

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 4th May, 1978

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Presentation to Governor: Acknowledgment

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

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

ALUMINA REFINERY (WAGERUP) AGREEMENT AND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [2.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The purpose of the Bill before the House is to ratify an agreement between the Government and Alcoa of Australia Limited. The agreement will set the conditions under which the company will establish a third alumina refinery at Wagerup, about 30 kilometres south of Pinjarra.

Except where specifically altered by this agreement, all the rights and obligations of the company pursuant to the existing Alumina Refinery Agreement Act, 1961-1974—the principal agreement—and the Alumina Refinery (Pinjarra) Agreement Act, 1969-1976—the Pinjarra agreement—will apply with the appropriate changes to this agreement.

It should be appreciated by members that clause 13 of the Pinjarra agreement already confers on the company the right to construct another alumina refinery in the State. Therefore, legally speaking, the company was not required to enter into this new agreement with the State.

It was the desire of the Government, however, and the company readily agreed, that a new agreement be negotiated. This has enabled the Government to have included important new provisions related to the protection and management of the environment.

Accordingly, negotiations with Alcoa have proceeded and agreement has been reached on the terms under which the company will construct the proposed Wagerup refinery and related facilities for the production of alumina.

The production capacity of the company's Kwinana alumina refinery is 1.3 million tonnes per year but, apart from slight increases in capacity due to continuing process improvements, no significant change in this capacity is ever expected.

The Pinjarra refinery presently has the capacity to produce 2.2 million tonnes of alumina per year. The refinery could ultimately be expanded to a maximum of four million tonnes per year.

In considering the terms and conditions to apply to Alcoa regarding the production capacity of the new Wagerup refinery, the Government has been aware that it would be unreasonable to expect Alcoa to invest in a new refinery at all unless the company has reasonable assurance that, market factors permitting, the refinery will be able to be expanded to an economic size, which is about two million tonnes per year for a new refinery.

The agreement for the Wagerup refinery therefore will enable Alcoa to expand the plant from a minimum of 200 000 tonnes per year to a capacity of two million tonnes per year over a 15 year period. The establishment of the refinery and its expansion to this capacity will be dependent on—

- (1) The company submitting to the Government for approval a detailed environmental review and management programme for Wagerup refinery and associated mining operations, which will detail the company's commitment to long-term environmental protection and management.
- (2) The company agreeing to a continuous programme of monitoring and research to improve environmental management techniques.
- (3) The company submitting yearly reports and detailed three-yearly reviews of the results of research and monitoring programmes.

- (4) The company continuing to observe all laws and regulations relating to protection of the environment in force from time to time.

If at any time Alcoa should propose to expand the Wagerup refinery beyond two million tonnes per year capacity, a new further detailed environmental review and management programme in respect of that expansion would need to be approved by Government.

Although not a specific provision of this new Wagerup agreement, the company was told and understood that it is the policy of the Government that any proposals for expansions of the present Pinjarra refinery will require the approval by Government of a new environmental review and management programme.

It will be appreciated that the establishment of a new refinery at Wagerup presents the opportunity for future expansion of Alcoa's alumina refining capacity to be concentrated at the new refinery, rather than at Pinjarra. This will have considerable benefits to the State in holding the rate of mining in the Dwellingup area at its present level for some considerable time.

It will thus increase the length of time when bauxite mining is concentrated only in the western, high rainfall, dieback infested, low salt content areas of the Darling Range where rehabilitation and water quality protection techniques are already well demonstrated. Further time will therefore be available for research in the lower rainfall areas, well in advance of any commitment to mine in these areas. This is precisely what is being required by those who are concerned with the consequences of mining in these fragile areas.

Members will no doubt be aware of the importance of the alumina industry to the economy of the State. It is particularly important that the industry is healthy and proposing to expand at a time when many of our other primary industries, both agricultural and mining, are suffering reductions in employment and earnings as a result of adverse market and physical conditions.

Alcoa employs 2800 people directly in its operations in Western Australia. The Wagerup refinery will provide an additional 330 permanent jobs at a production level of 500 000 tonnes per year. A further 210 permanent jobs will be created for every expansion of capacity by 500 000 tonnes per year. Therefore at the maximum level of two million tonnes per year, 960 people would be directly employed.

It is generally accepted that for basic resource processing operations such as alumina refining there are between two and three additional jobs

created in contracting, service, and retail industries for every direct permanent job. The alumina industry is therefore presently responsible for the livelihood of 8 500 to 11 000 people in Western Australia and the support of their dependents.

During the three-year construction period for the refinery, the contractors' work force will reach a maximum of 760, and will average about 380 over the three years. It is expected that a similar work force will be virtually continuously engaged if the refinery does expand to a capacity of two million tonnes over 15 years. By applying the multiplying factor it will be seen that an additional 1 000 persons will have jobs for 15 years. This is over and above the approximate 2 500 jobs as a result of ongoing production of two million tonnes of alumina.

Total investment by Alcoa in this State at present is approximately \$450 million. The cost of the initial stage of the Wagerup refinery will be \$150 to \$200 million.

In 1977 Alcoa produced 3.5 million tonnes of alumina valued at more than \$275 million.

The company spent \$114 million on producing that alumina in this State, including \$14 million paid to the State and local governments, \$35 million paid as wages to direct employees, and \$65 million paid to contractors and suppliers. All this spending contributed to the creation of more jobs and stimulated economic activity in the State in a period of reduced activity in other industries.

I will now explain, in general terms, the provisions contained in this Bill which, I might add, are the same as or closely related to a further Bill, which sets out to amend the agreement which is scheduled to the Alumina Refinery (Worsley) Agreement Act, 1973.

Firstly, new definitions of "environmental review and management programme", "State Energy Commission", "Wagerup refinery" and "Wagerup refinery site" have been inserted. These relate, respectively, to the detailed environmental review and management programme for the proposed new refinery which has to be submitted by the company for the approval of the State before construction can commence.

State Energy Commission is in lieu of the former State Electricity Commission, and Wagerup refinery means the proposed new refinery plant to be constructed near Wagerup for the treatment of bauxite to produce alumina. Wagerup refinery site refers to the location of the new refinery.

As previously mentioned, the company will not be permitted to commence construction of the refinery and hence increase the capacity of its

mining and refining operations, until its detailed environmental review and management programme has been submitted and approved. This is perhaps the most significant of all the provisions of this agreement.

The reason for this important provision is that the State has to be fully satisfied as to all of the measures intended to be taken for the protection and management of the environment; these include rehabilitation and/or restoration of the mined areas and areas used for the disposal of red mud, the prevention of the discharge of tailings, slimes, pollutants, or overburden, and the minimisation of salt release into the surrounding country, water courses, lakes, or underground water supplies and the prevention of soil erosion. Only after all these environmental measures are satisfactory will the State approve the proposed undertakings by the company, regarding the construction of the refinery.

In addition, the company is obliged to submit a 10-year mining plan of its proposed mining operations upon areas of State forest and Crown land. The plan will be reviewed and resubmitted at yearly intervals.

Likewise, the company is obliged to carry out continuous investigations and research, including monitoring and the study of sample areas, to ascertain the effectiveness of the measures it is taking pursuant to the approved ERMP. If necessary, the State can approve of variations to the approved ERMP from time to time to enable new measures to be introduced.

During the currency of the agreement the company is required to submit an interim report at yearly intervals and a detailed report at three-yearly intervals concerning the investigations and research it is required to carry out. The State may request additional information in respect of all or any of the matters the subject of the detailed report.

It is emphasised that a most important provision is that the company has not been permitted to undertake unlimited expansions of the proposed new refinery. The initial approval of the State limits the company to a refinery with a designed capacity of two million tonnes.

If the company wishes to proceed beyond this level it is required to submit a completely new detailed environmental review and management programme for consideration, and, if appropriate, approval by the State.

The second ERMP which could not be expected before about 15 years will limit any proposed expansion of the refinery to a capacity not exceeding four million tonnes per annum.

Complementary to these particular provisions of the agreement is the inclusion therein of the standard environmental clause which has been included in all new ratified agreements since 1971. This clause requires the company, irrespective of the provisions of the agreement, to comply with any requirement in connection with the protection of the environment, arising out of or incidental to the operations of the company under the agreement, that may be made by the State or any State agency or instrumentality or any local or other authority or statutory body of the State, pursuant to any Act for the time being in force.

Amongst the future economic benefits of the refinery is a new provision of the agreement which will enable the company and the State Energy Commission to enter into arrangements for the establishment of combined electricity generating and steam generating facilities, and also for the company to sell energy to the State Energy Commission.

These provisions could have the benefit of reducing the State Energy Commission's total generating cost for a given quantity of electricity produced. They could also facilitate the establishment, at some future date, by the company of a smelter to process some of its alumina into aluminium metal. This would have obvious benefits in terms of value added to local resources for export and more employment and could enable future opportunities for local fabrication of metal products.

As with the principal agreement, and the Pinjarra agreement, the company is obliged to transport by rail to Bunbury and/or Kwinana all alumina produced from the Wagerup refinery and from Bunbury and/or Kwinana to the Wagerup refinery all the company's requirements of bulk materials required for the operations of the refinery. Rail transport may also be used to transport the company's requirements of lime, limestone, and starch if the parties agree that it is economic so to do.

If for reasons such as *force majeure* or securing the most economic transport arrangements, the company elects to ship any of the output of the Wagerup refinery through Kwinana, the company will rail an equivalent quantity of alumina from Pinjarra to Bunbury for export.

Naturally, as a result of the expansion of its operations, the company may require some additional land in the vicinity of the port of Bunbury. Provision has been made for the lease to the company of such land as may be approved, after

first taking into consideration the requirements of the Bunbury Port Authority, the SEC, and other users of the port.

To assist the State, the company, if required, shall advance a sum or sums to be agreed towards the cost of the State providing locomotives, brake-vans and wagons; and for upgrading the existing railway from Wagerup to Bunbury and/or Kwinana. Any such advances will be repaid on terms and conditions to be agreed.

Additional to this, the company shall, at its own cost, provide, maintain and renew, as necessary, loading and unloading facilities and terminal equipment. The terminal equipment includes weighing devices, communication systems and fixed site radio equipment, sidings, shunting loops, spurs and other connections.

The company will provide a staff adequate to ensure the proper operation of all such loading and unloading facilities and terminal equipment.

Provision has been made for the granting of licences for road transport of materials required for the construction and operation of the refinery. However, these are strictly subject to the obligation of the company to transport by rail the alumina and other bulk materials already referred to.

Although the company already is obligated under the principal agreement to give consideration to the use of local goods and services, it has been agreed with Alcoa to have included a new clause relating to the use of local professional services, labour and materials. This clause has been included in more recent legislation such as the mineral sands agreements.

The company will be responsible for the housing of its work force in the Wagerup area and will be required to contribute towards the cost of any public works made necessary as a result of its proposed operations.

With regard to any transportation systems, including pipelines, roads and conveyors, which the company wishes to establish outside of the boundaries of the Wagerup refinery site, the company must submit proposals for the approval of the State.

The construction of any railway required for the company's operations either within or outside the boundaries of the Wagerup refinery site shall be carried out by the Railways Commission at the cost of the company. Any such railway will also be the subject of an approved proposal.

The company is also required under the provisions of this agreement to submit proposals for approval by the State in respect of any works which it wishes to carry out to supply the water requirements of the refinery and associated

mining operations. This includes details of proposed bores, dams, supply channels or pipelines and diversions of existing drainage or irrigation works within the Wagerup refinery site.

Subject to the approval of such proposals, the State will grant the company, pursuant to the provisions of the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act, 1914, a licence or licences to permit the company to obtain water from above and/or below the surface of the Wagerup refinery site up to a specified maximum annual quantity.

Any private roads required by the company for its operations under the agreement shall be at the cost of the company. In addition, if the company uses public roads it shall pay to the State the whole or an equitable part of the total cost of any upgrading required or of making good any damage or deterioration as may reasonably be required by the Commissioner of Main Roads resulting from such use by the company.

The company will be entitled to request the State to approve the closure of existing roads within the Wagerup refinery site area, purchased by the company, but will be required to provide such alternative roads as may be necessary.

Such necessity is envisaged, for example, where said closure prevents or impedes reasonable public access or denies any owner or occupier of land abutting or contiguous to such road from having reasonable access to a public road.

Opportunity has been taken in this agreement to make appropriate amendments to both the principal agreement and the Pinjarra agreement.

In the principal agreement it is proposed to substitute a new clause 28 for the existing one to enable the agreement to be brought into line with all other recent special agreements in so far as the provisions for varying the agreement are concerned.

What is proposed is that any future variation of the principal agreement shall be laid on the Table of each House of Parliament within 12 sitting days next following its execution. Each House may within 12 sitting days of that House, after the agreement has been laid before it, pass a resolution disallowing the agreement. If on the last day such a resolution has not been passed, the agreement shall take effect.

It was also considered necessary to amend the Pinjarra agreement by including therein a new clause to enable the Bunbury Port Authority Act, 1909, to be modified.

This was to allow any leases or licences to be granted to the company pursuant to that Act to be for a term concurrent with the provisions

of the agreement rather than be limited to the terms and period referred to in section 25 of the Bunbury Port Authority Act.

In conclusion the following points are emphasised. Under the present agreement, the company is legally entitled to expand the Pinjarra refinery. It is also entitled to build a third refinery. Further, it is legally entitled, under the existing agreements, to do this without any submission to the Government for environmental approval.

This agreement before the House therefore has not been framed to expand bauxite mining and the alumina industry. On the contrary its purpose is to restrict the industry, quantitatively and environmentally; and to reduce the rights of the company to expand those rights which the company has under its existing agreements, without the State's approval.

Under the agreement now before the House, the company is subject to very specific environmental conditions. It is limited to a maximum alumina production capacity at Wagerup of two million tonnes. Any expansion at Pinjarra will be subject to an environmental programme being approved.

From an environmental point of view this agreement creates major beneficial effects.

Bauxite mining in the next 10 or 15 years will be concentrated on the less sensitive high-rainfall areas around Wagerup. This in turn will provide an opportunity for thorough testing in the sensitive western escarpment around Dwellingup.

The 10 or 15 years will allow time to prove whether such an operation on the eastern escarpment can be sustained from an environmental point of view with particular regard to forest and salinity problems.

In its submission to the System 6 study the company's alumina production limit was envisaged at 9.5 million tonnes, but the company's production limit is 3.4 million tonnes at Kwinana and Pinjarra, and if the ERMP is accepted, another two million tonnes at Wagerup.

This total of about 5.5 million tonnes is nothing like the 9.5 million production limit envisaged in System 6. Any production above 5.5 million tonnes will, of course, be subject to ERMPs.

I would also emphasise that clause 17 of the Bill has the "dragnet" effect of automatically applying to all of the company's operations any future environmental rules and regulations adopted by the Government of the day.

Finally, it is pointed out that this legislation has been framed to put the Government in complete command of all facets of bauxite mining and

alumina production but with particular emphasis on the environmental aspects.

Members are assured that the utmost consideration and thought have been given by the Government and the officers of the relevant departments involved in the negotiation of this agreement to all the provisions it contains.

The Government believes the agreement provides both adequate and sensible safeguards for the protection and management of the environment at the same time setting the framework for the extension of this most valuable industry.

A minor drafting error in clause 11 of the Bill will be corrected in the Committee stage.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by the Hon. D. K. Dans (Leader of the Opposition).

(Continued on page 1356).

ALUMINA REFINERY (WORSLEY) AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [2.59 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The purpose of this Bill is to ratify an agreement between the State and Alwest Pty. Limited and Dampier Mining Company Limited, which I will refer to as the joint venturers.

The agreement sets out to amend the alumina refinery (Worsley) agreement—the principal agreement—to take account of those matters where circumstances since 1973 have made the principal agreement inadequate.

Members are no doubt only too well aware of the considerable importance of the alumina industry to this State. The Worsley refinery will add a new dimension to this industry and will have several additional advantages for the State. Most important will be the contribution which the refinery will make to the economy of the south-west as a whole and to the Collie-Bunbury region in particular. The initial stage of the refinery will create 800 direct permanent new jobs in an area where employment in traditional areas has declined in recent years. Expansion of the refinery to its ultimate capacity of two million tons per year will add a further 400 to 500 direct permanent jobs.

The estimated investment by the joint venturers in the Worsley refinery will exceed \$800 million at completion of the first stage in 1981. This initial plant will be capable of producing one million tons of alumina per year.

During the three-year construction period, an average of over 1 200 men will be employed on the project. The construction work force will peak at over 2 000 men in the last year of the construction programme.

With the multiplying factor it means an average of 3 600 jobs during construction, 2 400 in the first stages of production, and 3 600 during the fully extended production. Added to this, the increased work force with Westrail, the Collie coalmines, and the Bunbury Harbour has to be taken into consideration.

Alumina produced will be railed to Bunbury for export through the new inner harbour, while supplies will be imported through Bunbury and hauled by Westrail to Worsley.

The refinery will generate its power and steam requirements from Collie coal. This will require expansion of the coalmining work force. Moreover, the extra production will contribute to the more efficient extraction of coal for use by the SEC with attendant savings to the State.

The location of the refinery at Worsley, utilising the natural resources of the south-west, together with the new Alcoa refinery some 40 km north at Wagerup, will present great opportunities for all contractors, suppliers, and other service industries in the region.

The effects of this project will be felt far beyond the creation of direct jobs at the mining area near Boddington and at the refinery. It is no exaggeration to say that it is the single most important project ever to be established in the south-west region. Its long-term benefits will be felt by all who live in the region, as well as by the State as a whole.

In general terms the Bill proposes the following amendments to the principal agreement. Firstly, new definitions of "Alcoa", "Berth A", "Berth B", "environmental review and management programme", and "State Energy Commission" have been included.

