers which will cost well in excess of the amount required to meet the contract to which I have just referred and those advisers will in no way be productive to the State; they will merely consume.

We see a Government committed to the legalisation of two-up which will not increase State revenue, yet here we have a company languishing because it does not have a contract. The Government has made a commitment to prices control, tobacco tax, salary cuts, and office improvements. None of those commitments could be said to be productive, nor will they encourage investment in the private enterprise sector, which is so essential to the future of the State.

If the tender has not been lost completely, the position should be re-examined, and the company should at least be given a fair go. All it asks is that the tender be examined properly and the Government make a fair assessment of the position and give a commitment that, in the light of the points I made earlier, the position will be considered carefully.

I urge the Premier to take up that matter with his ministerial colleague and provide a reasonable response to the company. An answer should be provided to this company, which has written to the Government and has expended many hundreds of man hours trying to ensure that it, as a Western Australian, high technology company, can participate in the future development of this State.

I turn now to the second area I shall raise, which concerns the portfolio of the Minister for Transport. The Minister has examined the position in relation to a set of traffic lights at an intersection in my electorate. I thank the Minister for visiting the area and looking at the position.

I shall give the House a brief history of the matter. In August 1982 it became apparent that a problem surrounded the intersection at Karel and Parry Avenues. I wrote to the previous Minister for Transport (Mr Rushton) asking him to consider the problem as quickly as possible.

The Minister's response—I think it was a reasonable one at the time—was that the Government, through the department, would review the position at the intersection following the opening of the freeway to South Street and the development of Karel Avenue into a dual carriageway in due course.

As a consequence of the opening of the dual carriageway and the freeway to South Street, I wrote to the new Minister for Transport in March, pointing out that Leach Highway had

been opened to South Street and had made a tremendous difference to traffic flow. I indicated also that the dual carriageway in Karel Avenue was almost completed and problems would occur soon in that area.

Problems did arise there and, as I understand it, two children were involved in accidents. One was knocked off a bicycle and another was involved in a traffic accident as a pedestrian.

From personal experience and the experience of my secretary and friends in negotiating that intersection at peak traffic times, I indicated to the Minister that something needed to be done about the matter quickly. Not only did I hold that view, but also it was shared by many community groups which wrote to the Minister and to me drawing attention to the dangerous situation in the area.

As a consequence, I invited the Minister to visit the site; however, he indicated the intersection would be placed for consideration on the 1983-84 programme and he felt that would suffice.

I then told the Minister I did not believe that was sufficient and still thought he needed to inspect the intersection, bearing in mind that, if one says a matter is due for consideration in the 1983-84 programme, it could well be considered in June 1984 or July 1983.

The Minister then inspected the site and he would be aware that, on a rainy Friday morning, a large number of people turned out. I believe that indicates the very real concern of the people about this problem.

Following that visit a couple of things happened. In the week following the Minister's visit, the Melville City Council installed traffic lights at the intersection which improved the traffic flow and safety throughout the area. The council is to be commended for acting so quickly and the steps taken have made a significant difference and have improved road safety there.

However, following the Minister's visit the Government's reaction has not been as prompt as that of the council. I personally followed up the matter with the Minister by writing a letter dated 20 June. On 1 July the council responded to the Main Roads Department to the effect that it had completed all the work the department wanted it to do. However, on 20 July I received a letter from the Minister saying, "When the council completes its work, we will consider getting on with the job". That is just not good enough.

On 6 July the council advised the Main Roads Department of the position and two weeks later the Minister signed a letter indicating that he had not yet received that advice. Today I checked the

position and, in my view, the Minister should contact his department immediately and check the exact state of affairs in relation to the intersection.

Many people, including me, are sick of playing Russian roulette at the intersection. We are sick of taking our lives in our hands almost daily when crossing it. It is time the Minister stopped playing trains and started getting on with the real job of administration and making sure the people in my electorate are afforded the safety they deserve.

MR PETER JONES (Narrogin) [3.19 p.m.]: I shall comment on two or three matters in this debate. Firstly, I turn to the amount of work that is in progress within the Public Works Department. I do not know whether the passage of this Bill will allow some of that work to be contracted out, but it appears that is necessary.

I have asked a question about a manual arts block at the Narrogin Agricultural College. The position there is disgraceful so far as the Public Works Department or the Education Department is concerned. I am not sure which department is to blame.

The main building has been constructed so far, but no further work has been done on it. Although it is a manual arts block, a tender for its wiring was not included in the original specifications.

It is now the subject of separate tendering arrangements, but this is more than a year, in fact 15 months, after the original commitment to the building. If this new arrangement will allow the building to proceed more quickly, I will be quite happy. But I have been told that the building's completion will depend upon available funds and whether an acceptable tender is received. I do not know what will happen if no acceptable tender is received. Perhaps we will have our own Stonehenge; a half-completed building.

Mr Wilson: It happened under the former Government.

Mr PETER JONES: I am talking about the administration of the Public Works Department; I am making the point that it is not necessarily the result of the Minister's negligence. However, this matter does fall within the Minister's province now.

Mr Wilson: And the former Minister.

Mr PETER JONES: I am making that point.

Mr Wilson: Not very clearly.

Mr PETER JONES: The same situation applies to other works that have been committed. Can these other works at least be progressed in a way that will allow the jobs flowing from the work on the buildings to be enjoyed by the sub-

contractors and others who will be employed and who will benefit from the funding?

In relation to another job, I have been told that the file has gone from the Public Works Department to the Superannuation Building and is awaiting the personal approval of the Premier for work to proceed. I do not know whether that is so, but I will discuss this with the Minister afterwards.

If this is the procedure being followed nowadays, let it work so that the funds are made available and put into the system as quickly as possible in order that these projects can get under way.

The next topic I wish to raise relates to transport. The Minister has indicated to me the likelihood that road train operations in the great southern area will be expanded. He said that officers in his department were having discussions with local government authorities and various people in the region about the state of the roads and what their attitudes might be to the expansion of road train operations and further approvals to conduct road train operations through a wider area than currently is the case.

The operations on the Albany Highway were the subject of a report commissioned for May but which was delayed for various reasons. I would like an undertaking from the Minister that discussions with the local authorities will take place before the Government makes a decision. The Government and the Minister made a clear promise that discussions about these various initiatives would be held with the appropriate local authorities and community groups. We want to make certain that these discussions take place before any decision is made in order that there may be input—I believe there has been some input already—and some understanding of what the Government is thinking.

The next point to which I shall refer relates to areas of land in the Yilgarn Shire known as the Yilgarn "special leases". These leases cover land on which farming and grazing operations are conducted. However, the people involved are restrained from holding freehold title because the Government departments associated with this land, and particularly the Mines Department, previously would not agree to the land's becoming freehold.

Previously, the long-standing policy of the Mines Department was based on the fact that extensive mineralisation occurred in the Yilgarn area and therefore the exploitation of that mineralisation should not be placed at risk by the possibility of the land's becoming freehold. This situ-

ation existed for a very long time even though other areas of land were opened up for settlement and agricultural development.

Advice given to me did not indicate any great difficulty would be encountered if the land were to be freeholded; the capacity to farm and otherwise operate in the area, whether on a specialised grazing lease or not, would not be affected. This did not matter at all until comparatively recent times.

What brought the matter to a head was the financial difficulty being experienced by people in increasing farming areas there, as a result of successive dry years and poor crops, which meant the people involved had to engage in considerable fund raising in order to maintain their agricultural enterprises. Last year approaches were made to the Government to have the Mines Department release its restraint on these areas of land. The chain of events is very lengthy, so I will not go into it all now.

The simple fact is that there was no justification whatsoever for the Mines Department to retain its veto over the freehold of the land, because the present Mining Act classifies this land as private land. It makes no difference whether it is freeholded; it would not affect the capacity of the occupier to withhold or to give consent to exploration activities.

Mr Cowan: At least the department has the capacity to terminate the lease.

Mr PETER JONES: That is right.

I discussed this matter with officers of the Mines Department and asked them to conduct a review. The review resulted in the department's geological survey branch wanting to retain its power of veto and to not allow the Lands and Surveys Department to freehold the land whenever it received applications.

The system had been that an occupier could apply to the Lands and Surveys Department, which would then ask other Government departments whether they opposed or agreed to the application. The Mines Department would always say, "No". I felt this was no longer appropriate or fair, particularly after I had received indications that the banks—and, indeed, I checked this with a bank at the time—were very sceptical about making financial advances to certain occupiers of the land because the people involved were not in a position to offer sufficient security for a loan. In other words, the basis on which the land was currently held was not classified as sufficient tenure. Indeed, the tenure in some cases was just three months. The leases varied, but in most cases tenure was very fragile.

The matter came to a head earlier this year after the review had been conducted. A meeting was called by the Yilgarn Shire Council and was held at Southern Cross on 16 February. Mr Raymon Patroni, on behalf of the people in the region—the landholders—together with the President of the Yilgarn Shire Council, and others, put forward all the information that had been collected. This was discussed by the various people present including the Assistant Under-Secretary for Mines and me, and at the conclusion of the meeting a clear undertaking was given that the Mines Department would no longer stand in the way of the special leases being freeholded. However, that did not mean to say that this would happen automatically. The landholder would have to apply to the Lands and Surveys Department. That department had previously given an undertaking that it would place no impediment in the way of the land's being freeholded provided the Mines Department had no objection. The then Minister for Lands had confirmed this arrangement. A clear commitment was made. I put that in writing and confirmed it, and it became the policy of the Mines Department that it would place no further impediments in the path of people seeking the freehold of this land.

I was then approached by the new member for Mt. Marshall, who asked me for some background information regarding this matter, and I pursued it with the present Minister for Mines. Despite two letters sent in May, I have yet to receive an answer from him. The only acknowledgment of my request, despite my calling his office, was my receipt of a copy of a letter the Premier had written to the Leader of the Opposition.

According to the advice given to me, what happened was that on 21 March, Cabinet reviewed the decision and changed the Government's policy in order to go back to the previous situation. I have explored this matter to find out why, but that has been difficult. All I have been able to establish is that none of the existing members of Parliament for that region had the matter discussed with him; and the Yilgarn Shire Council was not approached, despite the spirit of consensus and consultation we have been told to expect. A major policy issue was dealt with without reference to the shire council concerned or the members of Parliament representing the region in question. Yet the Minister, whom I asked specifically whether members of Parliament were contacted, said that the relevant members were approached. I do not know with whom he spoke, but I am told he asked his mate, the now Minister for Transport, about this matter.

Mr Tonkin: Isn't "mate" unparliamentary?

Mr PETER JONES: If the Minister for Mines did not ask the member for Esperance-Dundas, now the Minister for Transport, about this matter, my information is wrong, but I have been told the Minister for Mines discussed with the Minister for Transport the question of a change of policy on special leases.

Mr Tonkin: Is that illegal?

Mr PETER JONES: I am not saying the Minister for Mines should not have had that discussion; I am saying he did not discuss the matter with the people directly involved; he did not discuss it with the shire or the landholders, the occupiers, who had put up such a good case. The occupiers had put a great deal of work into their submission and had collected a great deal of material, but the policy was changed on the whim of the Minister for Mines with advice from the Minister for Transport. I have been advised that this is so, but no doubt the change was made after a request was received from some mining companies which had some interest in the area and thought that those interests would be jeopardised. That is what this matter is all about.

I understand it is still being pursued by the members of Parliament representing that region, and the Yilgarn Shire Council; but, if what has occurred can be called "consensus" or "consultation", little hope exists for us. If what happened is an example of the kind of treatment we can expect to receive, again little hope exists for us.

The Minister for Transport has not denied his involvement in this issue, and if he was involved, I could not say there was anything wrong with that involvement. However, I am concerned that it was not discussed with the parties involved. The only reason given to me by the Minister for Mines for his not discussing this matter with the parties involved was that there was a long-standing policy of the Mines Department to oppose the freeholding of this land. The Government cannot hide behind one of its departments. If the Government is to use an excuse such as that to change something, or implement something else, what is the Government's policy? Is the Government not interested in the security of tenure of those who occupy this land? Is it not concerned with the difficulties some of those landholders are experiencing with financing arrangements, which were the key to the previous change in policy?

Mr McIver: Do you realise there is a moratorium on all the land releases?

Mr PETER JONES: This has nothing to do with land releases.

Mr McIver: Yes, it has.

Mr PETER JONES: We are talking about people who have had these leases for a long time. The Minister for Lands and Surveys knows that.

Mr McIver: I am surprised that you, having been a Minister in that capacity, would say those things. It is now our Government that is doing this. You had nine years to do it.

Mr Old: Will you release the land that has already been approved? You said you would.

Mr McIver: That has already been done.

Mr PETER JONES: I do not deny that point. We changed the situation, and, if there is any criticism towards us that can be justified, it would be that we did not make that change earlier. As the financial pressures on these people increased, the situation was changed, but that change seems to have received no recognition whatsoever.

I want to know what the Premier thinks of this situation, and I hope the matter will be able to be reviewed again in light of the approaches he has received from the Yilgarn Shire Council. I understand that the Minister for Mines has received submissions from the occupiers of those special leases seeking something to assist those people in order to give them security of tenure instead of their being in the position of jeopardy into which they have again been thrust.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [3.35 p.m.]: I will make some comments in relation to the proposed Western Australian development bank. The proposal was one of the backbones of the policy and platform on small business of the Labor Party at the last election. The ALP said that through the establishment of this bank long-term loan funds would be provided, and that the bank would be able to take an equity interest in different business activities.

During and since the election campaign, in advertisements and public statements, and by way of remarks made in this House the Labor Party has referred continually to this proposal.

In *The West Australian* of February this year appears the headline, "Burke promises new bank if he wins". The report states—

A NEW development bank, partly funded by State government, will be established in Western Australia if the Labor Party wins this month's State election.

The Premier said that the bank would have initial capital of \$40 million funded by the State bank and that there would be a minimum 51 per cent ownership by private Western Australian interests. One of the main reasons for the Premier's being so keen on the establishment of this bank—he says he is still keen to establish it with

Western Australian control—was that too much of the financial control of our development, whether it be of resources or in industry, was in the hands of people from the Eastern States or overseas. I support any moves the Premier will make to build up Western Australia as a financial centre within Australia, but I will get onto that matter later because in some areas he has not acted quickly enough to achieve that result.

Some time back I wrote a brief letter to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology, as follows—

A number of businesses in Western Australia have asked me as to when the Western Australian Development Bank will be established, to enable them to apply for long term loans and venture capital.

Would you please be good enough to inform me of a timetable for establishing this bank so I can forward this information on.

Till this day I have not received a reply to my request.

I have asked the Premier some questions about this matter. Last week I asked him what stage the establishment of the bank had reached, and what banks were to be involved. The Premier said in his address to the House last week—

Planning and negotiations are well in hand for the formation of a Western Australian Development Bank and a South-East Asian Marketing Corporation.

The development bank will marshal funds for the development of Western Australian industries and resources and ensure a greater share of the benefits of development remain in the State.

He went on to say—

Legislation on both these agencies, which are being developed in conjunction with the private sector, is expected during this Parliament.

When I asked about who would provide the balance of the funds for this bank, I received a pretty vague reply. I asked this question without notice—

The Premier in his address yesterday said that a Western Australian development bank would be established in conjunction with the private sector. Will any foreign banks be involved in this bank and if so from what countries?

His answer was—

I cannot answer the question because the decisions in the areas to which the member

referred have not been taken. Every possible avenue and option is being explored in order to make the WA development bank a viable and valued contributor to what we hope will be an accumulation of capital for industry and resource development in this State.

The important point was that the Government has not made decisions as to just who will fund this bank; in other words, the establishment of the bank seems to be a long way from fruition. I am concerned that the Western Australian development bank as outlined by the Premier in his policy statements and since his coming to Government will never exist. I do not think we will see a bank established with the Government putting in \$40 million, or a bank with 51 per cent ownership by private Western Australian interests—a bank aimed at getting new projects off the ground and taking equity in the State's existing industrial and resource developments.

The Government made a commitment before the election that it would take an interest in the diamond mining venture. It talked about a 15 per cent interest in Argyle. A five per cent interest in Argyle would cost initially some \$50 million which would lick up the capital of the bank they have just established; not only that, but also there would be a continuing commitment by whoever takes up that equity to put further development funds into that—

Mr Brian Burke: Are you opposed to some public equity in those sorts of projects?

Mr COURT: I am saying the Premier said he could take a 15 per cent equity in the Argyle venture.

Mr Brian Burke: No, we did not say that.

Mr COURT: The shadow Minister at the time—

Mr Brian Burke: He didn't say that, either.

Mr COURT: He did not say a specific figure, but he said around that figure.

Mr Brian Burke: Yes, he did.

Mr COURT: What was the figure?

Mr Brian Burke: You have just got it wrong. The words used were that we would "seek", not that we would "take". The amount of 15 per cent is correct, but the question I am asking is whether you are opposed in principle to some, if you like, window into those companies.

Mr COURT: I am opposed to this State Government's taking an equity interest in that sort of resource project. We cannot take a 15 per cent interest with this particular bank if that is what the capital will be limited to. The Premier says the Government put in \$40 million and some-

body else put in \$40 million; the result would be that it would cost the Government \$50 million for a 5 per cent interest, not a 15 per cent interest.

Mr Brian Burke: Why would you take it with this bank when the bank is 51 per cent privately owned? You would not be taking a 15 per cent equity, surely.

Mr COURT: I am saying it could be done.

Mr Brian Burke: The public would have only a 49 per cent equity in that 15 per cent, surely.

Mr COURT: If the Premier wants to take it that way, though, he should think about the 7.5 per cent equity that the Government is putting into the Argyle project.

Mr Brian Burke: The public would not have any equity. We would have a 49 per cent share of the equity possessed by this privately controlled bank, on your own estimation.

Mr COURT: The bank could not afford to do that. It would not have enough capital. That would be one project.

Mr Brian Burke: Why would you want to do that?

Mr COURT: I am talking about using that bank to go into all sorts of projects to help business go into resource projects and manufacturing projects.

Mr Brian Burke: The point I am making is that no-one ever spoke of that bank going into the Argyle diamond venture, or anything else. You are the only person who has mentioned it.

Mr COURT: The Premier said he would use the WA development bank to go into resource projects and I can assume only that that is one of those projects.

Mr Brian Burke: For public equity? We never said that. You should stick to the facts. The facts are in relation to venture capital—the accumulation of capital for resource development projects. There was no question about that; it was never raised.

Mr MacKinnon: How would you seek to get equity into the Argyle joint venture then? How would you plan to seek it?

Mr COURT: If the Government was to do it through a bank?

Mr Brian Burke: We said we would seek on commercial terms a 15 per cent equity. I am not saying we can afford that equity today, but as a statement of principle, I think it is an admirable one.

Mr MacKinnon: On what basis would you seek to do that?

Mr Brian Burke: A purely commercial basis.

Mr MacKinnon: Who would hold the equity?

Mr Brian Burke: That remains to be seen. It could be held by a State Government statutory authority, I suppose. If the WA development bank held it, we would not have an equity because we would own only 49 per cent of that bank.

Mr COURT: The Government would still have an equity. It would not have a controlling equity if it had 49 per cent. This gets onto another point.

Mr Brian Burke: Who is going to take in an equity?

Mr COURT: It is the same thing. What company will provide the balance of the funds required by this bank?

Mr Brian Burke: You asked this question the other day and all I said was that we would be talking to all those people who might be interested. Five months have passed and you know as well as I do that this is a very complex area and that a great many people are interested. If we were to tell you the names of everyone to whom we have spoken, you would be none the wiser and the negotiations would be prejudiced.

Mr COURT: How much does the Government want to fund with another bank, with another source outside Western Australia?

Mr Brian Burke: You have been saying 51 per cent, but I don't know where you got that figure from.

Mr COURT: I got the figure of 51 per cent from the Premier's Press release.

Mr Brian Burke: I cannot remember saying 51 per cent.

Mr COURT: All right. I will table that so the Premier will have a copy of it. The reason I am concerned and the reason I have brought up these points today is that, following the election, many business people thought that this bank would be set up pretty quickly—it was one of the Government's election promises—and that they would have access to these funds either in the form of long-term loan funds or a bank willing to take up an equity interest in their businesses.

Many businesses have actually prepared statements which they could lodge in an endeavour to obtain those funds. As the Premier is no doubt aware, businesses are always seeking avenues through which they can obtain funds for development purposes and when the word went out that this bank was going to get off the ground—the Premier made continual references to this bank; he made a reference to it last week in an address to this House—these businesses, I believe, have had their hopes built up falsely. Many have been

planning their future growth and development on the possible assistance from this source. Any student of small business problems will know the need they have for long-term funds and/or an established institution such as a bank prepared to take an equity interest in their business. This is one of their major problems. As I mentioned, I believe their hopes have been raised falsely.

Many of the businesses to which I have spoken are keen to get this type of funding, and have new projects and developments which involve the use of new technologies, and this would certainly add greatly to employment opportunities in this State. It is very easy for the Government to say, "We are going to create a bank and lend you money". We all joke about people being able to go to banks and get money. It sounds great. It certainly gets the voters in, but it is a theory which is very hard to implement in practice. I am sure the Premier is finding out now that the promises he made about this bank being established are proving difficult to achieve.

The Government should come clean and give us some sort of timetable as to when this bank will be established. The Government had all the answers before the election; it was about to get it going. At least the Government could provide a timetable so the business community would know whether or not it is a possible source of funds in the future.

I am also concerned that some bank managers might be using the possible formation of this bank as a bit of an excuse to fob off their clients. Many businesses put in an application to their banks for funds for a new development, new business, or new project and usually bank managers have the cunning ability to fob the client off somehow. I would not like bank managers to do this or to say, "I am sorry. I cannot help you with this particular application, but why don't you go down the road and try the WA development bank that we read about in the paper every day? They are going about providing funds for the same purpose for which you require funds". In other words, they will be fobbed off into a source of funding which simply does not exist.

When the Hawke Federal Labor Government came into power recently, it reversed the previous Government's decision to allow foreign banks into Australia. The result of this will be that we will continue to have a closed shop situation among our national banks here, competition will be kept down, and a valuable source of funds which would have existed with the introduction of new foreign banks no longer will be available. Our suggestion to the Government to assist industry is that it should widen the scope of the R & I Bank's fran-

chise to enable it to enter into the business of taking equity capital in Western Australian businesses and enable it also to provide long-term funds which are currently not available. I am informed that when the previous State Government announced its plans to allow such an expansion, the bank received many phone calls from interested parties willing to take up its offer and apparently many of those businesses were assisted under their existing arrangements.

If the Government wants to fulfill this election promise to establish the Western Australian development bank, it should form a division of the Rural and Industries Bank. If it would help the Government to get off the hook, it could call the bank the Western Australian development bank, but at least it should give some immediate assistance to that sector which the Government said it would help.

Many well-established small businesses in this State are preparing to enter into the fields of new technology to expand their businesses. Those are the types of companies we are talking about and if a bank such as the Rural and Industries Bank were able to become involved with these businesses, it would be of great assistance to the State and particularly would create employment opportunities.

The Government will find that, if it does establish a bank, it will be very hard for it to provide venture capital. As the Premier would know, venture capital is risk capital and banks are not normally in the business of lending to that sort of operation. They are in the business of lending funds, but they must return funds that they lend intact to their depositors with a bit of interest added.

Many people, on hearing funds are available, submit weird and wonderful business propositions. One would have to talk only to the branch manager at any bank and he could tell of the great propositions he has had put to him. What the Rural and Industries Bank could be doing is not so much putting this risk capital in, as providing funds to the secure existing businesses so that they can go ahead. There is no way that the Government would be able to establish a bank based on sentiment for the good and glory of the State. It gets back to money, not sentiment.

It would appear the Government is considering using some overseas capital in this bank, if it is to get the bank established. I would be interested to see how it gets around the country's banking laws. For the operation of a bank Australia-wide, a central Australian licence is required. This requirement does not cover State-owned banks such

as the R & I, but these State banks cannot operate over the border.

If a State bank were set up using foreign capital and if it were over 15 per cent of the equity of the bank, the approval of the Foreign Investment Review Board would be required. If the foreign investment is 40 per cent to 45 per cent of the capital, going on recent decisions of the board, the application would not be allowed to go through.

The Premier is no doubt aware of some of the problems I have mentioned, especially if overseas equity is sought in that bank.

The Premier mentioned in his statement that one of the reasons for the establishment of this bank is the promotion of Perth as a major financial centre. That is a very good goal, but the Premier must act in other directions if he wants to achieve that. He must reverse the damaging effects which have occurred to the money markets in this State since the introduction of a financial institutions duty in New South Wales and Victoria.

Revenue and turnover are being lost due mainly to the transfer of major discount security transactions to the financial institutions duty States. I hope the Premier does not fall for the temptation of the approach which is being adopted in Canberra in the introduction of a national FID because that would not help our situation in this State at all.

We have an ideal opportunity—and I know this has been put to the Premier—to take advantage of the fact that the FID has been introduced in New South Wales and Victoria, and by amending our Stamp Duty Act we would have the opportunity to promote a lot of activity in the financial markets in this State.

The Government has been very slow to operate in this area. It is an area where the Government will have to move quickly because that duty was introduced last year in the other States and the effects of it are still new. I would like the Premier to take quicker action.

Mr Brian Burke: At the same time they were introduced well before the last Government was defeated. You were a member of that Government before it was defeated, too.

Mr COURT: What, this Government?

Mr Brian Burke: Yes.

Mr COURT: I am saying they have been in operation for 15 months now.

Mr Brian Burke: A bit longer than that in Victoria, isn't it?

Mr COURT: Okay; let us say two years.

Mr Brian Burke: The point I am making is that you had 1½ years and we did not see any action.

Mr COURT: I am saying that we had to see what was going to happen after a year of operation of that particular duty. Now we can see what has happened. Instead of falling for the trick of saying, "Let us go for the national introduction of that duty", this State has an ideal opportunity to offer lower rates of duty to attract businesses.

Finance is one of those service industries which we can expand and develop. It has the opportunity to employ a lot of people and one of the things that concerns me is the large volume of funds generated in this State either through our resource projects or our trade in general, and the agricultural sector. These funds are transferred through to the Eastern States, and we do not get the opportunity to handle them.

I would like to finish my remarks by saying that the State Government should declare how and when the Western Australian development bank is to be established. I am concerned that the business community has had its hopes built up falsely. The continual publicity about the bank and the continued mention of it by the Premier makes one wonder just when this will occur.

If the Government is having problems getting the Western Australian development bank off the ground, it should be working constantly with the existing banks that are operating in this State and the other appropriate financial institutions and encouraging them to further expand their activities into the areas we are talking about; that is, these existing banks and other financial institutions should provide the small business sector with a better range of borrowing terms and conditions and, if possible, become involved and take an equity interest in some of the existing companies. We have new companies also with new ideas which will wish to come onto the scene.

The Premier should be asking the Federal Government to bring in tax incentives for those people who are prepared to put venture capital—risk capital—into these companies.

MR OLD (Katanning-Roe) [3.58 p.m.]: I would like to make a few brief comments about problems being experienced in some of the farming areas with regard to the transport situation, and to mention a few of the problems which beset some of the people in the south-eastern part of this State.

The Minister for Transport has been faced with some fairly difficult decisions early in the stewardship of his portfolio as agitation has occurred in the Lakes and Ravensthorpe areas about the

different system of carting goods from Newdegate through the Ravensthorpe and Lakes areas.

The Minister attended two meetings in the area—I was away in the east at the time—one at Ravensthorpe and one at Lake King. As a result of these meetings the decision was made that a franchise carrier would no longer exist; the area would be a free area and carriers would be able to operate from Newdegate down to Ravensthorpe and, I assume, to Hopetoun.

This, I think, has placed pressure on some parts of the community, particularly the business people in Ravensthorpe and, to a lesser degree, the farming community in the Lakes area. I do not think they realised at the time the ramifications of what they voted for; and I do not know, because I was not there, whether they were thoroughly explained to the farming community.

One of the problems farmers have concerns the carriage of wool, especially from Mt. Maddon, which is a fair haul from Newdegate, the rail head. In the past, the carriage of wool from the Mt. Maddon area and from Lake King to Newdegate has cost a flat rate of \$1.50 a bale. I believe that today it costs in the order of \$5 a bale to have the same commodity carted to the Newdegate rail head.

I took up the matter in correspondence with the Minister and asked that consideration be given to exercising the recommendation that had been made in the south-west area transport study, that a subsidy should be applied where necessary. I feel this is an excellent opportunity to apply such a subsidy.

I know there are problems throughout the State in the transport industry; and I do not believe that the onus can be put on one section of the community to make up the deficiencies that may exist elsewhere. While on this subject I ask the Minister to give it further serious consideration, because in his reply to me he wiped out any thought of a subsidy.

One of the greater problems is that it was anticipated that the Government of the day would free wool completely, as was the programme of the previous Government. I am quite confident that, had we been returned to Government, wool would have been a free commodity by now. In other words, farmers could have engaged carriers to cart their wool from the shed to the store, which is something for which they have been fighting for many years. Unfortunately, it appears that we are now going backwards and rather than freeing wool altogether there is a fear of regulation to rail of goods that are currently carted by franchised and free carriers.

Mr Blaikie: Heaven help the country people if that happens.

Mr OLD: Heaven help the country people, because they will have a lot of problems to contend with.

Mr Grill: I do not think we would have a regulation.

Mr OLD: That is the impression we have gained; I did not say that the Government said that. I am waiting patiently to hear what it will say.

One of the problems which I have drawn to the Minister's attention, is the delivery of nitrogenous fertiliser from Kwinana to areas such as Pingrup and Ongerup. Unfortunately, carriers are not allowed to operate out of Kwinana and cart fertiliser to these districts. Even if they were able to, they could not because they are not allowed to take wool to Fremantle. Nitrogenous fertiliser, which has become the lifeblood of the farming industry in those areas, is being railed to Albany at a cost of about \$16 a tonne. Carriers who have a licence to operate in the Albany district are able to take wool to Albany and then pick up nitrogenous fertiliser.

For example, a farmer east of Pingrup would be faced with the following costs: The cost of freight from Kwinana to Albany is, I understand, in the order of \$16 a tonne, and freight from Albany to the farm would be about \$14 a tonne, giving a total of \$30. My understanding is that nitrogenous fertiliser could be carted direct to the farm from Kwinana for about \$18 a tonne. This would give a saving of \$12 a tonne to farmers in that area.

Pingrup, which I have used as an example, is one of the more remote areas. Members can understand the advantage which this would give to members of the farming community, and which would be reflected in their profit and loss accounts at the end of the year. It is essential that something be done in this regard.

Apart from the problems being experienced currently, there is some inequity in the rail system, and I am not putting the blame on any person or persons for this. The Nyabing-Pingrup section of the Katanning-Pingrup railway line has been closed for many years. It was closed on the basis that franchised transport would operate from the Pingrup and eastern areas to the Albany zone. That worked fairly well because wool was carted into Albany and fertiliser was brought back to the farmers. In fact, it was a fairly happy situation for many people.

Unfortunately, times have changed and now the section of line from Nyabing to Katanning has

been retained as a seasonal railway line. Being a seasonal line, it does not suit all commodities that are required because they are not all required at the time the line is open.

In a similar situation the Katanning-Donnybrook line was closed and some relief for farmers was necessary. After giving consideration to this matter, the Government of the day decided to free the carting of wool on that section of line from about half way between Katanning and Kojonup to this side of Donnybrook. This has worked particularly well, and obviously it has been of advantage to the Government. The railway line was certainly not paying its way; and as the wool is now being carted by contractors, it certainly balances out the differences, and the Government comes out in front. In my opinion the same privilege should be accorded to farmers living on the closed Nyabing-Pingrup line because they have no access to a railway. The argument is that these farmers are able to cart their wool to Albany. That was all very well until the Australian Wool Commission, in its wisdom, decided not to hold any wool sales at Albany in the forthcoming season. Members can imagine that the amount of wool going into the Albany area will be fairly light.