The principal agreement required the State to make a berth at the Port of Bunbury available to the joint venturers. In this agreement berth B is nominated as the berth to be allocated. Berth B is adjacent to the existing Alcoa of Australia terminal on berth A. Hence it was necessary to clearly define Alcoa, Berth A and Berth B.

Various amendments have been made to clause 5 of the principal agreement. This clause describes the new obligations of the joint venturers in respect of the protection and management of the environment.

The joint venturers are obliged to submit for approval by the State a detailed environmental review and management programme, which will set out their commitment to ongoing environmental protection measures, research programmes, and monitoring and reporting to the State on the outcome of the measures and research.

The provisions in this variation agreement relating to environmental protection are the same as those placed on Alcoa in the new alumina refinery (Wagerup) agreement. These have already been explained in detail.

It is important to note that the maximum capacity of the refinery which the joint venturers may now construct is two million tons of alumina per annum, whereas previously no limit was stated.

It is not expected that the joint venturers will ever wish to expand the Worsley refinery beyond this two million ton per year limit, due to relatively limited reserves of bauxite. However, to cater for the possibility of minor expansions which could be possible by continuing process improvements if greater ore reserves were located, provision has been made for such expansions to be considered by the Government in light of a further new environmental review and management programme to be submitted by the joint venturers at the time any such expansions are proposed.

An obligation is placed on the joint venturers to commence the construction of the alumina refinery by the 31st October, 1978, or the date of approval of the environmental review and management programme, whichever is the later. In other words, if the ERMP is submitted and approved prior to the 31st October, 1978, then the joint venturers must commence construction by that date. If, however, the ERMP has not been approved by that date the joint venturers cannot commence construction until such approval is given.

It will be observed that, where appropriate, consequential amendments in respect of the new agreed date of the 31st October, 1978, have been inserted in this agreement.

The deletion of the provisions in clause 5 of the agreement has not relieved the joint venturers of their obligation to advance to the State an appropriate contribution towards the cost of dredging the access channel and turning basin at the Port of Bunbury.

In fact new clause 5C has been included which requires the joint venturers to advance \$2 million to the State when they commence shipping alumina through Bunbury Harbour. In addition the joint venturers are obliged to advance to the State the total cost of any additional harbour works required if they elect to construct a wharf and associated shipping facilities at berth B.

With regard to the use of Bunbury Harbour, in essence what has been achieved is that—

the joint venturers have been assured of a lease of the berth B area;

commercial arrangements will be entered into between the joint venturers and Alcoa for the joint use of berth A, which presently and even with the production of the new Alcoa project at Wagerup will not be fully utilised by Alcoa;

the State will be recouped by the joint venturers for any future capital outgoings in respect of any works necessary to allow their alumina to be exported through Bunbury Harbour.

That is to say, if it was necessary for further works to allow a new wharf to be constructed at berth B.

Extensive amendments have been made to the existing provisions of the principal agreement in respect of royalties. The intention of the amendments is to place payment of royalties by the joint venturers on, as nearly as possible, the same basis as those currently imposed on Alcoa by virtue of the 1974 amendment to the alumina refinery agreement.

The obligation upon the joint venturers under clause 6(1) to investigate the technical and economic feasibility of establishing a smelter in the State has been retained. However, subclause (2) of that clause has been amended to require the State as well as the joint venturers to be satisfied that such a smelter would be technically and economically viable and competitive on world markets.

A new subclause has been added to enable the joint venturers to be released from their smelter obligations in certain defined circumstances which would prejudice their operations under the provisions of the agreement.

The provisions of the principal agreement with respect to mining operations on privately owned land have been carefully re-examined. The relevant subclause—subclause (9) of clause 7—has been replaced with a new subclause.

Essentially this provides that the joint venturers shall not commence any mining or related operations on any privately owned land until they have—

obtained the consent of the owner and occupier of any such private land;
entered into an approved compensation agreement with the owner and occupier; and
entered into an approved restoration agreement with the owner and occupier.

These provisions are very similar to the existing provisions. However, provision has now been made for resolution of any disputes which may arise in respect of either the obtaining of the consent to mine, compensation or restoration.

In the first case—that is, a failure to gain the consent of the owner and occupier to commence mining or related operations—the joint venturers may apply to the warden to dispense with such consent.

It is strongly emphasised that this could be used only as a last resort and only in circumstances where an owner and/or occupier had unreasonably withheld such consent. Where there is a failure to reach agreement on compensation the matter can be referred to the warden for a determination.

In respect of restoration, any failure to reach agreement shall be referred to the Minister for the time being responsible for the administration of the agreement for determination by him.

At the request of the Railways Commission an amendment has been made to clause 8(3) of the agreement. This relates to the construction of the railway. It stipulates that the provisions of section 96 of the Public Works Act shall be deemed to apply to the construction of any railways.

Also at the request of the Railways Commission a new clause has been added. This will ensure that irrespective of any *force majeure* situation which may arise the joint venturers will be required to fulfil their obligations to the State in respect of any moneys to be repaid by them to the State.

The amendments to clause 12 were necessary because it is not intended to grant other than a lease to the joint venturers of the refinery site, and land for the purposes of water collection and storage and the construction of red mud residue areas.

In addition it was necessary to provide for compensation to be paid to the Conservator of Forests for any State forest leased to the joint venturers for these purposes.

As already pointed out the joint venturers will be granted a lease of the berth B area. The new clause 12A sets out the conditions relating to the joint use with Alcoa of berth B.

As with the amendment to the alumina refinery (Pinjarra) agreement, as contained in the alumina refinery (Wagerup) agreement, it has also been deemed desirable for the terms or period of any lease or licence granted to the joint venturers under the Bunbury Port Authority Act, 1909, to be consistent with the provisions of this agreement. In this regard it has been necessary to modify the Bunbury Port Authority Act.

With regard to the water supply for the refinery and associated mining operations, the following amended provisions have been allowed for.

Firstly, a change in the estimated water requirements of the refinery. Secondly, a change to the basis for payment for water to be supplied to the joint venturers which will ensure that the actual cost to the State of the water supplied will be paid by them at all times.

A new clause relating to alternative sources of energy has been included. This obliges the State to keep the joint venturers fully informed of any new developments in energy availability in the State which may have a bearing on their operations.

The several amendments to clause 16 are necessary to reflect that the State forests are to be covered not only in respect of the joint venturers' mineral lease but all of their operations under the agreement. In addition members will observe that other minor self-explanatory amendments have been made to several other clauses.

The schedule of railway freight rates and the agreed escalation formula has been varied to take into account revised tonnages and the recent cost experience of the Railways Commission.

In conclusion, the importance of the project to the future welfare of the south-west region and the State as a whole is emphasised. This is highlighted by the important changes, which have been readily agreed to by the joint venturers, which extend the State's control over the size of the refinery, and which will ensure the application of the best available environmental protection and management measures at all times.

In consideration of these most important factors, I have pleasure in commending the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by the Hon. D. K. Dans (Leader of the Opposition).

(Continued on page 1409).

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Presence of Visitors: Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (The Hon. Clive Griffiths): Honourable members, I wish to draw attention to the presence in the President's gallery of delegate Steven V. Sklar, member of the House of Delegates, Maryland, United States of America. Delegate Sklar is accompanied by Mr Noel Semmens, Director of the Department of Tourism in this State. Also present in the President's gallery is the Hon. Murray Hill, member of the Legislative Council of South Australia. We accord these visitors a very warm welcome.

ACTS AMENDMENT (LEGALISATION OF BINGO ON LICENSED PREMISES) BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [3.21 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. This is a Bill to amend the Liquor Act and the Lotteries (Control) Act to enable bingo to be played on licensed premises.

The law at present forbids a person licensed under the Liquor Act to permit the playing of unlawful games or the conduct of lotteries on licensed premises and forbids the Lotteries Commission the right to grant a permit to a religious body or charity organisation to conduct bingo if the game is to take place on premises licensed under the Liquor Act.

The Bill will not alter the requirement that a permit must be obtained to conduct bingo or that gambling—other than bingo—is not permitted on licensed premises.

In order to ascertain the opinion of people in the community concerned with this matter a letter was sent last July to all clubs licensed under the Liquor Act. The letter said—

The Legal Committee of the State Parliamentary Labor Party has been requested to investigate the possibility of amending the Act governing the playing of bingo. Before taking any steps to introduce legislation on this matter, we are seeking information from you as to your needs in this regard and your opinion generally.

We understand that as the law forbids the playing of bingo on licensed premises, many licensed clubs are hiring halls for the purpose of raising money for their particular community purpose, when in fact, they have within their own premises the facilities for doing just that.

Please write to us as soon as conveniently possible so that, if we find a consensus of opinion supporting a change in the law, we may take action accordingly.

Letters were sent to 360 clubs and replies were received from 252—a 70 per cent response. Five clubs said they would not be interested, the rest—182 country and 65 metropolitan clubs—said they would like to have the law changed.

Extracts from some of these letters express the reasons for the introduction of this Bill; namely, the very real need, especially in the country, of raising funds, increasing social togetherness and using facilities to their maximum potential.

One reply stated—

We wish to support you in your efforts to have the Act amended—it does seem stupid to have to hire a hall for the purpose of bingo.

Another said—

My committee is completely in favour of some action to allow this type of entertainment—it is ridiculous that bingo can be played on private premises without facilities and without any form of supervision whilst a licensed club with proper facilities and open to inspection by gaming squad or police in uniform is not able to do so.

Another said—

The committee has been approached on countless occasions by various fund-raising committees inquiring into the use of our premises for the purpose of bingo. Our own fund raising activities have also suffered in this regard.

Yet another extract stated—

It is our opinion that bingo would be an advantage to our members in giving us another social activity and creating another opportunity for members' friends to participate.

Finally—

Our application to the Lotteries Commission to play bingo was not granted. Other venues in the town to satisfy the commission could have been used but are cold and dingy places whereas our club is air conditioned and comfortable.

Members will see in the enthusiasm expressed in these extracts for a change in the law a really grass-roots appeal to legislators.

I commend the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. G. E. Masters.

ROAD MAINTENANCE (CONTRIBUTION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Transport) [3.27 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The purpose of this Bill is to more clearly define the interpretation of the term "owner" as it appears in the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act.

During recent years there has been a trend in the financing of commercial goods vehicles to "swing" away from hire-purchase agreements into the leasing of vehicles or using other methods of finance.

In view of this trend and the doubt that has been expressed in some quarters that those who finance in this way are not subject to road maintenance contributions, it has been decided to more clearly define "owner".

Presently the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act defines in part, an owner of a vehicle as "... a person who has the use thereof under a hiring or hire purchase agreement." The amendment is designed also to cover those persons who have the use of a vehicle under a lease, or loan or any other arrangements.

In commending the Bill to the House, I inform members that during the passage of a previous Bill of a similar name I indicated I would move this as an amendment. However, I was unable to do so and it had to be introduced as a separate Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. F. E. McKenzie.

ALUMINA REFINERY (WAGERUP) AGREEMENT AND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [3.30 p.m.]: This Bill has already been debated in the Legislative Assembly and we can say now that the issues in respect of it have already been decided. No matter what the length of debate in this House may be not one comma of the Bill or the agreement will be permitted to be changed. We on this side of the House are faced with the problem of what attitude we should take with regard to the debate in this Chamber. As the circumstances are, the debate that ensues will be only for the record

since this is the only way we can make any contribution at all to this discussion. However, we would hope that in bringing the various issues to the notice of the Government as we see them, some force will be added to the voices of those who have already spoken. We hope the Government gives due regard to our comments.

The Australian Labor Party and its parliamentary members gave deep consideration to this matter and conducted a very deep and extensive debate on the limits of information available to them. We realise the importance of the proposals and their consequences. We know full well the state of unemployment that is now current under the present Liberal Government and it would not be our wish to do anything to worsen this matter or prevent anything occurring which might alleviate the position and improve the unemployment figures. However, we must still judge this matter with the utmost responsibility.

It was in that light that we arrived at our decision to oppose expansion of the present level of capacity of the Alcoa company as it operates at the Kwinana and Pinjarra refineries. It is our firm belief that this matter is of such great moment it requires us to take this very serious step. I can assure members that it was a decision not taken lightly. It was a matter on which we spent considerable time in discussion.

In our investigations we visited the Alcoa and Alwest establishments so far as they are on the ground at Boddington and Collie and we heard expert witnesses from the scientific field and from persons interested in the environmental aspects. The matter that led us to arrive at our decision was the probable long-term effect of continued mining and particularly an expanded mining programme.

The State's water supplies are likely to be affected and there is the danger of the spread of *phytophthora cinnamomi* or dieback as it is more commonly known. There is also an unsatisfactory state of knowledge in the science of reforestation and of the largely unknown ecological issue surrounding the jarrah forest. The last point was one on which there was very little information to enable us to examine it. One of the reasons I asked a question in relation to studies of Western Australian birds was to gain some further information on that score. Members may remember that the Minister answered that the studies currently being undertaken by his department were chiefly on the wetlands.

I assert that the Government is in a state of panic in respect of the employment situation and is fearful of its own historical reputation. It is a Government with a Premier whose reputation

was based on the idea of great development, and perhaps we could say the Premier has the development "disease" that all virtue is contained in unrestrained development.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: It is probably better than the dead hand of socialism.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable Mr Lewis might be familiar with that disease but I am not. It appears to us that the Government is prepared to risk the long-term future of this State in order to achieve short-term benefits; benefits which have a fair measure of political content.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Didn't the Tonkin Government have something to do with alumina agreements?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I suggest to the honourable member that he will have an opportunity to get to his feet when I have finished. The next point I would like to make quite firmly and which I direct to Mr Lewis and to other Government members is that the Australian Labor Party has quite strongly supported the development projects of the parent legislation and the amendments to this present Bill. I agree that the Tonkin Government gave great support to the Alwest interests as did the Whitlam Federal Labor Government.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Whitlam gave consideration to Alwest?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is correct.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: That is what kept it back so long.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: They are the sort of comments I expect to hear from the honourable Mr Lewis.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I recommend that you disregard interjections.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Certainly, Mr President. They are denigrating and belittling statements which commonly flow from the honourable member's tongue, do no credit to him or his party, and bear little resemblance to the truth.

Point of Order

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I hate doing this, and interrupting the debate, but I would like the honourable member to withdraw the words indicating that my words were very far from the truth, or I was not telling the truth.

The PRESIDENT: Would the honourable member withdraw the words?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Whatever words of that nature I uttered, and I am not sure what they were, I withdraw unequivocally.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I think if the honourable member reads what I said earlier he will find his objection was not very well based.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Would the honourable member proceed and disregard the interjections?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I hope it is not the honourable Mr Lewis' intention to unduly disturb the flow of the debate on this Bill, because it is of such great importance. I was saying that the Labor Party has quite plainly made clear its support of Alcoa and Alwest and their previous proposals; one could say the same for any other developmental project that has been brought to this Parliament.

From that point of view, when we were in government we demonstrated our concern to see the success of these companies. So, any charge that the Labor Party is opposed to bauxite mining *per se* has already been shown to be completely false. On this issue we have made our position clear. We are not saying that bauxite mining should cease; we are saying there are certain considerations which demand that Alcoa should not proceed to increase its capacity beyond its present levels.

When we examine the legislation we find that, in fact, it does not limit the company at all, as has been suggested by the Government. The legislation authorises its expansion from its present capacity to six million tonnes, with the possibility of a further 2.2 million tonnes above that. There is also the capacity of the plant at Pinjarra to be expanded on the site where it is now located to between 3.5 and four million tonnes.

I believe the Government has played lightly with the truth in this respect in claiming this Bill imposes a limitation. In fact, it authorises an expansion of the operations. Our response to that is to agree that the company should not do so. There are no present considerations that would lead us to agree to such expansion.

The Government, through the second reading speech of the Minister, has said that mining on the western scarp will be concentrated in the next 10 or 15 years on the less sensitive high-rainfall areas around Wagerup. If we take the minimum period of 10 years the Minister has mentioned, we see there is very little time left to overcome the very great problems that have been brought to public notice in this debate.

In the discussions which the Labor Parliamentary Party had with different groups, time scales of 20 to 25 years were mentioned. It was therefore with some surprise I found the Government mentioning time scales of 10 to 15 years. That indicates the rate of mining will be at the maximum capacity within a very short time, and we will not have to wait 15 years before Alcoa at Wagerup will expand to two million tonnes per year. In fact, we will find that happening within a very short time.

When it is understood that the viable size of an alumina refinery is 800 000 to one million tonnes capacity, we can see why the company would want to speed up its expansion at Wagerup.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Are you in favour of the Bill or not?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I think the honourable member is being a little facetious in that remark; either that, or he has not been listening very carefully.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I am not being facetious at all.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.04 p.m.

Point of Order

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: On a point of order, Mr President, I desire some clarification under Standing Order No. 86. I refer to an incident which occurred prior to the afternoon tea suspension when the Hon. Sandy Lewis drew your attention, on a point of order, to words used by Mr Claughton. Mr Lewis asked for the words to be withdrawn, and you immediately asked Mr Claughton to withdraw them, which he did. Two weeks ago in this House I was vilified—

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order. I call on the Hon. R. F. Claughton.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr President, I must insist. I require some clarification in respect of—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY:—Standing Orders, because a similar incident could occur in this House.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I point out to the honourable member there is no point of order. There is provision in Standing Orders for members to ask questions of the President, and that is the procedure which should be followed.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: With the greatest respect, I am not asking a question; I am asking you to rule on Standing Orders.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If the member has a point of order would he please state the Standing Order under which he requests me to make a decision. In order to save the honourable member time, I suggest Standing Order No. 86 is not appropriate. Would the member indicate to me the Standing Order under which he considers I ought to give him an explanation?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Standing Order No. 86 states that any member—

The PRESIDENT: Order! Might I point out to the honourable member that Standing Order No. 86 provides an avenue for a member, who feels aggrieved at something another member has said, to ask that member to withdraw. That Standing Order does not provide an avenue for another member to make some comment with respect to something which happened previously.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I respect your ruling, but I do not agree with it.