Not enough consideration has been given to that factor. As I have mentioned, I wrote to the Minister and asked him to consider these factors. His reply was along the lines that if the previous Government happened to give the Kojonup people an advantage, it was not binding on this Government. I would impress upon members that there is such a thing as fair play in all things and we should take that into account.

It may cost a few bob to stop fining the carriers in the Pingrup area because that has become a fairly healthy source of Government revenue. They have been breaking the law; they do it knowingly, and that is their problem. But, in order to try to make a living, they have to cart wool somewhere. They cannot go into Albany because there are no sales, so they try to cart to Fremantle and invariably get apprehended as they go about their business. The whole subject needs looking at closely because a necessity exists to free transport in that area. I am referring not only to Pingrup, but also to the south-west and the Lakes area.

There was an expectation in the farming community that this would happen. I suggest seriously that the money wasted by this Government on a social decision to open a railway line which has not a hope in hell of paying its way, would be far better applied to relieving some of the problems being experienced by the farming community.

The Government should not lose sight of the fact that the income of this State comes from outside the metropolitan area, not from the Perth-Fremantle railway line. Fremantle and Perth people have been mighty well served in the past by linc buses. Mark my words, Mr Speaker, the Government will have a red face when after a few weeks the euphoria of the "training again" has gone, the footy matches have finished, and there is no Saturday traffic. The Government will have a lot of egg on its face when it has to consider either heavily subsidising that line again or closing it. Obviously, it will heavily subsidise it because it would not take the odium of closing it.

Mr Grill: All Perth public transport was highly subsidised, under your Government, and will be under future Governments.

Mr OLD: There is no need to subsidise it further. We have to use some common sense in that regard.

Mr Grill: A lot of other areas are much more highly subsidised.

Mr OLD: I thought the Minister for Agriculture—a man who has had previous experience in that position—would be very interested in this particular problem. I thought that if the Minister for Transport could not see his way clear to do something about it, I would write to the Minister for Agriculture because he should realise what are the hardships of the agricultural industry. I wrote to him on 3 June and pointed out the problems, and gave him the story as I have told it to the House, about the saving of \$18 a tonne which could be made. I received a reply on 28 June—only 25 days later—thanking me for my letter of 3 June in which I brought to his attention the situation of primary produce transport in south-eastern districts. The Minister said he had sought further information from the Minister for Transport and would reply as soon as he had fully considered the matter.

I had had a reply from the Minister for Transport and I thought that unless the Minister for Agriculture was prepared to take the matter to Cabinet, we would not get anywhere. I have since received a reply from the Minister for Agriculture thanking me for my letter and for raising points of concern. He said he regretted not having replied earlier. That is fair enough as the letter was referred to another Minister. The Minister said Mr Grill had informed him he had replied directly to me on 21 June. The Minister for Transport did not reply directly to me in answer to the letter I wrote to the Minister for Agriculture. He replied to the letter I wrote to the Minister for Transport.

The Minister for Agriculture said he shared my concern with regard to the curtailment of wool sales at Albany and the ramifications and effects of that change. I believe that is the point at issue which has not been taken into account. We now have a one-sided transport system; no balance exists at all. Even carriers who are paying \$800 and upwards a year for the privilege of operating within country areas are not allowed into Kwinana or Bunbury, and most are not allowed into Albany. About all they can do is drive around in ever-decreasing circles at ever-increasing speeds and we all know what happens to people who do that. That is probably what will happen to the transport industry.

Mr Davies: Goodbye forever.

Mr OLD: The Minister is very quick today.

I want briefly to touch on one other area which has given me some cause for concern and which I am sure will cause concern to a lot of people in the meat industry. Some 12 months ago, Mr Jack Ware, who was a member of the WA Meat Commission, filling the post of one who had special expertise in the meat industry, was appointed Chairman of Directors of Metro Meats and departed this State. He resigned his post. I gave very serious consideration as to who should be put in that area. We had another member in there who was heavily involved in the export of meat, so that expertise already was available. I felt we should look to another field.

It was quite propitious that at the time Mr Ted Boylen, who had provided excellent service to the people of this State as an industrial advocate, was retiring, I approached him to see whether he would be prepared to go into the Meat Commission. Maybe some people thought I was drawing a long bow when I approached him as a man who had specific expertise in the meat industry. One of the things we most lacked in the Commission was communication in the industrial arena between the Commission and the workers.

I thought Mr Boylen would be able to bring a new breath of life into the industry in this area by maintaining constant communication and looking at industrial problems that the MIEU claimed were being experienced. We appointed Ted Boylen, and his appointment was for the balance of Mr Ware's term, which had 12 months to run. I have been watching very closely to see what would be the outcome under the present Government and whom it would appoint. I was bold enough to suggest at one stage it would be odds on the Government would appoint Mr Alec Payne who is the union organiser for the MIEU, and, verily, I was not disappointed.

There could be two reasons for his appointment. One could be that the Government of the day wants to see that the confidentiality of any negotiations within the Meat Commission will go out the window, because Mr Payne's first duty and responsibility is to the members of his union. I do not think anyone would dispute that. You can bet your life, Mr Speaker, that anything in those discussions in the commission which impinges on industrial relations and on the export of meat and sheep probably will go straight back to the union members. If this occurred I would see it as being a fairly serious breach of confidentiality.

I have looked everywhere, but I cannot really find a good reason for his being appointed. The only one I have been able to come up with is that he was not appointed as a Government adviser. Perhaps he is one of the few union bosses who has not been appointed a Government adviser and his appointment to the Meat Commission is a sop to allow him to have some say in government. I think it is a disgrace that a fellow with the ability of Mr Ted Boylen has been replaced after only 12 months. I could probably stomach it a little better if he had had a full term. He brought much into the industry and my understanding from the members of the commission and executive staff was that industrial relations were very good because of Mr Boylen's activities, and that communication was excellent.

I only hope that the Government will not make a practice of this. There are other examples and, at a later time, I will have something to say about that, but I will leave the matter there now.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.20 p.m.]: The Bill before the House is the traditional Supply Bill, an interim measure to provide supply to the Government for the maintenance of its services to the community until such time as the Appropriation Bills can be presented. I take the opportunity presented by the breadth of the debate on this Bill to raise very briefly a few points which I want to bring to the attention of the House in relation to immediate and current issues. Before I do so, I would like to take a moment to present a petition to the Premier.

Mr Davies: Now is not the time for presenting petitions.

Mr HASSELL: As you know, Mr Speaker, this petition is not in strict form, and, therefore, I was not able to present it to you and to the House at the beginning of the proceedings today. However, I am assured that it will be in order if I just take a moment to present this petition and to have it handed across the room to the Premier during the

course of this debate. It is a petition from some 1 320 ratepayers of the Town of Cottesloe who are concerned about a decision made by the Minister for Planning to permit the development of a 12-storied hotel complex on the beachfront in Cottesloe.

Mr Blaikie: They're concerned all right!

Mr HASSELL: The petition arises because the Minister for Planning allowed an appeal from the decision of the Town of Cottesloe which rejected the application for the development by the exercise of discretions under the town planning scheme. It is not strictly a hotel development, of course—it is a hotel and residential complex. There is no doubt that the main objection of the ratepayers of Cottesloe is related to the height of the complex.

As it is not appropriate to debate here and now the rights and wrongs of the particular decision—a debate I do not want to enter upon—I will leave that aside. The only point I want to make in presenting the petition to the Premier is that the people in the area are upset because the Government's first decision in this particular area of planning completely went against the things that the Minister for Planning and the Premier had said when in Opposition. At that time the Premier, in referring to the beachfront at Scarborough, had said that the high-rise nature of that development should be stopped. It was part of the policy approach of the Government, when in Opposition, and indeed it was loudly proclaimed by the Government when in Opposition, that the independence of local government should be upheld and should be extended, and should not be reduced by overriding ministerial decisions. Yet here, in this first important and critical decision by the Minister for Planning, the Minister overrode a very firm decision of the Town of Cottesloe, and overrode the views of many people in the area who have now signed this petition.

The number of people who signed this petition—as I said, some 1 320—exceeds significantly one-third of the total of the ratepayers of Cottesloe, so it is on that basis that I present the petition to the Premier for his consideration.

In concluding my remarks on this particular issue, I say that there is no suggestion but that people who have won an appeal following the lawful process are entitled to take the benefit of that appeal. I would say also that I do not believe the rights of appeal in all these matters should be abolished. I want to make that clear.

Through the Clerks, Mr Speaker, I present this petition to the Premier for his consideration.

As I said, I will now refer to a couple of points which are immediate and current in the political scene. The first relates to the matter raised already by the Leader of the Opposition in dealing with procedures apparently being adopted by the Government in relation to this House. The Leader of the Opposition raised the point that we are really not getting a fair deal from the Government in its answers to questions. I want to refer to that, also.

Mr Davies: Guess from whom we learned to answer questions?

Mr HASSELL: I have heard that remark already from the Minister this afternoon and I do not think it is very clever.

Mr Davies: It might not be clever, but it is true.

Mr HASSELL: In fact, it really makes the point, that many of the answers being given to us are of that smart-alecky nature.

Mr Davies: We learned from the previous Government that that was the right way to go.

Mr HASSELL: I would like to refer to an analysis that has been prepared of the questions on notice only. In a moment, I will refer to one question without notice, but I have here a very brief analysis of the questions on notice in the first week of sitting. The Leader of the Opposition asked 29 questions of which only seven were considered to have received full, complete, and satisfactory replies.

Mr Tonkin: Considered by whom?

Mr HASSELL: By our analysis. Obviously matters of opinion come into this, and I am not trying to run away from the fact that it is the Government's opinion against ours. I think what we have here is a result of objective opinions—the answers have been looked at fairly. Referring to 29 questions which the Leader of the Opposition asked, seven of the answers were considered by us to be fair, full, and complete, although I hasten to add we do not necessarily agree with what was said in the answers.

Of the balance of the questions, six were considered to have been answered partly and required a further follow-up, and some 16 replies were considered to be rude or smart alecky. That is a pretty poor record. It is not just a matter of parliamentary procedures—questions of courtesy arise. I want to remind the Government that questions asked in this place are not simply Opposition questions; they are parliamentary questions from both sides of the House. They are part of the essential process by which a Government accounts to the Parliament and through the Parliament to the people.

In my own case, I asked 12 questions on notice. Six were considered to have been fully and satisfactorily answered, and the balance were considered to have been partly answered or replied to with rude or smart-aleck answers.

The member for Narrogin asked 17 questions of which nine—just over half—were considered to have been fully answered. A further eight were considered to have been partly answered only or received a rude or smart-aleck type of answer.

Mr Davies: Did you examine the questions to see whether they were clear enough, because very often the questioner expects the Government to read into the question what the questioner does not put there himself?

Mr HASSELL: The point raised by the Minister may be correct. I am sure there are occasions when members do not ask questions in a precise way. I have faced many of those questions myself, but we are not talking about them. We are talking about the apparent deliberate policy of the Government to avoid giving a fair and full account of its actions to Parliament and, through Parliament, to the people.

As a fourth example, I refer to questions asked by the member for Floreat. He asked 25 questions on notice; only nine of them were considered to have been answered fully and fairly; and some 15 questions were partly answered or received rude or smart-aleck answers.

Mr Tonkin: While you are talking about the member for Floreat, I indicate that the answers given to me by the Metropolitan Water Authority to some of the questions asked by the member for Floreat had a familiar ring with me and they reminded me of the kinds of answers I received from him previously. In fact, I answered some of them, because I felt he deserved a better answer.

Mr HASSELL: Ministers have to take responsibility for the answers to questions regardless of where they originate.

Mr Tonkin: That is right.

Mr HASSELL: That was never an issue with us. I do not know whether we are going to throw away yet another tradition—that is, that of ministerial responsibility—but I am talking about the responsibility of Ministers for their departments.

Mr Mensaros: Some of the answers said, "Suggested reply".

Mr Tonkin: And did you get "suggested replies"? You always scratched out the word "suggested" and that made all the difference.

Mr Parker: I received replies from Ray Young like that.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Several members interjected.

Mr HASSELL: I do not think anybody on this side of the House, especially those of us who served in the Ministry, would say that we did not receive suggested answers from departments on occasions and that on occasions, we did not draft our own answers. The point is that the responsibility for answers rests with Government Ministers. They are responsible Ministers; they are responsible to Parliament and to the people through the Parliament.

Mr Tonkin: Fair enough.

Mr HASSELL: That is the essence of our system. I have just detailed an objective analysis of questions on notice—

Mr Tonkin: Do you mean objective or subjective? You said it was your opinion. Come on! Surely it is subjective.

Mr HASSELL: The objective analysis—

Mr Tonkin: Subjective.

Mr HASSELL: —of the questions on notice which were dealt with, leaving aside the questions without notice which almost without exception were not answered fully—

Mr Tonkin: Especially those on Thursday!

Mr HASSELL: —showed that, on average, less than one-third of the questions were answered fully and fairly. One has only to go through the answers to the questions to see that that is the case. That is a matter about which the Leader of the House and Ministers should be concerned.

Mr Gordon Hill: That is your assessment, not an objective assessment.

Mr HASSELL: I wonder whether the Government Whip claims that all the questions were answered fully and fairly. I wonder whether that is his claim.

Mr Tonkin: I do not think he has examined them all.

Mr HASSELL: Of course he has not; therefore, why does he offer his inane remarks?

Mr Tonkin: They are not inane. The point is that it is a subjective matter. You yourself admitted it was your opinion. What is the definition of "subjective"?

Mr HASSELL: I made the point that, of course, any analysis would be a matter of somebody's opinion, but the analysis was not made by me personally, nor was it made by my leader personally. It was made by someone who sat down and went through the matter objectively, looking at it and expressing an opinion.

Mr Gordon Hill: Who was that person?

Mr HASSELL: Never mind.

Mr Gordon Hill: It is a so-called "objective" opinion.

Mr HASSELL: I do not make this concession, but even if the figures were a little wrong, on a very generous interpretation, the point would still be valid, that significantly less than one-third of the questions on notice have been satisfactorily, fully, and fairly answered in the first week of the session. That really does not represent a fair go for the Parliament and the public.

I shall refer now to an aspect of a question without notice which I asked the Premier on one of the sitting days last week. It concerned his Ministers and I asked whether any of them had visited the Soviet Union as guests of the Soviet Government and at the expense of that Government.

The Premier could have cleared up the matter in two minutes by saying that he would check the position and advise the House. I did not come into the House and start naming people under the privilege of the House without regard for responsibility. I did not make any accusations. I asked a very clear and simple question. It was a legitimate question. It related to matters which are currently of public importance in Australia and which are being examined by a Royal Commission appointed by a Labor Government in Canberra.

Mr Gordon Hill: The Premier asked you specifically. You did not have to do it in Parliament; you could do it privately. He did not have to do a witch-hunt in the Ministry. The Premier gave you an opportunity—

Mr HASSELL: The Premier is responsible for his Ministry. Not only did the Premier fail to answer the question, but also he refused to undertake inquiries and, as an alternative, the Premier would not refer the matter to a body established by a Labor Government in Canberra which is looking into just such issues.

In part, the Premier's reply reads as follows—

I might add that many members on both sides of this House have visited the United States of America as guests of the American Government, yet this is not reflected in any sort of a question from the member opposite.

What an incredible answer! It is an amazing proposition that no distinction can be drawn—

Mr Gordon Hill: Just quote the answer the Premier gave when you asked the question a second time.

Mr HASSELL:—between a visit by a member of this House to the United States as a guest

of a free Government of the western world—Australia's closest and most important ally—which operates a free society in which people can say and do as they like within the law—

Mr Gordon Hill: Quote the answer he gave you the second time.

Mr HASSELL: —and a visit to the Soviet Union, the greatest totalitarian State in the world where people are not free and where the members concerned may have been guests of the Soviet Government and their expenses may have been paid for by it! If the Premier cannot see the difference between those two points, indeed, we are in trouble.

Mr Tonkin: I would like to know who it is. Who is it?

Mr HASSELL: We should put this very clearly on the record. We should remind the House that the Premier, in reply to a question about the Soviet Union, drew a direct parallel with the United States of America. So much for the Premier's interest in defence and our alliance which he trumped up to help him win the State election in a defence statement made a few weeks before that election!

Mr Tonkin: I may as well ask a question about the colour of your tie.

Mr HASSELL: Apparently the Leader of the House cannot tell the difference, either.

Mr Tonkin: I can. Your tie is red. I think it is disgusting!

Mr HASSELL: Apparently the Leader of the House cannot tell the difference between the relative importance of the issues.

Mr Gordon Hill: If you aren't prepared to do it in Parliament, do it privately.

Mr HASSELL: I shall refer to another matter which is being debated currently; that is, the inquiry into Aboriginal land rights being conducted on behalf of the State Government. The Opposition's objection to that inquiry, as expressed on a number of occasions by our shadow Minister, the Hon. Norman Moore, has been that the terms of reference of the Seaman inquiry turn it into a sham. The inquiry has not been asked to determine the simple question of whether there should be land rights, or even the question of whether there should be more land rights, given that vast areas of Western Australia already are set aside for Aboriginal people.

The terms of reference of the Aboriginal land inquiry commence with the following—

1. Specifically the Inquiry shall consider the most appropriate form of title over

land reserved for the use and benefit of Aborigines or leased for Aboriginal Communities.

2. In addition, the Inquiry shall consider the question of what kind of Aboriginal relationships to land should be protected and the ways in which to satisfy the reasonable aspirations of Aboriginal people to rights in relation to land.
3. The Inquiry will make recommendations about the terms and conditions upon which such land should be granted and by which body or bodies the titles should be held.

These terms of reference contain no suggestion that anyone may question with Mr Seaman the basic point of whether Aboriginal people have to land a special right different from the right to land which all of us ought to possess, and which all of us need to possess.

Without my undergoing the whole process of reading every one of those terms of reference, plus the additional reference referred to the commissioner, I must say again that it really is farcical that this whole inquiry is based on terms of reference which dictate the outcome, and there is no attempt by the Government to inquire genuinely into Aboriginal land needs—only an attempt to direct a commissioner to recommend action to confer land on Aborigines.

I want to make it absolutely clear—on the record—that the Opposition has never suggested that Aboriginal people do not have a need for land as do the rest of us; or that Aboriginal people should not have the same right to acquire land as do the rest of us. Equally, it should be made clear and unequivocal that the Opposition when in Government supported—and when in Government again will support—the proper provision of necessary welfare and other assistance to other people as Australians who need that assistance. Indeed, the Opposition will continue to support the provision of land to those people who have a demonstrated need for land.

However, that is not the central point. The point we argue about the Seaman inquiry, and argue with the people who have no regard for basic equality in the community, is whether one group of Australians, distinguished by the colour of their skins, is entitled to make a special claim and to have special rights superior to the rights of other Australians.

Mr Pearce: Would you say Aborigines are an advantaged group inside the community?

Mr HASSELL: I have never suggested anything of the sort; the Minister should not start up

with that sort of nonsense. I am trying to make our position clear, and if I need to state it again for the benefit of the Minister, I will do so.

The Opposition, when in Government, supported the making of special provisions for Aboriginal people as disadvantaged people in cases of need. The Opposition, when next in Government, will do that again. As a former Minister for Community Welfare, I am only too painfully aware of those needs—the needs for housing, education, hygiene, health support, and employment. Some people in this community believe that all those needs will somehow be met, and all the issues will be resolved by the granting of some fancy form of freehold title to some vast tracts of land. None of those problems will be solved in that way.

I will go back to the central theme of my remarks. The State Government has commissioned Mr Seaman to carry out a farcical inquiry, the result of which has been determined by the Government's terms of reference. At the same time, the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Mr Holding) has said repeatedly that there will be a uniform system of land rights in Australia, and as recently as this morning he was reported as having said that this uniform system of land rights will apply from the end of next year.

We have farce upon farce. We have Mr Seaman QC, who is not a figure in the legal profession whose fees could be regarded as small, even on a comparative basis, charged with the responsibility to make an inquiry and produce a report—the Government has told him that he must come up with a system of land rights. While the elected Government of this State—the Premier and his Ministers—carries out its functions, however inadequately and however much we may criticise its endeavours, the Canberra Government is pronouncing that regardless of this Government's efforts, or its position, or the outcome of the inquiry, there will be established in Australia a uniform system of land rights to take effect from the end of next year. What is the point of our conducting the Seaman inquiry if Mr Holding will come in with a big stick—he has the legislative power of the Commonwealth, supported by the Tasmanian dam decision and a thin majority of judges of the High Court who have no commitment to the Federal system—to exercise the Commonwealth's constitutional powers in order to override everything done in this State in accordance with the law of this State and the decisions of its elected Government?

What nonsense it is that we should have this inquiry in Western Australia proceed without any attempt made to sort out whether it will be utterly fruitless at the end of the day because of the

overriding centralist decisions of the Canberra Government relying on strange interpretations of the Constitution and the determination of that Government to have its will regardless of any other responsibility.

As much and all as I am not entirely happy about the outcome of the last election, I still acknowledge that the Premier and his Ministers are the Government of this State, and as such have constitutional responsibility through this Parliament for the people of Western Australia—all those people, including Aborigines. Yet this Premier and his Government, having appointed an Aboriginal land inquiry at considerable expense, have not said one word in protest against the pronouncements of Mr Holding and the predators in Canberra who intend to overrule all our efforts in this State to make our own decisions.

When will this Government stand up for Western Australia's constitutional position? When will this Government tell the boys and girls in Canberra that Western Australia is not for sale for their bureaucratic centralist ambitions and is not available to be taken over, regardless of external constitutional interpretations such as that made in the Tasmanian dam case?

When will the Premier, and his Ministers, say to Canberra that that Government was not elected with any mandate to totally destroy the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia and to totally remove the responsibility of the State of Western Australia?

Even the position adopted by Mr Holding's gang in Canberra is ludicrous because if we are to have uniform land rights in Australian States that system will have to be imposed not only on us, but also on all the other States, including New South Wales where legislation for land rights is in the process of being enacted, and South Australia where, by mutual agreement of that community, some system of land rights has been established in relation to the Pitjantjatjara people.

When will the Government of this State, the elected Government, the elected Premier and the Ministers elected under the Premier, stand up and tell Mr Holding that he has no business in this State in relation to land rights, or any other subject to do with State responsibility?

It is often claimed by Federal Ministers, Liberal and Labor alike, that in 1967 the Australian people decided that the responsibility for Aborigines should pass to the Commonwealth Government. That is a gross misrepresentation of what occurred in 1967 and what appears in the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution because all

that was done in 1967 was the deletion of a few words.

From memory, I would say that, precisely three words were deleted from the Constitution. Section 51 of the Commonwealth Constitution provided that the Commonwealth could make special laws for the people of any race, except the Aboriginal race.

Then, in 1967, the mood of Australia had changed and people were concerned to remove from the laws and the Statutes of this State, and the Commonwealth, any section or provision which appeared to be discriminatory. Therefore, in 1967 the people of Australia voted to remove from that placitum of section 51 the words which excluded the Aboriginal people and left in the Constitution a provision that the Commonwealth should have power to make special laws for people of any race. That is all it says; it does not say that the Commonwealth shall have powers to make special laws for Aborigines, any more than it says that the Commonwealth shall have power to make special laws for Italians, Yugoslavs, or any member of the multifarious races which make up the Australian community.

No claim by Federal Ministers, Labor or Liberal, justifies the contention that by some Act of law in 1967 the Commonwealth assumed full and total responsibility for all Aboriginal people, to the exclusion of State responsibility or to the exclusion of Commonwealth responsibility for people who have special needs, whether they be Aborigines or any other group of Australian people. This ridiculous focus and claim of power should be contested. It should be contested by the Premier and his Ministers.

The Premier should be saying to Mr Holding and to Mr Hawke, "Look, we are the elected Government of Western Australia; we are responsible for the needs of the people of Western Australia, and we are attending to those needs in our way, in our time, and in our Parliament, under our law as we were elected to do and we will not brook interference from Canberra in this matter". Yet, the Premier has not said it and his Ministers have not said it; indeed, the Government has apparently no intention of saying it.

Mr Blaikie: I bet the Minister for Transport will have a point of view on this.

Mr HASSELL: Just as the Premier and his Government refused to interfere in the High Court as they could have done on behalf of Tasmania—

Mr Bertram: What difference would that have made?

Mr HASSELL: Well, that is a good question.

Mr Bertram: It would do the legal profession good, but no-one else.

Mr HASSELL: That is very interesting because the member for Mt. Hawthorn seems to be suggesting that the Government did not interfere in the Tasmanian dam issue because —

Mr Bertram: You suggested it.

Mr HASSELL: —it would have been a waste of money.

Mr Bertram: Probably would have been, too.

Mr HASSELL: That is not what the Attorney General said on behalf of the Government at that time. The Attorney General issued a Press release in which he said the Government was not interfering on the side of Tasmania because it supported Federal intervention to stop the Franklin dam.

Mr Blaikie: Which every member on that side supported also. They all supported Federal intervention in Tasmania.

Mr HASSELL: That is what the Government said. It supported the Federal intervention in Tasmania, and therefore, would not intervene on behalf of Tasmania to oppose Federal intervention.

Now, we have before us an Aboriginal land rights inquiry being conducted in this State at the behest of the State Government, apparently to be overruled, overridden, disregarded, and treated with contempt by Mr Holding and his gang in Canberra. Not one word has been said by this Government in opposition to it.

It is time the Premier and his Government recognised their interests and responsibilities are towards Western Australia. In the months leading up to the election the Premier made great play of how he would stand up to any Government in Canberra to protect the interests of Western Australia. When I asked the Premier a question about that fact—on the day we sat to pass the ill-fated prices control legislation—

Mr Blaikie: Prices control! What a laugh that turned out to be.

Mr HASSELL:—he said in a written answer, on that day, that this Government of his would stand up to any Government in Canberra which threatened the interests of Western Australia. When is that going to happen?

Mr Blaikie: I think you had better repeat it again.

MR BURKETT (Scarborough) [5.00 p.m.]: Mr Speaker I congratulate you on your appointment to this high office and I commend you on your ability to bring this rowdy House to order.

I congratulate the Premier, his Ministers, and all members of this Government both in this House and in the Legislative Council. I would particularly like to congratulate the new women members in both Houses, all of whom have shown that they will be members of Parliament for many years to come. I look forward to these women being represented on the front bench at which time I doubt that any of those opposite will ever enjoy the last word in any future debate.

While talking of women, I thank those four special people who almost walked their legs off to get me where I am today—they are my wife, Beryl, and my daughters Joanne, Sharon, and Penny, all of whom gave 100 per cent commitment to me and to the Australian Labor Party. I thank them most sincerely, and all the wonderful people who worked on my election campaign.

In particular, I extend special thanks to my wife's mother, Mrs Nell Smith, who while we were on the election campaign completely managed our house for six months and did all the housework. I will be grateful to her for my entire life. I thank the staff of this House who have been most generous with their assistance to me.

The Minister for Consumer Affairs, who is, of course, the Leader of this House, I thank for his guidance to all new members. If it is "missionary zeal" which permits him to work at full pace from 7.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m. each day, I do hope that he can always retain this tremendous zest.

Just what have he and his department achieved in the past five months, and what legislation is he preparing to properly protect everyone in our society?

A committee of inquiry into petrol prices in Western Australia has been established under the Prevention of Excessive Prices Act. The terms of reference of the inquiry are three-fold—

- (a) to conduct a study of how the retail petrol market functions in Western Australia;
- (b) to seek to identify the circumstances under which wholesale and retail price control of motor fuel may be desirable in Western Australia and to advise the commissioner as to whether he should fix maximum prices for motor fuel and if so, what such price ought to be;
- (c) to examine the trading conditions of petrol retailers and to report to the Minister concerning those matters as soon as possible.

A reduction in the price of petrol has been achieved as a result of the enactment of the Prevention of Excessive Prices Act 1983. The Minis-

ter also declared retail service station site rentals under the Act to enable the Prices Commissioner to investigate all rental and lease matters relevant to those service stations. This action requires suppliers of those declared services to notify the Prices Commissioner of any intended price rises not less than 14 days before those increases are proposed to come into effect.

Investigations have begun by the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs into some shopping centre leases to assess the fairness or otherwise of proposed increases which would put rents up from between 15 per cent and 60 per cent a year.

A Bill has been drafted to amend the Builders' Registration Act to expand the geographical jurisdiction of the board. The board's powers currently apply only to the area served by the Metropolitan Water Authority which was a boundary decided by a previous Liberal Government. Notable deficiencies exist in the actual geographical area the board covers. For example, in the Shire of Mundaring, one side of the street is covered by the board, while the other side is not. All the Serpentine-Jarrahdale townsite is outside its charter, while the surrounding State forest is included. One-third of Ballajura is excluded. Another exclusion is Singleton in the Shire of Rockingham and yet a piece of the Shire of Beverley is included. These anomalies mean that, in practical terms, the Builders' Registration Board of WA cannot carry out its work properly.

Uniform credit legislation is proposed to offer greater protection to those who buy goods and services of all types on credit. This will provide for the establishment of uniform credit laws across Australia. The legislation will improve the disclosure to consumers of the real cost of any type of credit they are seeking. It will be possible to introduce a computer data system which will enable all finance company encumbrances on any item for sale to be checked very quickly by prospective purchasers.

Legislation has been drafted to license travel agents to ensure that travellers are protected from unfair or unscrupulous practices. Travel agents will be required to register and to adhere to a code of practice. In addition, agents will be required to have a trust account, and a fidelity fund will be established for the industry.

A consumer education programme will give consumers an awareness of their rights, and knowledge of the legislative protection available to them. Seminars have been held and will be continued to be held throughout the State. Such seminars have involved the business sector and it is believed that the business sector will benefit in not

having to deal with as many unjustified complaints as is now the case.

A working party has been set up to establish responsibilities for the design, construction, and performance of footings and structures on reactive clays and other problem soils. In 1982, 6 403 dwelling approvals were granted and 442 complaints by individuals were made to the Builders' Registration Board of WA. The working party consists of a representative from the Institution of Engineers Australia, the Master Builders Association of WA, the Local Government Association of WA, the Housing Industry Association, and the Builders' Registration Board of WA, and is chaired by the MLA for Helena and Government Whip (Mr Gordon Hill). The working party was established after the Minister had inspected a number of houses which are the subject of complaints to the board, and which involve extensive cracking of internal and external walls and associated problems, most of which can be traced to inadequate or inappropriate footings.

A new trade standards Act has been drafted which, *inter alia*, will ensure the better labelling of children's nightwear to provide greater safety by the requirement to label correctly footwear and the fibre content of garments. This legislation will assist both manufacturers and consumers to know both what their obligations are and what protection is available to them.

The effect of the legislation will also be to improve and modernise the law relating to false advertising. For instance, the Act will enable the Consumer Affairs Bureau to deal with unscrupulous firms which are misleading young people about employment. In addition, the legislation proposes to give to the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs a power to restrain misleading and deceptive conduct and other conduct contrary to the Act. At the present time, some misleading advertising by non-corporate traders cannot be dealt with as the Commonwealth Trade Practices Act can deal only with corporations.

Amendments to the Builders' Registration Act are being drafted to provide for a consumer representative on the board, to limit the activities of new builders obtaining owner-builder licences by extending the period in which an owner-builder is precluded from obtaining a further licence from two to six years, and to extend the limit in which a person may sell his owner-built house from 18 months to three years. This condition may be waived by the Minister on compassionate or genuine hardship grounds. The purpose is to prevent operating non-registered builders purporting to be genuine owner-builders, and in fact building spec homes.