The PRESIDENT: I call the Hon. R. F. Claughton.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Before the afternoon tea suspension Mr Gayfer interjected and I must apologise if he finds it difficult to hear me when I am facing the Chair. However, Standing Orders require that I face the Chair. I will do my best to speak in four directions at the same time, but I will find it rather difficult. Those who speak with forked tongues may find it easier, but that does not apply to me.

The PRESIDENT: I have already suggested to the honourable member that he should disregard interjections.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I was addressing myself to the times which the Government has projected for bauxite mining to be completed on the western scarp. The period was stated to be from 10 to 15 years, but there is a difference in the evidence provided to Labor Party members who investigated this matter. That evidence suggests that the company plans to expand at the maximum rate in the shortest possible time. Of course, Pinjarra could expand to about double its present capacity. The capacity of the new Wagerup development has a present limit of two million tonnes which could be reached within a very short time—far too short to resolve the problems associated with *phytophthora cinnamomi*, reforestation, and questions relating to the increase in salt in the marginal areas to the east.

The Government has suggested that in order to contain the development on the western scarp we should give approval to this proposal. That seems to me to be conflicting. I have been told that to reduce the period during which the material can be mined, a further refinery should be constructed. It would seem more likely to me that we should contain development to the Pinjarra site—and the potentiality of expansion to that site—when we would be in a better position to contain development on the western scarp for a longer period than if we had two plants operating.

The company would not be inhibited, because while there would be a limitation on its expansion eastwards, at this time there would be no limitation on its expansion southwards. That would be across the Murray River into an area where there is a large infestation of *phytophthora cinnamomi*; that is, damaged forests in which there is less unaffected timber to be dealt with.

We have not been presented with any other structural limitations to indicate that is not a viable proposition for the company to follow, instead of building at Wagerup to contain its operations at Pinjarra and, perhaps, to extend those operations to the maximum that is common with that sort of plant. The ore could be conveyed from south of the Murray River to the plant at Pinjarra. Ore is now transported a considerable distance by conveyor belt or by railway, whichever happens to be the best method between those two modes of transport.

The Alwest proposal allows for the transport of ore over some considerable distance between the quarrying site and the refinery.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Because of the escarpment there may be some grade difficulties.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That would apply regardless of whether or not the plant was located at Wagerup. There are physiographical features to contend with, no matter where the site is located.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: That is not really true, because what you are suggesting is contrary to the existing conveyor belt.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As I understand the evidence given to us, in the operation of conveyor belts, contours do not matter a great deal. When talking to the Alwest representatives I was told that the most economical way for them to go would be in a direct line, as the crow flies, regardless of the topography.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: There is an easy grade line.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The company said a direct line. The easy grade lines are around the valley, and that is a much more indirect route. I am sorry that Mr Tozer does not follow this. If he had undertaken the research that we have undertaken, he would understand what I am talking about. I suggest that such a proposal is reasonable, and it is one we could expect the company to follow. Even the then Minister for Industrial Development (Sir Charles Court), in talking to the 1969 proposal, suggested that if the company had chosen to use the existing facilities at Kwinana, rather than looking at Pinjarra at that time, it would have saved \$40 million at that stage. I believe a saving of the same order would apply if the company decided to expand at the Pinjarra site rather than opening up an entirely new refinery.

We are told that the 1969 legislation allows the company to expand regardless of the measure before us. I have not sought a legal opinion on this, and although the Government assures us the company has that right, a reading of the agreement leads me to question whether that is so. Clause 13 of the agreement reads as follows—

13. If the Company desires to establish an additional refinery or refineries in a site or location approved by the State then the provisions of this Agreement shall *mutatis mutandis* be deemed to apply to the extent agreed at that time by the parties hereto.

I fail to see how that provision gives the company an unequivocal right to establish a third refinery. All it says is that if the company wishes to establish another refinery, the provisions of that agreement apply. However, the location must be approved by the State. So the company cannot establish a new refinery without the approval of the Government. How can the Government say the company has the right to do this? In my opinion the Government is throwing a red herring into the debate.

Some of the comments made by the then Minister for Industrial Development in 1969 are quite relevant today. On page 1311 of *Hansard* of Tuesday, the 7th October, 1969, the then Minister for Industrial Development had this to say—

The most difficult problem we faced was the fact that we were asking the company to establish itself in a brand new area with all the basic costs involved, which I mentioned to the House the other day. The first two units will cost \$40 000 000 more than if they had been built alongside the existing industry at Kwinana.

We can see that the company would save itself some costs if it continued at that particular site. On page 1312 the same Minister had this to say—

It is our job to argue all these pros and cons to try eventually to get the company to go along with a logical development programme in our State and substantially in our time.

This reminds me of a phrase used by the honourable Mr Chamberlain in 1939 when he said, "Peace in our time". In my opinion the connotations of the two phrases are not all that different, because the consequences of expanded bauxite mining could very well mean disaster for Western Australia. The then Minister used the phrase, "in our time" on two occasions in that speech.

The then Minister for Industrial Development referred to the establishment of a smelter, and today the Attorney-General, in his second reading speech, referred to this also. On page 1313, again of *Hansard* of 1969, the then Minister had this to say—

The next point is the possibility of a smelter being erected in this State. Naturally the Government would like to have just as firm a commitment for a smelter as it has for a refinery, but this has been found to be impracticable. I am firmly of the opinion that a smelter will be established in this State in the 1970s.

That is a fair indication of the way in which our present Premier can make very bold assertions without the substance to back them up. We asked the Government about the company's attitude in regard to the way the project would continue if environmental factors were found to be unfavourable. It is unfortunate that I cannot quote the remarks the Premier made in another place. However, when I asked the Leader of the House the following question—

Is it a fact that the Premier was informed by Alcoa interests in America that the alumina refineries in Western Australia would cease operations if it is not in the interests of the State to extend bauxite mining into the eastern portion of the Darling Range?

His reply was as follows—

Alcoa—both Australian and American interests—have assured me that they would never endanger the Perth water supply with any of their operations if such operations are proved to do so.

Very often we find Government members replying to our questions with the one word, "No". However, in regard to the question I asked such an answer would have been very acceptable. The

Leader of the Opposition did not give us a direct, "No", and yet that is the impression given by his reply.

If we allow these three refineries to be established and then to operate at full capacity, what will happen when mining is completed on the western scarp in 10, 15, or 20 years' time, and it is found that the risk of proceeding eastwards is far too great because of factors which are not fully researched at this time? Will the refineries then simply cease to operate? I cannot speak for other members of the House, but it appears to me to be quite unrealistic to suggest that the communities which will be established around these areas in the expectation that the work will continue will have no future. The people who have set up residence around Pinjarra and Wagerup will be left without jobs. Surely this is one of the most unrealistic propositions in this particular proposal.

I find it hard to believe that the Government at that time will be so callous to those individuals—to those voters, and that is probably even more pertinent—that it will say, "Sorry, chaps, we are going to force Alcoa to shut down all its operations. We will not let the company expand eastward, and you will all lose your livelihood and your homes."

I cannot believe the Government at that time would take such an attitude. I will not dwell any further on that particular point, but I feel it is one of the most serious misconceptions the Government has tried to force upon the public in respect of its proposals.

It seems to be fairly uniformly agreed that the environmental aspects of the legislation are an improvement on the provisions in the 1969 agreement. When introducing the Bill the Leader of the House said that after 1971—when the Tonkin Labor Government was in power—environmental matters were watched more closely, and specific proposals have been included in development legislation since then. I will not contest that proposition. However, we are being asked to believe that the environmental provisions in the measure before us will provide the necessary safeguards in regard to our jarrah forests and the Perth water supply in particular. The major drawback in this regard is that it is employees of the company who will be required to do the research and prepare the reports. The Government has conceded, since the legislation was first introduced in another place, that approval will not simply be in the hands of Cabinet. The Government will seek to have the ERMP tabled in Parliament so that it can be debated. However, this does not mean the ERMP must have

the approval of Parliament, but rather that it will be available for discussion. I suppose we must be grateful for that sort of concession.

I believe the present propositions do not provide the necessary safeguards, and they are not as adequate as the Government could have made them. For example, the measure could have included a provision that the Environmental Protection Authority and the Forests Department would play a role in preparing these environmental reports. It is far from adequate to leave this matter entirely up to the company. No matter what the public debate may bring forth it will be left to the Government of the day, the Cabinet of the day, to give its approval. We have seen how often public opinion can be ignored if the Government chooses.

I would like to spend a little time on the issue of the salt content of the soil and the danger of increased salination of streams if bauxite mining is permitted to extend into the marginal areas east of the north-south line that runs through Dwellingup and delineates the wetter western scarp from the marginal areas in regard to salt content.

I believe the evidence is sufficiently clear at this stage to show that dangers exist of increased salinity in our water supplies consequent upon the clearing of the jarrah forests for bauxite mining or, for that matter, for any other purpose.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It depends on where it is situated, of course.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am referring to east of that north-south line that passes roughly through Dwellingup; it is not a straight line, but that gives its approximate location.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Provided it is in the location of a catchment area of a river which provides a water supply.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, and I think the Leader of the House would agree that the bulk of Alcoa's leases are located in such localities.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, but your broad statement was a shade simplistic.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not want to go into the matter in fine detail, because that would take a considerable amount of time. I accept the Minister's comment that, for instance, the Worsley refinery is not to be located in a drainage basin that affects the Collie water supply, because it happens to be located north of the divide; the river is on one side, and then there is the Murray River to the north again separated by a water divide.

Obviously if mining is to occur in a catchment area from which water does not flow into one of the streams which are supplying the metropolitan water supply, then water supplies will not be affected; but there would be very few such places in Alcoa's reserves which would not have that effect. All the leases of that company are within areas which feed the Perth metropolitan water supply. So the danger of salt increase from that source is extremely great.

That question seems to be undisputed. It has not been disputed by the Government or by any of the other people to whom members on my side have spoken. However, what is disputed is the methods by which the risk of salt increase can be controlled if bauxite mining proceeds to the east; and as yet no answer has been given to that problem and it would seem that a considerable time would elapse before a solution is likely to be found.

None of the evidence given to us indicated that researchers are anywhere near to finding a solution. Various suggestions were made as to what might be done. One proposition was that bores should be located under mining sites, and water pumped from them at the expense of the company. Of course, such bores would have to be established not only in the area that is being mined, but also in the rest of the area involved in which ancillary activities take place, and in any areas affected by dieback spread as a result of the activities of mining.

As far as the western scarp is concerned it would seem the danger of salt encroachment is minimal. We are told that not only is the salt hazard low in that area, but clearing could in fact increase water run-off and thereby increase the storage. We accept the evidence given to us in respect of that proposition.

That briefly sums up the salt question. Some large question marks about the effect of salt still exist, and I might add that the published information about salt is that there is no clear division between areas which are salt prone and those which are not. Areas on the western side of the Dwellingup line—I think it is the 20-inch isohyet—have produced high salt readings from bores which have been put down.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: I suggest the 20-inch isohyet is a long way east of Dwellingup.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I was most reluctant to use that term; probably it is better to stick to that rough-line running through Dwellingup. I tried to recall the particular isohyet because the line curves around; in fact it deviates east at Dwellingup and then turns to the west again. However, that is not an important point.

On the matter of reafforestation it was pointed out very clearly that although the present plantings show encouraging early growth it has not yet been established which varieties will be able to maintain themselves in the long term. It is not sufficient to take a 10-year stand and say, "Look how beautiful that stand is" because it has been found that varieties which have already been tested developed problems after 10 years, and the success rate falls dramatically. Therefore, there is as yet no clear indication of any particular specie which could be successfully reafforested in the mining areas and which would be able to maintain itself in the long term.

When we are talking about forest trees we are talking about trees which must demonstrate their ability to grow in the mining areas over a time span of 40, 50, or 60 years. With the current programme, which must be short, on the western scarp we will be a long way from knowing whether reafforestation programmes will be successful. I do not want to go into all the detail provided to us on that matter.

On the matter of *phytophthora cinnamomi*, again we see encouraging signs that Forests Department officers are getting near to a solution and are now much more optimistic about their chances of success than they have been in the past. New lines of research are promising and not only are Western Australian officers coming up with new developments, but also researchers in other countries where this disease is a problem are making some headway.

Again, a span of years will be required before we can be confident that any methods developed will be successful. However, it would be a great shame if, for example, within a reasonable time a successful method to combat dieback was found, and forests which are now written off by some people as being completely devastated by dieback were cleared and we were not able to take advantage of the new development to restore and reclaim those forests.

The other question relating to the jarrah forest is, of course, the jarrah tree itself. The Premier in his remarks in 1969 rather played down the jarrah tree as a productive forest tree, simply because of the time it takes to grow. He was much more interested in pines. I will not quote his speech, because members can read it for themselves. The Premier referred to the use of other forest materials for pulp, chipboard, and other things.

There is no doubt that the Forests Department is developing the production of goods from a variety of forest timbers. However, it would be a sad thing if it were suggested that we should

establish only large areas of pines because no other trees are suitable to be established on mining areas. The point at question is whether the trees can survive in the long term; and experiments have shown that pine trees are no more capable of withstanding stress than other forest trees. I believe this was shown by cyclone "Alby" when quite a few pine trees were blown down. In other words, the root structure of these trees on mining sites was not sufficiently well established.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Did that occur in large amounts?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have not seen any figures.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: There were a few other trees blown down around the State, too.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is true.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You want to see the salmon gums and white gums that blew down in my area.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If we look at the forests now we will see not only trees blown down by the storm, but trees which have died due to drought; and it seems the drought will continue in the present year, so there may be approaching another problem of which we have not yet felt the full extent.

I have already spoken for some time, and I know other members are anxious to speak, so I will be brief in my concluding remarks.

If Alcoa was requested to limit its production to its current capacity it would not be disadvantaged, especially when one considers the profitability of the company. The total income of Alcoa in Australia in 1977 was \$437 million, and its net profit was \$65.1 million, largely derived from its Western Australian operations. That net profit was an increase over the profit of the previous year, when the amount was \$42.6 million. In addition, a bonus issue of 125 million shares was made on the 30th December, 1977.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: How many people were employed?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The shareholders got those shares.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: How many people work for Alcoa?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The figures I am quoting were not given by the Minister. The figure the honourable member is requesting was given by the Minister, so if he wants to know about that he can read the Minister's speech.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: He was pointing out what is a bonus share.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: No, he is asking how many employees there are. I know what a bonus share is; bonus shares are given to shareholders.

The total share capital of the company is \$210 million and its assets are valued at \$960 million. It is a very wealthy company which has been making handsome profits, and it will continue to do so if it is asked to maintain its capacity at the present refineries.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [4.45 p.m]: This legislation has many facets and I am sure one could talk for a long time on any number of points concerning the mining of bauxite. It is not my desire or purpose to canvass the whole range of provisions associated with this measure. Nevertheless, I propose to advance a number of points of view in the course of my address.

The nature of this legislation has been known for a long time. The existing agreements, which have been in existence for a long time, have had the blessing of the majority of members of the Parliament and, therefore, there is nothing new about them. What is new is the change of heart of some people who now propose to oppose the amending Bill. I find that a quite extraordinary attitude on the part of members who, when in Government and in Opposition, supported the original agreements and welcomed bauxite mining. Yet they refuse to acknowledge the benefits in the proposed legislation. The legislation will bring benefits not only by way of protection of the environment, for which most of us have regard, but also by securing long-term employment and providing safeguards in a timely manner. Therefore the opposition to this measure is quite hollow.

The people who oppose this legislation are not only in the Chamber but also in the public arena; and I suggest they are very few in number. I represent in this Parliament a good portion of the south-west of this State and I have received not one objection, protest, or serious query regarding this amending Bill. I have received the usual circularised information from organisations, as a number of members have.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Do you represent the bauxite mining area?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I represent some of the bauxite mining areas and I am familiar with the country into which it is proposed to extend bauxite mining. I have been associated for more than 40 years with some of the country in the mining leases where it is proposed to mine bauxite; and during the past 23 or 24 years I

have had a very close affinity with that country. In addition to that, I have a very close affinity with a number of people living in those areas.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You would know as much about this subject as Mr McKenzie would know about railways.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I do not know about that.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You do not represent Wagerup.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: That shows the sort of unfortunate interjections that come from members of this House who really do not know what they are talking about. Members of the ALP are very keen to promote employment opportunities and to criticise the present unhappy unemployment situation in Australia, and that is commendable. But they also say that we must not expand our existing industries or promote new industries, because if we did we might hurt some environmentalists.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We have not said that.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: That is the effect of what they are saying. I suggest that the ALP "policy"—and I put that word in inverted commas, because I do not believe it has a policy in respect of this legislation—can be likened to a photographic laboratory: it contains so many negatives that its members are completely in the dark. They are groping about in the dark for genuine and wholehearted opposition to this Bill.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We have had one speaker, and did he oppose the Bill?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: He certainly was not very much in favour of it. The tactics of the Opposition are delaying tactics. If the Opposition cannot be more constructive and positive in its thinking, its members are abrogating their responsibilities as an effective Opposition.

When the Hon. John Tonkin was Premier of this State he was extremely keen to develop in the south-west an industry of which he could be proud, and it is to his credit that he was one of the great champions of extending bauxite mining, particularly in regard to the Alwest project. The Opposition's present attitude indicates to me that it is not inclined to see the south-west expand or prosper to the extent of which it is capable.

A few years ago when the Pilbara was developing its iron ore industry we heard the voices of doom throughout this Parliament and the State. The project was said to be pie in the sky and the then Government was accused of being hell-bent on the development of the north at the expense of the south-west. The voices in the

chorus of doom used to say that we were selling the country to Japan and were trying to create something that would never succeed. Shortly after that when the project succeeded, it was said that the north-west was being developed at the expense of people in the southern regions of the State. The cry then from the ALP and members of the public was that the south-west was being starved of development because everything was going north. How short-sighted an attitude that was!