A Bill to repeal the Door to Door (Sales) Act will strengthen controls over door-to-door sales in Western Australia and provide more protection for consumers. The present seven-day cooling-off period for this type of sale would be increased to 10 days. A provision will be included in the Act to prevent unscrupulous operators seeking to circumvent the Act by performing work during the cooling-off period. The Act will distinguish between calls solicited by the vendor and unsolicited calls. The new Act will clarify the position where requests are made by the vendor to attend at the purchaser's residence to negotiate a sale and prevent circumvention of the Act by vendors setting up a call that purports to be one solicited by a purchaser when, in fact, it has been arranged by the vendor. The new legislation will also apply to agreements made at the home and at a place of employment.

The responsibility for policing, and prosecutions of, unlicensed motor vehicle dealers is being transferred to the Police Department. This function was previously performed by two retired police officers operating from the Bureau of Consumer Affairs. Officers of the bureau do not have the authority necessary to carry out duties necessary for the implementation of this aspect of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act. A special unlicensed motor vehicle dealers' squad has been formed within the Police Department's Traffic Branch and the squad will have the authority to stop, search, and detain individuals and obtain and execute search warrants to seek evidence in their investigations. The officers previously carrying out this function did not have the authority to undertake investigations in this way.

Extension of the definition of "consumer" under the Consumer Affairs Act will include farmers. This will provide for protection for farmers in relation to their farming equipment. This has been an area of neglect by Liberal Governments for some time even though hundreds of calls are made to the Department of Consumer Affairs each year by farmers who have a special problem in gaining redress over defective goods and services. This move honours an election policy promise to classify farmers as consumers under the Act.

A Bill to amend the Painters' Registration Act will extend the area covered by the Painters' Registration Board to be the same as that encompassed by the Builders' Registration Board of WA as proposed. This will include all areas forming the metropolitan region under the Metropolitan Regional Town Planning Scheme Act, as well as the Shire of Mandurah. The size of the board is to be increased to permit a representative

from the Painters and Decorators' Union in line with the requirements of the Builders' Registration Board of WA and to provide for a consumer representative nominated by the Minister.

The Land Valuers Licensing Act will be amended to provide for a consumer representative and to remove restrictions on the Minister for the appointment of persons to the board. The intention is to allow greater flexibility in the selection of experienced members and to allow the Minister a choice in the selection of persons who might be suitable for appointment to the board.

Amendments to the Small Claims Tribunals Act will lift the monetary jurisdiction of the tribunal from \$1 000 to \$2 000. In respect of matters where the claim is between \$1 000 and \$2 000, there will be a provision that either party or the referee shall have a right to transfer the matter to the Local Court. This proposal will provide greater protection to consumers and is appropriate, given that there has been no change in the monetary jurisdiction since the legislation was first enacted.

A third full-time referee will be appointed to the Small Claims Tribunal and additional members for the panel of part-time referees. In the past 12 months the volume of claims has increased dramatically and it is estimated that the level will reach 1900 claims to 31 December 1983. Currently claims are listed for hearing approximately six weeks ahead with part-time referees being utilised extensively. In addition, it is envisaged that the proposal to increase the monetary jurisdiction from \$1 000 to \$2 000 will enlarge the number of claims to be lodged with the tribunal and it is expected that the panel will need to be increased.

The Sale of Goods Act will be amended to provide for implied terms to be imposed into contracts for the sale of goods and the provision of services to consumers in terms similar to those of the Consumer Transactions Act in South Australia and the Manufacturers Warranty Act of South Australia. The present legislation in this State provides for the inclusion in contracts for the sale of goods certain implied terms; for example, that goods be of merchantable quality or fit for a particular purpose, or comply with sample or description. The Sale of Goods Act does not extend to the provision of services and there is no corresponding provision in relation to contracts for the provision of services. There is also no provision in State legislation which provides for a manufacturer's warranty in respect of the sale of goods. Certain provisions are contained in the Trade Practices Act which provide for some protection, but the provisions are limited to cor-

porations and there will be numerous situations where a person dealing with a non-body corporate will be unable to obtain the protection afforded under the Trade Practices Act.

Legislation in other States overcomes this problem and consumers in WA dealing with non-body corporates are in a disadvantaged position as against persons dealing in other States. The proposals will avoid the legal confusion which often arises of drawing a distinction between corporations and non-corporations to determine what form of protection is given to a consumer of goods or services.

Establishment of a fidelity fund under the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act will compensate consumers in the event of failure of a dealer to—

- (a) carry out warranty work;
- (b) pass good title to a vehicle; and,
- (c) account to a vendor who has consigned his vehicle to the dealer for sale.

It is proposed that the fund will be administered by the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing Board and will comprise moneys derived as a levy on each registered premises operated by a dealer. Payments from the fund will be contingent upon a consumer having taken reasonable steps to seek recovery outside the fund. This fund is being established after consultation with the Royal Automobile Club of WA (Inc.), the Chamber of Automotive Industries of Western Australia Inc., and the Western Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce Inc.

The Motor Vehicle Dealers Act is being amended to require contracts for the sale of motor vehicles to be in writing, and to require the vendor-dealer to give to the purchaser a completed copy of the contract for purchase signed both by the purchaser and by, or on behalf of, the dealer. This will ensure that the dealers will get a copy of the contract in relation to the sale of the vehicle, a practice which is not always the case now.

The Minister for Planning was last week referred to by those less talented than himself as "the mosquito". It does not surprise me that those opposite must resort to their name calling as it is quite evident that the Minister has so much ability that his opponents cannot beat him under the normal rules of fair play. His positive approach to all his portfolios leaves nothing to be desired, and I am proud to be a member of the Government of which he is a senior Minister.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr BURKETT: I now turn to the subject of town planning; and I intend to comment on the Town Planning Board and the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority. I will also mention mat-

ters connected with my own constituency of Scarborough.

In the introduction to the report entitled "Proposals for an integrated planning system for Western Australia", dated June 1977, Mr Lloyd Graham, when referring to the two factors which should be recognised in a planning system, said that planning is a co-ordinating effort—particularly at State level—and, as such, its prime position relative to other agencies must be recognised in legislation; and that planning requires the "integration" of many areas of interest in order to produce meaningful plans and planning policies at State, regional, and local levels.

Although the existing planning structure could be said to allow fulfillment of these two factors, I question whether in fact, this is happening in practical terms. Local authorities have been vested, by delegation, with a good deal of power to deal with planning matters; but they are subject to State instrumentalities in a number of areas such as subdivision, the approval of zoning schemes, and rezonings.

The Town Planning Board was established following promulgation of the Town Planning and Development Act 1928. The board comprises five members, who are a person appointed by the Governor as a member and the chairman; an architect; an engineer or a surveyor; a person whose name is selected from a panel of three names submitted to the Minister by the Local Government Association of Western Australia (Inc.); and a person appointed by reason of his qualifications in the business matters to be dealt with by the board.

It is interesting to note that the Act does not require a town planner to sit on the board. In fact, the Act originally required the Town Planning Commissioner to act as chairman, but this requirement was deleted by an amendment in 1980.

The Act requires the board to advise the Minister in the administration of the Act, and to hold such inquiries and do all such matters necessary for the effective administration, under the Minister, of the Act. In essence, the main functions of the board are to deal with subdivision applications, and, although not specifically provided for in the Act, to advise the Minister on local authority town planning schemes and scheme amendments prior to his granting preliminary or final approval.

In 1976, the Act was amended to permit the board and the MRPA to prepare statements of planning policy. Notwithstanding improvements in the operation of the board since the appointment of a chairman from the local government

area, a number of shortcomings still exist which have an effect on local government, the development industry, and town planning generally.

The time taken to deal with subdivision applications can delay the provision of subdivided lots to the marketplace. It is acknowledged that the board is not wholly responsible for such delays. Perhaps the system itself, with its lengthy consultation procedures, requires modification. In some cases, board policy on subdivision conflicts with the views of local authorities which are often in the best position to evaluate local conditions.

The delays involved in dealing with town planning schemes, particularly zoning schemes, and scheme amendments are intolerable. The City of Stirling reviewed its 1974 zoning scheme in 1979 as required by legislation. It decided to prepare a new scheme and this was adopted, after a good deal of public consultation, in October 1980. Preliminary approval was not given until December 1982, and final approval is still awaited. If gazettal in late 1983 is anticipated, the process will have taken three years since adoption. Ordinarily the city's zoning scheme would be due for review in 1984, taking into account the five-year review period. I understand that other local authorities, and notably the City of Melville, have experienced similar delays. It could be argued that delays at the present time are attributable to the advent of the R-codes. However, the City of Stirling's original district scheme took five years to gain approval.

Scheme amendments, and particularly those dealing with the rezoning of small areas of land, usually take from six to eight months to gain approval. Even when there are no public submissions, a six-month wait can be expected. This increases the applicant's holding costs and prevents the early commencement of worthwhile, job-creating projects. I understand that a recent review of the town planning regulations suggests that a time limit be placed on local authorities in the scheme amendment procedures, but no time limits are to be placed on the Town Planning Board. To the board's credit, a number of policy statements have been issued. The most important of these are in R-codes. Despite a great deal of input from local authorities and others, the codes are still not finalised and many areas still require examination.

The MRPA was established pursuant to the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act 1959. It is a 13-member authority consisting of representatives of major Government departments, local authorities, and private interests. For the first 20 years of its history, the chairmanship of the authority was an honorary position. The

first two chairmen were ex-local government councillors, one with 23 years of local government experience, and the second with 13 years of local government experience. However, on 1 September 1979, a permanent paid chairman was appointed. The incumbent is from the private sector with no experience in local government or any other public capacity, to my knowledge.

The functions of the MRPA, as detailed in the Act, are to formulate, promulgate, and administer the metropolitan region scheme; to review the scheme periodically; and to amend the scheme when necessary.

The metropolitan region scheme was gazetted in 1963. I am not aware of any comprehensive review since that time. In the early 1970s, the so-called "Corridor Plan" was adopted as Government policy; but this has never been formally gazetted as part of the scheme. Naturally, many amendments have taken place, but many of these have been of a "catch-up" nature to bring the scheme into conformity with approved local authority schemes.

I can see a number of problems associated with the present structure and operation of the MRPA. I question whether the authority fulfills the coordinating role that it is intended to. Notwithstanding the presence of heads of Government departments, each of those departments will appear to be inclined to "go its own way" regardless of the aims of the metropolitan region scheme. The mixture of appointed civil servants and elected people tends to militate against efficient operation. It is sometimes difficult for part-time local government representatives to "compete" with full-time highly qualified and expert heads of Government departments. I am not criticising those civil servants, but simply pointing out the difficulties inherent in such a mix.

The MRPA's image in terms of its record in public participation is somewhat tainted. The examples of Herdsman Lake, the Canning River bridge, and Servetus Street require little further comment.

The Act provides for the establishment of five district planning committees to represent the 26 metropolitan local authorities. The role of these committees is to assist the MRPA in the planning of the region. Each committee appoints a member to represent it on the MRPA. I understand that it was not until June 1983 that representatives of these committees, except the City of Perth, met in concert with the Chairman and Secretary of the MRPA.

A continued bone of contention is the significance of the role the district committees

play, or are allowed to play. For example, the majority of matters referred to the committees are matters which would, in any case, be dealt with by one of the constituent local authorities as part of the normal planning process. If a particular committee raises a matter of some significance, it must be remembered that the committee has only one voice on the MRPA.

Members would know that I represent a coastal electorate. Within Scarborough lie the most popular recreational beach in Western Australia—and indeed in Australia—and the homes of people who choose to live near the coast in an ever-changing environment where land and sea meet. It is my view that previous Governments have neglected the Western Australian coastline, and the only exception to the rule would have to be the member for Karrinyup who has consistently opposed the construction of boat ramps and ugly seas of bitumen parking along the coast of his electorate.

I place on record today the fact that I will urge my Government to take long-overdue action towards effective management of our coastline. In particular, I will be seeking the creation of a coastal management authority for Western Australia, supported by necessary Statutes to effect its brief, its own area or in related legislation such as an amended Environmental Protection Act.

Let me make it clear that I do not frivolously advocate the creation of yet another statutory authority. My earlier comments in relation to the MRPA show that I am only too aware of what sort of monsters some authorities can become when they break loose from their initially short leashes.

I submit that there is an overwhelming case for the creation of a body to care for Western Australia's coast. Western Australia is the largest State, with the longest coastline. It has some 12 500 kilometres of coastline with a vast array of natural forms and human uses. The coastline is a special region because it is where the land meets the sea. Our Environmental Protection Authority defines the coastal zone as extending seaward to the 30-metre depth contour line and inland one kilometre from the high water mark. The coastal zone accommodates urban and industrial development, port installations, defence facilities, ecological reserves, commercial fishing, and recreational activities such as fishing, swimming, surfing, boating, and sightseeing. This coastal zone is arguably Western Australia's most valuable tourist attraction. If we could put a dollar value on what our coastline means to the State, we would find that its value far exceeded that of matters

dealt with by most of the statutory authorities in existence in Western Australia.

Numerous examples of conflict of interest have arisen within the coastal zone in Western Australia. In my own electorate of Scarborough, we have the recent example of controversy surrounding a proposed high-rise development. Clearly we will gain the greatest value from our coastal zone if conflicting interests are resolved in accordance with a coastal zone plan administered by a dedicated authority.

All other Australian States have Government bodies dedicated to coastal management. Even Queensland has its Beach Protection Authority with powers to litigate in its own right. Recently the Queensland Beach Protection Authority joined a local government authority in the courts against an unsavoury real estate development proposal.

The Liberal Government wasted an opportunity to establish a coastal management authority. In 1980, the then State Government appointed an adviser to the Environmental Protection Authority on the coastal zone. In 1981, that adviser, in conjunction with a steering committee, reported to the Liberal Government, in a report entitled "Coastal planning and management in Western Australia". For the political course of our opponents, the Liberal Cabinet refused to make the report public and ignored its major recommendations, which included the creation of a full-time State Government organisation dedicated to coastal management.

The Premier is committed to the acquisition and preservation of the Whitford nodes and the Star Swamp bushland in its entirety. I ask that he give urgent and positive consideration to the suggestions which I have recorded today.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

MR RUSHTON (Dale) [5.27 p.m.]: I will make a few remarks until we reach the appointed hour for question time. One of my comments relates to a question answered by the Minister for Planning today. I asked him about the number of blocks available, and I ask him to reconsider his answer because the information is available from the Town Planning Department. I want a guide as to the number of blocks provided, and the answer he has given me does not give any indication.

Mr Parker: The answer I gave you is an accurate answer to your question. I am happy to give you the statistics concerning all the subdivisions.

Mr RUSHTON: There are reserves of blocks available.

Mr Parker: You are wrong. What you are talking about is the preliminary approvals and subsequent final approvals.

Mr RUSHTON: I will have a personal chat with the Minister later.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr RUSHTON: I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of the sitting.

Leave granted.

Debate thus adjourned.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Postponed

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [5.29 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I crave your indulgence and that of the Opposition to apologise for the postponement of the questions directed to me on today's notice paper. Unfortunately, the postponement was the result of mishandling within my department. All the questions will be answered tomorrow.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 p.m.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR RUSHTON (Dale) [7.15 p.m.]: Before the tea suspension I was making a few points to the Minister for Planning. However, he has been in office for only five months so he might not have understood them.

Mr Parker: The question was badly phrased. I tried to answer. If you want the figures for the preliminary approvals and subsequent final approvals I will provide them.

Mr RUSHTON: I will tell you what I am looking for. Any senior officer, or any officer in your department, will tell you that in my time we set up a programme setting out how many lots were available.

Mr Parker: The person who is in charge of that committee or group supplied the answer to me to give to you.

Mr RUSHTON: He must be a new boy then.

Mr Parker: He was appointed by Mrs Craig.

Mr RUSHTON: All I can say is the new deputy would know all about it if you referred the matter to him because he assisted in putting for-

ward that plan when we took over in 1974. Something like 26 000 lots were available when the Tonkin Government went out of office and obviously that was not a sufficient number of reasonably priced lots on the market. About 4½ years later about 40 000 blocks were available in the private and public sector and that is the figure I am trying to obtain. What is available in serviced blocks?

Mr Parker: Are you looking at blocks already serviced and that can be released more or less immediately?

Mr RUSHTON: There is a hold up, with private development all over the place. Serviced blocks are held by private people and public agencies all over.

Mr Parker: The point I am trying to get to is: Are you talking about the broad acre land and the assessments made as to what they could produce?

Mr RUSHTON: That is the last part of the question: How many lots could you have? Houses can be built on those lots for private or public needs. The last part of the question related to the number of building blocks available.

It was pleasing for me to read in the *Daily News* today that the Government has appointed Lloyd Graham as Deputy Town Planning Commissioner. He is a first-class officer and that appointment is one good move the Government has made. Mr Graham is a man who is extremely loyal to the Government of the day and he has tremendous ability. He is a man the Minister could refer to for guidance on the Government's commitment to the nodes.

When I was in the department Mr Graham made a large contribution when we were considering the public problem and the vexed question of the future of the nodes. We arranged with the Shire of Wanneroo for the zoning of residential and industrial land so that they would have the wherewithal to purchase that land.

I feel sad when I think that the Government has a commitment now of something like \$15 million to buy back the nodes when the shire could have done that a long time ago, when it had the assets to do so.

Mr Parker: I can assure you that everything you have said about him, I agree with. He has a tremendous ability and I will have the assistance of that officer too.

Mr RUSHTON: The member for Scarborough said he was of the opinion that there had not been a review of the regional scheme since 1962. I refer him to the time of my occupancy of that portfolio when there was a complete review of the regional

scheme. A tremendous amount of effort went into making adjustments to the amendments and perhaps the member might wish to refer to the amendments of that time.

I wish to refer briefly to the question of the Budget—as my leader did—and of the deficit. Last Friday night I was very vexed. When I sat with a group of people I asked them what they thought of the position relating to last year's deficit and they said they were very confused. That is a sad state of affairs because it should not be a confusing situation. The sum of \$37 million had accumulated from the short-term money market investment for last year and obviously the \$14.2 million deficit claimed by the Burke Government should be offset against it. As an example, in the previous two years—during the terms of the Court and the O'Connor Governments—the outstanding deficit was balanced from accumulated investment funds. The media have the duty and responsibility to make sure this position is made very clear. What is happening now concerning the strategy of the Government in regard to the forthcoming Budget is worrying, especially as it has already raised two major taxes. The Government has sought to raise in vicinity of \$11 million from a section of the Public Service, and this is a discriminatory tax. It has sought also to raise money by increasing the tobacco tax and has \$37 million from the carry-over of the short-term money market.

Mr Tonkin: You are spellbinding again.

Mr RUSHTON: I was saying, irrespective of the rudeness of members opposite—

Mr MacKinnon: Ignore it.

Mr RUSHTON: I know there is no need to worry about it.

The point is that the actual strategy of the Government in relation to the increases in the taxes has not been presented to the Parliament. All Governments have done this in the past, but it appears that this is not to be the approach of this Government.

I want to touch on the issues raised by the Minister for Transport in an article in the Press today, and I will be able to cover some of the points on which the Minister has been misleading the public. I regret that he is not in the House tonight, but he did invite me the other day to give my opinion on certain aspects of transport, which I was happy to do. However, I want to put the record right on a number of issues.

It was a painful thing for me to see the re-opening of the Perth-Fremantle railway line the other night on television, and the participation in that opening by members of the Government.

Mr McIver: I hope you are not referring to the driver.

Mr RUSHTON: No, the driver was very intent on what he was doing and he did not smash up any of our modern railcars. During the television viewing of the opening, I reflected on the fact that Governments, since 1970, had been studying the viability of that line. Approximately \$1 million had been spent on research.

Mr McIver: Only 800 people patronised it last Monday morning! I know it hurts, and that it is embarrassing. However, look at the money you people wasted.

Mr RUSHTON: I was saying—

Mr McIver: Your Government spent \$750 000 for a bridge for the brewery. Talk about the allocation for a suburban railway.

Mr RUSHTON: —that about \$1 million has been spent on research on the Perth-Fremantle railway line. It was given a three-year trial. An intensive study was carried out, and it was revealed that the line should not be open at this time.

The previous Government and I as Minister were committed to introducing a suitable railcar that would be efficient; and I hope the Government will continue with this, despite the losses it will incur in operating a service in this narrow corridor.

In the Press article, the Minister talks about the intention of the Government to encourage greater population around the major transport routes, but there is nothing new in what he has put forward. It is difficult for him to touch on anything new because the previous Government was very thorough in its investigations.

Professor Peter Newman recently referred to the need for intensive development along the railway line in order that the Perth-Fremantle train might prosper. I advise the Government that this has been suggested a number of times. The Government will find that the shires, towns, and cities along that corridor are certainly not interested in encouraging density. In fact, there has been a drop in population in this corridor, and this certainly does not encourage the provision of a high capacity train in the area.

Mr Parker: We have ideas about increasing the density.

Mr RUSHTON: The Government may have ideas, but the actions it is proposing in relation to local government indicate that local government will be disbanded. If the Government does this it can then tell everyone how to live and where to live. This is something people will not accept.

Professor Newman said he was not sure whether the Perth-Fremantle railway line would continue to be a viable proposition. He said that in one year's time the Government might decide not to proceed with it, but that he, personally, would like it to remain open despite the cost. Professor Newman said that there must be greater density of population along that route in order that it might be viable. However, local government authorities in that area do not want this density. These local authorities represent the people of the area concerned, and we should have regard for the wishes of the people. This is the philosophy of the Opposition, but it is obviously not the philosophy of our opponents.

The second point raised in the newspaper article to which I referred, was that the Metropolitan Transport Trust's total master plan for the next five years will be produced shortly.

If the Minister would like a copy of it, I will give him one. Of course he would not have much trouble in producing one—he has only to change the Minister's name and a couple of points and he will have one to produce. This has been the way he has been carrying out his tasks. He has been bending the truth like a boomerang, but it will come back to hit him one day.

Mr Gordon Hill: Boring, boring!

Mr RUSHTON: I do not know why we have to listen to this bone shaking in the corner and the foghorn voice we hear from time to time.

The five-year plan was produced by the previous Government, but it will be resubmitted and brought forward as a proposition initiated by the present Government.

I am glad the Minister has returned—although obviously he is not in his seat—and perhaps he will listen to me. If he takes out the relevant report, he will find the five-year plan.

The other situation he enjoyed yesterday was the opening of the Joondalup bus depot. This was part of the total public transport planning concept for Perth. I understand that it finished up a good design and it was suitably constructed. I was pleased to hear that it was completed.

Mr Grill: We gave the workers a say as to how it should be designed.

Mr RUSHTON: I should not listen to the Minister as he is not in his seat.

The Minister has consistently misconstrued the transport deficit. He has expressed opinions about the deficit in many different ways since he has been the Minister. He showed great concern that the deficit would be increased. He has paid \$1.4 million to the drivers. This claim by the drivers

was rejected by the Industrial Commission. He has reopened the Perth-Fremantle railway line and although at present it has cost only \$1.5 million or something like that, it will finish up costing in excess of \$5 million a year when various costs are included.

I hope that the Minister has a copy of my research document now. If he looks at it, he will see that in this document dated 8 April 1981, the predicted deficit was \$61 million for 1983-84. In the public transport arena, one must look very critically at a deficit. The Minister now has predicted the figure will be \$61 million, but, after all the effort that has been made, this figure should have been lower. At least it should be less the \$1.4 million which was paid to the drivers and less the cost of the Perth-Fremantle railway. At least some decrease would have been shown this year. Now the deficit will be back to where it was estimated to be before we took reducing measures. We planned to balance the deficit on a 10-year commercial basis.

I heard on the radio this morning that the Minister referred to social service identification. I might add that I had a fair bit of trouble getting Cabinet to agree—and then Treasury was resistant—to segregating the social service aspect of the transport service. I thought it essential for the public to know what it really costs to transport children, pensioners, and others on concessions. At a rough estimate I believe that \$25 million of that \$61 million could be attributed to social services. However, a Government must tackle the problem in the best way it can.

I had a question on today's notice paper which will identify for the Minister some of the points I raised in tackling the deficit situation. It is not an easy one, but I will be watching the results on the bottom line very closely.

To increase fares is an unproductive way of going about reducing the deficit. Fares must keep up with the CPI increases, but it is counterproductive once fares increase at a higher rate than does the CPI. Already a savage increase in fares has been made in the middle-distance zone. This year there has been reference to car-pooling as an alternative way to transport people objecting to paying the increased fares. In a free society one must always be careful about what to charge people.

For the information of the Minister and of the House, I indicate that the 1983-84 predicted deficit was \$61 million and the Minister is predicting a similar deficit next year. As I say, it is far too high, and we could have saved some of this increase without the burdens of the Perth-

Fremantle line and the increase in MTT wages. The increase in the wages of the MTT employees has been above the increase in the CPI rate.

The result obtained shows that the marketing programme we followed for the last 12 months must have had some results. However, when I left office in February, I had the feeling that the marketing programme was increasing the patronage, but it was not bringing the results we had hoped for in regard to the deficit. I do not think we can rely on a marketing programme to bring about a big drop in the deficit. A drop in the deficit must come from, firstly, a determination of the social service percentage. It is a big struggle to haul in the MTT deficit and one cannot relax for one moment in what one does in this regard. We tried nearly everything although we did not have the opportunity to try small buses. With the bicentennial road funds, the Minister will have a chance to try these small buses. The small buses might result in a better loading.

The estimated future Budget deficits are as follows—

	million \$
1984-85.....	71
1985-86.....	82
1986-87.....	93
1987-88.....	107
1988-89.....	122
1989-90.....	142
1990-91.....	163

So by 1990-91 the accumulated deficit will be over \$1 billion for the decade—something a Government could not accept. We had taken steps to rein in the deficit, but it is very distressing for me to see that it has now increased because of the Government's actions. In fact, the spiral of the deficit has increased and the Government is back at the target from which we began. The old saying was, "Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves", but, in regard to the State's Budget, the Government must look after the single millions as well as the multiples of the single millions.

The Minister should negotiate with the employees, through their union, for a more flexible approach in regard to the conditions under which they work. I believe we cannot accept that in 1990-91 we could have a deficit of \$163 million for public transport. Extra money is urgently needed by many hospitals and schools and so we must do something very quickly. We have tried 12 months of a marketing programme as recommended by the present director general and the present co-ordinator general, and others towards

improving the deficit position. Everyone will have to make a big effort. Although the marketing over the past 12 months did increase patronage, insufficient people wish to use the transport at the right time of day to load the vehicle up efficiently and so bring back the deficit.

I had hoped that with the opening of the Perth-Fremantle railway line, the appropriate manning of the trains—two people per train—could have been achieved. I do not know whether that was achieved and I will endeavour to determine this a little later. It was agreed with the union that after 8.00 p.m. there would be two men per train and I cannot see why the same situation should not apply all day long. It would save \$1 million or so in wages. If the people want a public transport service, they must support it. The employees and the administration must be serious about what they are doing. The employees can play a major part by giving good service and I am sure they will do this. However, they must be mindful of the effect on the deficit of any wage increases.

I want to touch on another item or two. One matter raised by the Minister in his article today referred to investment funds. He is fortunate to have arrived in his job at a time when he will gain the benefits of the bicentennial road programme introduced by the Fraser Government, a programme that we hope will be carried on by the Hawke Government. This will give the Government about \$18 million to be invested in public transport. This is our State's quota of the bicentennial road funds and we can do a great deal with that amount of money. We have battled along with something less than that. Prior to my time as Minister, this State missed out on an allocation of public funds for transport. I do not know who was to blame for that, but we certainly received less than our fair share in comparison with the amounts received by the other States. However, under this programme, we will receive our proportion of the funds and if we had not been burdened with the cost of the railcars, the Government could make great advances with this amount of money. I expect it will be used extensively for the purchase of new buses and railcars.

In regard to the use of the rail reserve for buses, I realise this was not the best advice I received. In the next phase of our development—during the next 10 years or so—we will still be faced with a low-density population throughout the metropolitan area. It is essential that we develop a lighter railcar for our suburban system. I myself directed a study by the Commissioner of Railways into light railcars. I see by a Press release about this matter that the study is now completed and it has been sent to the Minis-

ter. In due course, I would like to see the results of that study.

Probably not too many people in this room use public transport, and I would like to point out that rail reservations are very important in our transport system. With the freeway we now have going north, we could install a rubber-tyred train or something like that. We could utilise flexibility in the vehicles, and, on other routes, we could use a light railcar which could fill in for a number of years until we have sufficient population to warrant electrification or something of that nature.

Leylands railcars are used in England. I have seen these and I have ridden in them, and I think the Minister would have seen them also. The Comeng people who build vehicles for us in this State have presented me with a copy of a document showing that they could build a lighter railcar. I believe it would be much lighter than the present railcars. The high cost of the present railcars depends on their weight, and if we had light railcars, the cost of running them would be more comparable with the cost of running buses. We must take some of these steps to reduce the deficit.

I have taken the opportunity to reflect on the remarks made by the Minister for Transport. I recognise this is a difficult time for him. The previous Government was very active in the transport area and the Minister's officers would have shown him the work that was done. The Minister has done his best to make it appear as if the Government has been active in this area from the day it was elected. It is rather difficult to show that. I was somewhat sceptical about the Minister's trip to Singapore. Previously a transport officer went to Singapore and returned with a report containing information relating to public transport and shipping and that information is available to the Minister.

I was concerned that, in the first five months he was in the position, the Minister was travelling out of the State, bearing in mind the complexities of his portfolio. It is certainly an area which requires a great deal of study to understand.

In conclusion, I point out the stages at which the various arms of transport would break even. After segregating the social services aspect of the railways, we would have broken even in trading on a commercial basis in five or six years; Stateships would have broken even within four years; and, after a real struggle, the MTT would have broken even within about 10 years. The previous Government had those objectives. We shall be watching the present Government's performance.

I was interested to read the information in relation to the movement of employees within the Transport portfolio. Our targets have been maintained and it is to be hoped they do not begin to move upwards, as that would destroy the great progress we have made in this area.

As a result of steps taken by the previous Government in the way of modernisation, a total of \$50 million per annum has been saved in that portfolio. That would not have been the case had we not taken the hard decisions. If members compare the transport situation in this State with that in the other States of Australia, they will find that the people here have performed very well.

I take the opportunity also to express my appreciation publicly to the many people within the Transport, emergency services, and Deputy Premier's portfolios. They have been most loyal. I hope the present turbulence which surrounds them does not destroy their morale. I understand morale in those areas is rather shaky at the moment in view of the salary cuts mooted by the Government. I hope the Government realises the loyalty of the people to whom I have referred. Regardless of which party is in Government, they will be loyal and willing to serve. Indeed, these people demonstrated their capacity for hard work and loyalty during the time I held those portfolios. Together, with consultation, we achieved many transport initiatives.

I am anxious about what is taking place in regard to the new freight policy. A committee comprising 50 per cent union representation and 50 per cent representation from other interests has been formed. A total of \$55 000 is to be spent in this area and, as far as I am concerned, it is a complete waste. The research has been done already and monitoring is in progress. As a result, the situation is improving and yet a committee has been established to carry out further research. I suggest the terms of reference of that committee have been prepared by the unions, because that is the way they read. No-one can take credit for such a situation.

The unions have every right to be consulted in the various areas in which they are involved, but they are not responsible for running a commercial operation, nor are they responsible for ensuring that the State transport system is run in the most efficient way. Indeed, in the past, unions have had an interest in the inefficient running of the service, because the more people employed in the system, the better, as far as the unions were concerned. As a result, they resisted any moves towards improved efficiency.

It must be explained to the unions that their interests are the State's interests, and the previous Government went some way towards achieving progress in that area. However, the research the Government intends to carry out into the new freight policy and the part played by Total West should be questioned stringently.

It was not essential to establish Total West; the important aspect was to remove the trucking from Westrail. It had been proved that the railways could not run that segment of transport efficiently. The administration of Westrail, the Coordinator General of Transport, and everyone else involved in it agreed with that point of view. It is not possible for Westrail to run this service in competition with a private transport system.

I hope the Minister will recognise, when the committee's report becomes available, that if Westrail continued to carry less-than-car-loads freight, approximately 1 300 more people would be needed.

A number of fundamental lessons have been learnt in this area. Indeed, I found the whole experience very rewarding. The sad part of the situation was the political aspect. I suppose it is only human nature that, when one tries to introduce something new to a system which has been regulated for 50 years, the opportunity will be taken by opponents to try to exploit the position. Indeed, the unions did exploit it. It is said they vandalised some of the vehicles and freight was sent in the wrong directions initially. However, the situation settled down after a few months.

Many lessons have been learnt in this area and I hope the Government will adopt a pragmatic approach and will not change the direction of transport policies too greatly. Another monitoring report will be available from the Transport Commission shortly and it will be interesting to see the progress which has been made in that area.

I indicate to the Premier that we are anxious about the structuring of the Budget, particularly bearing in mind the taxing measures which have been adopted prior to its introduction. I do not refer to increased rates and charges; I refer to the taxing measures announced by the Government prior to the structure of the Budget being known. All these measures should be dealt with at the same time, but time will tell what will happen.

The debate has given me the opportunity to express some of my anxieties about the actions of the Government so far.

MRS HENDERSON (Gosnells) [7.53 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I rise to support the motion.

I would like to extend my congratulations to you on your becoming Speaker of this House. I

know you will continue to perform your duties with the fairness and forthrightness which you have demonstrated so far during this session. I hope that during your term you will have the opportunity to Chair debate between members, each representing approximately the same number of electors, so that the fairness which you have demonstrated will also be extended to the voters of this State.

I am extremely proud to be in this place making my maiden speech, representing the people of Gosnells as part of a Labor Government. The Australian Labor Party has a long and well-established place in Australian society as the party which represents the hopes and aspirations of the ordinary working people of this State.

It has always represented the tradition of a fair go for everyone, coupled with concern for those who find themselves in difficult economic circumstances. It is the party which says that all people are equal while at the same time recognising the varied talents and skills of each individual. It is the party which stands for those things that make life in a civilised society possible—sharing, concern for others, and compassion and help for the poor, the sick, and the disadvantaged. It puts concern for the well-being of society above promotion of self-interest. It is the party which grew out of the need for working people to have representation in the law-making processes of this country. It is the oldest political party in Australia and one which rejects the promotion of vested interests and privilege.

It is the party the policies of which were overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of this State in the February election and again in the Federal election in March.

In paying tribute to the Australian Labor Party, I would like also to make mention of our leader in this House, Brian Burke. He is a person I have known for many years and whose compassion and concern for the underprivileged is legend in his electorate and now throughout the State. He is a person of drive and ability who will lead this State forward through the difficult economic times we are experiencing.

I made mention of the development of the Australian Labor Party to represent the needs of working people. At no time have the working people of this State had more need of strong and effective representation of their points of view than now. For their immediate industrial needs, the trade union movement has always acted on their behalf. From time to time it is suggested that, while unions may have been essential in the aftermath of the industrial revolution with its pro-

duction of a mass of underpaid, underfed, and ruthlessly exploited workers, such a need does not exist today. Nothing could be further from the truth. Just as the industrial revolution changed the whole face of society and moved industry from the cottages into the factories, so the current information and technology revolution will produce changes in our way of life as far-reaching and dramatic as the industrial revolution. It is no exaggeration to talk of factories with a handful of supervisory workers checking on the programmed machinery and to forecast massive losses of jobs in communication, banking and insurance, retailing, and all sections of manufacturing industry. Professor Stonier from Bradford University predicts that by the end of this century 10 per cent alone of the working population will provide all our required commodities—food, shelter, clothing, transport, and energy.

The current high levels of unemployment in Australia are obviously not due to changes in technology. Undoubtedly a worldwide slump in demand has been the major cause of small business bankruptcies and redundancies in industry. This has been exacerbated by the monetarist and contractionary policies of the former conservative Federal and State Governments which sought to bring down inflation at the massive social cost of soaring unemployment.

However, it is during periods of recession, when high unemployment leads to a decline in levels of trade union industrial activity, that many employers will take advantage of the opportunity to introduce new labour-saving systems. In Australia this activity was undoubtedly assisted by the former Federal Government's investment allowance which offered attractive incentives to industry to introduce employment-displacing machinery.

The rate at which jobs are disappearing in this country is frightening. Future generations will not thank the conservative forces of this State which label as "greedy" unions which seek to prevent the loss of jobs; nor will they be able to fathom the logic of such intense opposition to reduced working hours when ultimately this will be the only way to spread around the community the limited opportunities to work.

There is no doubt that Australia will not escape the consequences of this technical information revolution which has already swept other industrialised countries. Undoubtedly the growth of the largest and strongest companies and the growing internationalisation of production will have a dramatic impact on our small business sector which currently provides the greatest employment opportunities of any component in our economy. It has been calculated that five million people in

the United Kingdom may become unemployed in the 1980s as a direct result of new technology. In West Germany, it has been calculated that two million clerical jobs will disappear. As the vehicle building and steel-making industries in Australia shed labour, we are likely to see automated machinery displace these jobs as the industry restructures itself.

The paradox of this situation is that here, in Perth, thousands of people are walking the streets seeking work, and a crying need also exists for the creation of jobs in other community service areas.

Undoubtedly the lives of hundreds of elderly people would be brightened by the visit of a friendly and concerned person to check on their well-being. Whether they are coping independently at home or whether they live in a nursing home, there is no doubt that their loneliness is a major problem in our society. Similarly, young mothers at home with small children would, I am sure, welcome the provision of neighbourhood centres where they could obtain occasional child care when they have dental or medical appointments, or other private business to attend to. I believe that no task is more difficult, more demanding, and more important, than that of a mother at home looking after two or three young children.

The burgeoning of learning centres in the suburbs is testimony to the needs of mothers and others for places providing contact and the opportunity to learn skills in an informal setting with adequate child care provided.

Our eroded beaches cry out for grass planting schemes, our classrooms are still bursting at the seams. There is no lack of vital and important jobs to be done. At the same time, thousands of our young people have become angry and disillusioned as they search in vain for work; meanwhile, overtime is common and many people hold two jobs. What is needed is a concerned Government prepared to tackle these problems, and fortunately for Western Australia and Australia, we now have that Government.

As industry moves to greater automation, and more and more jobs are lost, there will be not only savings in costs for employers because of the reduced wages bill, but also enormous increases in output. In this situation it is essential that the interests of the community are protected. Unless action is taken at the point where jobs are lost, the opportunity for the creation of other jobs in the service and community service sector, utilising these benefits of increased productivity, will escape.

The technology which makes possible this increase in output has often been developed at public expense at universities and institutes of technology. The Government must act to protect the interests of the community as jobs are shed. If it does not, it will passively accept responsibility for the welfare of those unemployed people while the companies involved reap the financial benefits and use these benefits to absorb other small competitors.

What is to be done? Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Government on the appointment of a Minister for Economic Development and Technology as a major step in giving recognition to the importance of this problem. Secondly, the Labor Government in this State and the Federal Labor Government have always maintained that economic recovery can be assisted only by expansionary policies which stimulate demand. The Premier is to be commended for his stand on this at the recent Premiers' Conference. Lack of demand could well be the only factor at present putting a brake on the introduction of new technology. Increased production is of little benefit to anyone if a substantial section of the community is unemployed and unable to purchase the products available.

Allied with these points, of course, are the questions of sensible use of our resources and energy, bearing in mind the needs of future generations. Similarly, there is the question of limits on the quantity of consumer products that the community can or should absorb.

In the short term, one thing stands out clearly. While Western Australia may be at the forefront of research and development in some fields, it has been firmly positioned in the stone age in regard to industrial relations. The former Government's policy of confrontation is one that has now been abandoned. I welcome the Government's planned tripartite council with representatives of the union movement, the employers, and the Government examining and advising on matters of industrial relations. I hope the Press will follow the Government's lead and seek to report on the causes of any future industrial disruption which may occur, rather than solely on the effects. I have been disappointed to find that the rhetorical anti-union rantings that characterise Liberal Party election material also echo from the other side of this House.

That people in this State are being laid off from their jobs after 10 or 15 years' service, often with only a few hours notice, is appalling enough; that those people who take up the cause of these redundant workers should be described as "greedy" or "power hungry" is utterly abomin-

able. I repeat what I said earlier: The need for unions to represent the needs of their members is as important now as it ever was. The days when people abandoned their democratic rights to be consulted in decisions affecting their lives as they walked through the factory gates should now be over. The rapid restructuring of work in the wake of technological change demands that unions be involved in the decisions made about the jobs of their members.

Other countries, with more advanced and progressive Governments than our previous Government, have clearly shown the way. Working people must have access to information about the future plans of the enterprise where they work, and must be given the opportunity to contribute to decisions made about those plans. Working men and women, through their unions, must be able to participate in the making of decisions affecting the organisation and the future of their work. Work is probably more important in our society than in any other society in history. Because work is vital to our self-esteem, and a source of personal satisfaction or dissatisfaction, there is no doubt about the need for workers to gain greater dignity and recognition at work. This concept, broadly called "industrial democracy", is not new, and I look forward to its establishment in Western Australia.

Some employers in Western Australia have, I believe, deliberately hidden from their employees plans to introduce new technology, which in turn has resulted in wide-scale redundancies and a permanent loss of jobs. Such occasions highlight the need for legislation to establish the rights of unions to seek information for the benefit of their members. In the meantime, I look forward to an open and consultative approach by the Government to its employees in the introduction of new technology.

Mr Speaker, I am conscious of being one of four newly elected women to this place. The four women who sit here today represent the same number of women as has ever sat in this House on either side of the Chamber. I think this is a clear example of the way in which women have been underrepresented at the decision-making levels in our society. In Government, in the Public Service, in law, in education, and in management, women have rarely been involved in the making of decisions that affect their lives. Partly through tradition, partly through the difficulties of combining family responsibilities with other responsibilities, women have a history of exclusion from Government in this State. This is not to say that women have been inactive. Women's groups and individuals for years have been on depu-

tations to Ministers, have written letters, have compiled submissions, and have generally sought to persuade men to make decisions which women have thought were necessary. This involvement has always been indirect and has often been unsuccessful. I am pleased that our Government has signalled its intention to establish a women's advisory council to give women direct access to Government. I am pleased that the Government has received almost 60 submissions from a wide range of women's groups stongly in favour of the establishment of such a council and the appointment of a women's adviser. Similarly, the work that has been done by a wide range of women's groups in calling for antidiscrimination legislation is to come to fruition during the term of the current Labor Government.

Women's groups throughout Western Australia have long expressed their grave concern about the incidence of violence to women and children in their homes. I pay tribute to these women, who, in the absence of any domestic violence legislation, have established a network of refuges to give a safe haven to women and children fleeing from violent situations. I welcome the Federal Government's increased funding for this area and look forward to our State Budget for further improvements.

In closing, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank all those electors of Gosnells who gave me the opportunity to represent them in this Chamber. I would thank also the staff of this House and my parliamentary colleagues for their assistance and co-operation. My grateful thanks go to all those dedicated Labor Party workers in Gosnells who assisted me to win the seat. These are people who have a vision of a better society, and who selflessly work towards that goal.

Finally my thanks go to my parents for their encouragement, and to my husband whose loving support has always been a source of great strength and inspiration.

[Applause.]

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [8.07 p.m.]: I appreciate receiving the call to take part in this debate on the Supply Bill, which will appropriate funds to enable the Government to carry on the running of the State until the Budget is passed later in the year. I am not confident, however, that the funds will be spent wisely and well.

Mr Blaikie: One thing we can be guaranteed is that the funds will be spent.

Mr LAURANCE: That is correct, but they will not be spent wisely and well.

Mr Blaikie: It is a spending Government.

Mr LAURANCE: It is a big spending, big taxing Government. Labor Governments have been known to be big taxing Governments, and this Government has started off in that same vein. It has given an undertaking to the people of this State that they can expect to witness what they have seen Labor Governments of previous times do in this State. Labor believes it can tax heavily to support its programmes.

No doubt the Premier will be able to use these funds, and he may even be able to bring back to his side some of the groups he has alienated in his first few months of Government with a litany of broken promises. We have witnessed also broken traditions in a number of areas, and I will point out to the House where this Government has broken with long-standing tradition.

Mr Parker: Sometimes that might be better.

Mr LAURANCE: In some cases that might be so, and I am not opposed to change.

Mr Parker: We have never been afraid to break with tradition.

Mr LAURANCE: The Labor Party may pay the penalty for that. The Supply Bill gives us an early opportunity to appraise the actions of this Government over the last five months, and to have an early glimpse of what we are likely to witness in the Parliament.

My appraisal is this: In the five months the Labor Party has been in Government, and the few days we have been in the House, I regard this Government as very cynical and overconfident.

Mr Tonkin: Cynical! Come on!

Mr LAURANCE: In a moment I will give the Minister an example.

Mr Tonkin: You might criticise us for being idealistic, but not cynical.

Mr LAURANCE: We are still in the early days of this Government. It is to our advantage politically if this Government continues to operate in the way it has, but my point now to Government members is that already their Government is cynical and overconfident. Government members may think they have a right to be overconfident as a result of the comfortable majority they hold in this House; but it is a very cocksure Government which will lay down the law to people throughout the State, whether they be cigarette smokers, public servants, or members of the Opposition. It is not too early to label this Government as a maverick Government as a result of the way its members have cavorted around the place.

A Government member: At least we are not an extreme right-wing Government.

Mr LAURANCE: More is the pity.

Mr Parker: An interesting comment.

Mr LAURANCE: This Government can afford now to be overconfident, but I wonder for how long. If it continues in the way it has operated so far, not only will it alienate selected groups by imposing big taxes and breaking its promises, but also the public generally will get the message that the next 2½ years will not be all sweetness and light as proffered at the election.

I appreciated the sentiments of the previous speaker; the Premier is not all he is cracked up to be.

Mr Bateman: Give him time to implement our policies.

Mr LAURANCE: It is a bit early for Government members to make excuses for him, but I expect they will make them for him in any case.

The groups this Premier has alienated are well known, and their circumstances have been well documented. I am sorry he is not here now because I wish to make another point in regard to the Supply Bill. We have heard a deal of argument about the Budget and his capacity as Treasurer. I know we are in the early days and I know we need to be forgiving to a certain extent because he is a new Treasurer.

I will not take up the points made by my leader which showed that the Premier has tried to mislead the public in regard to various figures stated on a number of occasions. On one occasion, he was 100 per cent wrong, and after several days had to admit that his figures were totally wrong. However, it is appropriate for my leader, as the previous Treasurer, to say whether the figures were incorrect by \$X million or \$X plus Y million.

What I say to the Premier is this: By this legislation we are appropriating \$1 billion. Although I am pleased to be part of a Parliament appropriating these funds to a Government to enable it to carry on the running of its affairs, I must make the point that the taxpayers of this State are footing the bill for this Supply Bill and, subsequently, will foot the bill for the Budget. All members of this Parliament deserve a better deal than that. It is about time this Premier started to get it right. I do not care now whether the anticipated revenue from the tobacco tax is \$15 million or \$128 million, or whatever it was. I will not raise those points because they have been canvassed. My point is that this Government has made an embarrassing number of mistakes in discussions of the Budget.

I say to the Premier: I deserve to have more time and more advice available to me, but with the enormous increase in staff to advise him, surely he can get the figures right before he makes public statements.

Mr Court: He is the cook.

Mr LAURANCE: Perhaps he is cooking up the Budget, and he is embarrassed. We on this side of the House, however, deserve better than that; he should come up with a better performance, and, before coming out with figures, he should take the time to get them right.

The people advising the Premier have a duty to the State not to give the figures incorrectly because when the Premier goes out publicly and makes statements, he is called upon to defend them, only to find they are wrong. We might score a political point or two as a result of that, but I just make that observation.

We are providing \$1 million of taxpayers' money in order that the Government might carry on with the running of this State. Members of this House, and taxpayers, deserve to get the figures the right way the first time. They should not have to rely on the Opposition to keep hammering away so that we finally get the proper figures given to us.

There are well-documented cases such as one which has come to light only today in another place in answer to a question. This relates not to a broken promise or something being wrong, but to the fact that the Premier has broken a tradition that a Labor Government established. I refer to the appointment to the Rottneest Island Board—which was announced today—of one member of the Government. The member for Cockburn has been a long-standing member of the Rottneest Island Board and his time has expired. It is unfortunate that the member is not present in the House at the moment. The member for Cockburn has been replaced by another member of the Government.

This is only a small point, but the Government has broken with a tradition in this particular area. It has broken a tradition that I understand was introduced in the 1950s. At that time Mr Kelly, as Minister for Lands, appointed a member—

Mr Tonkin: The member for Cockburn is not the Minister for Lands.

Mr LAURANCE: The Minister for Lands at that time appointed a member of the Opposition to the board and successive Governments, over a period of 30 years, have maintained that tradition.

Mr Tonkin: You are really hung up on tradition.

Mr LAURANCE: I am saying how it was 30 years ago and how Governments of both political colours have abided by that tradition over the years. It has now been broken. The Government has that right, of course, but I am just saying that it is a cynical exercise.

The member for Cockburn did not attend the meetings of the board because he acknowledged that tradition. That is the reason that he has been removed by the Labor Party—he is one who respected that tradition.

I was the previous Chairman of the Rottneest Island Board until the election this year and the change of Government to the present Government. The previous Government reappointed the member for Cockburn as a member on the board in line with tradition, but since the change of Government I believe, out of respect for tradition, he did not attend meetings.

Now the Premier is chairman of the board and we will have another Government member on the board.

Mr Tonkin: How do you know the reason he did not attend?

Mr LAURANCE: If the Leader of the House checks with the member for Cockburn, he will find I am right. If I am not correct, I will be happy to hear from him. In the two or three months up to the election, he was still a member of the board, but he did not attend the meetings out of deference to the tradition that is held on the Rottneest Island Board.

Mr Court: Did he give up his mooring?

Mr LAURANCE: I do not believe he did.

Mind you, members of the Rottneest Island Board are not paid. Perhaps they do have other benefits which make up for the tremendous amount of time that they give.

I wish to make the point that the Premier has taken over as chairman of the board. I congratulate him on this decision, but I believe it is proper for the Government to appoint a member of the Opposition to the board.

Mr Tonkin: Would you like that job?

Mr LAURANCE: I certainly did not want that job, but not because I would not have liked to have served on the board.

Mr Tonkin: What do you have against Rotto?

Mr LAURANCE: I believe this is another cynical exercise. I do not want to say that it is another "job for the boys", but it sticks out like another proverbial "If you are not in the Minis-

try, you will get a cushy job in the House and a car provided and go on a couple of other things like the Rottneest Island Board". If that is the case, good luck to him. I am not a great supporter of the Premier and I do not think he will be an adornment to that board anyway, but it is breaking with a very good tradition which has been respected by both sides of the political spectrum and they have seen fit to continue it. We have seen previous members, such as the member for Cockburn, do an excellent job. He served the board well, and I believe he will be very disappointed. If we consider where he now sits in this House and what has happened to him, we realise no-one from the Labor Party will give a tinker's cuss about what he thinks about all this. I am sure he will be very disappointed about the callous way the Government has broken with tradition.

If the Government wishes to break with tradition, why does it not appoint someone from outside the Parliament? I would have been quite happy to go along with such a break in tradition.

Before leaving the subject of the Premier, I wish to say something about his staff. Firstly, if I may interpolate here, I must say the only sign of modesty we have seen from this Government came from the Premier today when he gave an apology for not having his questions answered, because of some foul-up in his office. I am sorry he is not present at the moment. I think the Leader of the House was very modest this evening, too; he even blushed at one stage. I will deal with the Leader of the House in a moment.

I asked the Premier a question; I wrote to him and contacted his office about the matter. I asked him about an invitation which had been sent to his office from the manager of the tourist development office in the Kimberley. The Premier seemed to think I was taking him to task for his not accepting this invitation to open a motel at Derby. The person who issued the invitation waited for two months and had received no acknowledgment of his invitation. He received no acknowledgment that the invitation had even arrived in the Premier's office. I ask the Premier: What are all these officers in his department doing? He has a political adviser, media advisers, additional public servants, and a new department of Cabinet, but he is not telling us what these officers really do. In fact, in answer to a question asked of him by the Leader of the Opposition about how many people have been placed in the Premier's Department, he said, "None, because it is a completely new department". I think that was a cynical way to answer a question.

Mr Barnett: It proves you do not know how to ask questions.

Mr Blaikie: It is like a cover-up.

Mr LAURANCE: It is fair to ask such a question on behalf of the people of this State. It is fair to ask what these people are doing and what they are being paid. They do not have to give away 10 per cent of their money as others must do.

Mr Parker: Yes they do. There is no question about it.

Mr LAURANCE: I believe that is up to negotiation under their contract. I believe they do not have to pay. They are getting these allowances. What are they being paid? The Premier cannot answer the question.

If the Premier got up on a Thursday afternoon and said, "I cannot answer the questions because we sit at 10.45 a.m. and the questions did not come in until early some time today", any reasonable member in this place would accept that because of the new concept of hours which this Parliament had forced on it. We find now that we must submit questions on a Thursday when previously we could submit questions on a Friday. It is often the case that the Premier cannot answer questions on a Thursday because they were submitted to him at the last minute, but we find that the Premier cannot answer questions today.

I repeat that the Premier—

Mr Brian Burke: I have been listening.

Mr LAURANCE: —showed the only sign of modesty we have seen from this Government, when he apologised. I am not criticising him about his appointments because I know it is very sensible to wait until the time is closer to the date before arranging appointments. That is a sensible and responsible approach.

While I am speaking about this matter, I must say that I can give the Premier some advice about his tourism adviser, especially when he goes to the previous Minister's electorate. If he does not want to raise the hackles of people and win me some votes, he should not run down the local member. He seems to be immature about these things.

The new Premier's departmental staff and his political and media advisers, as well as additional staff, could not write to the fellow and say that they acknowledged his letter to the Premier and when the Premier could arrange his programme a little closer to the date they would give him the courtesy of a reply. What are these additional people doing with the money the taxpayers of this State are providing?

I would like to deal now with the Leader of the House because I am surprised to find that we still have the same Leader of the House tonight, es-

pecially after his disgraceful performance last week. I thought the Government would have removed him, but that is the Government's decision.

The longer the Leader of the House is left in his role and the longer he is left in charge of electoral business and the business of this House, the greater will be the advantage to the Opposition.

Mr Brian Burke: Why don't you get on to discussing the Bill instead of centering on personalities?

Mr LAURANCE: It is the Supply Bill.

Mr Brian Burke: Of course it is, but ever since you stood up you have centered on personalities. I am just advising you that, if you got off personalities and on to the substance of the Bill—

Mr LAURANCE: The Premier is seeking funds to carry on Government.

Mr Brian Burke: You are insulting the Leader of the House.

Mr LAURANCE: There is no reason to deny me that opportunity because we have been denied many other opportunities. The Premier's Government is cynical and overconfident. I said previously that the Leader of the House was a zealot because I know, Mr Speaker, that if I described him as a mad dog, you would make me withdraw that statement.

Mr Tonkin: Do you know what King George said about John Wolfe?

Mr LAURANCE: The Leader of the House is not a pragmatist like the Premier. The Leader of the House is getting the Government into strife; he started on that path last week. He was the most irrational member when he was in Opposition and that is one trait he has taken across the Chamber with him.

Mr D. L. Smith: You have said nothing constructive and nothing about good government—it has been just personal abuse.

Several members interjected.

Mr Wilson: What a real knocker! Just a knocker!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LAURANCE: With general debate, such as that on the Supply Bill, we are entitled to make our comments. The Government should not override or squash any opposition coming from this side of the House, but that is what we witnessed last week when this irrational Minister tried to ignore the traditions of the House and tried to jack boot the Opposition into submission when previously such matters had been dealt with by agreement.

Mr Brian Burke: Do you realise you are harming only yourself?

Mr LAURANCE: However, matters were not carried out that way this time. The point I made earlier this evening was that questions were very poorly answered, if they were answered at all. We on this side of the House deserve a better deal. If we are to ask questions, we deserve proper answers, but unfortunately that has not been the case. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have not received proper answers to their questions; and I make the point that this Government is very cynical and over confident because some of the replies we have been given have been very cynical indeed. That is the advice I am giving Government members. There is no need for the cynical approach; the Government has the numbers and can crush us any time it wants to take a vote.

Mr D. L. Smith: Tell us how many electors you represent.

Mr LAURANCE: I represent more than the two Labor members who represented that area for the 40 years before I entered Parliament.

Mr D. L. Smith: How many voted for you at the last election?

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Mandurah lives in the member for Mitchell's electorate. The member for Mitchell should ask him. He did a good job in representing those electors and he was an ornament for the Labor Party. The member may say he should not have been here, but the Hon. F. J. S. Wise and the Hon. Dan Norton, a previous Speaker of this House, were a great adornment to the political party they represented and to the area of the State they represented; they did well. The member may not like the fact that they represented that area, but they did it well and I am happy to follow in their footsteps. If I can hold this seat for 40 years, it may balance the period for which they held it from 1933 until I entered Parliament.

I want to refer to two questions which were asked recently, but I am sure there are other examples. A very cynical approach has been adopted by Ministers in replying to questions. Last Tuesday, the member for Dale asked question 249 and he did not receive an answer. He was advised that an answer would be given at a convenient time, some time, maybe never, or a bit later. On Thursday, he asked another question on notice saying that some parts of his original question could be answered straightaway and could he have an answer to them. In a cynical way the Minister for Transport said, "I thank the member for his great patience". How puerile can

a Minister get? What a cynical approach to Parliament.

Government members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: It can be described only in that way. The questions could have been answered in the first place. If they could not be answered, why could not the Minister provide a reply without using that particular approach?

On Wednesday last, I asked the Minister for Transport question 227. I asked what effect the Federal Government's new withholding tax would have on the transport industry in Western Australia when it commenced on 1 September 1983. He came back with this reply—

I am not aware of any new withholding tax which the Federal Government may be introducing on 1 September 1983.

What sort of approach is that?

Government members: A cynical approach!

Mr LAURANCE: It is. The interjections are very much appreciated; I thank members for their help.

The Minister's reply went on to say that the Federal Government was introducing a prescribed payments system on that date which did not impose any new tax. The Minister said the system would require income tax, for which subcontractors in the road transport industry are liable, to be collected in a PAYE fashion by the prime contractor. In *The West Australian* today it is stated that WA is going to act against the new tax. It says the State Minister for Housing is launching a campaign against the Federal Government's controversial 10 per cent withholding tax. Perhaps the Minister for Housing might whisper to his cynical colleague that it is being talked of around the place as a withholding tax.

I know the Minister for Transport can say it is a prescribed payments system, but I would point out that the answer to the question goes on to say that very little has been done. First the Minister says there is no such thing, and then he says that not much has been done about it. I am pleased to see the Minister for Housing has come out against his Federal colleagues. It is gratifying to see that occurring so early in the life of this Government. Ministers are having to attack their Federal counterparts. We became very familiar with that as a Government and I am pleased early in the piece that the Government has recognised that the Federal Government will be its Achilles heel. Labor Government's are traditionally big tax Governments and here we have a new tax.

Mr Wilson: It was introduced by a Liberal Government.

Mr LAURANCE: It was a form of tax on the cash society, but it was not proceeded with. Now the Minister's Federal counterparts are moving into this area.

We have already lost a lot of jobs in this State since this Government took over. The Government has not been able to maintain any prospects for increased employment that it promised before the election. The Federal Government's action will cost more jobs. The Minister for Housing has correctly identified that this tax will mean big trouble in the housing industry. It has not struck his colleague that it will mean big trouble in the transport industry. Both industries rely heavily on subcontractors. I know the State Government is trying to belt the Federal Government around the ears because of the effect this new tax will have on the housing industry. Prime contractors will be required to take out not 10 per cent, but 25 per cent from a subcontractor's payment. It will send him broke. The prime contractor will be able to take out only 10 per cent rather than 25 per cent if the subcontractor has an exemption, but today one cannot get an exemption form. If one rings the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation in this State, one cannot get any guidelines for this new tax.

Mr Davies: They were delivered last night.

Mr LAURANCE: The subcontractors would not know that yet. I know many accounting firms in the city are trying to organise seminars for their clients to tell them what it is about, and they have been waiting on advice from the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation. They have not been able to hold the seminars because they cannot get the information. The Minister says the information was made available last night, but that is a Federal Government matter anyway.

I am worried about the impact of the tax on industries in this State, particularly the transport industry which is of such vital interest to me, and the effect on employment. Even if a subcontractor can get an exemption and reduce the amount that is taken out from 25 per cent to 10 per cent, it will still be taken from his prime contractual fee. It does not take into account his expenses and, if 10 per cent is taken off the top before the fee is paid, it will be more than he earns on a particular trip. The House should contemplate the effect it will have on subcontractors in this State; it will be a disaster. The Federal Government has only one way to go—it must withdraw it or defer it.

I agree with the Minister for Housing that, if this tax proceeds, the Minister for Employment

and Administrative Services will find the noose being pulled tighter around his neck. More importantly, jobs will be lost in this State and the Minister already has not been able to turn around the difficult situation we are facing. It is getting worse.

Mr Court: He pinpointed 25 000 jobs.

Mr LAURANCE: I am very concerned about the impact of the new tax and I am pleased the Government is taking positive action by getting into a stranglehold with its Federal counterpart. It needs to do that on this issue.

Mr Blaikie: It is not choking its Federal counterpart with great enthusiasm.

Mr LAURANCE: It is asking for a deferment and that is in line with what industry is seeking. It is an important matter for the Government to tackle.

I was referring earlier to the attitude of this Government—

Mr Hodge: The cynical attitude.

Mr LAURANCE: I thank the Minister for interposing.

The Minister for Transport is another good example. The old jack boot Leader of the House is laughing at my description of him. He has some colleagues, and the Minister for Transport is one. The way he has answered questions shows a great lack of courtesy not only to me, but also to other people to whom he has responded, and to the Parliament.

Mr Tonkin: You should talk!

Mr LAURANCE: There have been some disgraceful examples. One occurred last Friday. Out of courtesy to the Chairman of the Metropolitan Transport Trust who extended the invitation to me, I accepted an invitation to attend the celebrations in connection with the reopening of the Perth-Fremantle railway service. I went to Fremantle station last Friday morning, and I have never heard or seen a function turned into a political rally as was that one. I thought it was a disgusting display, particularly by the Minister for Transport, and to some extent the Premier, although not to the same extent. The Minister for Transport demonstrated on that occasion that he is a real cowboy.

Mr Bertram: A cynical cowboy!

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Mt. Hawthorn is right again. We are talking about the expenditure of taxpayers' funds. This was an election promise and, in making its decision, the Government has honoured that promise. It was correct in doing so, but it will be a financial disaster for this State. The Government is entitled to

make the decision to reopen the line and I acknowledge the correctness of its decision; but it is the taxpayers' money and for a Minister to get up and talk about the Liberal Party doing this and the Labor Party doing that is wrong and in poor taste. He could have said, "The Government has decided to do this". Everybody knows the Liberal Party is in Opposition. It was beneath the dignity of the occasion to denigrate previous Ministers in a jocular fashion, particularly when this was a large show and the taxpayers' funds were being expended. The Minister has won the right from the voters to expend taxpayers' funds, but some propriety must be observed in how one goes about it. To say the Liberals put the kiss of death on the transport system and that the wonderful Labor Party is going to breathe new life into it, if the Treasury can survive—

Mr Tonkin: How is your campaign to go far right going?

Mr LAURANCE: If the Minister wanted to go about it in that way, he did it particularly well. One thing was missing. The clowns were there, and the bands and the train.

Mr Parker: You have already told us you were there.