If my memory serves me correctly, the ALP implied that in certain circumstances it would appoint a Minister for the south-west who would wave a magic wand throughout the south-west because of jealousy with regard to what had happened in the Pilbara. Now members of the ALP are saying that they want development on the one hand but we must not have it on the other hand. Where do they really stand?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I shall let you know shortly.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The voices of doom are still with us. They are saying, "We will let you know." But the people of the south-west want to know right now. The people who understand what this matter is all about do not have any real argument about it.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Do not the foresters understand what it is all about?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Indeed they do.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Does not the CSIRO understand it?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Indeed it does, and many other people also do. But the big difference is that Governments and their members have to make a value judgment on these things, and I am quite happy to do that. Members opposite should state categorically where they stand one way or another.

It is amazing to hear this sort of talk when one appreciates that the extension of bauxite mining in the south-west, coupled with the safeguard enunciated in the amending Bill before us, will do so much for places such as Collie. We can still hear ringing in our ears the cry of, "The Government never does anything for Collie. It sells Collie short." I suggest that Liberal-Country Party Governments in the past have done more for Collie than any other Governments in this State. That sort of cry showed a lack of foresight and did not do the Opposition much credit.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: How is this agreement going to help Collie?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I am referring to bauxite mining in the south-west.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We are talking about Alcoa.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I shall extend this point as members opposite really do not know what they are talking about. I refer to Waroona, Harvey, Brunswick, Eaton, Australind, Bunbury, Pinjarra, and perhaps Mandurah; all those areas will also benefit. So why should we worry about only one town? If the people who are complaining at the moment understood what local authorities and people in the south-west have done by way of providing a better quality of life, better schools, extensions to hospitals, upgraded medical facilities, and so on, in preparation for this project they would not be opposing the legislation in this manner.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: What do the people of Dwellingup think about it?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I shall leave it to my colleagues who represent that area to answer that question.

It has often been said by some people that the railways are disadvantaged in many ways because of the Government's attitude, but the railways stand to gain from bauxite mining. Surely this is good business. Provision will be made for more jobs on the railways in the south-west. The Labor Party is very keen on championing the cause of the railways and I fully agree with its attitude. So, let us give the railways more work and provide more opportunities for people. Yet we still hear this go-slow attitude from members opposite.

In recent years inflation in Australia has been running at a very high rate and this affects the whole economy, including mining. The ALP has been very quick to criticise the State and Commonwealth Governments in this situation, but today we do not have the same situation, because the official figures, whichever chart one uses, show that the rate of inflation in Australia has come down remarkably. This has set the economic stage for the type of development contained in this legislation to proceed.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: But you do not know what the effects will be; that is the problem.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I know the sun will rise tomorrow and it will be a happy day when we pass this legislation.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are not really sure of that, being a God-fearing man!

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The merriment in which members of the Opposition seem to indulge is a happy sign. They are happy to think that

this project will succeed despite their attitude; and it is a pity the ALP cannot identify itself with the people.

The ALP has suffered some crushing electoral defeats at the polls in recent years. The reason is simply the attitude it is expressing today. Its members do not relate to the people; they do not understand what the people want; and they do not understand the expectations of people with regard to the performance of Governments. Therefore, they do not have their fingers on the pulse of the community and they do not know what the people expect by way of quality of life.

This legislation will assist the south-west to consolidate an excellent industry. This Bill and the succeeding one will probably provide the greatest boost the south-west has ever seen.

There is no question about that. Members may judge it by any yardstick they like. I come again to the naming of these areas, because I have had very close liaison with the local authorities, other organisations, and individuals right through this area. I shall repeat the names again: Harvey, Waroona, Brunswick, Australind, Boddington, Bunbury, and surrounding rural communities. Indeed, the town council at Bunbury has been active—as have all the local authorities—in this sort of exercise, because Bunbury stands to gain so much as a regional centre for the south-west. It is playing its part as an outlet for the raw materials.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The Bunbury Port Authority got a better deal than the authority in Kwinana.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The Bunbury Port Authority is welcoming this and it goes to show the wisdom of establishing an inland harbour at Bunbury. That harbour was established at great cost. Some of the cost involved was incurred by the industry; but the greater part of the cost was met by the State. It is as a result of the expenditure of the State's money—the people's money—that we are reaping the harvest from the provision of a safe deep-water port at Bunbury which will enable the materials to be transported from the south-west.

In the past various people have opposed all sorts of things. In recent years we have had the great opposition to the wood chipping industry. The Save the Native Forests Committee and other organisations were extremely active and some of them are still active. They seem to think everything should stand still. This has been put to me by people many times. They wish to save forests and to leave the trees unmolested. They say the forests and timber should be left as they

are; that they should be left to stay in the condition they are in today. I have said to those people, and I say to the House now, that forests and trees are never still. What happens today will not happen tomorrow. Trees are indeed like people; they grow; they mature; and they die.

The manner in which one farms trees determines whether one gets the best out of them. These people have a similar attitude to mining.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you think we should farm people?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: We do farm people if the member thinks about it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I am sure you do.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Well-meaning people, and some people who are not well-meaning, wish to save the environment in a general sense and particularly the trees. People are concerned about the loss of some trees if bauxite mining proceeds. I would suggest they give some thought to controlling cyclone "Alby" and other cyclones, because those of us who understand the south-west and have witnessed the far-reaching and widespread damage caused by the recent cyclonic winds which ripped through the whole of the south-west corner, feel those winds have done far more long-term damage to the flora and trees in the south-west than any man-made devastation could possibly do.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I do not think it would remove the top soil.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: When these people go down into the devastated areas—and I suggest they do—they should reflect upon the situation. It is all very well to say, "Leave things as they are"; but things do not stay as they are for the very reasons I have given, because of the nature of the growth of trees, the nature of the climate, and everything that goes with it.

The attitude of these people is very strange indeed. Let us look at the quality of life they talk about: the alternative life style where people do not want anything changed. They want to enjoy an alternative life style; to opt out from the usual conditions of community living maybe. Let us look at that. They want an alternative life style. They want to do something different. There is nothing new in that idea. People have been doing something different from time immemorial.

This very country was developed by people who had an alternative life style. They did it their way. Whether they developed agriculture; whether they developed the fishing industry; whether they

developed dairy farms, grazing land, fruit growing, vegetable growing, grain growing; whether they went goldmining or prospecting, they did it their way. That was their alternative life style. They went mining for gold or tin, or they built roads to improve communications for their fellow men and hopefully they were paid for it. Whether they were school teachers teaching the young people to become good citizens and equip themselves for a better life, they did it their way. There is nothing new about this. It did not matter whether they were storekeepers or whether they were engaged in railway construction and running railways; that was their choice.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: What does that have to do with the Bill?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: This is a Fitzpatrick travel talk.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: It has a great deal to do with the Bill. It concerns the nature of change. Bauxite mining will cause changes. There is a difference between the people who in this modern age say they want an alternative life style and the group of people who developed this country. Whatever the latter group of people did, they did it responsibly for the benefit of the community. That is the big difference.

In the same context I do not believe the opposition to this Bill is responsible. It is more shame to them.

I want to refer specifically to one or two points concerning the Waroona-Wagerup area. I made a speech last year in which I pointed out that the company had purchased farming land at Wagerup to be used for refinery purposes. There is nothing wrong with purchasing farmland. I said that last year. However, I wish to underline my disappointment that in the purchasing of this farmland the company included in its holdings viable dairy farms.

The company purchased farmland well served with irrigation facilities and land which lends itself to irrigation methods. These dairy farms have been lost to the local area. This is very unfortunate. It means change is occurring once again. This rural community once contained some very good and viable dairy farms, but that situation has changed because of bauxite mining. That is an unhappy situation in the rural context. We know, of course, the district will benefit in other ways as a result of the opportunities provided to people to gain a larger share of the trade which will flow from the operations of the company as a result of the extra people who

will be employed in the community. The district will benefit certainly from the refinery activity itself.

I am sure before this debate is over someone will enlarge on the agricultural aspect more than I; but I want to register my disapproval on that point, as I did last year. It is unfortunate that this aspect comes into the situation.

I have touched already on the benefits to Bunbury Harbour and the town of Bunbury itself. Under the provisions contained in this Bill Bunbury Harbour will be expanded and I have no doubt that as time goes by more berths will be established to allow for increased shipping as the need arises. One of the clauses in the Bill contains a provision to encourage the company to let contracts locally and to buy materials locally wherever possible within a reasonable price range. That is contained quite clearly in one of the clauses. Without actually looking at the clause, I can say with a degree of certainty there is an obligation in the legislation requiring the company to report to the appropriate Minister at 12-monthly intervals to indicate the success or otherwise of this particular policy of using local materials.

There seem to be one or two main concerns expressed in the opposition to this legislation. One is the loss of jarrah trees. It cannot be denied that mining operations of the nature proposed will in fact deplete some areas of jarrah forests. Here again we have to make a value judgment. I have read in print that some people believe the extension of mining under this Bill will bring the desert areas closer to Perth with the destruction of trees causing erosion. That is extremely far fetched. It is completely irresponsible and people who make those statements really do not deserve any comment at all.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why do you make that statement?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is ridiculous! You are certainly wrong about that.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I make that statement because those of us who have visited the areas and seen the vegetation which has been rehabilitated on mined areas are satisfied the mining operations will not bring the desert closer to Perth. The timber grown may not be fully commercial; but the area will certainly not become a desert, so the honourable member should not fall into the trap.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is tallow-wood. It all just falls over after 10 years.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: That just goes to show the lack of understanding of Mr Dans. What he has said has been true in the past, but through experience—and that is what this Bill is all about—that species is not now being planted.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I know that. I have visited the area.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Another species is being planted. Experience will enable better methods to be adopted so that the area may be rehabilitated in the best way possible. That is the nature of things, and so it should be.

The other area of concern appears to be the protection of water supplies, particularly to the metropolitan region. I have studied this Bill very closely and I am satisfied with the safeguards envisaged. I cannot see that the water supply for Perth will in fact be endangered to any extent.

If, with the passing of time, it is shown that there is a threat to the water supplies, as Mr Dans mentioned, and if experience shows some aspects need to be altered, provision is contained in the Bill to effect remedies. However, at the moment I cannot see that the water supplies will be adversely affected to any great extent.

I should like to reflect a little. I have made it my special concern since I have been privileged to be a member of this House to take a particularly keen interest in forestry matters—the growing of trees. I have as much regard as anyone else for the timber industry and for forestry generally. It is right that I have made this matter a specialty, because I represent the part of the State where so much timber has been grown and will continue to be grown in one form or another. I have the interests of the south-west at heart. I refer particularly to the people who have chosen to live there and earn their livelihood in the best way they are able with the opportunities presented to them. Here again I commend the spirit of initiative that has always pervaded the attitude of the people in the south-west. They have used their initiative to make a career and a livelihood for themselves.

The provisions of the Bill will enable further expansion. I, for one, representing the south-west welcome it. I know the people I represent want it and I suggest the opposition to this legislation arises out of the mythology of the new left. I believe some of these people may be intoxicated by what could be called a “witches brew” which brings people together in a comradeship for the cause resulting in the clouding of their views. I would hope, on reflection, they

will support this legislation for what it is. It is an opportunity to develop the south-west, not only for the south-west.

As happened in the Pilbara, and as happened in the early days on the goldfields, the development benefited the whole of the State. I earnestly hope people will support this measure, because it is a worthy one.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [5.14 p.m.]: Before I deal with some of the problems involved in this Bill I should like to make reference to a couple of points which have been made by the honourable member who has just resumed his seat. He talked about the mythology of the new left as if this was an identifiable and finite thing. He does not know very much about the new left if he thinks there is a mythology.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I thought that would provoke you!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am not provoked. I am just putting the honourable member right, as I have been putting people right for a long time. Some people talk about alternative life styles, and they mean opting out, leaving the big cities, living in the natural bush and on farms, and living the simple life because they think it will solve the problems of the modern world which have grown up with mass technology and large cities. Nobody on this side of the House espouses those causes, because it is obvious the problems caused by technology must be solved by technology. The problems of New York City cannot be solved by all the citizens of that city going out and living on their farms; there would not be enough room. We are not talking about that kind of thing.

The honourable member talked about the responsible attitude of the people who developed this State in the early years. Certainly they were responsible but they destroyed vast tracts of our forests and they also caused salination of our rivers. They were not being responsible, because they did not know what they were doing.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Should they have stayed in the caves?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am not saying that. I am saying we have learnt a great deal since, and that is why we are facing new problems.

One of the things that have happened, which has caused what is called a change of heart by some people, is that since the first refinery was established at Pinjarra we have learnt a lot more. It is a good thing if people learn as they go

along and try to avoid errors made in the past. In an earlier speech I made in this House I was accused by the Leader of the House of talking rubbish, but that is not unusual.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you mean it is not unusual for you to talk rubbish?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am saying it is not unusual for the Leader of the House to accuse me of talking rubbish. On that former occasion I said in our development we had to be careful not to make mistakes similar to those which had been made in the past. I pointed to the example in America of rivers which are fire hazards. I am not suggesting we are about to do that but we might do something else which would destroy our environment. This is one of the matters we must consider.

The alumina industry is very attractive, because aluminium is one of the few metals which has an expanding market and is not suffering the recession of other metals on the world market today. Furthermore, it is a metal which looks as though in the foreseeable future its use will continue to expand. It is a very attractive metal.

I am told it is expected by 1985 all motorcar engine blocks will be made of aluminium. Many are now made of aluminium. I am driving a car with an aluminium engine and I am very happy with it. In addition, aluminium is in many ways replacing wood as a structural agent in buildings, and it may be that in the future we will solve many of our problems by using aluminium and plastics in the building of houses. In other words, we may solve many of the problems associated with the loss of timber in the world by developing materials such as aluminium.

So aluminium is very attractive from this point of view, and it is an industry which will produce employment and decentralisation in this State, which of course is in line with Labor Party policy.

I can understand why the Government is in a moderate hurry to get these Bills through.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: It has taken a long time. They have been under consideration for a long time.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Although, as someone has pointed out, inflation is dying down, the fact remains that when the Pinjarra refinery was built it was profitable to build a refinery which would produce 200 000 tonnes of alumina. That is no longer the case. In order to be profitable a refinery must produce 800 000 tonnes; one million tonnes is better, and two million tonnes is better than that.

If we are to have refineries in this State, the sooner they get going the better.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What has caused it to become unprofitable?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: According to the people at Alcoa and Alwest, the reason was the inflationary situation in the world. That is what they told me. They may be wrong but I presumed they knew what they were talking about. The inflationary situation in the world is an inflationary situation that has been in the world—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is a profound statement!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: —and it has affected people who produce alumina throughout the world. At the same time, although there is some degree of urgency, I do not see that it is necessary to bring these Bills down before the recess. Surely it would have been possible to wait for the reports which have not yet been presented—the reports of the Hunt committee and the Stanford committee, Alcoa's ERMP, and the System 6 report. Why can we not wait for those?

Although the mining and refining of bauxite is very attractive—and I certainly understand Mr Ferry's interest in it—if I may leave Alcoa for a moment and point to Alwest, it will double the size of Boddington.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: That is not in his electorate; it is in mine.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I was not talking about his electorate but about his interest in the south-west. I understand the interest of members from the south-west—and, furthermore, join them in wishing that the south-west can be well and properly developed. I have been down there a number of times and I intend going down there again. I do not know of all the problems yet, but I certainly wish to see the south-west develop if it is possible, and I think it is possible.

The other thing I want to say is that certainly, as Mr Ferry said, much as been learnt since Alcoa first started to practise reforestation. When one goes to some of Alcoa's early mine sites one finds wizened trees which have fallen over. People take photographs of them and flash the photographs all over the place saying, "This is what happens." But the situation has changed since—and let us give credit to the company. I am not attacking Alcoa when I express doubts about this Bill. As a mining company it is behaving with great responsibility.

It has developed new ways of attempting regeneration and reforestation. It now puts the topsoil to one side. It has discovered that by deep-ripping the soil for two metres it can establish trees which look as though they will survive.

But here is the rub. It has been alleged or it is hoped that after five years the trees Alcoa is using—including red mahogany, spotted gum, *eucalyptus maculata*, and now wandoo—will produce the same transpiration as the jarrah forest they replace. The new timbers have been in for four years, so we will have to wait another year before we know whether that is true.

It is claimed by some critics of reforestation that to apply a lot of fertiliser to quick-growing trees, as Alcoa is doing—

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Not a lot, surely.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: They said "heavily fertilising".

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: A couple of handfuls per tree.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: "Heavy" is a matter of degree. If I fertilise my trees I do it very lightly. If I put a couple of handfuls on certain trees, it is heavy fertilising.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It depends on the amount of bull-dust.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They were Alcoa's words.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You surprise me, because I have been there several times and have not heard that phraseology.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It does not matter. Alcoa is fertilising the trees. I am not trying to accuse Alcoa of doing anything improper. I am trying to remember what I was told by the company. The trees are being fertilised and they are growing fast. Pits have been dug to examine the roots, and it has been found the roots have gone very deep. To a layman like me it looked very promising. But we do not know whether in five years the trees will have the same transpiration as the forest they replace. We also do not know whether they will live beyond 15 years. Trees which grow rapidly in the beginning sometimes die in 15 years. If the trees survive, we do not know whether they will become viable timber trees. We will not know that for 20 to 40 years. In other words, there are many things we do not know.

I was a member of the Australian Labor Party joint committee which examined this matter and I have spent a lot of time on it. There are still

a lot of things I do not know because, of course, I am not an expert. I am an ordinary, average layman who has tried to understand, but I am left wondering what the end result will be. I am left wondering whether we can successfully reafforest, and I am left wondering what will happen if we cannot.