Mr LAURANCE: The classic situation was that the first train ran late. In spite of all the elaborate precautions, the train was considerably late getting away from the station. The only thing missing when the Minister for Transport gave his highly charged political speech, was a big sign behind him saying, "Vote Julian 1".

Mr Court: He said Charlie Court took them down the centre of the line.

Mr LAURANCE: He denigrated everybody he could think of.

Mr McIver: Tell us about the \$4 million installation at Camballin which was never utilised.

Mr LAURANCE: What does the member for Kimberley say about it?

Mr McIver: I am not interested in what he says about it. You talk about the Fremantle train. You should hide your head in shame.

Mr LAURANCE: I am pleased the Minister raised that because this facility is still there.

Mr Davies: Rusting and waiting for a cyclone.

Mr LAURANCE: It will be used. I would like to be able to orchestrate Government members more. The only person not finding fun in this matter is the member for Kimberley because he knows his party's attitude to northern development. He knows we will be able to make political capital out of this. Government members are putting their feet right in it.

We will be able to come back and use against the member for Kimberley the jocular fashion in which members of the Government are talking about northern developments. They are developments that Governments of that political colour have supported in the past; but members can imagine how the member for Kimberley fared with them.

While we are talking about northern developments and the Kimberley, let us consider the telex received by the Premier only yesterday or today from the Kimberley Travel Association about the membership of the wonderful new tourism advisory committee. The member for Kimberley has taken up that matter. What about the assistance for the flood damage this year?

Government members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: I was telling the member for Collie earlier this evening that I did not really want these microphones in here. In fact, I am a little disappointed we have them, because I do not really need them.

The only time the Government responded to the needs of the people of the Kimberley during the floods earlier this year was when the member for Kimberley had to appeal to the Government. He almost had to get down on bended knee before the Government would listen. I will not embarrass the member for Kimberley by asking him to stand and say it, but he knows that he received a far better deal from the Ministers of the previous Government than from the Ministers of the present Government. It is an embarrassment to the member for Kimberley that the Minister for Lands and Surveys should talk about the facilities at Broome. I will encourage the Minister, because I know it is to the embarrassment of his colleague from Kimberley.

When the people in the Kimberley say that things are not happening, I will remind them about this. I hope *Hansard* is reporting the laughter. With the tapes, we may be able to have the laughter recorded. It is a pity that *Hansard* does not record cynicism, because that is one of the major things I am talking about. We will see how the Government performs in terms of northern development. The laughter of Government members will ring hollowly if the Minister for Lands and Surveys says things like that again.

I will return to the Minister for Transport, because I had not finished with him. He came out today with comments about the \$61 million deficit in the public transport system. He said it might throttle the whole system; he said that this year it would cost every man, woman, and child in the metropolitan area \$70 a year. That is a ter-

rible burden. Those comments were made by the Minister within a few hours of the reopening of the Fremantle-Perth line which will add at least \$5 million a year to the deficit. Within two or three days of the reopening of that line, the Minister is crying crocodile tears about the public transport deficit in this State.

Transport deficits are not new. We had to grapple with them, and this Government will have to grapple with them. However, the Government has accelerated the deficit. There is only one way for the Government to handle the transport deficit and that is to have a relentless struggle to keep it down. The Government must achieve a balance between the service it can provide and the charge on the community; that is the relentless struggle.

I will have more to say about this later. I do not want to talk about it any more at this time, as my time does not permit me to enter into this particular debate. We will have an opportunity to debate these public transport matters and the effect on the transport system of the reopening of the Fremantle-Perth line. We will discuss the cost to the people in the community—the people in the northern suburbs who will not have the assistance of a modern transport system until the Government has paid off or recouped some of the debts incurred on the Fremantle-Perth line.

We will discuss the lack of service to some of the other suburbs along the Armadale and Midland lines. We will discuss the cost to the country people who cannot even use the Fremantle-Perth service. We will talk about those matters later on.

While I have the opportunity, I draw to the attention of the House the hypocrisy of the Minister for Transport in shedding crocodile tears about the deficit on public transport. That deficit has been accelerated in quick time by this Government. In the early days of this Government, after the institution of the wages freeze, the Government added \$1.4 million to that deficit by giving a wage rise to Metropolitan Transport Trust drivers. I am not saying that the drivers did not deserve the increase. What I am saying is that the increase was given at the beginning of the wages pause—an action that had been accepted universally, not only in this State, but also around the nation. The Government has had the opportunity of spending some of the money raised in the wages pause; but it has destroyed it in the area of public transport. With the Fremantle-Perth rail decision and the granting of the additional wages to the MTT drivers during the wages pause, the Government has forced up the public transport deficit. It is laughable for the Minister to make public utterances about the size of the deficit and

the fact that the Government finds it difficult to contain that deficit.

I return to the central point of my remarks. I have tried to talk about the attitude of the Government. The people are sizing up the Government. I was able to conduct an exercise in one area of the State recently. I found some voters who had voted Liberal previously, but who had voted Labor earlier this year. I asked them, "Well, are you happy with the result you have got?" They said, "No—very much disappointed". Then I asked them, "If you had another opportunity"—and in some areas they may have one in a very short time—"would you change your mind?" A number of them said, "No. It would be too early to change our mind".

A number of people who supported the Government would suffer a loss of face at this early stage, even if they might feel inclined to make a change if they were senior public servants, smokers, or any of the other alienated groups who have become disenchanted with the Government's policies, if they changed their vote. Somehow or other they would lose face to themselves, if members understand my point. They feel they should give the Government a little more time before the pendulum swings back, as it will swing back; it is inevitable.

The point I am making in my contribution this evening is that the Government is showing by its attitude that it will steamroll the Opposition; it will ride roughshod over us, the Parliament, and many sections of the public. This is the first step downhill for the Government.

MR TROY (Mundaring) [8.53 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, firstly I join with other new members in congratulating you on your election to the high office you now hold. It is already evident to me why you have been elevated to that high office by members of this House, in the sincere welcome and kind assistance you have displayed to me as a new member in this place. I thank you for that assistance and wish you every success in what certainly appears to be an onerous task, considering the conduct and questionable tactical manoeuvring of the Opposition members witnessed here last Thursday evening. I know I share the majority of members' views in this House in saying that your impartial, fair, and well-considered determinations will maintain the respect, decorum, and worthwhile traditions of this place well into the future.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude and thanks to my wife and family, and my campaign team and their families, for their undivided support and encouragement during the campaign,

and the subsequent testing time. To the many other helpers who gave unstintingly on election day, and the people who supported what I represented at the ballot box, I also extend my appreciation on behalf of the party I have the honour to represent in this place: the Australian Labor Party.

I believe that voters in the Mundaring electorate recognise that the Australian Labor Party can offer hard-working and capable local representation coupled with a dynamic, talented, and skilful team of back-benchers and Ministers, headed by a leader (Brian Burke) who has not only the ability, purpose, and dedication required—shown in a few brief months in office—but also the compassion and feeling which enable him to see people as other human things, not electoral statistics.

I am proud to be associated with such a team. The ALP in the 1980s is broad based both in philosophy and representation. Its democratic structure ensures a width of consideration and discussion that simply can never be entertained by an organisation motivated by profit margins dominating all human consideration.

I have one other acknowledgement to make before I move on to address matters related to the Mundaring electorate. I refer to my ALP predecessor in the seat of Mundaring, Jim Moiler. Having personally door-knocked extensively throughout the electorate, I have had an impression deeply confirmed. When my time ceases in this place—and I am not anticipating that for some years, despite the full processes of the law currently being tested—if I leave with a reputation equal to that held by Jim Moiler, earned as a result of his concern and response to people in the electorate, I shall be extremely proud of a job well done. Jim's loss to this place is a sad reflection on the electoral boundary manipulation that must be scourged from our parliamentary system in Western Australia before anyone of us can hold up our heads and honestly claim we are members of a truly democratic Parliament.

The Legislative Assembly seat of Mundaring now covers approximately 1 350 square kilometres and extends from its closest point less than 13 kilometres from the Perth GPO northward to the boundary with the Swan and Chittering Shires, some 27 kilometres distant. After accommodating the electoral splinter of the hills electorate of Kalamunda which separates the remaining sector of the Mundaring Shire forming part of the Helena electorate of Mundaring, it extends from a point dividing the Glen Forrest community at Hardey Road, 24 kilometres distant from Perth,

to the shire boundary at Wooroloo, a further 25 kilometres distant.

This unfortunate division of localities and community of interest at Swan View and Glen Forrest is a provision any electoral commission would obviously normally avoid, given the freedom from a parliamentary, and politically-motivated, dividing line between fictitious metropolitan and country districts. What an electoral sham to think that Mundaring, with 9 227 electors, enjoys a representative in Parliament while Rockingham, with 16 535 electors, and a closest point to the Perth GPO of 30 kilometres, falls within this politically motivated and created boundary. When I look across to my fellow hills electorate representatives on the opposite side of this Chamber, I believe deep down they know one of us should not be here—and I am not volunteering to leave until at least this and other important legislation is passed in this and subsequent Parliaments.

I have a personal respect for the member for Kalamunda brought about by an association some years ago. Without wishing to cast an adverse reflection upon him among his peers, I believe if his colleagues earned the respect in the electorate he has gained by his fair and even-handed representation, they would have little to fear in any fair electoral contest. After all, their South Australian counterparts have been able to prove that the party offering the most electorally appealing programme is elected to office by a majority vote in its favour.

Mundaring, Kalamunda, and Darling Range, with electors numbering 27 132, in a predominantly metropolitan environment, simply are not entitled to three representatives in this House, while Rockingham, with 16 535 electors, and Armadale, with 16 887 electors, have one each—and let me not hear rumblings from the members for Gascoyne and Murchison-Eyre with 3 986 and 3 213 electors respectively.—

Mr Coyne: And 400 000 square miles!

Mr TROY: —while the member for Kimberley, with enormous problems of servicing, represents 12 511 electors. I do not believe the concerned electors of Mundaring wish to be part of such a gerrymander.

The electorate of Mundaring, as members may realise from my earlier comments about its proximity to Perth, now consists of the greater parts of two local authorities, Mundaring and Swan. Localities include West Swan, Henley Brook, part of Middle Swan, Herne Hill, Millendon, Baskerville, Upper Swan, Bullsbrook, part of South Chittering, and Gidgegannup within the Shire of Swan. Mundaring localities include part

of Glen Forrest, Hovea, Parkerville, Mahogany Creek, Mundaring, Stoneville, Sawyers Valley, Mt. Helena, Chidlow, Beechina, and Woorloo.

I raise these separate localities, particularly in the eastern hills area, because a proud historical tradition is still evidenced today in the residents' wishing to maintain the individual identity of each of these urban cells. I believe that feature to be an appropriate planning concept that will ensure the maintenance of a delightful environment against the threat of unhindered urban sprawl.

The electorate of Mundaring was originally one based on rural pursuits, but a trend has been evident for many years now for people to seek relief from the pressures of inner urban living by commuting daily between their more open and environmentally attractive places of residence and the inner metropolitan centres of employment. Genuine rural activities within the eastern hills are now largely removed except for concentrated activities not associated with large landholdings. This area in particular is now almost totally residentially oriented, but not in the traditional sense of the inner urban developments. While the extent of this "rural" residential development is not yet as pronounced in the less timbered area of the Shire of Swan, reaching to Bullsbrook and South Chittering, the same pattern is emerging.

I do acknowledge, however, that concentrated rural pursuits will remain for many, many years because of the transport advantages to Perth markets and the unique climatic and soil conditions existent in the area, and I refer to grape growing on the Swan Valley, fruit and vegetable products, poultry, meat and egg products, and stock grazing.

While referring to industries, one must recognise the enormous resources of manufacturing clay within the electorate and the contribution this industry makes to the overall economic viability of the subregion. One must be careful to ensure that the appropriate decisions are made with regard to the balance required between environmental and industry-cum-employment decisions of the future. I refer in particular to the unwarranted intrusion by the previous Minister responsible for planning in the quite fair and workable conditions of excavation sought by the Swan Shire on an excavation licence in the Jane Brook area.

That particular company had made significant progress in the restoration of sites used for clay extraction and obviously had the technique and skills required to successfully rehabilitate such a site. I do not believe one can blame the company

for exploiting the weakness of the then Minister through the appeal processes, but I am sure it remains conscious of the public need to this day. Appropriate management controls will ensure the extractive clay industry has a long-term future in the area while leaving the environment unscarred, and in many circumstances substantially improved with the creation of lakes and effective tree replanting programmes.

I have one other industry which is certainly worthy of mention and which is becoming a major source of employment. I refer to the many branches of the horse industry strongly evident in the electorate, ranging from the thoroughbred and trotting industries to the children's pony. This quaternary industry is ideally suited to the electorate and can no longer be referred to as the prerogative of a single social class. The related employment provides opportunities in many supportive roles and I believe it would be quite accurate to forecast that the electorate of Mundaring will become the leading equine locality in the State in the near future.

In referring to industries, one must immediately recognise that the electorate of Mundaring is heavily dependent on the metropolitan area, and particularly the Midland subregional area, for an employment base. Midland has been dealt a severe blow with the closure of the abattoir and the cutbacks at the railway workshops.

I am grateful for the support of my colleagues in having the question of employment for the eastern subregion raised so vigorously, and the keen interest taken in the problem by all Ministers involved. While the reopening of the Midland Junction abattoir appears an unlikely event, there is little doubt that some of the facilities remaining and not yet selectively dismantled and liquidated in a highly suspicious manner—which raises questions of deliberate political sabotage—may be utilised in an effective manner together with the extensive landholding. I have every confidence that the Deputy Premier and Minister for Economic Development and Technology will be mindful of this locality and the severe unemployment situation in the subregion in future decisions he will pursue.

The question of transferring the metropolitan markets from the present West Perth location is becoming more urgent, particularly when one recalls that a 1975 consultant's report to the Court Government recommended the need for a new location within 15 years. There is little doubt that Midland is centrally located to both growers, considering the newly developing area and the produce outlets, particularly when consideration is

given to the full range of transport alternatives that will be available within a reasonable time.

I am pleased that the Burke Government has taken the initiative of placing the responsibility for the interrelated functions of employment and planning under the one Minister. The previous lack of co-ordination and initiative in the eastern corridor development has seen major reductions in employment opportunity, escalating transport costs incurred from pursuing more distant work, and complete failure by the previous Government to address itself to stimulating an alternative development in the eastern subregion.

As an example of the previous Government's ineptitude, the eastern corridor study has never been formally accepted. I acknowledge the contribution of my predecessor in this seat, Tom Herzfeld, while he briefly occupied the presidency of the Shire of Mundaring, in assisting in the public input to that study. On the same point, I believe he must accept some of the responsibility for its not being formally adopted. Both shires, Swan and Mundaring, have been forced to undertake extensive and detailed strategy planning in their areas based on the concepts of the eastern corridor study without the formal commitment of the Government. I am pleased to note that the current Minister for Planning has acknowledged both the need to review the study and also the need to formalise adoption.

A review of the eastern corridor study is not only desirable, but also essential. Population forecasts made in 1976 have proved surprisingly different even allowing for the adverse economic circumstances. Escalating cost-of-service provisions with a hills environment do not necessarily preclude future development, but determine areas of priority for development so that existing services are fully utilised before extravagant outlays are undertaken.

The current Perth metropolitan region plan is now within 17 years of its original 45-year term. Despite some upgrading, an obvious review is now warranted and it is also just as obvious that such a review may have an enormous impact on the eastern corridor study.

I am of the opinion that planning functions have become distorted over time and that regional planning has lost its sense of direction. Unnecessary intrusion in local planning processes has become a common practice by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and its representative organisations. With an overall review now being warranted, there is little doubt that work is available appropriate to the regional planning function. Many of the specialist groups operating

under this regional umbrella should be subjected to sunset provisions.

One may need to ask a few basic questions to establish more clearly the need for reviews of the functions of a regional planning authority. Should the Town Planning Board be interested in the supply side of land provision or is it the prerogative of the developer to survey the market?

Should the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority be the managing agent of regional recreation areas or should such responsibilities be delegated to local authorities or to a regional park authority with appropriate funding assistance, bearing in mind the extensive overlap and interdependencies of regional, subregional, and local recreation areas? I do not wish to answer those questions in this address, but I am sure members see their relevance.

Another feature of planning and development heavily impacting on the Mundaring electorate is the inordinate delay evidenced by the unwieldy processes. There is a factor—time—particularly at current interest rates, which can render a development totally uneconomic when these delays occur. I am pleased to say that the Minister for Planning has agreed to a seminar in the eastern region involving Government planning authorities, local authority planners, local planners, local developers, and local agents, at which these problems will be pursued in an effort to expedite those processes causing unnecessary delays. Employment in the building trade that can result from the speeding up of planning and development processes will have a major impact on the present situation within the electorate while reducing costs at the same time.

Another feature of the planning process needing urgent attention is the role of Government in the fundamental decision making. I do not suggest a rigid and totally dominating role for Government, but when a decision such as the future of the Swan Valley is involved, local authorities, or even regional planning authorities, cannot be expected to undertake the decisions of Government in the wider ramifications. Questions of zoning, industry relief or support, extent of aid, tourism, agriculture, environment, and rating systems are all involved. Guided planning is essential to that situation; otherwise, in the interim, options in that ultimate decision are lost. Proximity to Perth is not the only criterion necessary for urban development in Perth.

I take this opportunity to place on record a comment relevant to another of the important considerations of planning; that is, the provision of services, but mainly water.

Currently the Metropolitan Water Authority has representation on the appropriate planning bodies and is one of the many authorities involved in the planning and development process. As part of that initial planning decision, the authority is party to decisions which establish various degrees of density of living within the metropolitan region. That planning process caters for different densities in an urban environment and also acknowledges a number of classes of living other than urban, which are still essentially residential—but may be described as special rural—landscape interest, rural residential, and rural living. While acknowledging the Metropolitan Water Authority's responsibility for efficient economic management, the present policy permits the Metropolitan Water Authority to escape from an obligation in low density living areas because of the convenient tag of "rural".

This factor is highlighted further by the different attitudes of the Metropolitan Water Authority and the Public Works Department towards application for water services. It is fairly obvious from my remarks that the boundary between the two authorities traverses the electorate of Mundaring. I, and many constituents, will be pleased when both those authorities are one, as is presently being pursued by this Government.

This anomaly, along with many others, is strongly evident within the electorate on water provision. Streets are in evidence, fed from either end, servicing rural holdings, while houses established for 10 years or more are without water at the mid-point of those same streets. Boundaries between low level and high level systems established 10 years ago have never been reviewed, yet full utilisation of capacities is not achieved. Residences within 400 metres of the goldfields pipeline and 12 kilometres of Mundaring Weir are still without scheme water.

One of the most pleasant features of the hills environment is undoubtedly the abundance of trees. That feature unfortunately has a disadvantage with regard to power lines. High maintenance costs result; accessibility through private property is difficult; and, naturally, frequent and prolonged power outages occur, particularly in adverse weather.

I accept all that reasoning, but I do not believe we have the most adverse weather conditions and that our topography is worse than that experienced by other power authorities. More effective circuit breakers; speedier fault locations, aided by more sophisticated equipment; greater co-operation between other public utility organisations, including fire control authorities, with co-located service corridors, all seem to be avenues that can

be more vigorously pursued, bearing in mind the recent Victorian bushfire disaster and power line related problems in a similar environment.

I am grateful that high winds have not been experienced in periods of severe fire hazards in the hills region during past summers. While I acknowledge the splendid volunteer bush fire organisations that exist in the Swan and Mundaring shires, a reappraisal of this situation and an improvement in interruption times to power within the electorate appears warranted.

Much earlier I touched on the subject of transport and its importance to constituents, particularly related to the employment opportunities diminishing in the neighbouring Midland area. Obviously there is a difficult balance between the cost of operation, frequency of service, and effective routing. However, in a recent letter to the Minister for Transport I have been able to point out a number of shortcomings in the feeder services operating from the electorate into the Midland rapid transit terminal. There is little doubt that the standard of service provided by rail between Midland and Perth is highly valued by commuters in the electorate, despite the recent difficult periods without adequate rolling stock. Feeder bus services, however, leave a lot to be desired, particularly in terms of peak hour routing, route design, and failure to service the recent growth cells at Mt. Helena and Stoneville via the local regional centre of Mundaring. Bus routing is simply not in step with shire planning and community desires, and until this problem is addressed—I am hopeful that is not too far distant—the upgrading by the Metropolitan Transport Trust of major trunk route frequency-of-service appear unjustified without increased passengers attracted from terminal routes.

The time appears appropriate for closer examination of more direct routing from Midland to Kewdale-Welshpool and Midland to Morley-Balcatta to permit workers the opportunity to range more widely for their employment opportunities. The volume of vehicular movements evident on these routes clearly identifies a market not yet tapped by the MTT. I believe the trust should be far more active in undertaking market research of such possible routes. Many hills dwellers are forced into their private cars because of this lack of direct routing.

I am aware that the Minister for Health has noted my plea, together with that of the member for Helena, for urgent consideration to be given to the upgrading of Swan District Hospital. It is clearly evident that the medical department, in its desire to achieve the absolute in medical care and

equipment, has tended to overlook one very important item—the patient. Decentralised services are an urgent need in our community, along with highly specialised facilities centrally located. I have every confidence that under the capable direction of the present Minister this balance will be more effectively achieved as evidenced by the commencement of a psychogeriatric ward last week at Swan District Hospital.

Education within the electorate is in a serious position mainly because of the age of most schools. Both primary and secondary schools alike, that have been established in excess of 10 years, are suffering from a lack of refurbishment. Minimal funds seem to have been allocated for this purpose and both the Eastern Hills Senior High School and the adjacent primary school at Mt. Helena evidence this situation. Incremental adaptations have been a regular approach to the Eastern Hills Senior High School accommodation problems over the past 10 years, and what was even more disturbing was the lack of an up-to-date needs survey. High school student population estimates in the electorate do not follow the regular pattern of determining local primary school throughput. Many families move to a hills environment midway through their children's schooling and hence high school estimates are sadly astray.

Short-term political interference has detracted from the quality of education within the electorate. Gidgegannup has been ignored and is presently catered for with three school buses transporting up to 200 school children and requiring some students to leave home at 7.10 a.m., while a new replacement school has been built elsewhere after a request for a toilet block, that decision being announced just prior to the last election—so much for effective expenditure programmes. Bullsbrook District High School, which attempted to cater for years 11 and 12, has lost half its catchment area to neighbouring Gingin. As a result, course options are extremely restricted and severely limit the range of tertiary avenues available to students. The concept of mobile teachers is worthy of further consideration and is one of many local submissions made to the Beazley inquiry into education.

I am pleased at the excellent response from concerned parents and citizens' associations and individual parents to that inquiry, and furthermore I thank the Minister for Education for the interest and concern he has shown toward these problems. I am confident significant improvements can be made to education in the electorate by pursuing the avenues already opened in these past months.

Another notable education development that will commence in the near future in the eastern region, and will provide enormous benefit to Mundaring constituents, is the proposed Midland technical college. The timing of its development will link closely to the anticipated changes in secondary education resulting from the Beazley inquiry and its staged development will be both exciting and stimulating to the whole subregion.

One of the main reasons I ventured to this place was my concern that the role of local government and local decision making was being greatly hindered by the present Act. Despite the dramatic changes to the local government function, changes to the Act have been reluctantly granted only after the careful playing off of the local authority organisations against each other. I look forward to speaking at length some time in the future on our Government's local government proposals; therefore I will restrict my comments on this occasion to the following.

Financially, local authorities are facing increasing difficulty with the increased functions and the demands of ratepayers in today's society. Despite their gallant efforts on fund raising with increased rate collections, expanded loan programmes, and support from State and Commonwealth Governments to the extent of 25 per cent of income source, the problems have not disappeared and are unlikely to do so.

The question of local authority finances is inherently wrapped up with that of the Commonwealth-State financial juggle. There is little doubt that the revenue side of the ledger is, and will remain, largely a Federal Government responsibility. However, there is considerable scope for allocative decisions apart from those of a strategic nature being the responsibility of State Governments and local authorities. If the next stage of Commonwealth-State financial developments pursued that avenue, I believe the taxpayers and ratepayers would be much more satisfied. Such a development could be appropriate and acceptable only if the local government franchise were significantly improved from the present system. I am pleased to note that matter was clearly outlined in yesterday's address by the Premier at the commencement of Local Government Week.

This financial squeeze is even more strongly felt in developing fringe metropolitan shires such as Swan and Mundaring, and the shortcomings in the present valuation based rating system are savagely and unfairly felt by constituents of this electorate when the triennial valuations are introduced. I see the process of phasing in new valuations as a buffer only.

Inquiries into rating systems have been constantly coming forward since the McCurrey committee of 1967, the Keall inquiry of 1975, the Local Government Association-Country Shire Councils' Association discussion paper in February 1980, the differential rating workshop in April 1980, the McCusker report of April 1981, and the Local Government Association-Country Shire Councils' Association submission to the Minister in July 1981; but one would perhaps suggest the greatest action of the parties opposite during that time has been the recent flurry since they have formed an Opposition local government committee.

I am pleased to comment that, following discussions with the Minister for Local Government and with his approval in principle, I have been able to propose a trial differential rating system to the Swan and Mundaring Shires in what is the first positive step toward moving local government rating away from the present iniquitous system.

Local government authorities are of age. Let them have the responsibilities of local decision making for which they are best qualified. The fear of centralism is not the sole domain of Canberra-Perth, and this place, in particular, has been just as guilty in the local government sense.

The issues impacting on residents of the Mundaring electorate are many and varied and demand the full attention of a local member. People of all political persuasions are welcome in my office. I have a responsibility to serve all and I undertake to make that effort to the best of my ability. I do not believe electors will be disappointed.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr TROY: While the issues of the Mundaring electorate are paramount in my mind, I have one concern to which I hope this Assembly and Parliament will apply itself without political gain or prejudice; I refer to the future of this country's key resource—its young people.

Successive Governments in both the State and the Federal spheres have tried to bury the heads of all Australians in the sands of ignorance over our future. The public have been misled into believing that an upturn in the manufacturing industry will result in more jobs. It will not. Technology will create new jobs, but not more jobs. Increases in the use of technology will result in greater profits for those who own the technology. It might result in lower prices, and it will result in less employment.

We face a series of historic decisions. Do we accept that millions of Australians will not have jobs as we knew them in the early 1970s? Do we de-

velop a society where everyone works shorter hours, and, if so, do we educate them on the use of leisure time?

Do we carry on in a fantasy, no matter how irresponsible, that, "it will all get better if we leave it alone"?

Do we forget about manufacturing that which is made cheaply in other parts of the world and concentrate on items to our economic advantage—our mineral and energy resources—and concentrate on tourism, food production, and technological development?

What do we do for our children, and grandchildren? How do we educate children for the twenty-first century—because children who are now in kindergartens will be looking for their first jobs in the next millennium?

To find these answers there must be a new attitude in Government, an attitude that this Government has noted in the need for medium and long-term planning—apart of course from day-to-day considerations.

We need the best advisers that this State and nation can afford.

We need to tell the people the truth so that they can make informed decisions about their future.

There will have to be more summit meetings, and more inquiries than ever before; we cannot afford to make wrong decisions.

Mr Speaker, through you, Sir, I thank the members of the Assembly for their attention and consideration during this address.

[Applause.]

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [9.29 p.m.]: I wanted to use the occasion of the debate on the Supply Bill to deal with a certain subject because we will not have grievances until after the Address-in-Reply is dealt with. Due to the events of this afternoon's question time, however, I feel compelled to make some comments. I repeat that the Minister willingly or unwillingly did not respond to my questions. Instead of replying, he reverted to an attack on me, alleging that I want to lower the morals of the Metropolitan Water Authority although it was incumbent on me to try to create a situation of improving its image. As a matter of fact, if the Minister recalls, when the whole question of irregularities was mooted—not on our side, not by me, but by him at least publicly—I issued a statement and warned the Minister to deal with this matter in a sensible manner instead of just repeating his condemnation of the Metropolitan Water Authority.

Mr Tonkin: What did I do in Opposition?

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister did not do anything but condemn the Metropolitan Water Authority.

Mr Tonkin: When?

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister has only to go through the *Hansards*. On every possible occasion, the Minister and his leader did this. They did not do anything else.

Mr Tonkin: Not I. You do your research.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not need to do my research because I have a reasonably good memory.

Mr Tonkin: I referred to snails; of course I did.

Mr MENSAROS: That is what I asked of the Minister.

Mr Tonkin: It brought the authority to its knees.

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister acknowledged today and previously that what he did was entirely irresponsible; in fact, in his answer today he said that he had little direct knowledge of the Metropolitan Water Authority before he took over being in charge.

Mr Tonkin: That is right.

Mr MENSAROS: That is right. Therefore, the accusations and the attacks he made on the Metropolitan Water Authority prior to his attaining the position of Minister were based either on nothing or on secondhand information.

Mr Tonkin: The snails were a matter of public interest. What are you talking about? They were in my street in Bassendean.

Mr MENSAROS: I made that statement for the first time when this question came up and said that the loyal employees of the MWA had not even had time to lick their wounds after the consistent bashing they took from the Premier and his colleagues while they were in Opposition before they became subject to new attacks; so, it was absolutely unfactual and unfair, to say the least, for the Minister for Water Resources to accuse me of this instead of answering my question.

Mr Tonkin: I answered your question.

Mr MENSAROS: The question was not answered directly, but by trying to impugn the morals of the Metropolitan Water Authority, the staff of which I have worked closely with and I respect. The Minister has not answered the question; I ask him to put an end to this simmering speculation; it exists, whether he wants it to or not.

Mr Tonkin: Simmering by the Opposition! It is simmering only in the Opposition.

Mr MENSAROS: It exists. The Minister should answer my questions fairly. I asked him

whether there had been any discussion about a member of Parliament or a union official being the beneficiary of these irregular actions which were alleged in the Metropolitan Water Authority. He has not answered my question.

Mr Tonkin: What was the question again? I am sorry. I was speaking to someone.

Mr MENSAROS: When the Minister was discussing the question with either the Deputy Premier, his ministerial colleagues, or the officers of the Metropolitan Water Authority or its staff members, has there ever been any mention, or has any allegation been made that the beneficiary of these irregularities could have been a member of Parliament or a union official? What is the answer to my question?

Mr Tonkin: The answer is that I have not received any allegations and as I have not received any, I cannot comment.

Mr MENSAROS: I ask the Minister very frankly a simple question because he pretends not to understand.

Mr Tonkin: I am not pretending.

Mr MENSAROS: I repeat: During the Minister's discussions with any of these authorities, has there been mention that a member of Parliament or a union official was the beneficiary of or the subject of one of these irregularities?

Mr Tonkin: I will again repeat the answer that I gave you.

Mr Rushton: You would have to be dopey not to know.

Mr Tonkin: The answer is that I received no details of allegations, but when allegations were made I suggested that the managing director refer them to the police. If the member thinks that I was going to be a scapegoat and take over from the police, he has another think coming. If he thinks he can do a better job than the police, I think he is a fool.

Mr MENSAROS: I have 45 minutes in which I can speak.

The simple question is: Has it been mentioned by him, or to him, that a member of Parliament or a union official was the beneficiary of these irregular actions? It is very simple to say that no-one mentioned it to him, or that the police will clear this matter. The Minister does not answer questions; he does not want to say. He was in trouble and he did not want to tell us. Everyone knows that, but he does not want to put an end to the matter.

Mr Tonkin: You say I run to the Deputy Premier. You would be surprised to know that I discuss many things with the Deputy Premier and the

Minister for Employment and Administrative Services. I talk with many people. I do not run to people.

Mr MENSAROS: I did not say that. That is not the question. The Minister pretends to not understand my question.

Mr Tonkin: I understand it all right.

Mr MENSAROS: Did the name of a member of Parliament come up as a possible beneficiary of irregularities, or did the name of a union adviser come up?

Mr Carr: You are harping on this. Are you making an allegation?

Mr Tonkin: If you are talking now, when you were not earlier, what are the allegations? If you have allegations, go to the police.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not have allegations; I have gossip.

Several members interjected.

Mr Parker: A peddler of gossip!

Several members interjected.

Mr Tonkin: And you want me to accept, across the Chamber, that you have gossip?

Mr O'Connor: The Minister can put an end to it.

Mr Hassell: By simply saying "No", he can put an end to it.

Mr O'Connor: If the Minister says, "Yes", that is the end of it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order!

Mr Tonkin: So you like a good old gossip?

The SPEAKER: Order! It has been a long-established practice in this House that when the Speaker rises to his feet and calls for order and then immediately sits down, the member who was speaking is the next person to address the Chair, not another member who wishes to interject. The member for Floreat.

Mr MENSAROS: The response from the Minister has justified my decision to bring this matter forward because he does not want to put an end to the rumours.

Mr Tonkin: How can you put an end to gossip? Should you cut out the tongues of old people?

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister does not wish to put an end to the rumours because I have repeated the question about four times and everyone can understand it—

Mr Tonkin: How can you put an end to gossip?

Mr MENSAROS: The logical thought crossing one's mind is that the Minister does not want to divulge the answer to this question. Why does he not want to divulge it? It is because he has something to hide.

Mr Tonkin: If there is something there, why won't the police divulge it? We have gone to the police and that is a very proper action of a Government and you are saying the police have some information they will not divulge.

Mr MENSAROS: No, I am not.

Mr Tonkin: The police have investigated this.

Mr MENSAROS: Do not get excited. Can the Minister guarantee to me, with the aid of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, that the police will divulge or give an answer to the same question I ask which is: Do the police know of any allegations of that sort?

Mr Tonkin: You will have to ask the police.

Mr MENSAROS: Anyway, the Minister wants to evade the question; that is quite clear.

Mr Tonkin: If you are saying the police have covered up, I have much more faith in the police than you have.

Mr O'Connor: But he does not have much faith in you.

Mr Tonkin: I did not investigate the matter; the police did.

Mr MENSAROS: I did not ask whether the Minister investigated the matter. I simply asked whether the matter came up in conversations with the Minister.

Mr Tonkin: I am saying that I do not indulge in gossip.

Several members interjected.

Mr MENSAROS: Mr Speaker, you have realised over a long time, as everyone has, that not everything is all clear with the Minister. He has something to hide, because, if he has not, he would answer the question.

Mr Parker: He has answered the question.

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister for Planning is built up as one of the most intelligent men of the Labor Government, but he pretends to be much more stupid than the Leader of the House.

Mr Hassell: He could not pretend that.

Mr MENSAROS: I know that the Minister for Planning does understand what I am saying, so why does he pretend?

Mr Parker: I am telling you that the Minister has tabled a letter and the letter tells all.

Mr Tonkin: But you are making allegations against the police. We have tabled that letter

from the police and you are not satisfied with the police inquiry. We cannot do any more. I am not a policeman. I am not going to investigate the matter.

Mr MENSAROS: I simply want the Minister to answer the question because he has left the whole situation under suspense and suspicion, instead of clearing it up.

Mr Tonkin: Who is under suspicion?

Mr Hassell: You are.

Mr MENSAROS: Who was the beneficiary of any of those irregularities?

Mr Tonkin: Who is under suspicion?

Mr MENSAROS: No-one is under suspicion, the Minister maintains the suspicion by not answering a simple question.

Mr Parker: Suspicion against whom?

Mr MENSAROS: Suspicion against the Minister's party, against members of Parliament, and against union representatives.

Mr Parker: The only person who has raised members of Parliament is you.

Mr MENSAROS: That is the question: Was one the beneficiary of one of these irregularities? It is so simple.

Mr Tonkin: You would have to ask the police that.

Mr MENSAROS: I ask whether you have heard about that.

Mr Tonkin: Whether I have heard gossip? I have heard gossip about you, but I did not repeat it.

Mr MENSAROS: I ask whether that matter was ever brought up in conversations that the Minister had?

Mr O'Connor: Just answer.

Mr Tonkin: If you would like a gossip session, we can go and have a cup of coffee.

Mr MENSAROS: That is precisely what the member for Gascoyne has mentioned; the Minister has just tried to evade the question. In the short term, that may be all right, but, in the long term, the Minister will do damage to the reputation of this Parliament.

Mr O'Connor: You do that because you evade questions.

Mr Tonkin: Who is under suspicion?

Mr O'Connor: You are.

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister is because he does not answer the question. The Minister is under suspicion.

Mr Tonkin: I am under suspicion because I went to the police?

Mr MENSAROS: Under Standing Orders, the Minister has the option of saying that he does not wish to answer a question.

Mr Tonkin: I did answer your question.

Mr MENSAROS: If he does not want to answer a question, he should say so.

Mr Hodge: You just do not like the answer you got, but you got an answer.

Mr MENSAROS: I did not, but that is not the point. I do not like it because I respect this Parliament more and I remind the Minister for Water Resources that there was one case only in my nine years as a Minister, when I could not answer a question without notice. I recall one occasion only when I did not answer a question without notice and asked it to be placed on notice and that question required statistical information. When I obtained the figures, I gave the information.

Mr Tonkin: The Managing Director of the Metropolitan Water Authority told us you were most assiduous in doing your homework, and I agree. Do you want a gold star?

Mr MENSAROS: I simply mention one case when I did not answer a question immediately.

Mr Tonkin: I could easily rise on a point of order because of this suspicion about a member of Parliament, but I will not do so because it is hardly worthwhile. Just remember, there are Standing Orders to deal with that matter. If you have a suspicion about anyone in this Parliament, it is your duty to go to the police and inform them. Why don't you do that?

Mr MENSAROS: I do not want to instruct you, Mr Speaker, about Standing Orders because we have both been in Parliament for some time and need no instruction in them.

Mr Tonkin: If you have information, give it to the police.

Mr MENSAROS: I conclude by saying that it is a great pity that the Government lacks the acclaim of a responsible Government because the Minister's behaviour simply points to the opposite and illustrates the weakness of the Government.

Mr Tonkin: If I had not gone to the police with the allegations, you would criticise me for white-washing.

Mr MENSAROS: I will turn to the subject which I originally intended to deal with and that is what I consider to be a gross injustice and more than an inconvenience to residents in Mt. Claremont, and particularly those in Rochdale Road.

In order to understand this matter the Ministers involved—the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Planning, and the Minister for Local Government—should visit the area and experience what is happening there now. The volume of the traffic in Rochdale Road is greater than that in Servetus Street and Stirling Highway. I wrote to the Commissioner for Main Roads some months ago asking for a traffic count, but unfortunately the department has been too busy to reply and provide the information requested. Traffic using Rochdale Road consists of not only motorcars but also trucks, semi-trailers, and tankers. The constant noise is disturbing residents and does not allow elderly people to sleep at night. During peak hour residents in Rochdale Road are unable to drive in or out of their carports.

The area is zoned residential and the intention of the residents was that it be residential. The Government may ask why I have raised this matter now as I have represented the area for more than 15 years. It may ask why the previous Government did not do anything about it. I fully agree that the problem of Rochdale Road is not new, and, in fact, I made my first representations about this matter some 14 years ago.

At that time it appeared the matter would be easily resolved because the then Commonwealth Minister for the Army promised to relinquish the rifle range if suitable alternative land could be earmarked. However, it was quite understandable that he did not want to take the blame if the local authorities did not agree with the proposal; and he requested an agreement between the local councils—Cottesloe, Nedlands, and, to some extent, Claremont. The councils did not agree amongst themselves and a solution was not forthcoming.

The present Minister for the Environment, who was then the Minister for Town Planning, will recall that I made numerous representations about the plight of the residents in the area but he promised only that studies would be undertaken.

The next solution that was suggested created an argument in relation to the environment, but nothing eventuated. The residents in the area have been very patient. I do not know of any residents who would have been more patient during those 14 years. They have waited patiently for the results of one inquiry after another. I am not saying that the previous Government can be excused for its lack of decision making.

Finally, the previous Government decided it would solve the problem commonly called "Servetus Street", and that this would solve the existing traffic problem of the north-south highway. This gave the residents of Rochdale Road

hope that, if not tomorrow, or if not next year, but in the foreseeable future, their problem would be solved by having a different route for the traffic instead of using the dog leg from Alfred Road to Rochdale Road.

Before the residents of the area had the satisfaction of having the traffic problem solved, a new Government took office. It has ignored the proposed solution and has gone back to the unending studies. It has thrown the outcome into uncertainty. There is no guarantee that there will be a solution.

The residents of the area took the mildest action and petitioned the Nedlands City Council. Ninety-nine per cent of the residents petitioned the council; this means it is a unanimous decision because the remaining one per cent of the people did not oppose it, but were unavailable at the time the petition was circulated.

The residents simply wanted a bypass road as had been earmarked for this purpose already. I emphasise that if the previous Government's decision had been adhered to it would not have hurt anyone.

Mr Parker: That is not true.

Mr MENSAROS: It is.

Mr Parker: In fact, the letter I sent you a couple of weeks ago indicated some problems were created in the proposal put forward in relation to the Curtin Avenue and Servetus Street interchange and to Servetus Street itself. A great deal of work had to be done before the proposition could be agreed to. The situation existed with the Cottesloe Golf Club that your Government gave an undertaking that they would be given two summers before any proposition to build a bypass road could be considered because of the need to relocate greens and engage in activities of that sort. That was the commitment given to the Cottesloe Golf Club which I am happy to uphold and honour.

Mr MENSAROS: It does not alter my statement, and as far as the Cottesloe Golf Club is concerned my answer is different. Firstly, the Cottesloe Golf Club does not have to be touched and secondly, if the Minister—

Mr Parker: In any proposition that you considered—

Mr MENSAROS: It does not have to come from these propositions that have been suggested.

Mr Parker: That is not what Mr Sweet said.

Mr MENSAROS: I am happy if the Minister contradicts me so that he may have an excuse. Furthermore if the Minister says he is being so honest that he wants to uphold the commitment

of the previous Government that the road can be only there and not some 100 yards further on—which it can—and even then if the Minister were to say to do that the Government could make a decision in two summers, I could go back to my constituents and advise them that they will have a new road in three summers.

Mr Parker: There was no intention on the part of the previous Government to construct that road.

Mr MENSAROS: Neither did I say that, nor should I argue about something I have not said. I am simply seeking a solution and the residents were happy about the previous Government's solution.

Mr Court: Does the Minister agree it is a problem?

Mr Parker: Of course it is a problem. I acknowledge it and I have written in expansive terms on that although I was surprised that Mr Sweet had not received a letter from me. I sent a lengthy letter to him explaining the options, and also to the *Claremont-Nedlands Post*.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister has said what I wanted to say—that the Government knows about the problem and there are plenty of indications that the Government knows the plight of the people. The residents have written to the Premier who transferred the communication to the Minister for Transport, but the Minister for Transport has not responded to the residents.

Mr Parker: It is a planning consideration at this stage.

Mr MENSAROS: The Premier transferred it to the Minister for Transport.

Mr Grill: It is not my responsibility.

Mr Court: The traffic problem is.

Mr Grill: Not at this stage.

Mr MENSAROS: The Premier has written to the residents and said that the Minister for Transport will deal with the matter, but he has not done so. My understanding is that the Minister for Transport was asked to go on the 6KY programme and he said, "Yes". However, when he found out it was about the road, he said, "No, I am not going".

Mr Grill: Absolute rubbish!

Mr Parker: The residents in the area have had a response from the Government.

Mr MENSAROS: As the Minister says, the residents received an answer, and I have received an answer, but it does not give the residents any satisfaction. It is an answer they have been receiv-

ing for the last 14 years. The answer says that problems exist, but does not say that a solution exists or what will be done. This is precisely what I am complaining about.

The question is very simple: What can the local residents expect? There are two ballot boxes in the area, and, if the pendulum goes our way, I receive 55 per cent, and, if it goes the other way, I receive 48 per cent. So it is not a matter of political considerations. The important thing is to say to the residents that finally they have an answer. They had an answer once after a long time and now that has been taken away from them. They are back to where they were, in absolute uncertainty.

The failure to solve the problem does not help the Servetus Street people because the traffic there will be just the same.

Mr Parker: That is not true.

Mr MENSAROS: If the Minister for Transport will give me a hand and ask the Commissioner of Main Roads to give me an answer—and he has not done so for 1½ months—it might prove what I am saying. I wrote to Don Aitken 1½ months ago and have not had a reply.

Mr Grill: I thought you said you had written to me.

Mr MENSAROS: I have done so.

Mr Grill: And not received a reply?

Mr MENSAROS: No. I do not have the date here, but I have written. If a traffic count could be made, my point that more traffic uses Rochdale Road than Servetus Street would be proved. If the bypass were built, the situation in Servetus Street would not be altered at all.

Mr Parker: That is not the advice of my department. That point was raised in the letter to *Claremont-Nedlands Post*. The department says that if the Rochdale Road bypass were built in the way proposed by the residents, it would funnel more traffic into Servetus Street. Servetus Street as it is could not accommodate it. One of the points the residents make is true; that is, that Servetus Street could be upgraded within the old road reservation which applied before the so-called parkway project, to take more traffic. According to my department, because of the increased traffic, there would need to be channeling of traffic, and lights would have to be installed at the corner of Curtin Avenue and Servetus Street.

Mr MENSAROS: What the Minister says is not really the answer I seek to my problem. Even if the assumption were true—and this is crystal ball gazing—that if a better road were built, more

traffic channelling would occur, the Government only wanted to save face. It thought some political advantage could be gained by leaving Servetus Street as it is.

I heard of a case today in which the MRPA bought a house and is now offering it to another man who wants to buy it. By offering it for sale at a lower price, the MRPA is saying to the man, although not in so many words, that if the Government changes or the situation changes, and it all goes back to square one, the MRPA has promised to pay back the money plus interest.

Mr Parker: Are you saying an area in the current reservation has been purchased from person A by the MRPA which is now proposing to sell it to person B?

Mr MENSAROS: I saw the house; I was there this morning.

Mr Parker: I will look into that; it is surprising.

Mr MENSAROS: I will give the Minister the address.

The Government decided not to do anything with Servetus Street in order to save face, but the residents are still in a difficult situation. They cannot blow the traffic away. It continues to use the street, and if anything it will be heavier. That penalises people in Rochdale Road as well, but there is no remedy. The Government is hiding behind what has not been done for the last 15 years and what has come out of the inquiries. I do not think any other subject has been inquired into so often for so long. The Minister for the Environment would agree with me because he has done so privately very often.

Instead of being doctrinaire about this and saying that difficulties exist and the previous Government committed itself to certain actions to try to solve the problem, the Government should oblige the people of this peaceful residential area. Even if the Government does not answer the question now—and as this is not a grievance debate I cannot expect the Minister to answer—I hope some notice will be taken of what I have said in putting the residents' complaints on record. I assure the Minister I intend to keep hammering this question because my constituents justifiably are on my back. I think they deserve some humane treatment from a Government which prides itself in saying it has solved all the problems.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [10.04 p.m.]: The National Party supports the Bill and I will not weary the House with a speech of any great length. I wish to refer to some matters and I ask the Premier to take them up.

The amount of money in the Supply Bill is over \$1 billion and represents 40 per cent of the State Government's expenditure in any one year. That is a fair slice of the economy of the State. Rather than dealing with the economy of the State as a whole, I will deal with specific areas of the State's economy, particularly primary industry. The Government has an obligation to do as much as it can for primary industry and the people involved in it directly, or who actually support it, living outside the metropolitan area.

I am sure that the Government's proposed one-vote-one-value objective indicates that its intentions for country areas may not be all they should be. However, in terms of economics, I remind the Treasurer that he has an obligation to make certain that the people living outside Perth are not neglected.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned earlier a pre-election promise made by the Treasurer in relation to dealings with the Commonwealth. I recall personally the Treasurer's remarks. The fact was that he said he would fight the Commonwealth Government to protect the interests of the State, regardless of who was in Canberra.

While dealing with this type of matter relating to the economy, I ask the Treasurer to remind the Commonwealth Government that it will be doing rural people a grave disservice if it continues with the threat of introducing a capital gains tax or re-introducing death duties. I ask him to use his good offices with the Federal Government to ensure that neither of those measures is introduced.

I have a personal interest in the matter of probate because I was a member of the party committee in 1977 which was instrumental in removing State probate. Despite the fact that my leader at the time would not give public support to our party's policy, we were successful in having probate abolished in Western Australia. I would not like to see that measure reintroduced although, if it is, I am confident that the Labor Party will not be in Government for very long. If the State Government, or its Federal counterpart, were to introduce it, that would hasten its demise on the Government benches.

That is a matter that the State Government should raise with the Federal Government. It should make sure that the primary industries, and the people in those industries, do not have to bear the added burden either of the capital gains tax or the reintroduction of probate.

It is easy for people to ignore primary industry. A reading of the headlines in the *Daily News* today indicates that the Federal Government—it

is proposed or rumoured; I do not know how authentic the report is—is to give \$400 million to BHP. That runs contrary to the proposition that the Government put forward, that it was looking for areas in which it could use money to create greater employment. Everybody in Australia knows that the Australian steel industry has been starved of funds, and it is now outmoded and out-dated. The only way the industry can become competitive on world markets is to shelve or get rid of much of the excess labour, become more automated, and therefore reduce its labour costs, to be able to compete with foreign manufacturers of steel.

It has been estimated that something like 15 000 to 16 000 jobs will have to be lost in Australia's steel industry for it to become competitive. That appears to be contrary to the intentions of the Federal Government at its economic summit where there was accord on the introduction of its job promotion scheme and the areas in industry in which jobs were to be created.

BHP has adopted a policy in the past of syphoning off the profits from its steel division and investing them in energy resources. It has allowed the steel division to run down so that it is no longer competitive internationally. Now we see BHP being given Commonwealth Government assistance; yet this will not achieve one extra job.

Most people would be aware that the level of support given to manufacturing industry represents roughly 20 per cent of the gross product of that industry. By contrast, the primary industry of Australia receives as little as 2 per cent of its gross product in assistance. I am serious when I ask the Treasurer to make certain that he carries out his pre-election promise in ensuring no extra burden on the rural people by way of the capital gains tax or probate. Such people receive very little assistance, and it would be a matter of neglect if this Government were to support, even tacitly, the concept of creating a greater burden for those people.

They were the only points I wanted to raise. It is most important that the Treasurer use the power of his office to make certain that those issues are raised at the Federal Government level, and that the rumours which are rife about these taxes are scotched for ever more.

MR WATT (Albany) [10.12 p.m.]: I address a few comments in this debate, and I hope that the Treasurer will take notice of them. I refer to what is known as supply management.

Supply management covers the Government Stores Department, the Government Tender Board, and those sorts of areas. In one of the re-

ports I have, with which I deal a little later, supply management is generally defined as the identification of a requirement, the procurement of a specified item, the warehousing of stock prior to use, and the distribution of stock to the end users.

I must confess that I first became interested in this subject because of parochial interests within my electorate. At that stage, I had little knowledge of the depth of the field. It really is a wide subject indeed. The more I delved into it, the more fascinated I became. My interest in the topic shifted from one of parochial interest to one of a much more general and State-wide interest because it appears to be an area in which the Government could effect real savings.

I was rather surprised to learn that two investigations had been undertaken by the Public Service Board. The report of the first one is dated August 1980, and it deals with financial data processing. It is actually a management profile which summarises the major aspects of a supply management system proposed for the Government by the Government Stores Department. It details the strategy which that committee recommended should be adopted and sets out a timetable, a costing, and a cost benefit analysis. All the studies that have been carried out demonstrate clearly that quite substantial savings could be made, although it is difficult to quantify them.

As a member of the Public Accounts Committee, I was a party to a much more detailed investigation into stores and procurement policies generally. We inspected the position at the State Energy Commission which has engaged specially trained and qualified experts, formerly employed by the armed services, and who perform a very professional job in the supply management system. We were most impressed with the SEC's computerised inventory system. It claimed in that one area alone that, by introducing proper management systems, it had been able to save approximately \$2 million just on the value of the stock held.

Clearly if that sort of saving can be effected in just one area, significant savings can be made in other areas. It seems to me the amount involved in the procurement of all the goods and services required by the Government is not defined; but estimates seem to vary from approximately \$300 million to something in the area of \$450 million a year.

It could be demonstrated that, if one is able to save only one per cent on that huge operation, it would be a very significant and worthwhile saving for the Government.

The present system is really very cumbersome and many departments and Government bodies operate under a variety of different Acts and regulations. These include the State Tender Board Act 1965; the Audit Act 1904; associated Treasury regulations; and, a number of Treasury circulars. Government bodies which are not subject to the provisions of those regulations are governed by their own provisions contained in their respective enabling legislation.

Members can see the whole problem is spread over a wide range of people and nobody seems to know what anybody else is doing. The present system lacks an efficient, overall, co-ordinated function, and essentially that was the finding of the Public Accounts Committee which investigated the matter and reported to this Parliament in November last year.

I should like to pay tribute to the current Controller of Stores, Mr Brian Corboy. My previous comments about a lack of co-ordination in the Government Stores Department bears no reflection on his efficiency. He does a good job and the Public Accounts Committee was certainly satisfied that he was a very efficient operator.

The frustrations I mentioned at the beginning of my comments which were of a parochial nature—I am sure all members, particularly those who live in the country have experienced some of the same sorts of frustration—are very difficult to overcome.

For the benefit of the House, I should like to give a couple of examples to demonstrate the types of parochial situations about which I spoke initially. I refer, firstly, to a firm in Albany called Evertrans, which is a motor body building firm. I understand it is the only firm of body builders outside the metropolitan area of Perth. It is competitive with its tenders and it is very competent in its work. That company would be like to share in the work of manufacturing motor vehicle bodies used by the Government in the great southern region.

Despite my efforts, the efforts of Evertrans, and those of various other people to try to assist the company to participate in this work, we have not been able to achieve success. Generally the problem that has been presented to us is this: A truck which might be needed in Albany, Mt. Barker, Denmark, or somewhere in the lower great southern is specified with a body and the department is not prepared—it says it is not able, but I think it is not prepared—to separate the contract for the cab and chassis from that of the body. Therefore, if the vehicle were to be produced in Albany, it would have to be delivered for inspection to the Public Works Department in

Perth, and then taken back to Albany where it would be used. Clearly that is an unnecessary expense and one which must always be built into the cost of the item. In a very tight, competitive situation it is a cost which might well cause the company to lose the contract.

A firm of fuel injection mechanics in Albany called Gericks Fuel Injection Service is recognised as the leader in its field in Western Australia, not just in the area of Albany. The proprietor of that firm used to do work for the Main Roads Department, but apparently that department had a ceiling on the value of work it was to have carried out locally.

On one occasion about 18 months ago a job was to be done which was above the limit. At the time, I think the limit was \$500. The Main Roads Department's mechanic was obliged to send the item to Perth; it was sent back to Albany for repair; after it was repaired, it was sent back to Perth for inspection; and it was then returned to Albany to be fitted to the vehicle.

Those are examples of the sorts of things which are happening and the situation is really a nonsense. There is a lack of a co-ordinated policy in all these areas and there is a need for an overview of the system to ensure it works efficiently which, of course, would save money.

Throughout Western Australia, not just in the region I represent, we find very efficient electrical, engineering, and hydraulic services, boat builders, and various other people all of whom are capable of doing work for the Government, but who are frustrated because of their inability to get to first base with these sorts of contracts.

Mr Tonkin: Nine years of the dead hand of Liberalism—that's the problem!

Mr WATT: I am glad the Leader of the House said that, because it will provide an opportunity to test whether the Government will do something about the matter.

Mr Tonkin: What were you doing in the last nine years—sleeping?

Mr WATT: I am disappointed that nothing has been done for the last nine years. I have raised the matter in the House a number of times, after which the member for Geraldton has raised the matter also.

Mr Tonkin: Wouldn't the Minister speak to you?

Mr WATT: The Minister would speak to me.

Mr Tonkin: He said, "No".

Mr WATT: That was another interesting aspect: Even under the existing arrangement, two

Ministers are involved in this general area and that adds to the problem.

The principal recommendation continued in both the Public Accounts Committee's report and another report which was prepared by the Public Service Board—I have not mentioned it yet, but I will come to it in a moment—was that a single State supply authority be established. Many other recommendations were made, but I will not bore the House by going through them tonight.

Mr Tonkin: Doesn't it seem to be a little centralist and monolithic?

Mr WATT: That is not really the case, because part of my approach to the whole situation involves decentralisation of these stores into various regions. However, control must remain somewhere in order that the whole system is co-ordinated. My criticism of the present system is that it is too fragmented and the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing. I am sure the Minister is aware of many common-use items which would involve very effective savings.

I have referred to the first report presented by the Public Service Board in August 1980. Another report presented also in August 1980 was by a review group, and a fairly high-powered steering committee it was. It consisted of the Chairman of the Public Service Board, the Deputy Under Treasurer, the Deputy Director General of Education (Administration and Finance), the Acting Under Secretary for Works, the Chairman of the State Tender Board—who is also the Controller of Stores—and the Senior Purchase Officer of the Public Service Board. In addition, a working group was made up of the Assistant Controller of Government Stores, the Manager of the Education Supplies Branch and the Acting Purchase Officer of the Public Service Board.

The committee produced a very comprehensive report which identified some rather alarming problems within the general area of supply and management. The committee identified a lack of knowledge of Government procurement policies: For example the non-observance of preference to local manufacturers, an area mentioned earlier by the member for Murdoch; a lack of knowledge on the part of officers initiating purchases of relevant Acts, regulations and other formal requirements laid down by Treasury and the State Tender Board; a lack of prescribed purchasing procedures in many governmental organisations; a lack of adequate supervision in procurement activities, which I think should be a very basic essential; a lack of knowledge of basic stores management and operational practices, some organisations not maintaining stock control records, another abso-

lutely basic part of the whole operation; and cases of excessive stockholdings.

I have already mentioned that with a properly implemented stores management system, it would be possible to significantly reduce stockholdings, and this would represent substantial savings to the Government. The committee also identified a lack of training facilities or programmes to promote adequate stores management and operational practices; a lack of a co-ordinating mechanism to promote efficiency in stores operations and management; and a need to review audit procedures to improve their effectiveness. All these represent fairly harsh criticisms, criticisms with which the Public Accounts Committee in its report recorded a fair amount of agreement.

The member for Kalgoorlie also was a member of the Public Accounts Committee at the time that study was undertaken; he was a signatory to those recommendations. As part of our study we sought the views of the regional users of Government Stores; we did this by going through the regional administrators. One of the problems identified in every case, I think, was the provision of wrong items ordered through Government Stores. Quite clearly if an item is sent to Port Hedland or some other remote area and it turns out to be the wrong item, various consequences result. Firstly, a cost is involved in forwarding that wrong article, which as often as not is not returned. Secondly, long delays are experienced, which means that production in some areas comes to a stop. Thirdly, additional freight costs are incurred to and from Perth. So the whole arrangement is cumbersome and unnecessarily expensive.

Clearly it can be seen that very significant savings can be made in this area. At the start of my remarks on this subject I mentioned the amount being spent in this general area of supply management and the supply of goods and services to various Government organisations, that amount being variously estimated at between \$300 million and \$450 million a year. I am quite sure that with the implementation of a proper management system, the Government would effect significant savings.

This would represent a far more constructive approach in trying to save the taxpayers of this State some money rather than putting up with some of the arbitrary actions that have been taken by the Government, such as the cutting of senior public servants' salaries. I am dismayed to think that when three reports at least have been presented to the Government, I find no recommendation has come from the Government Stores Department, the Tender Board, or the Treasury to the Premier suggesting this not only as a means of

doing something practical for the regions of Western Australia by way of decentralisation—something often spoken about—but also as a genuine means of saving the State money.

I urge the Premier to accept the challenge involved. I do so because in the various statements he has made, including the one the other day, he has not indicated that anything is planned in the area of Government stores and supply management. I am assuming therefore from the various statements he has made that at present he has no plans to implement the changes recommended. I hope he sees those recommendations as representing worth-while savings to the people of this State. They would also represent a very constructive change for the regions of the State.

I support the motion.

DR DADOUR (Subiaco) [10.31 p.m.]: I rise to speak on a subject that is very dear to my heart, a subject still well and truly in our minds as what took place happened only a short time ago. I congratulate the Government on its reopening of the Perth-Fremantle passenger rail service.

In 1979 the majority of people in my electorate objected most strenuously to the closure of that service on 1 September that year. I felt at the time that I should support the majority of electors. I am one of those members who sincerely believes that if the majority of a member's electorate want something, that member is obliged to assist those people.

It filled me with great joy to be a part of the reopening of that rail service. I thank the Premier and the Minister for Transport for extending the courtesy of including me in the wonderful events of last week.

Mr Davies: And your co-driver.

Dr DADOUR: The Minister for Works proved to be quite a capable train driver. The only time he did a bit of kangaroo-hopping was when I was holding his hand—I must have some effect on him. He extended the courtesy to me of joining him in the cabin of the first train and I shall always remember that and cherish the memory.

No-one in this place can say that from the start I did not fight hard and long to prevent the closure of the Perth-Fremantle rail service. Each year for the last four years I have moved a motion in the House for the restoration of that passenger service. My motions have almost succeeded on two occasions: Once when my motion was defeated by one vote and once when it was defeated by two votes.

I was subjected to an inquisition in our party room by the previous leader of the Liberal Party

because I had had the audacity and temerity to stand up and try to have the passenger service reopened. Believe me, I would not like to go through such an inquisition again. I was accused of being disloyal to my colleagues. But it was not a matter of disloyalty to my colleagues; it was a matter of loyalty to my electorate. If my party has a policy that is not in keeping with my electorate's wishes, I must take the view that the policy is wrong. In my mind there is no question about that; there never will be. It is probably because of my stand that I did not enjoy the sorts of things my colleagues did when we were in Government.

I did not obtain from my Government many benefits for my electorate, but during the first three months of this Government I have obtained more than I ever did during the nine years of the Liberal Government. How can I complain?

During the past four years I have worked with many fine people, and I must name those involved with the Friends of the Railways, and many old railwaymen. No-one doubts that little boys love to play with trains, but big boys do as well, and so do old boys. Railwaymen have a great feeling for railways, and I gained a deal of pleasure from working with them. Much of the information supplied to me to enable my moving the motions I did, was supplied by the Friends of the Railways, that fine band of people. I feel much better for having associated myself with those people, and the information supplied to me proved to be accurate. I thank them for that invaluable help. When the Minister for Works was the shadow Minister for Transport I worked in close harmony with him and was much better able to have my motions brought to fruition as a result of the help I received from him.

Before the last State election I predicted that the then Government would lose seats. Never did I realise that it would lose so many seats. At one time I was hopeful that I would end up with the balance of power. I would dream about it, and would even pray for it. I could see my little self having the balance of power, not accepting a ministry if it were offered to me, and just pointing my finger and saying, "You will do that, because if you don't there will be another election". I assure members that if I had had the balance of power the Perth-Fremantle railway would have reopened and we would not have heard all that rubbish we heard tonight about what its reopening will cost, that the line will fail, and the people living in the south and the north of the city will be robbed of a better service. All that is a lot of bull blast. I am left cold when I think of the amount of public money that has been wasted already. However, that is another point, to be raised at another time.

My remarks indicate how strongly I feel about the Fremantle-Perth railway. My congratulations to the Government for reopening that line are truly sincere.