Some people have very seriously made the suggestion that in areas of the world other than Western Australia which are climatically similar there are deserts where we have jarrah forest. Some people claim—and their claims may not be correct, but they seem to make some kind of sense—that the fragile environment of the jarrah forest is preventing this State from becoming a desert. I am not one who is prepared to dismiss this conclusion out of hand just because I do not like it. I am very much afraid it could be true, and I want to ensure as far as possible that it is true.

When one flies over the area and sees the spread across the surface of Alcoa's mining, one wonders whether the forest can indeed survive it and whether we can successfully reafforest. This is why the Labor Party in another place suggested that before we go on we have a Royal Commission inquiry where all the evidence can be examined publicly, so that we can perhaps make up our minds beyond reasonable doubt what we should do. If in fact in order to provide employment for people—and I am very much in favour of that—we destroy their environment so they cannot live there, we will not have helped them very much in the long run; and we do have to look at the long run as well as the short run.

I wish the Government had been prepared to wait a little while longer, to hold an inquiry and try to resolve some of the doubts. But of course some of them cannot be resolved in the short term and we have to wait and see. It is possible—and I hope it is true—that what the Alcoa people have done in reafforestation has solved problems which previously were insoluble. It is possible they have not found answers. It is possible they have shown us a way to reafforest the dieback areas, and they may have done us a great service.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You make it sound as though they will knock over the whole area, anyway.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am saying enough may be knocked over to damage the rest.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think they have certainly pointed the direction.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, and I want to give them full credit for this. I am not being purely negative about this matter, but I am most perturbed about it. One of the things it seems to me might happen if the Wagerup refinery is not developed is that we might persuade Alcoa to go south across the Murray River into areas where dieback is so heavy that the company cannot do very much harm. This is a problem we will have to face: that if we add another refinery the pressure will be placed on the Alcoa people, and inevitably in 10 or 20 years' time when the company has new people and a different management and it wants to maximise profits—and I cannot blame the company for that—it might want to expand its refineries.

Of course, the other problem is that the best bauxite deposits which service the Pinjarra refinery move east, and if Alcoa were allowed to mine in order merely to serve its own best interests—and the company officers say this; I am not putting words in their mouths—it would follow the natural inclination from the point of view of profitability and move to the east fairly quickly. The officers of the company are not claiming that they will do this, but that is the natural direction in which they would develop; and this would raise problems.

I am not saying, nor is the Labor Party saying, that Alcoa should not ever expand. We are saying that we are not convinced that a new refinery at Wagerup is the best way of expanding; we are not convinced that the company should be allowed to expand at all at present; we are worried about the Alcoa project, and we want further inquiry made into it. That is not an irresponsible policy; that is not a non-policy; that is a policy which is taking due regard to some of the problems we face, and the answers to which we do not have at the moment.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: In other words, you would never make a decision.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: We are not yet prepared to gird up our loins, take a position of strength, and dive in when we are not sure of the damage that may be done.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: When will you be prepared to make a decision?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I have already said that we will make up our minds after a Royal Commission.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do you think that would provide any more answers?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I think it might throw more light on the matter.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Have you seen the pamphlet put out by Mr Withers about the invention of the wheel?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: No, I have not seen it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You should read it. It is opposite to what you are saying.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Unfortunately I have not read the pamphlet, and I am afraid I cannot let it influence what I am saying.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think the argument applies, because in five years' time after an inquiry the situation would change and we would have to start all over again.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: What I am saying is that my own very limited and amateurish inquiry over the last few weeks or so has resolved a number of doubts and given me a different view of the operation, but it has not satisfied all my doubts; therefore, I am suggesting a fuller inquiry. If we wait at least until the reports come in that are already being drawn up, we might have a better idea.

I have always rejected the notion that we must develop at all costs and whenever development occurs all the other problems will necessarily be solved, because I do not believe that is true. From my own limited experience I am less worried about the Alwest project than I am about the Alcoa project; but I still have doubts in my mind on both of them which I would like to have resolved. Certainly I am the first person who would like to see these projects developed if they are viable and will not do long-term damage to our environment and, ultimately, to our State; because I want to see development and decentralisation, particularly in the south-west.

As a matter of fact, it might interest Mr Ferry and other honourable gentlemen opposite to learn that when John Tonkin put into his policy that we should have a Minister for the south-west, it was I who suggested it to him.

The Hon V. J. Ferry: Having a Minister is not the answer.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Of course it is not the answer, but that reflected my attitude. It is still my attitude, and it has always been my attitude ever since 1967 when I first arrived here and drove through the south-west.

I found the south-west to be a delightful area which seemed to me to be unduly poverty stricken and which could be developed in some way. I have felt that way ever since, and I am prepared to make the personal statement that I am highly

interested in seeing the south-west develop as far as possible, if we can find something that does not do too much damage to the environment.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Then you will support the Bill?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: No I will not, and I have told the honourable member why. I will not be taken to one side by those sort of simplistic remarks. Mr Ferry need not try that.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Sooner or later in this life you must make some decision. You cannot keep putting things off.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I have told the House when I will make a decision.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The water is always cold; just jump in.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Some people jump in too soon and sometimes the water is very cold when they jump in and they vanish.

I would like to take issue with some people who say that in 200 years we will have no jarrah forest anyway; so therefore we should go ahead. I am not talking here of members opposite but of some people in the community who say this. Perhaps some members of Parliament advocate it; but I am speaking particularly about those who voice that thought abroad. It seems to me we do not know what will happen with the jarrah forest in 100 years. In fact, in five, 10, or 20 years we may solve the problem of dieback in the jarrah forest.

Perhaps in some ways I cherish the jarrah forest more than people who were born here, because I grew up in a State where we had pine-wood as our building material, and also stringy bark, which is not bad. However, if one was really wealthy and wanted something first-class and could afford to pay for it, one imported at great expense jarrah from Western Australia. I came to Western Australia and found jarrah being used as stained flooring, as joinery material, and even burnt as firewood. I was quite devastated to see the casual way in which many native Western Australians regarded jarrah. Of course, many of them no longer regard it in that manner.

It would be interesting to see how many of the people who talk about saving our native jarrah forests have dining room tables made of jarrah.

We must not go too far one way or the other. Of course we want stands of virgin jarrah forest left; of course we want to use the timber; of course we want to preserve the timber; and of course we want development. However, I do not think we are quite in a position to make

the decision the Government has made. Therefore I think the Government has made a wrong decision and for that reason I am opposing the Bill at this stage.

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [5.39 p.m.]: As most members would no doubt realise, it is my intention to support the Bill. I am rather amazed at the opposition we see to the Bill in the Press, and by way of demonstrations; because if one bothers to carry out a little rather elementary research, if one bothers to read the second reading speech of the Minister, and if one bothers to read the Bill, one finds it is clear that the points which are being objected to have been very carefully covered.

We find a great deal of reference has been made to dieback, and this is used as an argument against proceeding with this amending agreement. Very little reference has been made by the Opposition to areas which have already been affected by dieback, with the exception of one area south of the Murray River.

We are told we should not proceed with any more bauxite mining or any expansion of the industry until a remedy has been found for dieback. It is true that considerable research is being carried out into dieback. It is true it has been found that the plant which is known as fire bush or fire weed produces an enzyme which attacks the dieback fungus. However, it would require a mighty lot of that plant to treat the whole of the jarrah forest area.

So we come to the proposition that we should simply wait until we find a cure for dieback. If we do not find a cure it means that we are just sitting back and waiting and doing nothing, and the forest will be destroyed, anyway. Forest which is destroyed in that manner may not be reafforested as is the case in the mined areas. We have problems now, and there have been problems in the past; but we are also having some successes in present endeavours to reforest this country. We have had some very promising results.

We are told by people who oppose the Bill that if the agreement is amended we will create problems in respect of water supplies to the metropolitan area. The people who make such assertions seem to be concerned not with the areas which we are considering mining in the near future, but with the areas which we are looking to protect in the immediate future and which will be moved into only when the problems have been adequately solved.

I mentioned a while ago that some elementary inquiries could answer the problems being posed by some people who are opposed to the Bill. In fact expert people who are examining this situation tell us not only will we obtain more water supplies for the metropolitan area by mining the western section of the scarp, but we will also improve the quality of the water supply as a result of the extra volume.

It is a red herring to argue what could happen in perhaps 10 or 20 years' time and to use that as a reason that we should not mine the several areas that are available at the moment.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Who are the experts?

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I would suggest Mr McKenzie has the same opportunities that I have to make inquiries from people who deal professionally in environmental matters.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: The experts I saw told me quite the opposite to what you have said.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: It is quite possible that the group of people with whom Mr McKenzie mixes have views which disagree with those of other experts. Wherever we find a person with one opinion, we will always find another person with the opposite opinion. However, we do not have to look very far for expert advice. We have only to go about one block from here to find some people actually working in the field who think that way about it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: On the one hand they think that way, and on the other hand they think this way.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I am not particularly concerned about the way Mr Dans wishes to wave his arms. The proposition we have arising from this is that perhaps in 15 or 20 years' time a problem may occur; therefore, because of that, we should do nothing now. The suggestion is we should deny the employment opportunities which will arise out of mining the safe areas. I could not accept this proposition, and I doubt whether people who are looking for jobs at the moment and who will be looking for jobs in the future will accept it, either.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: The safe areas probably will be mined out in 15 or 20 years if you allow this agreement to go on.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I refer the member who interjected to the Minister's second reading speech in which he spells out the repetitive research and reports which must be carried out during that period. As I said, those issues are well covered.

Let us have a look at Alcoa the company, and the people it employs. I had cause to say recently in the House that every community within my electorate has people from Alcoa living within it. That is a fact. If we look at the breakdown of Alcoa employees we find that 928 people are employed at the Pinjarra refinery, 242 at the Jarrahdale mine site, 1 198 at Kwinana, 188 at Del Park, 44 at the Medina office, 10 at the Perth exploration office, 92 at the Fremantle office and 8 at Bunbury, giving a total number of persons employed at Alcoa of 2 810.

With the exception of a few people, all these people would live either in or adjacent to my electorate. I could not say how many of the 10 employees working at the Perth exploration office live in my electorate, but it would be safe to assume a certain number of the 92 people working at Fremantle live in or adjacent to my electorate. I doubt very much whether any of the eight employees working at Bunbury would live in or around my electorate.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I do not represent an electorate; I represent a province, and a lot of people from Alcoa live in my province too.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: If the honourable member cared to listen he would have known that I said these people live either in or adjacent to my province. So, we can see that a very large percentage of those 2 810 people live either in or adjacent to the area I represent.

The total wage bill paid by Alcoa to its Western Australian employees in the year ended December, 1977, was \$35 million. That means a mighty amount of money is being paid to people who live either in or closely adjacent to the area I represent. It means a mighty lot of money is being spent in those areas. It means a lot of wives and children are being supported.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: They like the quality of life, too.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I am receiving stronger and stronger reactions from these people—

The Hon. R. Thompson: Because they are dissatisfied.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I thank the honourable member for his assistance; it is because they are extremely dissatisfied with the line being taken by the people opposing this Bill.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: But their jobs are not being affected. We have never said we want to take their jobs away.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: They are worried.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Why?

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: Because the people who group themselves in opposition to this Bill in actual fact are grouped with people who—

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: They are all extremists!

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I thank Mr Cooley for his interjection; I hope it has been recorded by the *Hansard* reporter. The people who oppose this Bill align themselves with those who are calling for a total moratorium on all bauxite mining. My constituents have expressed extreme concern that the Opposition party in the State Parliament is prepared to be numbered and aligned with these people—the same sort of people who opposed wood chipping, uranium mining—

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: They are probably the same people.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: Quite possibly. They have aligned themselves with those people who oppose any development whatsoever. The people I represent are concerned for their jobs and the future of their families; so am I, and so is the Government. There is no way on earth that we will be prepared to say, "Okay, we will put the project off for another nine months, then for another three years." In actual fact, we had Mr Hetherington suggesting the doubts would extend for the next 20 to 40 years.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is correct.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I put it to members opposite that as soon as the Government overcomes one objection, they would then ask us to delay the project for some other reason. They would say that some other aspect needed to be examined. We had Mr Claughton, when referring to a quote by the Premier, saying, "All the consequences of the expansion of bauxite mining spell disaster for Western Australia." If this is the thinking of members opposite now, there is no way they will be prepared to agree to the project in six or nine months.

My constituents are honest, hard-working people who have a right to be able to look forward to security. They should not be worried about groups of people who are calling for a moratorium on all bauxite mining. They should not have to worry about supposedly responsible people who align themselves with these groups. They want someone who is prepared to stand up and say, "We will support you in your jobs and in your future." I declare now that I am going to support those people in their jobs and their future, and I am going to support this Bill.

THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [5.51 p.m.]: I have spent a good many hours researching this question, because I believe it to be an extremely important one. I have read most, if not all, of the Press reports on the issue. I have read the agreements and the *Hansard* debates in the other place. I have read the reports of the four committees of the Australian Labor Party which made extensive inquiries into the matter, and I have read various other publications.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: After all that, you still are not prepared to make a decision.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Many statements have been made by the opponents of increased bauxite mining, and, of course, many counter-statements have been made by Government Ministers and company representatives who presented many facts and figures to support their case.

I have found it rather difficult to sift through all the figures relating to tonnages, hectares, work force, capital investment and economic viability, whether three hectares of forest will be destroyed for every one hectare mined, and so on.

However, despite the confusion which results from a reading of all these different figures, I am very concerned about the important principles involved in this entire issue. The Labor Party has considered it to be such a serious issue that four committees of the party have been meeting for hundreds of hours, seeking information from experts on both sides of the fence and, indeed, visiting the sites concerned.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: And you still have not made up your minds.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why were you so slow?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I will answer that sort of comment later in my speech; I do not propose to be waylaid at the moment.

As I said, the Labor Party considers this to be perhaps one of the most serious issues to come before this Parliament, and one which places a very grave responsibility on all members, because the decisions we make now could have very serious consequences on future generations of Western Australians.

Let us have a look at what is involved in this issue. I refer firstly to the political situation. Despite the fact that, prior to the 1974 State election Sir Charles Court made the rather rash statement that he could solve unemployment in this State within six months of getting back into office, and despite the very extravagant statement during the 1977 State election campaign

that this Government would create 100 000 jobs—according to Mr Grayden, they would be provided within 18 months of the election—we have at the moment the highest rate of unemployment since the depression years.

There is no doubt that we badly need jobs in this State. However, I hasten to add it should not be jobs at any price. We should not provide jobs simply because the Premier and certain Ministers made extravagant promises which they are finding difficult to fulfil, and they are desperately trying to save face.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do you think that is the reason we support this Bill?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: We will not allow ourselves to be stampeded into something which could result in an ecological disaster. What is the reason for this indecent haste? Why do we have to rush these Bills through at this particular point? Why cannot they be held over until the environmental reports are presented?

Although I was not aware of this point before I prepared my speech, my thoughts on the subject were confirmed by tonight's newspaper. I wish to refer now to an article written by John McIlwraith, who is a very responsible journalist, which appeared in *The Australian Financial Review* of the 6th March, 1978. The article is headed, "Green threat to North-West Shelf", and it tallies with what appears in tonight's newspaper, wherein the Minister for Industrial Development expressed fears that unless the Bills go through and the companies expand their bauxite operations, the North-West Shelf project is in some doubt.

Obviously, that is what is behind the Government's haste in pushing this Bill through the House. John McIlwraith wrote as follows—

So Alcoa's bauxite mining, the central issue in the environmental argument, has implications far beyond the forests in which it will take place.

He continues—

What has not been realised is that without them—

That is, the two new refineries. He continues—

—there is no justification for the building of a pipeline from the North-West Shelf to Perth, and this in turn would place that venture in jeopardy.

Contrary to an earlier belief that the Woodside group would be just as content to export all the gas produced from the fields, the local market is vital to the launching of the project.

Company spokesmen have said repeatedly in recent months that this market, which would absorb nearly a third of the fields' production, would be essential.

I think that might provide us with some sort of reason that the Government is anxious to rush these Bills through.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: What is new about that? That has been made public by the Minister.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Yes, but only this afternoon.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: No, in a speech the other day.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I did not see any reference to it. Certainly, I carefully studied the Minister's second reading speech in this House and it does not contain one reference to the importance of this proposal to the North-West Shelf gas project. If the expansion of bauxite mining is so vital to the development of the North-West Shelf, why are we not being told about it? Why did the Minister not mention it? I think that now the Government is midway through its term of office, it is desperate to deliver the goods. It cannot go on making rash promises about providing 100 000 jobs; it must appear to be doing something.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: It is prepared to make decisions, but you are not; you are simply sitting on the fence, that is all. You are a lot of fence sitters.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: As I said, many statements have appeared in the Press concerning this issue and, of course, many have come from the Premier. I wish to quote one such letter in which the Premier replied to a letter written by a Mr N. Segal. At the end of his letter, the Premier made a statement.

I would like members opposite to listen to the Premier's comments, which were as follows—

To announce fragments of policy before all the evidence has been gathered and the arguments assessed would be to indulge in the irresponsible gossip that so marks the vituperative outpourings of our opponents.

When the details are announced it will be seen that all the interests of the people of this State have been safeguarded.

Parliament and the people will then have ample time to comment on what is proposed.

By rushing through this legislation the Premier is doing precisely what he said in this letter; that is, he is being irresponsible. The Government is taking action before all the evidence is to hand

and before all the arguments have been assessed. I would like to quote the last part of the Premier's comments again, which were as follows—

Parliament and the people will then have ample time to comment on what is proposed. Is that all Parliament and the people are entitled to do—comment? Is this Government so arrogant and so convinced of its invincibility and power that it is prepared to pay no attention to Opposition arguments and any reasonable public opinion?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Don't you think we have had ample expression from the public?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Premier is saying that all we can do is to comment.

Sitting suspended from 6.02 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I believe before the tea suspension I was saying how important it is to allow the public to express an opinion and to be able to influence Government legislation which, in the public's opinion, is repugnant or dangerous. In this respect I refer to what happened during the term of office of the Tonkin Government. I am sure members will remember the very controversial Pacminex refinery question and the arguments about whether it should be allowed to operate in the Upper Swan area. When the Tonkin Government was in power it was very anxious to stimulate investment and industrial development in order to provide jobs for people. However, its attitude was that it would not do this at the expense of the environment and it took the only course open to it; it referred the matter to the Environmental Protection Authority. That authority examined all the aspects of the question and advised the Government that the refinery should not operate in the Upper Swan area.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What was the order of procedure? Can you remind the House of that?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: What has that got to do with it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think it is important. The agreement was signed and went through Parliament.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I believe this is quite irrelevant. The Tonkin Government could have proceeded with the establishment of the Pacminex refinery in the Upper Swan. It was prepared to listen and it was democratic enough to listen to public opinion. I remember that the late Fred White stood up in this Chamber and made a very impassioned speech against it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: But you are not suggesting that the ERMPs in this case will not be public documents, because they will be.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Environmental Protection Authority was very much against it. Mr MacKinnon does not like facts.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I love facts. I am referring to the order of things that happened.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It was not only the Pacminex refinery that involved environmental considerations, but there were other industrial development issues also that the Tonkin Government decided to examine in the light of ecological and environmental factors.

When I was looking for the Pacminex information I came across another couple of matters in my environmental file. One was a Press statement of the 13th September, 1973. It reads in part as follows—

A decision not to allow mineral beach sand mining near Augusta and in the Hardy Inlet pending a detailed ecological and economic study was announced jointly today by the Minister for Mines, Mr. Don May and the Minister for Environmental Protection, Mr. Ron Davies.

Mining claims will not be listed for hearing in the Mining Warden's Court until the study is completed and considered by the Environmental Protection Authority.

The following comments appear further on in the Press statement—

In its report tabled in Parliament today by Mr. May, the Authority said little was known about the ecology of Hardy Inlet and the possible effects of mining on it.

That was another question involving environmental considerations. Another example was dealt with in a Press statement dated the 2nd April, 1973. It reads as follows—

The State Government has refused applications for coal mining areas within the Fitzgerald River National Park.

Announcing this decision today the Premier, Mr. Tonkin, said that Cabinet had reached its decision after considering recommendations submitted by the Environmental Protection Authority.

As I have said, I submit those points to show that when the Labor Government was in office it was prepared to listen not only to public opinion but also to informed scientific information about the establishment of such projects and the effect they would have on the environment.

Members of the Government have done their best to denigrate people and organisations which have expressed doubts and fears about the expansion of bauxite mining. When one hears some of the members of this Chamber speaking, one would think it is the Labor Party only which is opposed to bauxite mining and that all responsible people in the community are in favour of it. However, let us have a look at some of the organisations which have expressed very grave doubts and fears about this legislation.

The people involved in the Campaign to Save Native Forests have put a great deal of time and effort into this question. They are people with no vested interests, apart from a very deep concern to ensure that our unique jarrah forest is not destroyed. They are concerned also about the environment generally. They are concerned that irreversible destruction of the environment or of water supplies does not occur.

The same situation could apply to other organisations such as the Tree Society. The people who belong to those organisations have no particular vested interests apart from their deep concern about our environment.

Of course, we are all aware of the CSIRO environmental research journal *Ecos*. An article appeared in that journal which stated that increased bauxite mining could damage our water supplies and spread dieback. Then we have the comments of the Australian Conservation Foundation. An article appeared in *The West Australian* of the 25th April under the heading "Deferment on bauxite sought" and it reads as follows—

The Australian Conservation Foundation yesterday called on the WA Government to defer legislation to expand bauxite mining until an assessment of the project's environmental impact had been concluded.

Further on the article refers to the director of the foundation, Dr Mosley, as having made the following statement—

The great haste in which the legislation was being pushed through and the lack of any procedure for public participation were sure signs that the companies and the Government had a poor case.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Which of the organisations is the one Mr Munday was involved in?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: There is concern that the jarrah forests and our water supplies are threatened.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Would you answer this question: Do you believe that those environmental studies should continue during the course of the project? Are you in agreement with a continuing inquiry as the project proceeds?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I believe that point has already been answered by Mr Hetherington and Mr Claughton when they referred to the very great danger of allowing industry to build up and then finding itself reaching the situation where it has to be scaled down because of the threats to the environment, and the difficulty of achieving this because of the consequent loss of jobs which is involved.

To continue what I was saying about the organisations in the community the thinking of which is in line with that of the ALP, another group, which is a responsible organisation, is the Institute of Foresters. In *The West Australian* of the 26th April, was the following—

Foresters Hit Bauxite Plan

Professional foresters came out yesterday against WA Government plans to allow bauxite mining to be expanded in the Darling Range.

The WA division of the Institute of Foresters said that the risks were too great and the consequences too serious.

The institute is the professional body representing foresters in Australia. More than 90 per cent of its 1 000 members work for the State and Commonwealth Governments.

The article goes on to refer to the threat to our water supplies, our forests, pollution, and so on.

The National Country Party, a member of the coalition Government, is against the expansion. The State Council of the National Country Party wants no further expansion of bauxite mining in Western Australia until doubts have been cleared up about effective reafforestation. In the Press of the 11th April was the following—

The council's recommendations to its Parliamentary members are that:

- No further expansion of open-cut bauxite mining should be permitted or new leases allocated till it has been proved satisfactorily that a jarrah forest can be reconstituted in mining and mine-affected areas equal to that which existed before mining operations like those at Jarrahdale.

- The NCP would be prepared to consider an exchange of leases involving proposed mining sites at Jarrahdale for areas of bauxite deposits under poorer quality jarrah forests, having a minimal effect on water catchments.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Have you the statement by the foresters which was made after the position had been explained to them?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: As I have said the ALP has met for many hours interviewing experts from both sides and subsequently it issued a statement to the Press. As it is rather lengthy I will not quote it all, but I think I should read the policy in respect of this particular Bill, because it explains the position in a nutshell. I will not refer to Alwest, because we are dealing with Alcoa at the moment. The ALP's attitude is as follows—

... in respect of the proposed expanded development in the Darling Range by Alcoa, a Royal Commission should be held into the economic, social and environmental advantages and disadvantages of the proposal. The project should be deferred until the Royal Commission has reported. If the Government will not agree to this, we will oppose the legislation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What was the voting on that? Pretty close?

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Unanimous.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: That is none of the Minister's business. When he starts telling us about the voting in his party we will tell him about the voting in ours.

I quote these references to prove that it is not only the ALP which is expressing doubts about the legislation, but also other responsible people and organisations in the community who agree that the matter should be deferred or delayed until more is known.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: How long would that be?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I do not have to canvass the reasons for their concern. Members have all read the reports and are aware of the problems.

However, I want to stress the important factors. Firstly, I will deal with the forests. Bauxite is one of the most common minerals in the world. It is found not only in other countries, but also in other parts of Western Australia. This cannot be said about the jarrah forest, because that is unique in the world, and once it is gone it is gone forever.

The other vital factor is water, and there are two aspects involved in this subject. Firstly, we received staggering news yesterday in answer to a question asked of the Minister for Water Supplies that over the past 12 months Alcoa had

used five million kilolitres of public water. I know Mr MacKinnon will get smart and ask me how many gallons that represents, so I am ready for him.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: He will not ask you now.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You will be very disappointed.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It represents 1 000 million gallons. How much more will be used when the industry is stepped up by Alcoa and the new industry is established by Alwest?

Secondly, of course, no-one—certainly no responsible scientist—is prepared to give any guarantee that should the mining be extended into the eastern zone of the Darling Range it will be possible to prevent higher salinity of our water. Some figures were quoted to me tonight and they reveal that only 6 per cent of the State of Western Australia is covered by forest, 90 per cent of the State's population lives within close proximity to that forest, and 80 per cent of the water supplies of those people comes from that area. What will happen at the end of the century when we reach a population of two million and they are all drawing on the same area for their water supplies? I ask members to stop and think about that for a while.

Surely all these people about whom I have been speaking and all the people whose lives and whose children's lives will be affected are entitled to be heard by the Government. Instead of just being able to make a comment, they should be able to make a real contribution before a Royal Commission and not be subjected to abuse in the Press merely because they are expressing deep concern. Mr Ferry said he had received no letters expressing opposition to the legislation.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: He does not receive letters about anything.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I can say that the only letters I have received on the legislation have been very strongly opposed to it.

I believe that the widespread concern in the community expressed by the ALP and responsible people generally is justified. Mr Masters said that we have to make the decision now, and Mr MacKinnon made some silly statement about jumping into the water.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are crediting me with all sorts of things I did not say.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Minister made a facetious statement about jumping into the water.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I suggested you should make a decision along the way now and again.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We do—very responsible ones.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Minister made some facetious comment about jumping into the water. I do not know the exact words he used.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You should not quote them then, should you?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: They were rather silly.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If you quote someone, at least be accurate. We forgive you a lot because you are a lady, but you should be accurate.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: This is a serious subject and the Minister was facetious.

Too often tragedy occurs because of ignorance, and too often people scoff at others who urge caution or express concern about matters. Only last night the Leader of the House thought it was rather amusing when I asked a question about the potential health dangers of the asbestos in brake linings.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is because brake lining is old fashioned and is rapidly going out of use anyway.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: My information is that brake linings still have asbestos fibre in them, but I will not enter into an argument about that subject. I use it as an analogy to the present situation. In recent months we have learnt of the real horrors which have resulted for those people who have been involved in the blue asbestos industry.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: We knew that 10 years ago.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: No doubt, when the blue asbestos mine commenced operations in the 1940s everybody was very excited about it. It provided jobs, and made a contribution to the economy of the State. I believe that some 300 or 400 people were employed in the mine.

I have done some research through *Hansard* to see whether I could find any comment in Parliament on that particular mine. I came up with some very interesting references.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Miss Elliott, I wonder whether you would do me a favour and go back to the figures you quoted with regard to the use of water by Alcoa. I am sure the usage was 1 per cent of the two dams—Serpentine Dam and Wellington Dam.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The figure was 1 000 million gallons.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is 1 per cent only of the capacity of the two dams; that is a very small quantity.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Coming back to the analogy I was mentioning, I intend to show how ignorance can cause tragedies. As I said earlier, I did some research through *Hansard* and I came up, firstly, with a question asked by Mr Bickerton in 1960. The question was asked of the then Minister and it concerned the blue asbestos leases at Wittenoom. The question in part was—

Is his Government encouraging their establishment; and if so, how?

The question concerned the companies involved in blue asbestos mining. The answer was—

The Government is anxious to encourage investment in the mining industry generally; and, in this case, is so doing by granting of reserves and mineral claims as above.

Other questions were asked in 1961 and 1962 which indicated some evidence was starting to come to light concerning the terrible danger to the health of the men who worked in the mine. In 1962 figures were quoted in the Legislative Assembly showing that there had been some 14 cases of asbestosis. They were only the known cases.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What has this to do with bauxite?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It has a lot to do with the mining of bauxite. The very point of our argument is that we should not be rushing headlong into something which could end in disaster. I submit that the Governments of the past—and we were probably just as much to blame as Governments of another political colour—were anxious to get development of mining. However, at that time there was no evidence available, and no knowledge of the serious dangers to the men who worked in the blue asbestos mine.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Now that you know about the problem of brake drums, do you suggest we cut out brakes?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: This is a serious subject; I am talking about men who have died from the effects of asbestos.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think the rest of us are talking about bauxite mining.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Ministers should not be facetious. You, Mr Deputy President, referred to the Opposition as "prophets of doom". I believe that was your term.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Very apt.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The question of asbestos mining is relevant to this debate. In *The Bulletin* of the 6th July, 1974—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The honourable member should be careful. Mr Dans will be cross if he finds out you have been reading *The Bulletin*.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: All of us on this side are very widely read!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In *The Bulletin* of that date there appeared an article on the effect of the asbestos on the men working in the mine. In part, the article read—

In 1958 the first inevitable case of asbestosis was diagnosed there and two years later a laborer died from mesothelioma.

The article states further—

The case was diagnosed by Dr Jim McNulty, then a chest physician with the Health Commission, who is now director of public health for the State. From then on he was a tireless critic of the way that CSR operated their mine.

I ask members to listen to these further comments in the same article—

In hindsight Dr McNulty is not at all sure that he did all that he could. "We were like Cassandra crying that dire results would follow—and nobody listens to people who wail about sad things that are going to happen in the future."

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It is the Labor Party which is the Cassandra of this Parliament, and it has been for many years.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Being a well read man, you would know, of course!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: More recently, in February of this year, a great deal of publicity appeared in the Press about this terrible disease of asbestosis. An article published in the Press on the 18th February read—

Medical research workers in the WA University department of medicine will try to trace thousands of former workers on the Australian Blue Asbestos mine at Wittenoom to obtain a record of asbestos-caused diseases.

The article also refers to the fact that 6 577 people were employed at the mine between 1943 and 1968.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What fibre content is there in bauxite?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I suggest the honourable member should return to the subject of bauxite. She has had fairly generous licence.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Members opposite cannot see the analogy I am trying to draw. In the case of asbestos, people rushed in and developed the mine without a full knowledge of the effects, and ignorant of what the development of the mine meant to the lives of people. In the same article to which I have been referring it was stated—

Twenty-four workers had developed mesothelioma—a previously rare form of cancer . . .

There was no known cure for it.

There was no known cure for mesothelioma, and the very point I want to make is that there is no known cure for dieback.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We have now switched to health hazards.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Although dieback does not cause lung cancer, it does cause the death of our forests. That is the point I am trying to make.

When the first alumina agreement was signed in 1961 the cause of dieback was not known. Dieback was not identified until 1965, and in that time irreparable damage had been done to our forests, not only as a result of the mining, but also by the Forests Department because of the lack of knowledge with regard to the cause of the disease.

Mr Pratt made a statement about the honest working people in his area for whom he wanted to do something. I agree that a job is extremely important to a person, particularly to a man out of work when he has a family to support. However, I wonder how many of those workers from the Wittenoom mine, who are now dying of lung cancer or mesothelioma, would accept that same job again if it were offered to them. I would be prepared to bet they would not touch that type of job with a 40-foot pole.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt interjected.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The member does not understand what I am saying.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Yes I do, but what you have stated is different from what I said.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I make the analogy that the people in the province represented by Mr Pratt will be affected if this area is extended as envisaged. They might have a job to do in that particular area, but what happens if in 20

years' time we reach the stage where our water supplies are in danger? Not only will they lose their jobs but many other people will lose their jobs too.

Once these Bills go through Parliament the opportunity for public debate will be lost, and in the interests of the forest, the water supply, and democracy I ask the Government to agree to delay this legislation.

THE HON. W. M. PIESSE (Lower Central [8.01 p.m.]): I support the Bill. I would not do so if it allowed for unrestricted mining in the intermediate and eastern zones of the Darling Scarp, but I have been assured safeguards are built into the legislation so that there will be a period of at least 15, 20 or perhaps 25 years before any mining takes place in what is considered to be the dangerous area.

I have listened to the many and various reasons that have been brought forward in an attempt to delay the passage of the Bill, and I am amazed at some of them. I am amazed at the Hon. Roy Claughton saying we have to be very careful about passing the Bill in case people lose their jobs in 15 years' time. I know people in this State at this moment who would be glad to have a job for a month. If they had a job for 15 years they would really be pleased. So I do not see any substance in that argument.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott quoted a report which stated that the National Country Party was of the opinion that there should be a moratorium on bauxite mining. I am not of that opinion.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: It was a Press report.

The Hon. W. M. PIESSE: It was a Press report. We do allow freedom of speech throughout the whole of the National Country Party.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: But that is the party's policy.

The Hon. W. M. PIESSE: No, that is not the party's policy. We allow freedom of speech and people sometimes make statements which are not binding on the whole party.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. W. M. PIESSE: We have policies on many things. We have a policy in relation to decentralisation, for instance. I am digressing a little, but the Hon. Lyla Elliott was allowed a fair amount of licence. As I drive to Parliament House I see stickers on the backs of cars saying, "Stop bauxite mining", "Stop uranium", "Stop wood chips", and so on. All those activities are associated with decentralisation in country areas.

I point out to the Hon. Lyla Elliott, who feels some anxiety about what we will do if the population reaches two million, that if we do not engage in some of these activities she need not worry because the population will not reach two million. We must all have something to live on.

I want to touch briefly on some of the more relevant matters which have been brought to light in relation to bauxite mining. One is the fear of increased salinity of the water supplies. I have been to look at the Alcoa project. I have had a look at the reafforestation. I was in the area the day after cyclone "Alby" went through, and I observed two pine trees which had been blown down during the cyclone. I travelled fairly extensively throughout the reafforestation area and I did not see any other trees which had been blown down during the cyclone. I think that was a fair test on wind damage.

This State does have a peculiar problem in relation to salinity, there is no doubt about that; but I believe serious work has been done in the last few years in relation to containing and averting the problem of salinity throughout many of the farming areas, and the work being done in the bauxite mining area is to be commended.

It is true mistakes have been made. It is true knowledge was not sufficiently great in the first instance and some of the trial plots were a failure. It is also true that some of the types of trees which were planted, such as tallow-wood, were not satisfactory. However, some of the trees which have been planted in the last seven to 10 years are making good progress. I have great hopes that our departments will get on with the job of making more and deeper investigations, and I am quite sure they will make good progress.

Another matter which has been brought to light is anxiety over the loss of our jarrah trees. This has concerned me very much because I do not like to think we are in danger of losing something which is peculiar to Western Australia and which grows nowhere else in the world. However, there is no doubt that we are in danger of losing it with or without bauxite mining. One of the reasons we are in danger of losing it is *phytophthora cinnamomi*, and another is the manner in which the Forests Department has been handling the protective burning.