The speeches made at the reopening by the Minister for Transport and the Premier were excellent. I was amazed to see Liberals sitting on the dais, Liberals who had ardently opposed the reopening. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was entitled to represent the Opposition, but I was amazed to see there someone who had stated that the reopening was an act of vandalism. Only one act of vandalism was ever committed on that line, and that was its closure. For two years I complained to successive Ministers for Transport that fares were not collected on that run, but that non-collection was part of a conspiracy to ensure that the number of passengers reported to be using that line was kept to a minimum. I have the correspondence regarding that matter; that line was the best paying of the three metropolitan lines.

I have been mystified by all the rubbish put forward about this line. A number of speakers castigated the Government for reopening it, but the news media did not give the reopening a decent coverage. All that was referred to was the amount of money it has cost to reopen the line. It will be successful, but I hope the Minister for Transport gives serious thought to the provision of feeder buses and ample parking at the railway stations.

The Government will receive more revenue from the tobacco tax, the wages freeze and the proposed cut of up to 10 per cent of Public Service salaries above \$29 500. I ask the Government to think seriously—I very much want to see this happen—about the running of a northern spur. The spur could commence at West Perth on reserved railway land beside the freeway, continue north to the end of the freeway and go right through to Yanchep on Crown land. I would like this spur to commence before railway electrification or the sinking of lines into the ground. It is a must.

The construction could be labour-intensive, and such a spur would be to the benefit of our children and their children.

Mr Tonkin: You're keen on the railways, aren't you?

Dr DADOUR: Yes, I am very keen on them. I support a comprehensive passenger service for the metropolitan area. Perth will become a metropolis of one million people, and we will need a proper passenger service. The railways are safe and fast. In fact, not one death of a paying passenger has occurred since the inception of our railways. What more could we ask for? The railways cater

for women with prams and basinettes, and paraplegics with wheel chairs—there is plenty of room. We need a service similar to those existing in the metropolitan areas of Sydney and Melbourne, a service to clear crowds of people from football grounds and so forth. The construction of this spur would create worth-while jobs and would be for our children and our children's children.

In all sincerity I thank the Government for reopening the Fremantle-Perth railway and for allowing me to take part in that reopening.

MR THOMPSON (Kalamunda) [10.42 p.m.]: The Supply Bill gives us one of the few occasions during the life of a parliamentary session to raise any issue we wish to raise. I realise the hour is late, and there already have been a few speakers on this measure. I want to speak on a number of subjects during this parliamentary term, but not all of them will I be able to fit into my Address-in-Reply speech. I want to take briefly the time of the House tonight to raise a subject I believe needs to be aired in this public forum.

Before I do that I will refer to the incident which occurred here last Thursday evening. There was a little bit of objection from this side of the House in respect of the way questions were handled—or were not to be handled. I remind members that it was not that long ago in this House when question time would take 1½ hours. Questions on notice were answered in full by the Ministers of whom the questions had been asked.

Mr Tonkin: Half of them couldn't read.

MR THOMPSON: It would take considerable time for those questions to be answered. As a result of the coming together of representatives of both sides of the House, a recommendation went to the Speaker that there be a change in the system for the handling of questions, which was a sensible and practical course to follow. How members went through that tiresome business of handling questions on notice as long as they did, I will never know.

Mr Tonkin: Conservatives tend to hold on to old things.

MR THOMPSON: That system was followed in the time of the Tonkin Government, when I was in Opposition. In time the system changed, but in line with that change something else happened; liberal time was given to the handling of questions without notice.

Mr Tonkin: In the true sense of the word, not in the sense of conservatism.

MR THOMPSON: I believe it to be a very important part of the proceedings of this House.

Mr Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mr THOMPSON: Mr Speaker, you relied very heavily on the Standing Order which says that the Speaker has sole discretion with respect to the handling of questions.

Mr Tonkin: As you did when you were Speaker.

Mr THOMPSON: Indeed, but when I was Speaker, I worked tirelessly to ensure that the Opposition got its half an hour of questions without notice every day. The member applied pressure to the Speaker last week; however, I resisted that pressure when I was Speaker. I put to our new Speaker—

Mr Tonkin: What pressure did I apply to the Speaker?

Mr THOMPSON: Subtle pressure was applied to the Speaker to allow a Minister of the Crown—

Mr Tonkin: What type of pressure was that? You are reflecting on the Chair and also on the Government.

Mr THOMPSON: I am reflecting on the Government, not the Chair.

Mr Tonkin: You are reflecting on the Chair.

Mr THOMPSON: The Speaker has a responsibility to ensure that the Opposition has its fair opportunity to ask questions without notice, although the Standing Orders are quite specific—

Mr Tonkin: You can move an amendment at any time and just get away with it.

Mr THOMPSON: —that they are effectively at the Speaker's discretion. I remind the House that when the now Deputy Premier of this State sat in Opposition, he said that the practice of this House had surpassed the Standing Orders.

Mr Tonkin: Come on, they can't. The practice, you say?

Mr THOMPSON: I can tell the member about a bundle of practices that take precedence over the Standing Orders of this House.

Mr Tonkin: They can't.

Mr THOMPSON: Indeed they do.

Mr Tonkin: That is ridiculous. Do you mean the Standing Orders have been overruled?

Mr THOMPSON: It is rather unique—

Mr Tonkin: It is not "rather" unique. It is either unique or it is not.

Mr THOMPSON: —in that we write down all these Standing Orders. We would be far better off if we relied on the proceedings of this House rather than on the Standing Orders. Breaches of the Standing Orders in favour of the practices of the House occur almost daily.

Mr Tonkin: Yes, I know, but you are not saying that is legal?

Mr Clarko: You are doing it by interjection which is highly objectionable; the practice is a precedent.

Mr Tonkin: That is not legal.

Mr THOMPSON: The Opposition should be given at least its full half hour of questions without notice.

Mr Tonkin: You could have had 20 minutes; it would have been a fair thing.

Mr THOMPSON: There is a saying in Parliaments around the world which are modelled on the Westminster system. It is a very tried but true saying—that the Government will have its way, but the Opposition must have its say.

Mr Tonkin: We do not have the Westminster system here. You have destroyed the Westminster system in WA. The Westminster system is not one of gerrymandered electorates.

Mr Davies: You must confess that the previous Speaker often cut question time short.

Mr THOMPSON: That was for an entirely different reason. That was to maintain the order and dignity of this House.

Mr Davies: Irrespective of the reason—

Mr THOMPSON: I suggest to the present Speaker that he does the same.

Mr Tonkin: Our Speaker does not need your preaching.

Mr THOMPSON: He does not need it, but the Minister does.

The matter I rose to speak about relates to a significant change which I see occurring in our society. I refer to the higher percentage of people in the community who are joining the ranks of the retired. Australian society is ageing, and ageing fairly quickly and, as a result, more and more people are retiring. Some people are retiring a lot earlier than previously was the case and I believe that the pattern which is emerging will result in a very serious problem for our society to cope with. The Government should do something, whether at this level of government, at local government level, or at Federal Government level; preferably at State Government or local authority level. Something should be done to, firstly, prepare people for retirement, and, secondly, assist people once they have joined the ranks of the retired.

Mr Gordon Hill: Did you read my speech to the Kalamunda Rotary Club?

Mr THOMPSON: No, I heard another aspect of the speech the member made to the Kalamunda Rotary Club. Actually, the

Kalamunda Rotary Club, being in one of the premier electorates of the State, is quite forward-thinking. It conducted a seminar on retirement; these are being held in many parts of the State and are being undertaken by a variety of groups. Clearly, within the community there is recognition of the problem that exists or is imminent. Governments have a responsibility to respond to this obvious pressure in the community.

Mr Gordon Hill: The subject of the seminar was "Planning for Retirement". I was surprised you weren't there.

Mr THOMPSON: I am not planning for retirement—no, not by a long shot. I urge the House to look at this problem. In many areas of our State local authorities are taking positive steps to cater for people in the community who are joining the ranks of the retired. One such facility in my electorate is the Jack Healy Centre which I am sure the member for Morley-Swan and the member for Helena have visited.

Mr Tonkin: I visited it. We had tea and scones there on the day of the arts.

Mr THOMPSON: I am sure the Minister for the Arts will recognise the value that unit has to the people of Kalamunda.

Mr Tonkin: It is community work; very good.

Mr THOMPSON: It surprised me to observe the relatively young age of some people associated with the Jack Healy Centre.

Mr Tonkin: They might be young to you.

Mr THOMPSON: The Jack Healy Centre was established principally to cater for the aged persons in our community, and indeed it does cater for those people. In addition to that, it caters for many younger people, who for one reason or another, have retired from their normal occupations. Although such organisations and centres are placed in some areas of the State, in other areas nothing is being done for people who are joining the ranks of the retired. I urge the Government and the House to give serious consideration to this matter.

I know of several people in the community who have considered retirement as a panacea to the problems that come to them during their working lives; indeed, one or two people close to me have been eagerly looking forward to retirement. One individual bought a boat and planned to go fishing regularly. He also joined the bowling club and intended to bowl regularly. In point of fact, when he retired, the frequency with which he went fishing and played bowls tended to be less than it was when he was leading an active working life; it is a

pity to see people like this floundering around, virtually looking for something to do.

An education programme needs to be instituted to universally cater for people in society so that we can prepare them for retirement and so that we do not create a situation where people come to the end of a very active working life and then find that that life shudders to a halt and that they go into what they think to be this glorious existence called retirement, only to find that they become bored and disenchanted with life. This presents a very serious problem for society.

There is pressure in the community for Governments to lower the retirement age of people in the community. Before the Government does that, it needs to give serious consideration to the ramifications of active people leaving their normal occupations at an earlier age. I know it is easy to say that, if we have earlier retirement, we will create employment for some people—perhaps younger people such as school leavers and others—who cannot get jobs. Simplistically, I suppose, that is a solution to the problem; but, if we adopt that system to solve one problem at one end of the scale, we will create a bigger problem at the other end of the scale.

I just wonder how much thought the present Government has given to this problem. If thought has not been given to it, I ask the Government to take it on board and do something about it, because I believe it behoves all of us in this institution to give some thought to advanced policies that will alleviate the problem.

A number of organisations and centres are set up by local authorities, but not all local authorities are favourably disposed towards this type of activity. Indeed, many people in this Parliament say that local authorities should be concerned only with roads and footpaths and that welfare and other such matters should not be their responsibility.

Mr Wilson: They are mostly on that side.

Mr THOMPSON: I disagree with that point of view. I believe that local authorities have always been concerned about the welfare of people within their communities, but have lacked the wherewithall to meet those needs.

In some areas in this State local authorities are taking into consideration the growing problem of retired people in the community and are doing something about it. However, in other areas a void exists and nothing is being done.

I do not believe this Government should take a big stick to all those local authorities which have not done anything about the matter, or should discriminate against those local authorities which do,

in some way, keep uniformity. However, this Government should give some incentive to local authorities if they are prepared to do something about this problem. A system should be implemented whereby local authorities are assisted to cater for this problem within the community. Hopefully the State Government will recognise this need and do something about it.

I am not suggesting that it could be solved with large dollops of money. Indeed, that would be the wrong way to go about the matter; but desirable results could be achieved in other ways. Many people in the community have administrative skills and, indeed, one person who retired recently from the Public Service Board—Mr Norm Saunders—still has many years of activity ahead of him and has his services to offer.

Mr Tonkin: There are many things for him to do.

Mr THOMPSON: Yes, but I am not too sure that such people know how to get into them.

Mr Tonkin: They need counselling.

Mr THOMPSON: This is the problem. The energies and abilities of these people ought to be harnessed and directed towards assisting to overcome the problem I mentioned. We should be supporting and encouraging people to help themselves and to help others within the community.

That is something which I believe is a growing problem and something which ought to be tackled fairly soon. I will be interested to hear when the Premier replies whether he can give some indication as to whether his Government has given any thought to this matter and what steps he is considering to address it.

MR WILLIAMS (Clontarf) [11.00 p.m.]: I wish to enter the debate on the Supply Bill and my concern tonight relates to the rates and taxes which are being levelled at small businesses. In particular I would like to discuss the plight of the small businessmen in shopping centres.

I must say from the outset that I am concerned with the pattern that is evolving with respect to new landlords in shopping centres. Unfortunately, the large conglomerates appear to be taking over shopping centres and included in these conglomerates are many insurance companies and superannuation funds.

While they are entitled to receive a profit from their investments, they are not entitled to bleed the tenant dry as they appear to be doing.

Another problem confronting us at the moment is that of the number of investment trustee accounts which are opening up. These investment trustees are guaranteeing 20 to 22 per cent per

annum on their investment and are creating havoc within the shopping centre industry because they are demanding an increase in rent every 12 months. Our figures show that these increases in rents can range from five per cent to 110 per cent over a 12-month period. Therefore, they inflate the return on the shopping centres and sell them to investors at an inflated value.

I would like to give an example of one shopping centre in South Perth which was bought for \$600 000 six years ago and the other day sold for \$3 750 000 which is an exorbitant price. That will give some idea of what is happening; the tenants are the ones who cop the lot.

With the downturn in the economy today, the only thing going up—as far as the tenants are concerned—is the rent because rents obviously never come down.

Mr Wilson: Didn't you have a back-bench members' committee looking into this?

Mr WILLIAMS: We are looking into it and will continue to do so.

Mr Wilson: The member for East Melville looked into it before.

Mr WILLIAMS: We are all looking into it, and I am making the statements now. I am not ashamed to make the statements, members can be assured of that.

Mr Wilson: You looked into it before and did nothing about it.

Mr Stephens: It is remarkable how they did nothing while in Government, but now they are in Opposition, they are talking about it.

Mr WILLIAMS: We have this downturn in business and unfortunately the shopping centre tenants are copping the lot. In many shopping centres today, when a tenant takes over, he has to pay for his shopfront, for his floor coverings, and for basic fixtures, and that, of course, adds to the initial charges. He has other charges also because in most of the leases which are prepared today a percentage clause states that, if the tenant's turnover goes beyond a certain figure, he is required to pay an extra rent on turnover. I would like to give an example, as this is happening in quite a number of shops. For instance, if the turnover is beyond \$100 000, every dollar over that \$100 000 is entitled to be charged six per cent on turnover—not six per cent on profit; not six per cent on gross profit; but six per cent on turnover.

Mr Wilson: It was happening when you were in Government and you did nothing about it.

Mr WILLIAMS: I will tell Government members something. The cigarette tax that they are bringing in—the 25 per cent—

Mr Gordon Hill:—Thirty-five.

Mr WILLIAMS: A 25c increase on the price of cigarettes—

Mr Wilson: The member for East Melville had a chance to change that situation; his committee did nothing.

Several members interjected.

Mr WILLIAMS: Oh, stop carrying on like a parrot! A 25c increase has been placed on cigarettes. Today I had a call from one tenant who sells mainly cigarettes and tobacco in a kiosk in a shopping centre. He might sell a few sweets besides, but he comes under this category, if he has a three to six per cent increase in rent on turnover on the whole of the increase in the last month. He has now reached that figure and he has to pay an increased rent and not one cent of it is profit to him. It is all going to Mr Burke's tax. That is what Mr Burke is doing to the small shopkeeper—he is increasing his taxes. That is pretty poor and another reason that he should drop the whole confounded thing.

When this percentage of tax is called for each month, if the landlord does not agree with the turnover, he can demand that an audit be taken of the tenant's books. If he finds those figures are not correct, the tenant has to pay for the audit which can be called for at any time during the year. It is another impost on small business. The small businessman has many variables to meet and many people tell me that they unfortunately do not go into it carefully enough—this is a common complaint—and they have to pay for maintenance, security, management, cleaning, and consulting fees. In some shopping centres this amounts to \$60 000. Of course, that is an impost on a shopkeeper and it is another cost that he has to fund. I might add that one of the most important things that is now rearing its ugly head, is that the Government has, in its new Bill, put the onus on shopkeepers to fill in a monthly return for cigarette tax. It is another tax the Government is putting on small business.

Mr Brian Burke: We are not changing the requirements at all.

Mr WILLIAMS: It was usually done by the wholesaler, but now it will be done by the retailer.

Mr Brian Burke: We are not doing that.

Mr WILLIAMS: If the Government is not doing that, it is news to everyone.

Mr Brian Burke: Are you sure of that?

Mr WILLIAMS: Yes.

Mr Brian Burke: You are positive?

Mr WILLIAMS: The Western Australian Shopping Centres Association has sent a brochure to its members asking them various questions. About 900 brochures were sent out and at the moment approximately 100 have been returned. It is interesting to note the questions that have been asked and the answers that have been given.

One question asked was, "Have you increased or decreased your staff over the last 12 months?" The percentage of those who have increased their staffs was 12 per cent; 53 per cent was unchanged; and the number who have decreased their staff was 35 per cent. A further question was, "Has your rent increased in the last 12 months?" Thirty per cent replied, "No" and 50 per cent replied, "Yes". Most of the balance replied, "Currently under review".

I mentioned earlier that rents have increased from five per cent to 110 per cent. Another question asked was, "When you first signed your lease, were you influenced by the rental terms?" Fifty per cent said, "No". In answer to the question, "If 'Yes', have those increases turned out to be greater than expected?", of the 95 per cent response, only 27 per cent answered, "No".

A further question was, "Have you ever been told by the owners or managing agents that certain clauses in your lease are there, but would never be used against you?" Forty per cent answered, "Yes" and 60 per cent answered, "No". We all know that. Any clause in a lease would be used against a person if it is required. Most people are against the merchants' association, but it has compulsory membership which costs anything from \$50 or \$60 to \$100 a week.

If tenants want to get out of their shops, in many cases they must pay a fee to the incoming tenant; invariably 12 months' rent must be paid to the landlord.

One must bear in mind that in some new shopping centres—for instance, Booragoon—the rents being charged are in the vicinity of \$1 000 a week, and one can imagine what the small businessman will have to pay if he is forced to get out. Therefore, a businessman could be up for \$50 000, even if he were broke. He has no argument and must pay it.

Mr Tonkin: What did your back-bench committee do about this?

Mr WILLIAMS: The Government has one little dictator who went up to the library and came out as an instant Einstein on small shopping centres. That was the Deputy Premier. I am trying to help them, and all the Government can

do is sling off. The member for Morley-Swan is vicious. He should be quiet.

Mr Tonkin: You were in Government for six years and did nothing.

Mr WILLIAMS: Another question asked was, "Are you making a profit?" In reply, 42.25 per cent said, "Yes". In answer to the question, "Are you breaking even?", 31 per cent said, "Yes".

Mr Tonkin: Do you want a glass of water?

Mr WILLIAMS: Now, 8.5 per cent are not even making wages. I am glad the member for Morley-Swan is making snide remarks, because he is showing small businessmen what he thinks of them.

Fourteen per cent said that they were running at a loss and 11.25 per cent said that they were considering closing down. That is an indictment on the downturn of the economy today. What is happening is that water rates are going up, electricity is going up, and rents are increasing. One of the main points brought out in the report of the Retail Traders Association was that town planners are one of the main causes for the proliferation of large shopping centres as distinct from smaller corner stores.

Mr Tonkin: That is right.

Mr WILLIAMS: Some of the other problems include Government charges, and the 17½ per cent holiday pay loading which is one of the big imposts on small business today. Do not deny that.

In conclusion, I say that if most landlords could see their way clear to cut rents by 50 per cent and still get a fair return on capital investments, we would not have this economic downturn. It is the only right and proper thing to do, because at the moment the whole situation is impossible.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tonkin (Leader of the House).

House adjourned at 11.12 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

259, 271, and 277. *These questions were further postponed.*

BRIDGE: MT. HENRY

Improvements

293. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) With reference to the Mt. Henry Bridge-Kwinana Freeway surrounds, does the Main Roads Department intend to improve the surrounds to the Mt. Henry Bridge on both sides of the river?

- (2) If so, what improvements are envisaged?
- (3) If "Yes" to (1), when is it anticipated such work will commence?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) At the north end, planting to embankments between the road and the river in the vicinity of the abutment, and at the south end, landscaping.
- (3) August-September 1983.

294 and 295. *These questions were postponed.*

TOURISM: WITTENOOM

Development Company

296. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does the Government intend to set up a new Wittenoom development company as recommended in the report by White Industries?
- (2) When can a decision on a new Wittenoom tourist complex be expected?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) The White Industries' report, which has only recently been received, is being studied by the Government. No decisions have been made.
- (2) By the end of 1983.

RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Tax: Protests

297. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) In view of the effect the introduction of a resources rent tax would have upon existing and potential resource developments in Western Australia, what protests against such a tax have been made by the Western Australian Government to the Federal ALP Government?
- (2) (a) On what date were such protests made; and
(b) to whom?
- (3) (a) What was the result of these protests; and
(b) of any undertakings given by the Federal Government?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) to (3) The Western Australian Government has had on-going discussions with the Federal Government on the resource rent tax concept.

On 18 May, the Minister for Mines, and Fuel and Energy wrote to Senator Walsh pointing out the concerns held by the State in respect of the effects that a resource rent tax could have on some of our State's extractive industries.

The Australian Minerals and Energy Council at its meeting in Brisbane on 3 June 1983, discussed the matter and concern was expressed by a number of States including Western Australia. It was agreed that the Commonwealth would prepare a detailed paper for consideration by the Commonwealth and State Governments prior to the next meeting of AMEC.

The Commonwealth Minister, Senator Walsh, has said that in any event a resource rent tax should be seen as a replacement tax; it could be administered and collected by individual States and would not be an additional tax on producers already subject to heavy imposts. It was not intended that such a tax should pre-empt State revenues.

ALUMINIUM SMELTER AND POWER STATION

Bunbury: Foreign Investment Review Board

298. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

In view of the economic importance of the alumina smelter-power station project to the State as a whole, and the Bunbury region in particular, what action has the Government taken to ensure Foreign Investment Review Board support for the project, and that no impediment will be placed in the way of the project by any Federal Government department, agency, or statutory authority?

Mr BRYCE replied:

There has been direct correspondence between the Premier and the Prime Minister on the subject of the smelter project. A briefing was also provided to the Minister for Foreign Affairs prior to his recent visit to the Republic of Korea.

In addition, the chairman of the aluminium smelter task force has met with a Commonwealth interdepartmental

committee comprising officers of the departments of—

Trade;
Treasury;
Industry and Commerce;
Resources and Energy;
Prime Minister and Cabinet;

and provided a detailed briefing on all aspects of the project.

RAILWAYS: FREMANTLE-PERTH

Staff: Overtime

299. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) On what dates was overtime worked by Railway Department staff and other Government employees to prepare the Fremantle-Perth railway line, stations, rolling stock and administration for the reopening of the passenger rail service?
- (2) What was the total cost of such overtime?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Between 18 May and 29 July 1983.
- (2) From 18 May to 23 July the cost was \$78 642. Final figures are not available for the period 24 July to 29 July but the estimated cost is \$4 300.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Linc: Patronage

300. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

What has been the weekly patronage on the linc bus service between Perth and Fremantle during the last three months?

Mr GRILL replied:

The average weekly patronage on the linc bus service between Perth and Fremantle during the last three months was—

Perth to Fremantle	22 123
Fremantle to Perth	19 214

Total passengers per week 41 337

- 301 to 304. *These questions were postponed.*

TRANSPORT: DEPARTMENT

Staff: Number

305. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will he please give the numbers of people employed by each of the departments and agencies within the Transport portfolio as at 19 February 1983 and 20 July 1983?
- (2) Will he please present the figures for Westrail adjusted to show numbers on a full-time employment basis?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1)		19/2/83	20/7/83
Co-ordinator	General of		
Transport		12	12
Main Roads Department		2 694	31/1/83 2 660
Westrail		8 591	31/7/83 8 355
Transport Commission		89	89
Metropolitan Transport Trust		2 117	2 114
Department of Marine and Harbours		127	134
State Shipping Service		299	294
Fremantle Port Authority		823	818
Port Hedland Port Authority		28	27
Albany Port Authority		31	26
Bunbury Port Authority		25	25
Esperance Port Authority		39	33
Geraldton Port Authority		28	29

Note: Main Roads Department figures for the two dates in question are not readily available.

Details of casual employees included are—

Albany Port Authority—6 at 19 February 1983
 Esperance Port Authority—24 at 19 February 1983, 17 at 20 July 1983
 Geraldton Port Authority—1 at 19 February 1983, 2 and 20 July 1983.

- (2) The Westrail figures have been adjusted to show numbers on a full-time basis.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Initiatives Expenditure

306. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Attorney General, Minister for Inter-Governmental Relations and Defence Liaison, Minister Assisting the Treasurer, and Minister for Prisons:

- (1) Could the Minister please itemise all the new initiatives within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which were not planned by the previous Government and for which there were no specific allowances in the 1982-83 revenue budget?
- (2) Could he also set the amount expended in 1982-83 against that item?

- (3) Could he indicate any votes or part votes in the 1982-83 revenue budget within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which have not been expended, and have been used for initiatives as under (1) above?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) to (3) Although a number of new initiatives have been put in hand since assuming office they have all been in the area of policy development and have not involved expenditure of any significance.

WATER RESOURCES AND SEWERAGE

Rates: Pay-for-use Principle

307. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has he received any representation for continuing the activities of the working party of business representatives to examine and recommend about more equitable water, sewerage, and other charges, based increasingly on the pay-for-service pay-for-use principle?
- (2) If so, could he name the individuals and/or the organisations which made such representations to him?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) I have received a number of approaches from various business organisations seeking to continue the activities of the working party. Having decided that the working party should continue, I have seen fit to expand the previous membership to include representatives from the Retail Traders' Association and the Small Business Advisory Service. Other business organisations have approached me with respect to representation. While I did not feel it necessary or wise to make the working party too large, I am examining these other requests. Together with the two organisations already mentioned, the Perth Chamber of Commerce, the Independent Retailers' Association and the Confederation of Western Australia Industry, form what I believe to be a balanced, fair and adequate representation for future discussions on alternative charging systems.

HEALTH: INITIATIVES*Expenditure*

308. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Could he please itemise all the new initiatives within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which were not planned by the previous Government and for which there were no specific allowances in the 1982-83 revenue budget, or in the case of an instrumentality not being subject to votes within the revenue budget items of the budget of the instrumentality?
- (2) Could he also set the amount expended in 1982-83 against that item?
- (3) Could he indicate any votes or part votes in the 1982-83 revenue budget (or in the case of instrumentalities, in their budget) within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which have not been expended and have been used for initiatives as under (1) above?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) to (3) Although I have put in hand a number of initiatives since assuming office, they have all been in the area of policy development and have not involved expenditure of any significance.

EDUCATION: INITIATIVES*Expenditure*

309. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Could he please itemise all the new initiatives within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which were not planned by the previous Government and for which there were no specific allowances in the 1982-83 revenue budget, or in the case of an instrumentality not being subject to votes within the revenue budget items of the budget of the instrumentality?
- (2) Could he also set the amount expended in 1982-83 against that item?
- (3) Could he indicate any votes or part votes in the 1982-83 revenue budget (or in the case of instrumentalities, in their budget), within the portfolios under his jurisdiction which have not been expended, and have been used for initiatives as under (1) above?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (3) Although I have put in hand a number of new initiatives since assuming

office, they have all been in the area of policy development and have not involved expenditure of any significance.

Initiatives which would involve significant costs, for example the promised appointment of extra Year 1 teachers, have had to be postponed to the 1984 school year because of over-expenditure and budgeting errors by the previous Government.

WATER RESOURCES AND SEWERAGE*Rates: Pay-for-use Principle*

310. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Referring to his reply to my question 19 of 24 March 1983 respecting the Metropolitan Water Authority, has he completed his examination about the work of the Metropolitan Water Authority and the working party about more equitable water, sewerage, and other charges, based increasingly on the pay-for-service, pay-for-use principle?
- (2) Has he made any decision about the continuing of the work of the working party?
- (3) If so, is he, as Minister, going to chair the meetings of the working party as his predecessor did?
- (4) If he decided not to continue the work of the working party, could he give reasons to disband it?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (4) I have completed my examination of the work and the preliminary findings of the previous working party on MWA rates and charges. In view of the contribution which has already been made by the working party, I have decided to continue its activities. I have seen fit, however, to expand the working party to include representatives of the Retail Traders' Association and the Small Business Advisory Service. I will chair future meetings of the working party.

311 and 312. *These questions were postponed.*

TRAFFIC: LIGHTS*Synchronisation*

313. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Transport:

Considering overseas experience in almost every larger city in the western

countries, could he say whether synchronisation of traffic lights has been considered in the Perth metropolitan area and, if so, with what result and prospects?

Mr GRILL replied:

Traffic signal co-ordination is already operating in Perth at—

Albany Highway between William and John Streets; and

Manning Road between Hamilton Street and Leach Highway.

The results have proved worthwhile and in 1983-84 it is planned to co-ordinate traffic signals at—

Shepperton Road;

Leach Highway from Riseley Street to High Road;

Part of the Perth central business district which will include both William and Barrack Streets from Wellington Street to the Esplanade; and

Scarborough Beach Road from Oswald Street to Odin Road.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES (KWINANA) PTY. LTD.

Effluent: Engineering Consultant

314. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Referring to his reported warning and offer to Chemical Industries (Kwinana), to employ an engineering consultant to resolve its effluent disposal problems, could he inform the House about the company's response and the Government's attitude in the matter?

Mr TONKIN replied:

My predecessor issued a licence to Chemical Industries (Kwinana) to discharge 10 cubic metres per day of process waste into a saline aquifer located a kilometre below ground in January this year. This method of disposal was selected by the company after study of six alternatives and endorsed by the effluent licensing advisory panel as the most technically and environmentally satis-

factory method of disposal of this difficult effluent.

In May this year the company obtained quotations for the well, which were well above the estimates and sought reconsideration of the matter and proposed discharge through the Cape Peron outfall.

I rejected this latter proposal, but after consulting with my colleagues, offered to reconsider the matter of effluent disposal if consultants were employed to look at not only effluent problems, but also air pollution and occupational health issues.

The company rejected this offer and was then advised that action would be taken against it under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act unless significant progress had been made with the disposal well by 31 August, which was the date fixed for completion of this facility by my predecessor.

The company has verbally advised the Metropolitan Water Authority that it will now proceed with construction of the well.

KINGS PARK

Footpaths: Replacement

315. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Lands and Surveys:

- (1) At times when the Government itself advocates the reducing of public expenditure, was it considered necessary to replace some of the slabbed footpaths in Kings Park with reinforced concrete paths and to build new reinforced concrete paths?
- (2) Is this work being done by contract or day labour?
- (3) If by day labour, by whose employees (Public Works Department, Kings Park Board, etc.)?
- (4) What is the estimated cost of these works?

Mr McIVER replied:

- (1) The reinforced concrete paths replace slabbed footpaths, sand tracks and grass, which fail to satisfy the specifications for dual use paths such as width and continuity of hard surface. The new dual use paths are in response to many requests to give better access for

wheelchairs and to reduce conflict between cyclists and motor traffic. The reinforced concrete paths, apart from meeting the specifications for dual use paths laid down when Mrs June Craig was Minister responsible for cycleway development, are durable and require little maintenance, robust enough to withstand damage due to occasional use by emergency vehicles such as heavy fire-fighting trucks, and comparatively inexpensive to construct using a high labour content.

- (2) The work is being done by day labour.
- (3) The day labour is engaged by Kings Park Board using Commonwealth wages pause funds. This project was approved when Mr Bill Hassell was Minister for Employment and would have commenced earlier, but for disagreement about the use of these funds between the O'Connor and Fraser Governments, now happily resolved between the Burke and Hawke ministries.
- (4) The first 1.5 km of dual use path has utilised \$20 272 for materials. The slabs recovered from part of this have been used to lay 600 m of new footpaths in areas not suitable for dual use paths. The labour including payroll overheads has cost \$30 624. The total of \$50 896 represents about one-third of this phase of the dual use path programme for which wages pause funds have been allocated, thus the estimated total for this will be \$152 700 providing work for 10 persons for 30 weeks out of the present allocation of \$200 000 from wages pause funds to Kings Park Board.