I am not one to criticise foresters. They are sincere and dedicated people. However, I believe their activities have proved that spring burning of the jarrah forest for protective reasons is not the best method. Spring burning creates a warm, moist temperature, and the upshot is that the small

undergrowth plants, which are so necessary to keep the floor of the forest cool, are scorched in the spring; they have to face a very hot summer, and they die.

The only way to avert that is to have a hot autumn burn. It is true it would be associated with great danger to surrounding areas, but in this day and age when we have so much more knowledge of fire-fighting equipment and methods of controlling fires, I believe the Forests Department should look more seriously at carrying out the protective burning at a more natural time for the forest. By that I mean that nature itself seldom sets off a spring burn, but I know from what I have read that autumn and early winter burns were fairly common in the natural forest. I have not heard any complaints about this up to date but I think we have been very remiss in this respect.

Another factor is the regeneration of the prickly Moses and acacias, which require a very hot fire to make the seeds germinate. An alteration in the management of the forests could be beneficial in stopping the spread of *phytophthora cinnamomi*.

The loss of the ecological system in the natural forest is a very serious matter. We must realise this is something which will disappear. I doubt whether we have any pure ecological areas left in this State. There may be some in the Kimberley or in the centre of the State, and perhaps there are some at the very bottom end of the State where there is still wilderness; I do not know. However, I do know that every time a human walks through a forest he upsets the ecological system, and there is no way to avoid that.

We must be realistic. The loss of the ecological areas is sad, but at the same time in no way can we go back to having a Garden of Eden. So we must take whatever measures we can to protect what is left of the ecological system in areas where it is practical to do so, and I do not think they include the western slopes of the Darling Scarp.

I appreciate the fact that even with the passage of these Bills ecological studies still have to be undertaken and reports made. That is extremely important. I do not see that we would gain any advantage by delaying the Bills at this stage.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You'll get on with the Government!

The Hon. W. M. PIESSE: In my opinion it is the reports from now on that will be of the utmost importance. The reports presently with the

printer will give us some information, that is true, but not sufficient information to cover the whole 20-year period.

I do not wish to delay the House any further. I do wish to see more decentralisation and some further development in my area. I am aware of the dangers in the intermediate and eastern zones of the Darling scarp. However, I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. T. LEESON (South-East) [8.11 p.m.]: I want to support the Bill with some reservations. As I come from a mining town, I believe some of the problems related to the mining of bauxite at the present time are following a trend that has been shown throughout Western Australia and in other parts of the globe. I touched on this subject a little while ago during the Address-in-Reply debate, and particularly on what is happening in the north-west and the eastern goldfields at the present time. No matter what we mine today, unless we have some stability in the industry we will have more and more problems.

Members of this House are aware of the problems I have in my area, which have been apparent at different times for many years. Members representing areas where mining takes place have to come before the Parliament to ask for support when an industry is on the downturn. Of course, we are all smiling when it is on the upturn.

These Bills are before Parliament at the present time because alumina is fetching a high price. It is understandable that companies want to move in to try to obtain the best profit they can. No Bills are presently before the House to ratify agreements to mine nickel, iron ore, or other minerals, because the prices for these are at rock bottom.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If they were, you would not oppose them?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I certainly would not oppose them.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Surely you are not going to oppose this?

The Hon. R. G. Pike: He said he did not oppose it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Oh, good.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: He likes to rush in.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: As I said, we must bring back some stability to the mining industry, and I am referring to mining in general. Very soon Governments, and particularly the Federal Government, must look at methods to stabilise the mining industry. With the alumina industry as it is today and with such high prices being paid

for the product, the Government should set a price for the products and then any extra amount received could be set aside for the bad days.

I am sure many members here, and particularly those representing metropolitan provinces, must get sick and tired of country members asking continually for assistance when these bad days come.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: No, we don't.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I am glad about that because sometimes we feel we are putting on the same old gramophone record, but unfortunately that is what we have to do because of the types of industries in our provinces and, therefore, the people we represent.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Well said.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Many members probably do not understand the situation with the mining industry. People's hopes are so high when an industry starts operating, and then almost overnight, it seems, an announcement is made that half the work force will be sacked. The Hon. Win Piesse said she would like people in her electorate to know that they have a job for the next 15 years. I go along with that viewpoint because we have had to worry about job opportunities in my area for many years. That is the way mining is, but it is very disheartening, particularly when the 15-year period—or whatever the time limit is—is up. Many people become very dependent on this industry. A man brings his family up in a mining town, and the whole family knows nothing but mining. Then all of a sudden, the door is closed behind him and the family has nowhere to go.

Looking back over the history of mining in Western Australia, in the old mining towns people lived for the present day and not for the future. Therefore, they did not put much money aside. Times are changing somewhat, but we still have problems, particularly in my area—I do not know about the metropolitan area.

With alumina, as with the mining of all other minerals, we must aim for some sort of stability. I know members opposite will disagree with me, but I hope within 20 years they will have other ideas. Unfortunately some members never will. In the future it will not only be members like myself from the goldfields who stand up here every 12 months or two years seeking assistance for their area, but this role will fall to representatives of metropolitan electorates as well, because mining is now on their back doorstep, as it were.

Naturally the other problem I am concerned about in relation to bauxite mining is the water situation. The goldfields is a large arid area and

it would never have been developed without a comprehensive water supply scheme. We are absolutely reliant on the water pumped up to us. Because of the dry seasons for the last three or four years, people are starting to realise how desperate things are. If this state of affairs continues, we will not be able to water our gardens at all. Residents of the goldfields have no alternative; there is no bore water to supplement scheme water. So we rely heavily on water supplies from the metropolitan area.

I do not think the Government has done all it can to assure the future of our water supplies. It does not matter what the industry is, without water there is no industry. When I read of the large sums of money which will be spent to pipe natural gas from the North-West Shelf to the metropolitan area, I cannot help thinking that perhaps the first pipes should be laid to carry water. It will not matter how much liquid gas is pumped here; without water the gas will be of no use to us. For these reasons many people in my area are very concerned about what is happening here. As I said previously, I hope this gamble—and I regard it as a gamble—comes off. If it does not we will rue the day we ever opened up more areas in this State for bauxite mining.

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East) [8.20 p.m.]: Mr President, this Bill is for an Act to ratify an agreement between the State of Western Australia and Alcoa of Australia for the purpose of the establishment of an alumina refinery at Wagerup. Let me say first of all that I support the Bill, and I support it wholeheartedly. I have no reservations about the measure.

When I say I have no reservations about the measure, I am sure all environmental studies and safeguards will be carried out. I am very concerned about the unemployment in Western Australia, and particularly about unemployment on the goldfields. If one is concerned about unemployment one must therefore support this Bill, because it will provide employment for many people.

I have studied the measure from the mining point of view, and I can see no harm in it at all. Bauxite is a type of lateritic deposit which has evolved from rock as a result of chemical action. The mining will not be deep or open-cut mining, but will be only shallow.

I have tried to envisage what health hazards may be involved. Perhaps one hazard could be loss of hearing from machinery noise, but then if earmuffs are worn and correct precautions taken that should not be a hazard. I have considered the matter of dust. Again, mining is to

be carried out in an open-cut fashion and therefore there will not be huge concentrations of dust. If the mining procedures are properly monitored and sampling is carried out I cannot see any harm arising from dust.

The only possible difficulty I can see—and I am not an authority on this—is the development of White hand syndrome, which is caused by the vibration of machinery. I do not know what type of machinery will be used in this mining, so I cannot say whether White hand syndrome will be a health hazard.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Isn't it caused only by heavily vibrating drill type equipment?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: Not necessarily. It can be caused by the shaking and vibrating of a vehicle, which causes a type of arthritis. I have read something about this lately, and it is a matter we will have to monitor. I will be asking a few questions on the matter as time goes by.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is a new one on me.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I am not impressed by the groups of people who are opposed to this project and who try to use the Labor Party. The Labor Party has a long history of being used by people when it suits them and is to their advantage; and when they have got what they want they later turn down the party.

I am afraid I cannot agree with my colleague, the Hon. Lyla Elliott, about asbestos.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I was only drawing an analogy; I was not suggesting it would be a danger there.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I cannot even see the analogy.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That makes two of us.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It makes three; Mr Tozer can't, either.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: Asbestosis is caused by crocidolite or long asbestos fibres which attack the lungs; and I cannot see any fibres in bauxite. Bauxite is a type of laterite which is mined and crushed and the alumina is extracted as a white powder and then smelted to aluminium. Let me point out that I would be the first to scream if I thought there could be a health hazard involved in this mining.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I was not suggesting there would be a health problem in mining it.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: Miss Elliott can say what she likes; I can see nothing to suggest any health hazard.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There is nothing to suggest silicosis, either.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I am very concerned about the job opportunities this project will provide—the job opportunities during the construction phases, and the job opportunities when the project is a going concern.

My background in mining tells me that when any type of mining industry is thriving it builds up the area in which it is being carried on, especially in the outback. A thriving mining industry is the greatest springboard to attract men to an area, and it is the best industry I know to solve the problem of decentralisation.

I have mined coal, clay, iron pyrites and gold; so I think I know a little about mining. My only wish is that a project like this could be commenced on the goldfields.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We all agree with you; we would give our back teeth to take something like this into your area.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I would like to see a project that would employ the 1 100 men who are unemployed on the goldfields. As one who has suffered unemployment I am aware it creates a certain trauma that always sticks with one. I have jumped trains, I have slept on top of wheat stacks, cut wood behind bakers' shops, and done all sorts of work for a feed; so I know what it is to be unemployed. The unemployed people have my sympathy, and I will do anything I can for them. It is for that reason I support the Bill.

I was a Cabinet Minister in the Tonkin Government; and in 1972 and 1973 we supported bauxite mining. We discussed possible health hazards and we were satisfied they could be overcome. Having supported the industry in 1972 and again in 1973, my conscience would not allow me to do anything other than support this measure. We demanded safeguards then, just as the Government is demanding safeguards now; and I hope they will be stringently monitored so that workers will be properly looked after and the quality of our water supply will be safeguarded.

I am aware there are problems of salt in catchment areas, but we are faced with problems everywhere. We have had the problem of salt in Western Australia for a long time in the agricultural

areas, and there are ways and means of overcoming it, although not completely. That is a problem we still have to solve.

The problem of dieback is a scientific one and the scientists will have to come up with something to kill that fungus. I read recently that scientists have had a certain amount of success with lime, but I do not know whether or not that will assist the situation.

Another matter of concern to me is that I do not think the trade union movement has made up its mind on this matter yet. I heard today on the midday news that the Trades and Labor Council is divided on the matter and will make a decision on it next week. I do not criticise the TLC on that point, because many unions are involved.

I could point out many more things, but I do not think that will help. I have stated my feelings on the matter, and I will vote for the Bill. I only wish the project were to be established on the goldfields.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have said it before, and I will say it again: You are a man of courage, Mr Stubbs.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Yes, he is a man of courage.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [8.29 p.m.]: Like the previous two speakers, I intend to support the Bill. I think the best contribution I have heard in this debate so far was that made by the Hon. Win Piesse. She expressed the position correctly, and I agree 100 per cent with the sentiments she expressed. I do not know just what the Opposition is asking for. We have heard a suggestion that a Royal Commission should be appointed to examine the reports when they are brought down.

Anyone with any experience of Royal Commissions would know they are a waste of time and money because of what occurs in this Parliament once the reports are received. Mr Deputy President, I am sure you would recall the motion moved some years ago by Mr Withers for a Select Committee to inquire into the welfare of Aborigines. I was the responsible Minister at the time, and eventually it was moved in another place to establish a Royal Commission. I had to search Australia to obtain the services of Judge Furnell, who did an excellent job. It was the longest and most costly Royal Commission ever conducted in Western Australia.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I did not move for the Royal Commission.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, the Hon. Bill Withers moved for a Select Committee. He wanted to run around, interfering with Aboriginal welfare. I did not think he was capable of doing it, so I had a Royal Commission appointed—a body which would have some balance, which would know what it was doing, and which would do the job properly. As a result of this move, we had a very thorough Royal Commission into Aboriginal welfare. Then, of course, the Government changed; I do not think the report of the Royal Commission has even been read by those responsible in government.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: I have read it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Mr Tozer is not responsible in government.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: It was read all right.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The same applies to the bauxite mining inquiries. What would happen if we waited for the reports to come forward? What would happen if we established a Royal Commission into the matter? The Royal Commission would sit for some time and its report eventually would be tabled in Parliament. It would be haggled over for another 12 months after which the Government would still do exactly as it liked.

The second reading speech of the Minister for Industrial Development reveals that for the first time we are seeing real sincerity on the part of the Government towards environmental matters. It was not until 1973 when the Worsley agreement was introduced for acceptance—not for ratification; I will mention that later—by Parliament that any Bill showed a sincere concern for the environment. In this light, it was heartening to read the following comment in the Minister's second reading speech—

Finally, I would make the point that this legislation has been framed to put the Government in complete command of all facets of bauxite mining and alumina production but with particular emphasis on the environmental aspects.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Thank you for recognising that point; nobody else has emphasised it as you have.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Minister's second reading speech continued—

I can earnestly and sincerely assure all members of this House that the utmost consideration and thought has been given by the Government and the officers of the relevant

departments involved in the negotiation of this agreement to all the provisions contained therein.

He goes on to say—

It is with every confidence that I assert that the Government believes the agreement provides both adequate and sensible safeguards for the protection and management of the environment at the same time setting the framework for the extension of this most valuable industry and I therefore commend the Bill to the House.

I have been a member of Parliament for a fair while and I have never known a Liberal Government to put anything like that in a second reading speech. I think for the first time the Government is being most explanatory in dealing with a Bill of this nature, and I believe the amendments contained in the legislation provide sufficient safeguards for the environment.

I am sure the Government is aware it is not on easy street in regard to environmental matters and that it will lose all credibility if it does not act in the public interest. Of course, the "public interest" means our jarrah forests and water supplies.

I know that when the Worsley agreement comes before this House there will be considerable argument about the salinity levels which have built up around that area over the last few years, due to the clearing of the forest. In this connection, I should like some of the members from the area to tell us about the problem. I trust that the dieback disease can be cured or confined to only small areas, and that our jarrah forests can be restored.

One criticism I should like to direct to the Government is that a Bill of this nature is really a signed and sealed document. Let us face it: It was signed, from memory, on the 18th April.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Subject to ratification by Parliament.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It has been brought here for ratification. At least the Tonkin Labor Government had the decency in 1973 to submit an agreement for the acceptance of Parliament before it was signed. However, that is the only difference I see in the two methods of presentation.

I do not think it would make any difference whatever to the outcome of Alcoa's new refinery if we had all these reports. Alcoa has been located within my province since its inception, and has always been a most responsible company.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Quite right.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I realise it had teething troubles when it first commenced operations in Western Australia. I spent a lot of my own money when the company was pumping effluent into Cockburn Sound. However, that was mainly because of untrained staff and not having the necessary engineering skills in a new plant.

We do not hear complaints about Alcoa now, although when it commenced operations we used to receive numerous complaints about the alumina—the end product—blowing into the Naval Base area. In the early years we had caustic blowouts and leakages, but these problems have been resolved, because the two agents causing the nuisance were the most expensive part of the operation. One was alumina, which is the end product of the whole process, and the other was caustic, which is the bleaching agent for alumina. It was in the company's interests to resolve these difficulties, and it has done so quite efficiently.

Members may recall a study was undertaken by the Tonkin Labor Government of what was known as the Jervoise Bay-Naval Base area with a view to turning the large strip of vacant land between Russell Road and Alcoa into housing land. The study came up trumps, and the area was found to be suitable for residential development. However, there was a change of Government and it now appears the Government has earmarked the land for industry.

My son has a caravan at the caravan park right next to the Alcoa operation. He has not been in this caravan since Easter, and I am sure nobody else has been in the caravan either. I guarantee that any member, who is prepared to go down there and inspect the caravan, will not find half a teaspoonful of dust. It just is not a problem, because it does not come.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Nor does the grain dust, either!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, that is true. The only pollution which is falling around the Cockburn area emanates from the State Energy Commission's Kwinana plant. The powerhouse is the biggest air polluter in the Kwinana region.

I compliment Alcoa on the way it has established its refinery. It has spent millions of dollars rectifying its mistakes. It is an efficient company, and when there is a problem it acts quickly. I have not been through the plant for some six or seven years, so I have had no contact with Alcoa.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This is very good news to hear from you; it is excellent.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have said previously in this House that this company is trying to do the right thing, and as far as I am concerned it has done.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: It spends a lot of money helping the communities, too.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: We are not dealing with that. It has a vested interest in the community because of the gifts it makes to the community and the Liberal Party. I might add that it does not give anything to the Independent member, although I am not asking for anything!

As the Conservator of Forests has been mentioned in the debate tonight, I should like to say that if one refers back to the principal Act one sees that the Conservator of Forests has quite a large say about which areas can be mined.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Quite rightly.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Quite rightly. If he has any doubts about the action of the company he has power under the original agreement to take action. I read in the Press that it appears he had some qualified doubts on the matter after the news release from the Institute of Foresters of Australia, but if he has doubts he has had sufficient time to take action to ensure that the company conforms.

Just because I have said that this is a good company, we should not relax, because it is our heritage that is at stake. Who knows whether the alumina market will dry up tomorrow as happened with regard to nickel, gold, and other base metals. If there is overproduction naturally there will be dismissals.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Bite your tongue.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That stops it from coming true.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is something we cannot foresee. The company is taking the risk with regard to capital outlay, but it is our duty as legislators and members of the public to ensure that the Government is kept on its toes to ensure that the company does the right thing. I support the Bill.