316 and 317. *These questions were postponed.*

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

Charges: L3 and S3 Tariffs

318. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) How many companies in Western Australia have been affected by the State Energy Commission's decision to phase out the old S3 gas tariff and transfer them on to the L3 tariff?
- (2) What is the average percentage increase in gas charges being faced by these companies as a consequence of that change?

- (3) What notice did these companies receive that they would be transferred from the S3 to the L3 tariff?
- (4) Are all of the companies now transferred to the L3 tariff, on the same tariff?
- (5) When schedules are changed, or abolished, what factors are taken into consideration by the commission before making such a decision?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) 16.
- (2) This depends on consumption level and load factor.
- (3) Three months.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) All relevant factors.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOLS

Enrolments

319. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Could he list for me the high schools in Western Australia which have a current enrolment in excess of 1 200 students?
- (2) Could he provide me with the projected enrolments for each of these schools for the beginning of 1984 and 1985?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) and (2)

Over 1 200 in March 1983	1984	1985
Balcatta Senior High School	1 314	1 311
Craigie Senior High School	1 220	1 195
Girrawheen Senior High School	1 360	1 420
Governor Stirling Senior High School	1 424	1 350
Greenwood Senior High School	1 310	1 410
Kelmscott Senior High School	1 515	1 500
Lynwood Senior High School	1 320	1 275
Mt. Lawley Senior High School	1 295	1 287
Rossmoyne Senior High School	1 325	1 395

APPRENTICES: HAIRDRESSERS

Dismissal

320. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services:

- (1) Did he recently receive an application from Mr Sam Rifici who wished to in-

denture 25 female apprentice hairdressers and to retain them on a part-time basis until the beginning of next year when they would revert to full-time employment?

- (2) If "Yes"—
- (a) has he indicated to this employer that this is not possible; and
 - (b) as a consequence has the employer been required to dismiss 13 of these employees with only 12 having been indentured?
- (3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2), why was Mr Rifici refused permission to retain all of these employees on a part-time basis for the remainder of this year?
- (4) If it is a legislative problem which has led to this refusal, what action, if any, is he now taking to overcome this?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) The employer was advised that the hours of work of employees, including apprentices, are determined by the Western Australian Industrial Commission. The Industrial Training Act permits apprentices to work reduced hours if the employer can substantiate that he is temporarily unable to provide work to fully employ his apprentices.
- (b) The employer was not required to dismiss any apprentices. Advice has been received that the employer chose to terminate 11 probationary apprentices.
- (3) The Western Australian Industrial Commission refused the employer's application to vary the hours of work of his employees under the State Ladies Hairdressers Award; and the Industrial Training Act does not provide power to approve the proposal put by Mr S. Rifici.
- (4) Amendment to the industrial training legislation to cater for this proposal is under consideration.

321 and 322. *These questions were postponed.*

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Charges: Media Campaign

323. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Referring the Minister to the advertisement placed in the local media saying to electricity consumers—"Yes, you can do something to reduce power costs"—could the Minister tell me how much has been spent on this programme since 1 January this year?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The cost of placing the series of advertisements entitled "Yes, you can do something to reduce power costs" since January 1983, was—

6 placements in *The West Australian*

6 placements in the *Daily News*

1 placement in the *Weekend News*

Media cost \$9 270.00

Production and agency charges \$1 960.62

Total \$11 230.62

FUEL AND ENERGY: OIL

Exploration: Seismic Work

324. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Has this Government taken action in an effort to encourage companies to undertake more seismic work to try to ensure that the slump in drilling which has been predicted by oil industry experts for 1984-85 does not occur?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The Government is continuing to do all that it can to ensure that companies comply fully with permit commitments.

In order to encourage exploration the Government is making efforts to establish and expand gas markets within the State, overseas and in the Eastern States which is considered to be a positive incentive to further exploration.

MINING: GOLD

Price Stabilisation Scheme: Election Promise

325. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Did his Government make an election commitment relating to the gold mining

industry which states that his Government will take action to implement "a negotiated and voluntary gold price stabilisation scheme (similar to those operating in the rural sector)"?

- (2) If "Yes", when will this scheme be implemented?
 (3) How will such a scheme be funded?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) An election commitment by the Government was to negotiate with the Federal Government a voluntary gold stabilisation scheme.
 (2) and (3) With gold prices at their current satisfactory level it is not considered appropriate to introduce such a scheme at this time.

The matter will be kept under review.

FUEL AND ENERGY: KEROSENE

Price

326. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Referring him to his letter to me of 9 June concerning the price of home heating oil, in which he indicated at that time "... The Government is aware of the situation regarding home kerosene, and I have already asked the Prices Commissioner to examine the matter."; could he now please tell me of the results of the examination of this matter by the Prices Commissioner?

Mr TONKIN replied:

No, I am not in a position to do so as the matter is still under examination.

Mr MacKinnon's concern in this area is laudable but I question his sincerity especially when one is aware of the complete inaction of the previous Government in regard to the price of petroleum products.

BUSINESSES: ENTERPRISE SEMINAR

Government Contribution

327. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Referring him to the June 1983 issue of *West Australian Business World* and the advertisement contained within that publication and endorsed by him in sup-

port of the 1983 enterprise seminar, could he please tell me of the financial contribution the Government is making to this seminar?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The State Government has contributed \$10 000 to the 1983 enterprise workshop.

328. This question was postponed.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Energy Appliances: Competition

329. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has the Minister any evidence to support his Government's claim that there is "not fair competition in the market place for energy appliances"?
 (2) If so, will the Minister make the evidence available for public scrutiny?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The Minister has not made such a claim.
 (2) Not applicable.

TRAFFIC: ACCIDENTS

Nicholson Road-Wilfred Road Junction

330. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware of the ever increasing number of vehicular accidents occurring at the intersection of Nicholson and Wilfred Roads, Canning Vale?
 (2) Is he also aware this intersection is the main route used by the heavy haulage vehicles to and from the Canning Vale industrial complex?
 (3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2), will he have traffic lights installed to prevent any further accidents?
 (4) If not, why not?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) No, the reported accidents at Nicholson-Wilfred-Bannister Roads intersection since 1979 have been—

1979	7
1980	6
1981	5
1982	7
1983 (June)	2

- (2) Yes. However, since the provision of a traffic constrictor in Wilfred Road there

has been a shift of heavy vehicles to Nicholson Road and to some extent to Yale Road.

- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) At this time there are many other locations having a higher priority for installation of traffic signals.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Appointments: Additional

331. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Housing, Youth and Community Services, and Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Will he advise the number of new appointments to his office since February 1983?
- (2) Will he list the occupations of these staff, stating whether regular civil servants or otherwise?
- (3) Will he list the wages for this staff?
- (4) Will he advise the cost of any additional equipment purchased, hired or obtained for this office since February 1983?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) to (4) The Government has responded already to questions about ministerial office staff. The responses were given wide publicity and I have nothing further to add. Should the member wish to raise a matter of specific importance with me I would be happy to consider it.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Appointments: Additional

332. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Transport, and Regional Development and the North West:

- (1) Will he advise the number of new appointments to his office since February 1983?
- (2) Will he list the occupations of these staff, stating whether regular civil servants or otherwise?
- (3) Will he list the wages for this staff?
- (4) Will he advise the cost of any additional equipment purchased, hired or obtained for this office since February 1983?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) One.
- (2) Research Officer, under contract.
- (3) \$20 603.00.

- (4) None.

Although the Leader of the Opposition has not asked, I think it needs to be clarified that since taking office the services of two senior research officers attached to the portfolio, and under the same roof, have returned to their agency. In addition, prior to the 19 February election, the portfolio had a full-time Press Secretary, which was changed to a share arrangement with another Minister immediately after the election.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Appointments: Additional

333. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services, and Planning:

- (1) Will he advise the number of new appointments to his office since February 1983?
- (2) Will he list the occupations of these staff, stating whether regular civil servants or otherwise?
- (3) Will he list the wages for this staff?
- (4) Will he advise the cost of any additional equipment purchased, hired or obtained for this office since February 1983?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) to (4) The matters raised in the question will be canvassed in a statement which the Premier will make to the House in due course.

MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Appointments: Additional

334. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will he advise the number of new appointments to his office since February 1983?
- (2) Will he list the occupations of these staff, stating whether regular civil servants or otherwise?
- (3) Will he list the wages for this staff?
- (4) Will he advise the cost of any additional equipment purchased, hired or obtained for this office since February 1983?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) to (4) The Premier has indicated the matters raised in the question will be

canvassed by him in a statement to the House in due course.

335 and 336. *These questions were postponed.*

MINING: IRON ORE

Pilbara: Report

337. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) When does he intend to make public the report relating to the future of the Pilbara iron ore industry and its infrastructure requirements?
- (2) What consideration is being given to the report by the Government and the companies involved?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The consultant study into the future of the Pilbara iron ore industry contains a considerable amount of information made available by the individual iron ore companies on a confidential basis. It is therefore not the Government's intention to make this report public.
- (2) Comment on the report has been sought from each of the iron ore producers and these are currently being evaluated in conjunction with the report itself. An invitation has been extended to the Japanese steel mills to participate in a discussion on certain aspects of the report. This invitation has been accepted and a meeting is likely to take place during September-October. Following the meeting with the Japanese steel mills, a report drawing together the inputs from the consultants, the iron ore companies, the Japanese and Government departments, will be prepared. Consideration is being given to making this report available to the public.

338. *This question was postponed.*

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: FOUNDRY AND CASTING INDUSTRY

Inquiry

339. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

Referring to the urgent study of the Western Australian foundry and casting industry—

- (a) by whom is the inquiry being conducted;
- (b) what are the terms of reference;
- (c) what is the cost of the inquiry;

(d) when will the study be completed; and

(e) will the results of the study be made public?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (a) The Government is presently examining resources within its control which might be used to carry out the study.
- (b) Terms of reference will be finalised in consultation with those who will carry out the study and union and industry representatives.
- (c) The cost is not yet known.
- (d) At the earliest possible time—hopefully, by the end of the year.
- (e) The results of the study will be made public, however, confidentiality will be observed with respect to any commercial information contained within the study.

TELEVISION

Pilbara: Commercial Service

340. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Regional Development and the North West:

- (1) What representations have been made to the Federal Government to seek a decision to grant a broadcasting licence to allow a commercial television service to the Pilbara region of the State?
- (2) What has been the result of any such representations?
- (3) Will the State Government continue to press for such a service?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) I have written to the Federal Minister for Communications on the subject. I have also asked for a meeting with the Minister to discuss the matter.
- (2) To date the Federal Government has not made a decision to issue a licence.
- (3) Yes.

TRANSPORT

Inquiries: Initiation

341. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

His reply to question 113 of 1983 indicated that six inquiries had been commenced in the Transport portfolio since

the State election but no mention was made of the taxi industry—is there an inquiry being conducted into this industry?

Mr GRILL replied:

Question 113 asked about inquiries which “have been commenced”. A transport strategy committee, examining multi-hiring and shared riding for Perth taxis, will commence after the bodies which are to be represented on the committee have nominated their representatives and a meeting can be called.

342 and 343. *These questions were postponed.*

LAND: BUILDING BLOCKS

Metropolitan Region

344. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Will he please let me know the total number of building blocks which are available for building of homes within the metropolitan region as at 20 February 1983 and 20 July 1983?
- (2) How many serviced building lots are now held by each Government agency including the Rural and Industries Bank?
- (3) What number of building blocks is each Government agency (including the Rural and Industries Bank) capable of producing from reserves of land held?

Mr PARKER replied:

- (1) For land to be available for building of homes it needs to be available to the market. The member will appreciate that the combination of diverse ownership and the varying objectives for holding land do not allow for an accurate assessment of land which could be considered “available”.
- (2) A survey carried out as at 30 June 1983 indicated the following stock situation—

Rural and Industries Bank	443 sites
State Housing Commission	393 sites
Urban Lands Council	366 sites

The figures indicated for the State Housing Commission are for sites available for sale and do not include land for the commission's domestic programme.

In addition to the above the University of Western Australia held stocks of 241 residential sites.

- (3) An assessment of prospective lot yield from land held by Government agencies is dependent upon the density which can be achieved, and this will be effected by the adoption of the residential planning codes. Government agencies are encouraged to keep their planning and engineering studies far enough in advance to ensure that they will be able to quickly react to any upturn in demand.

345 to 347. *These questions were postponed.*

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

WATER RESOURCES: METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY

Police Investigations

62. MR MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

The Minister has already told the Leader of the Opposition that he has spoken to the Deputy Premier in connection with allegations about the Metropolitan Water Authority. I ask—

- (1) Has he spoken to anyone else about the allegations, such as officers of the MWA, his ministerial staff, or his Cabinet and parliamentary colleagues?
- (2) If he has spoken to anyone else, were the names of union officers, union leaders, and/or parliamentarians mentioned in connection with this matter?
- (3) If names were mentioned, what were the names?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (3) The officer of the Metropolitan Water Authority to whom I spoke about this matter was the managing director. I cannot remember whether it was before or after the articles had appeared in *The Western Mail* that I discussed the matter with him. At no time did he give me any names or specific allegations; however, I told him that I thought the matter should be referred to the police. In my opinion, when serious allegations of this nature are made, the only proper authority to investigate them is the Police Force; so I suggested to the man-

aging director that he should refer the matter to the police, which he did.

Members will be aware that after some considerable time the police submitted a report, and I tabled the letter last week. The point is that at various times I have discussed the question with various people who have raised the matter with me and my main concern has been for the officers of the MWA—with whom I had had no contact before becoming Minister, although since becoming Minister I have naturally had extensive contact with the authority. I have found the officers with whom I have come in contact to be excellent people, well serving the people of this State.

I was concerned to ensure that the allegations, of which I had no specific knowledge, were investigated really thoroughly so that we could lay this thing to rest once and for all and so that we could say to these people, "Look, if you have any muck to rake up in connection with this authority, go to the police, because we really do want to nail this once and for all". I would have hoped that the Opposition, having seen unjust allegations made against officers of the MWA, would want this situation to be finished, because it is very difficult for officers of the authority to carry on in their jobs when this kind of thing is raked up continually.

I make it quite clear that, if there is any muck to rake up, I am not defending any officers concerned. I have told the managing director that if anything needs to be investigated, the police are the ones to carry out that investigation.

The police have taken their time—longer than I would have thought—and they have come back and said they have not found any substantive evidence of corruption. That is where I am prepared to let the matter rest. If any member from either side of this House has any allegations to make or has any knowledge of wrongdoing, no matter how slight, it is his or her duty to go to the Commissioner of Police and see to it that the allegations are repeated to him. I am aware that the confidence most members have in the Police Force is such that they know the allegations will be thoroughly investigated.

HOSPITAL: ROYAL PERTH

Staff: Replacements

63. Mrs BEGGS, to the Minister for Health:

In light of recent media reports indicating significant staff cuts at Royal Perth Hospital since the introduction of the Government's new staff replacement policy, can the Minister give details of staff replacements at the hospital since the introduction of that policy?

Mr HODGE replied:

Items have appeared in the printed media and in radio station broadcasts recently indicating that, since the Government introduced its new policy on staff replacements, somehow or other there have been drastic staff cuts at Royal Perth Hospital. In fact one article went so far as to say that the Government was playing Russian roulette with the health of patients in that hospital.

For the information of members, I indicate that Royal Perth Hospital has a staff establishment of 3 694. In the past couple of weeks applications have come to me from the hospital to fill vacancies from outside the hospital service. Twenty-three vacancies have occurred and I have been requested to authorise that they be filled. I have given authorisation for 22 of those positions to be filled. I did not authorise one vacancy to be filled because insufficient justification and information were attached to the application. The position concerned was for a cook. The hospital has 295 people on the catering staff, 28 of whom are cooks. So far, then, the sum total of staff cuts at Royal Perth Hospital under this Government involves one cook. I fail to see how any sensible person can say that this represents playing Russian roulette with the safety of the patients.

Mr Tonkin. It depends on how good the cook was.

Mr HODGE: I was told of allegations made last evening on a media programme that patients have had to wait exceptionally long times in the emergency department, and the person concerned allegedly said that this was a result of the staff cuts imposed by the Government.

I refute that allegation and I will put it to rest.

The only person I have refused to replace is the cook. I will look carefully at each and every application that comes before me to make sure that the vacancy should be filled. It is not possible to make large-scale reductions of staff at Royal Perth Hospital. I understand that the hospital had its staff cut very severely by the previous Government, and this left very little, if any, fat in the staff establishment. I understand further that the hospital is under considerable pressure at the moment due to seasonal factors that usually affect major teaching hospitals.

It will not be possible to make any major cuts to the hospital's staff in the near future. I will look at each and every vacancy to ensure sufficient justification is provided to back the application for a replacement.

I will do this so that the money we are spending on this hospital is giving us the best possible value. We will certainly not allow staff vacancies to remain unfilled if this would reduce the standard of care and attention available to the public at Royal Perth Hospital.

WATER RESOURCES: METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY

Police Investigations

64. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Further to a question I asked the Minister last week, in answer to which he advised that he had discussed the irregularities at the Metropolitan Water Authority with the Deputy Premier, I ask—

What was his reason for discussing these allegations of irregularities with the Deputy Premier?

Mr TONKIN replied:

I discuss a lot of things with my colleagues. I do not know what kind of Cabinet Minister the Leader of the Opposition was; perhaps he did not speak very often with his colleagues. I informed the member for Floreat that I had discussed the matter with various Ministers. It would seem a rather remarkable thing if a Minister responsible for a Government department about which allegations of this kind had been made did not discuss the matter with the Leader of the Government at the time,

whether he be the Premier or the Acting Premier. I am getting rather tired of this kind of questioning because I believe that what members opposite are doing is saying either that graft and corruption can be found in the Metropolitan Water Authority—in which case evidence should be produced to the Parliament—or that the police have not done a thorough job—in which case they should come out and say so and go to the Commissioner of Police and tell him so.

Members opposite are entitled to ask these questions and I am entitled to answer them in the way I am doing. If any member has evidence of corruption in the MWA, it is his or her duty to go to the police and make that evidence available. If members do not have any such evidence, in fairness to the officers of the MWA, those members should allow those officers—who cannot defend themselves—to get on with their jobs.

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Appointments: Tax-free Concessions

65. Mr GORDON HILL, to the Premier:

(1) Did the Leader of the Opposition advise this House last Wednesday that the Premier had given tax-free concessions of \$3 000 a year to persons hired by the Government?

(2) Is his statement correct?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No. It is completely untrue. All allowances are taxable. The Leader of the Opposition, as a former Treasurer, should be aware that collection and control of income tax is the province of the Federal Government and my Government would not have the powers to grant tax-free concessions of the type to which the Leader of the Opposition referred.

The Leader of the Opposition's nonsensical statement is only one of a number of untruths perpetrated by the Opposition on the subject of ministerial advisers.

He is supported in this approach by the member for Nedlands, and it appears to indicate that the Opposition is quite prepared to make allegations without taking any steps to check their accuracy.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Westrail Vehicles

66. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Transport:

I advert to question 280 asked last Wednesday concerning Westrail trucks—

- (1) Can the Minister advise whether Westrail currently has a pool of road-freight vehicles?
- (2) If so, has any plan for disposal been involved or are they being held in reserve pending the Government's consideration of a small freight study and the possibility of Westrail re-entering the small freight road transport field?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) I believe Westrail has some trucks, but I cannot indicate the number. If the member wishes to have a detailed answer he should place a question on the notice paper.

PUBLIC SERVICE: PUBLIC SERVANTS

Telephones: Tapping

67. Mrs HENDERSON, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of allegations in the *Daily News* of Friday, 29 July 1983, by the member for Dale that the Government is tapping the phones of public servants?
- (2) Is he correct?
- (3) Is it also correct that 55 people have been appointed through the Public Service to spy on apolitical people?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (3) Yes, I am aware of the claims by the member for Dale and I advise that they are patently absurd and untrue. The Government has not employed anyone to spy on public servants or to tap their phones.

I note the member has stated that he received an anonymous call by someone who said that calls going out of his office were monitored. Either the member has been deliberately misled by this person or the whole situation is a figment of his own imagination.

RACING: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB

Committee

68. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services:

With respect to the Western Australian Turf Club—

- (1) How many members are on the committee?
- (2) How many represent country areas?
- (3) If no members represent country areas, how many members, if any, come from country areas?
- (4) Before decisions affecting country clubs are made, what consideration, if any, is given to the clubs?
- (5) Will the Minister give consideration to the formation of a committee that will be more representative of racing in Western Australia and not representative just of the metropolitan area?

Mr PARKER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. In relation to parts (1) to (4), I have been advised as follows—

- (1) Twelve (by election from within the membership of the WA Turf Club).
- (2) Nil. The structure of the WA Turf Club committee is not geared to directly represent specific sections of the industry, including country areas.
- (3) There are no members. The Chairman of the WA Turf Club has extensive country racing and pastoral interests; ie., Toodyay, Gingin and Meekatharra.
- (4) When matters of policy are to be considered, provincial and country clubs are consulted and these clubs can approach either the country clubs subcommittee or the full committee of the WA Turf Club, or both.

An annual conference is arranged and funded by the WA Turf Club between the WA Turf Club and provincial and country clubs for the express intention of discussing any

matters raised by the provincial or country clubs.

On any matter there is constant liaison between provincial and country clubs and the WA Turf Club executive.

In relation to the remainder, the answer is—

- (5) The Government is in receipt of the report of the honorary royal commission appointed to inquire into and report on the suitability of present laws relating to racing and trotting in Western Australia, and is currently examining the report and awaiting submissions. Every aspect will be considered, including policy concerning the operation of the racing industry.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Expenditure Brought Forward

69. Mr TROY, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has he seen a report in *The West Australian* of last Thursday which contains a claim by the member for Nedlands that the WA Government had instructed departments to increase spending last month so that it could manufacture the deficit?
- (2) Is it correct that a memo had been sent to departmental heads asking them to bring forward to June as much of July's spending programme as was possible?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.

Mr Court: That question is on notice, by the way.

Mr MacKinnon: Treating question time with contempt again!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: To continue—

- (2) I have taken the opportunity this morning to confirm with the Treasury that no such instruction was issued and no action of that kind taken.

The end of year close-off of accounts was a completely normal and orthodox procedure and the instructions sent to departments by Treasury related only to procedures to be taken for dealing with schedules, revenue collections and cash orders in order to ensure that all accounts payable in June were processed

by 30 June. These instructions were identical to those issued in previous years.

The allegation is clearly a figment of the member's imagination or an indication of a naive and sadly deficient understanding of Government finances. However, it accords with the general position which the Opposition has adopted in relation to State finances.

WATER RESOURCES: METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY

Police Investigations

70. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

I regret that I have to come back to the Minister for Water Resources who did not respond to the main part of my question; hence, the reason for my being on my feet again to ask whether in his conversations with his colleagues or anyone else or, I understand, in the 14 points mentioned in the letter of the Commissioner of Police, any reference has been made to either union officials or parliamentarians. If the Minister does not care to answer my question according to the Standing Orders, he should say so, or he should answer it. I add to my question the comment that I have respected the Metropolitan Water Authority much longer than I have respected the Minister and I want to observe and uphold its moral fibre.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr TONKIN replied:

I do not appreciate the impudence of the member for Floreat—

Mr Clarko: Rubbish!

Mr TONKIN:—when he says that I should answer the question according to Standing Orders. I am not aware of the 14 point something or other to which he refers. However, I am aware that allegations were made. As soon as I heard of them I suggested to the managing director—I have said all this before—

Mr Mensaros: But you did not say that names of members of Parliament never came up.

Mr TONKIN: No, names were not given to me. In answer to last week's question I said, if the member can read, that I had no specific knowledge of the allegations.

Mr Clarko: Don't be nasty like that.

Mr TONKIN: Why does the member ask the same question three or four times? I suggest the Metropolitan Water Authority deserves a bit more loyalty from the member as a former Minister for Water Resources. I repeat that I have every confidence in the police. They have investigated the matter thoroughly and if any member of this House has any allegations, they should be made to the Commissioner for Police.

BUILDING INDUSTRY

Builders' Registration Board: Jurisdiction

71. Mr READ, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) What is the area of jurisdiction of the Builders' Registration Board?
- (2) When was this area established?
- (3) What was the reason for defining the area in the manner in which it is defined?
- (4) Will the Minister take action to expand the area of jurisdiction of the board?

Mr TONKIN replied:

I thank the member for Mandurah for some notice of the question.

Mr Old: He should thank you for the notice.

Mr TONKIN: The member will enjoy this—nine years of inactivity. Listen to this, not only inactivity, but a lack of concern for the building industry!

Mr Old: Come on, answer it.

Mr TONKIN: The reply is as follows—

- (1) The present area of jurisdiction of the Builders' Registration Board is contained in the schedule to the Builders' Registration Act which comprises six pages.

Mr Blaikie: You can't read your own writing. Come on! You are the Minister who does not need notes.

Mr Old: Of six pages, anyway.

Mr TONKIN: Members can see why I do not need notes: I do better without them. Suffice to say, I am not sure what the words mean because of the typing. I will table with this answer the definition of the board's area.

- (2) The area was established on 21 March 1980 by the unlamented previous conservative Government.

- (3) The Government can find no sensible reason for the inclusion of this area which relates to the Water Board area of 1969. This is the housing industry regulation area.

Mr Thompson: It used to be a Water Board area when you were last in government, too.

Mr TONKIN: This is another example of the laziness of the previous Government in relation to consumer affairs matters. We will hear more on that subject.

Mr Thompson: It used to be the water supply area when you were last in Government.

Mr TONKIN: How does one justify the inclusion of large areas of State forests for building purposes, while parts of Mundaring which were not very well looked after by the then member for Mundaring—

Mr Hassell: Very well, too.

Mr TONKIN:—and the whole of the Serpentine-Jarrahdale townsites were excluded? So, whole areas of State forest were included while places which contained houses and where there should have been some controls, were excluded.

Mr Thompson: It was during the period 1971 to 1974.

Mr TONKIN: I am sure Gilbert & Sullivan would have had an apt comment to make about Government buffoonery of this nature.

- (4) The Government intends to amend the Builders' Registration Act to alter the jurisdiction of a board to include all areas within the metropolitan region together with the Shire of Mandurah. The Government also is giving consideration to extending the jurisdiction beyond those areas and it will do so on logical and not fatuous grounds.

Mr Speaker, part of the answer is statistical in nature, and I request permission to table it.

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

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT: ELECTORATE OFFICES

Party Meeting

72. Mr TUBBY, to the Speaker:

On Wednesday, 27 July, I asked question on notice 170 which I had di-

rected to the Premier, but which was answered by Mr Speaker. The question referred to use of members' electorate offices for party political purposes. I now ask—

- (1) Are electorate offices now Mr Speaker's responsibility?
- (2) If so, how does he reconcile his answer concerning staff members in which he stated that a staff member accepting political party endorsement is required to take leave without pay "forthwith", when on 11 May 1983 in *The West Australian* under the heading "Government lifts ban on candidates", the following appears—

The WA Government has lifted a ban on the employment of endorsed political candidates in MPs' electorate offices.

The ban was imposed by the previous Government in May last year.

Mr Old: Misleading the House!

Mr TUBBY: The article continues—

Announcing the decision yesterday, the Deputy Premier, Mr Bryce, described the ban as undemocratic and discriminatory.

It had provided that a staff member employed in a parliamentary office who accepted endorsement by a political party had to take leave without pay from the date of endorsement, he said.

Mr Blaikie: The Government is directing the Speaker now; that is interesting.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: Order! I take great exception to that remark and I ask the member for Vasse to immediately withdraw the remark and to apologise.

Mr Blaikie: I withdraw the remark and I apologise for any reflection on you, Mr Speaker.

Questions (without notice) Resumed.

The SPEAKER replied:

- (1) and (2) Normally questions to the Speaker should be placed on notice. When that question was directed to me I referred to the guidelines given to me as the Speaker. I must confess that I never saw any reference to any changes in

those guidelines. As members would know, I have been absent for some of the time since we have been sitting and the member may well be correct. The Government may have lifted that particular section of the guidelines; but it was not communicated to me as the Speaker.

Mr Old: Shame!

The SPEAKER: It certainly is not on my file. I looked at the file in order to answer the question. I apologise to the member if the answer seems to be incorrect. I will have inquiries made on the matter.

EDUCATION: SCHOOL BUSES

Contract System: Review

73. Mrs BUCHANAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did he order the recent review of the school bus contract system?
- (2) If not, who did?
- (3) Can he outline the agreement between the Government and the Road Transport Association on school bus contracts?

Mr Old: A very good idea!

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (3) I did not order the review of the school bus contract system. The review of the school bus contract system was ordered by the previous Government in 1980 as a result of Treasury considerations in this matter.

Mr Clarko: And approached by the RTA first!

Mr PEARCE: Yes. The fact of the matter is that the Road Transport Association did not ask for a review of the contract system, of course, but for a review of the basis on which the standard rate was calculated. Treasury looked at the situation and decided the arrangements were of an anomalous nature and the Government was paying far more for bus contracts than it needed to. The previous Government then ordered a secret review of the bus contract arrangements under the specific guideline that no mention of the review was to be made publicly or in writing, to communicate to bus contractors—I guess because of the political sensitivity they saw in that in their electorates.

Mr Clarko: Pity you haven't shown some level of it!

Mr PEARCE: As a result, the review that was finally completed contained some deficiencies because, of course, the Transport Commission which was fundamentally responsible for the review was not able to discuss the matter, particularly the question of costing for bus contracts. Late last year the Transport Commission reported recommending that the current system be scrapped and that a system of open tendering be instituted, instead.

Mr Clarko: Do you mean late last year or the year before?

Mr PEARCE: My understanding is that it was late last year.

Mr Clarko: November 1981 is the Transport Commission's report.

Mr PEARCE: The previous Government made no decision on this matter and it was one of the many areas that had to be cleaned up by me when I came into office.

Mr Clarko: They decided not to take any action. That is quite a different thing.

A member: Superman!

Mr MacKinnon: Now hand in your broom!

Mr PEARCE: Cabinet made a decision that it would approve the open tendering arrangement in principle and instructed me to open negotiations with the Road Transport Association on this question. I immediately commenced those discussions with the RTA and in the course of them I spoke with many bus contractors around the State, about a quarter of the total number. Meetings were held at my office and other places in the State, at Parliament House and at other country centres.

Mr Old: Jolly good!

Mr PEARCE: I acknowledge that a small number of contractors were introduced to me by members of the Opposition and a number of country members on the Government side. I personally attended meetings of bus contractors from Esperance in the south to the north of the State.

Mr Old: Did he give you a copy of it?

Mr PEARCE: As a result of these discussions an agreement has been made not to go to an open tendering system but nevertheless to scrap the current standard rate schedules. The RTA, the Education Department, and the Transport Commission are working to give new costing guidelines under which bus contractors will negotiate as their contracts are due for expiry on the basis reflected in the information of their direct costs—and not the additional costs which they have been able to claim under the anomalous arrangement which previously existed with a margin for profit.

If there cannot be agreement on the basis of the new cost arrangements for the bus contracts, the contract will go out to open tender. That is the arrangement which will apply at the end of this year. It is an arrangement which will save the State money; it is an arrangement which has been agreed to quite happily by the RTA and bus contractors.

MINING: NOONKANBAH STATION

Agreement: "Areas of Significance"

74. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that an agreement has recently been reached by the Aboriginal community at Noonkanbah and the International Energy Development Corporation which will allow seismic work to be carried out on Noonkanbah Station?
- (2) If so, will the Minister advise whether he will use section 19 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act to prevent drilling on the so-called "Area of Influence" delineated by Mr Peter Bindon in his 1979 report to the Museum of Western Australia?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) and (2) The Aboriginal Heritage Act comes under the jurisdiction of my colleague, the Minister with special responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs, and I suggest the question be directed to him.