THE HON. F. E. MCKENZIE (East Metropolitan) [8.42 p.m.]: I oppose the Bill and in doing so I wish to clear up some misunderstandings that may have occurred during the debate. Firstly, the Labor Party did not lightly make the decision to oppose the Bill and in fact is very concerned about the jobs of the people who are employed in the bauxite mining industry. At no

stage have we suggested that the current operations be terminated. What we are saying is that because there are so many unknown quantities in respect of the expansion that is planned, we ought to halt for a little while—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: When you say it was not taken lightly, what was the vote?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I shall not tell the Leader of the House what the vote was. Since I have been a member of this place he has never told me what the vote was in his party room and until he does I do not intend to tell him.

I attended many of these study groups which took place over a long period. We looked at the matter very responsibly because we were concerned about providing employment for people but we did not want to provide that employment when problems might eventuate in the future.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is the decision you made last week?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Never mind about the decision we made last week. We undertook comprehensive studies into the matter. We decided we wanted to hear more about it and we thought the Government would bring down these other reports to clarify the situation before it went ahead with this legislation. That is the whole problem. For the life of me I cannot understand why we cannot wait until the next part of this session of Parliament.

Not only the legislators but also the people outside are confused about the issue and worried about the future; and there has been quite a lot of controversy in the newspaper about the haste the Government has displayed in embarking upon this exercise.

One of the points raised in the studies was the question of dieback disease, and it is true that at present there is no known solution to the problem. One of the doctors involved in these studies said to us, "We are optimistic about a solution in the future, but if you take away—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What was he a doctor of?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I do not know, but let us say he was a doctor skilled in the field of forestry.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is not good enough. You are quoting him. What was his field of expertise? He might have been an entomologist and therefore have no competence to say anything about microbiology.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The Leader of the House is asking me to give his name so that he can be singled out for some treatment by the

department. I am not going to give his name; the Minister can either believe me or not. I shall not breach his confidence, but he did say this to me. The Hon. Lyla Elliott has reminded me that when the Hon. Ian Pratt was speaking I asked him the name of the expert who spoke to him and he did not tell me.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member direct his comments to the Chair and refrain from provoking interjections.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I shall try to do that, although I do not believe I am provoking interjections. We were told that the scientists were optimistic about finding a solution. This gentleman said to me—and I wonder whether members have thought of this problem—that there will be no hope of finding a solution when the forests have gone. While they exist a solution may be found, but if we have no jarrah forests there will be nothing to save.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: When they are gone for what reason—from bauxite mining or from *phytophthora cinnamomi*?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: When they have gone because of bauxite mining. The problem here is that because the Government, by this agreement, is expanding mining more forest will be taken away and the period during which the bauxite will remain in the ground will be reduced. If the Government were setting up an industry which would live by regeneration, I could understand it. But when the bauxite is gone what will happen to all those people who will be employed as a result of the expanding industry?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: With all the kindness I can muster can I suggest that you stick to railways.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I told the Leader of the House previously that I was diversifying, and this is another area I have gone into. I am very interested in these questions. It has not been easy for me to oppose this Bill because of the fact that the railways will be on the up and up as a result of this legislation.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are much more impressive when you talk about railways.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I should like to be talking about the railway from Mullewa to Meekatharra and to raise that topic at every opportunity.

The PRESIDENT: I suggest the honourable member talks about bauxite and directs his comments to me.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: If members opposite would cease their interjections I would like to get on with my speech. The problem with this matter is that the Government is rushing into things. Why cannot the Government wait until the reports have been brought down? There would be no problem then.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: How long would it take for you to be clear in your mind?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It would be hard to say but before we could say we approve entirely we would need more information to help us make a determination.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are sitting on the fence as usual; you will not make a decision.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: We have made a decision to oppose the Bills until we get the reports. It may well be that when we get the reports and study them we will support these Bills.

Another problem concerns the planting of trees. No-one knows how successful a reafforestation plan would be. If the mining is stepped up the amount of bauxite remaining will soon be depleted. In the second reading speech of the Minister he indicated there was sufficient ore available for only another 10 or 15 years. The company would then consider a move into the intermediate section of the State forest where there is no dieback at present. By allowing the expansion of the company's operations the Government is reducing the amount of time in which the western scarp can be mined. At its present rate the company could work in the area for another 30 or 40 years. The Government is buying trouble for itself.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The Opposition has no desire to interfere with the mining as it is currently proceeding because it allows the Government extra time to discover factors that are presently unknown. No-one in the House can say there will be no harm done to the forests or to the water supply. Certainly no-one has said that yet.

Members should consider the problems we have had already with the planting of trees. For instance, there has been no planting of tallow-wood since 1972 because it proved to be a failure. It looked wonderful according to one of the groups we spoke to. It looked as if it would go well but it finally failed and in 1972 Alcoa stopped planting it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There is still argument about whether they were a failure.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Once the bauxite has gone it will not come back and the Government will not be able to create jobs in this industry after that time.

The Hon. T. Knight: While it is going, how many jobs can we create?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: As far as the timber industry is concerned, this is an ongoing matter.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Should we try to revive the goldmining industry?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I believe we should. I think the Government should take over the mines and create work for 1 100 people. In doing so it would save a bundle of money that will have to be paid out in unemployment benefits. The mining companies say it is not economical to mine the gold.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the member confine his remarks to what is contained in the Bill?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I am trying to do that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The member should disregard interjections.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: One of the points about this industry is that it is a capital-intensive industry rather than a labour-intensive industry. Of course it will provide some additional jobs.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: But you don't think we should bother about that? Doesn't that enter into your concern?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The Hon. Win Piesse said the Forests Department has found that the burning of the forest had been done at the wrong time or in the wrong way. I share that view and this is the type of thing we will find out later. So the longer we can confine the mining to the lower part of the western scarp, the better the chance of knowing whether it will damage all those things the people are concerned about today.

The Opposition is asking for a stay of proceedings until we can get more information but the Government has not gone along with this. I am disappointed in the Government's attitude and I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. NEIL McNEILL (Lower West) (8.56 p.m.): I have given a great deal of thought over a long time to the prospects of this Bill and of this industry. In the course of the preparation of my notes for this speech I have now come to feel just a little inadequate. I feel this way mainly because of the contributions by two members

whose opinions I respect in a debate of this nature and more particularly because of the situation and the atmosphere which they have created. I refer to the Hon. Ron Leeson and the Hon. Claude Stubbs.

I doubt whether there would be anyone in this House who would not have been affected by the attitude and the words they expressed. It throws my mind back a considerable number of years to a time when you, Mr President, can recall, the Hon. Norman Baxter can recall, the Hon. Ron Thompson can recall, and the Hon. Graham MacKinnon can recall when we in this House had the opportunity and the refreshing experience of hearing members express their own views. Therefore, I have found this debate to be a most intriguing one, a highly interesting one, but one which at this moment I find difficulty in commenting on. I had words in mind when I had my speech prepared.

The difficulty now is in how I should comment in what I hope will be an objective fashion in the way that those two honourable members and the Hon. Ron Thompson addressed themselves to the Bill. Perhaps before embarking on that objective comment I should refer to the remarks of the Hon. Fred McKenzie while they are fresh in my mind. These may not be his exact words but he indicated we should confine bauxite mining to the western side of the scarp for as long as possible in order that the consequences may be known and research may be conducted and the consequences of other actions which are of concern to the public may be studied. I believe that may be a fair commentary of his remarks.

Mr President, I put it to you that his remarks are an answer to the views expressed by the Hon. Roy Cloughton when opening the debate for the Opposition. The Hon. Roy Cloughton queried why the Government and the company were preparing to embark on the establishment of a refinery at Wagerup when there was still great potential capacity for the expansion of the Pinjarra refinery. In fact Mr McKenzie answered him.

There was another answer, of course, and that was contained in the second reading speech of the Minister when he referred to the fact that the opening of the second refinery would result in the decentralisation of that industry which both parties concurred with; but there was in addition the very great advantage—an advantage which the protagonists of the protection of the environment have been expounding for a long time—that it gives time to research, to look at closely, to scrutinise, to have all the committees

and departmental organisations look closely into those matters while still allowing bauxite mining to continue. The Minister referred to the areas involved as being "those fragile areas around Dwellingup."

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: So two refineries give you more time than one.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I am not quoting the Minister exactly, but that is the purport of what he said. There ought to be the acknowledgment that the company realises the sensitivity not only of certain sections of the public, but also the sensitivity of the area in which bauxite mining will take place and the conditions in the area east of Dwellingup to which Mr McKenzie has already referred.

It is not for me to capitalise on the situation which has developed in this House in relation to the debate. But let me say that I acknowledge it with very great appreciation, because it has in fact restored a certain objectivity in terms of the examination of legislation by the members of this Chamber. I believe that is something we surely would welcome.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: The objectivity was lost when you got to your feet, apparently.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: The public debate on this question has centred mainly on the two issues of jarrah forest retention and the preservation of the water resources, including the purity of the water. Whether or not I agree with that is beside the point. That is the way I propose to deal with it.

Regrettably in my view too little attention has been directed to a great many consequences of bauxite mining and it is my intention to make brief reference to some of these consequences during the course of my remarks. These remarks may not comprise what would normally be regarded as part of a political debate and it is not a matter on which I would speak in the House in normal circumstances; but there are certain comments I feel it is necessary to make. I ask members when considering the remarks I am about to make concerning the legislation to bear these comments in mind.

This Bill concerns my own home countryside. It is an area in which I have lived almost continuously from the day I was born. Also I am an immediate neighbour of the Alcoa refinery site, an immediate neighbour of the Alcoa farmland, and also of its mining areas. I believe that gives me personally a very special interest in this legislation.

There is another matter which in all modesty I would not normally have included in the debate. Because the public debate is concerned with the jarrah reafforestation and the environmental problems involved in bauxite mining, I feel I should mention, that having graduated with virtually a major in botany of which ecology was a significant part there would be few people who would recognise or believe there have been many changes or developments in that particular field of study in the time since I graduated and made those studies, except that perhaps today a great many more people have at least heard of the term "ecology" even if they do not have a full understanding of it.

I have a great interest in and a great love for the jarrah forests and the timbered areas. I believe I can illustrate this best by mentioning that my own home bears the name "Djarryl", an Aboriginal name meaning jarrah. In fact the name was suggested to me some years ago by the most eminent Western Australian historian, Dr James Battye.

I can recall as a schoolboy in those districts more than 40 years ago hearing the views expressed locally and the concern expressed by the people as to what was happening to the jarrah forests. They would say, "What is happening to the jarrah trees?" The Hon. Lyla Elliott who spent part of her school days in the district may have similar recollections. The people used to say, "What is happening to the jarrah trees?" One of the claims was, "They are dying because of the increasing water table brought about by the logging and tree felling in the high hill country." The claim was that for every tree felled approximately 40 000 gallons of water a year was released down to the lower country. I do not know whether there is any truth in that particular claim; but that is what was said more than 40 years ago. Unquestionably there was an element of truth in it, because in the last 15 years or so a condition now identified as dieback has become a little better known and that particular condition or disease is a water-borne one.

In view of that, I can say at least for the last 40 or 50 years the people in that district, and I am sure the people in other districts, have been aware of the dieback condition and they have been concerned about it. There has not been a great deal of public awareness of what has been done in order to cure, prevent, or control dieback disease. I believe also that the people who have a special interest in the areas concerned do not consider an indication has been given as to the manner in which successful restoration of the jarrah species may be achieved.

There may be some members in the Chamber, Mr President, and you may have been one of them, certainly the Hon. G. MacKinnon and the Hon. R. Cloughton were two of the members of the Parliament of the day who accepted the invitation extended by the people of Waroona some 10 years ago to visit that area. During the course of the visit I well recall arranging a trip through the forest areas to a place called Mt. William. The purpose of that trip was to demonstrate to the members of Parliament the extent of the existence of jarrah dieback disease.

The Hon. R. Cloughton: I very clearly recall that.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: The Hon. Roy Cloughton will recall that.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Yes, very clearly.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I make no apology for the fact that that particular portion of the exercise was a further demonstration and a further method of expanding on the questions that both I and the then MLA for the district, Ewart Runciman, had been directing in this Parliament in respect of the effects of dieback disease.

The members who visited Mt. William on that particular day—and some may have been back to the area since then—will recall that the area had been logged and had been the subject of timber treatment and cutting over for close to 100 years. Many of the mills which were operating in those days would now be virtually, if not completely, unknown. The Waterous and the Klondyke were two of the very great mills which were operating in that area.

In view of that background, including the knowledge of local people—the experiences that a great many people have had—the references in Parliament, the knowledge of the logging that has occurred, the tree felling that has been going on for a long time—I suggest to people and particularly to the lobbyists that nobody need complain to me about mining being a scourge of the jarrah forests or that bauxite mining is ecological suicide. I believe that I, and a great many other people in this area, have a better knowledge than that.

For the benefit and comfort of those who have a genuine concern, I want to say that if we desire to have a forest worthy of the name in 20 or 30 years' time, the only way we will achieve it is by the tremendous expense, effort, and—very importantly—the get-up-and-go efforts of Alcoa in forest rehabilitation. In my experience no Government or Forests Department has ever achieved, or will ever achieve a young forest such as we now have at Jarrahdale, Huntley, or

Del Park. I want to acknowledge that the only thing lacking at the moment is jarrah reforestation and restoration. I am not aware that the South-West Forest Defence Foundation, the Campaign to Save Native Forests, the Conservation Foundation, the Tree Society, or even the Forests Department and the CSIRO have yet been able to re-establish successfully jarrah in dieback country.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Or anything else for that matter.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: That is a rubbishy interjection.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Well, pines.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I want to say that if anyone does bring back our jarrah, it will be Alcoa with the help and co-operation of the Forests Department and the CSIRO, and with the help—not the obstructionism—of people at large.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Are you talking about mining sites?

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: Considering all the Press coverage of the subject over a lengthy time it would not be surprising if some members have not seen a letter in *The West Australian* of the 29th April. It was written by Dr J. S. Beard. Members have not referred to it, but perhaps that is because it does not serve their purpose. In my view Dr Beard is a prominent botanical scientist in Western Australia.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: He made some of the oddest comments I have read for some time.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: Dr Beard expresses a point of view. I do not necessarily say that I am supporting it, but it should be mentioned. I anticipate what Mr. Cloughton might say, because I am sure he has already forgotten some sentiments I expressed earlier when I asked members to bear in mind certain comments I was about to make. I will ask Mr Cloughton again to keep that in mind, because I do not necessarily say I support the letter. However, it is a point of view. Dr Beard said—

The public should be told clearly that while there is an obvious case for the retention of as much jarrah forest as possible on aesthetic and sentimental grounds, there is none on economic grounds.

Jarrah, due to the difficult climatic and soil conditions under which it grows, has a low production rate per hectare per annum, so low in fact that the jarrah forest is doubtfully economic.

The letter is quite lengthy, but I will not read any more. I quoted that portion, because I believe it needs to be quoted as it represents another point of view in contrast to so many other points of view which have received a great deal of publicity and which, in fact, also have been aired in the House by certain members.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You leave so much unsaid it is hardly worth making the statements you just made. Unless you give some explanation of what you have said, your comments are not relevant.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: I am finding them most interesting.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I want to say that in the interests of brevity—

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Are you saying that we should completely wipe off jarrah as a timber tree because you believe it to be uneconomic? Unless you are saying something like that what is the relevance of what you read out?

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I would prefer to ignore the interjection.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I have no doubt you would.

The PRESIDENT: I recommend that you do.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I wish I could accept your recommendation, Mr President. I repeat that Mr Cloughton has obviously forgotten the genuine sentiments I expressed at the commencement of my remarks. I said that I happened to have a very great personal interest in the jarrah forest and its restoration, rehabilitation, and in perpetuity. In my view, certainly in Australia, there is no timber to come anywhere near jarrah.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: It is almost incomparable. It should have a high premium value.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I will not pursue the subject, because I do not believe there would be any virtue in my doing so.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Are you going to leave your comments unexplained?

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I have already said that if our jarrah is to be restored, then the one agency which will be able to achieve this for us is Alcoa with all the drive and stimulus it has given to the subject. I hope it will be achieved, and if it is it will be achieved with the co-operation of those bodies and agencies to which I referred and with the help—not obstructionism—of people in general.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I hope you will not leave it there.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: A great deal of attention has been paid by certain speakers on the other side of the House to a lack of information about the studies which have been undertaken in connection with the whole project. This is obviously because they have a pre-occupation—almost an obsession—with two particular issues to the exclusion of a great many others. Those two are jarrah forest restoration and water salinity. I ask members to bear in mind the studies referred to by the Government and, most recently, in the speech by Mr Thompson. I think it will be acknowledged that Mr Thompson has had some experience—and, in fact, ministerial experience—in connection with matters of this nature.

I recall that when the Worsley agreement was introduced by Mr Thompson I led the debate for the Opposition. I also recall certain remarks made by Miss Elliott and Mr McKenzie, and perhaps others who are opposed to the Bill. Therefore I will refer to the circumstances surrounding the introduction of the Worsley agreement into the Parliament in 1973 by the Tonkin Government. I ask Mr McKenzie to bear in mind what I am about to say.

The Tonkin Government as part of its policy—I do not say I disagree with it—submitted an unsigned agreement to Parliament, seeking its ratification. In it was a variations clause of the widest possible nature in order to give the Tonkin Government room to manoeuvre—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And didn't you give us a rough time with that Bill!

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: —after Parliament had given consideration to the legislation.

That was not all, because to the great credit of the Government at that time it also tabled in this House a number of documents concerning the Worsley agreement, including EPA documents and a number of others. I have referred to some which were not included in the papers tabled, but the important point was that despite the tabling of those papers, and despite the studies carried out and the reports delivered to Parliament—which were available for public perusal—the Tonkin Government was unable still at that stage to come to Parliament with a signed agreement.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is far too much conversation which is making it difficult for the *Hansard* reporter to hear.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: The present Opposition in this Parliament is endeavouring to make political capital out of the fact that it may have supported this Bill if environmental reports had

been available for public perusal. They had them in 1973, and yet they were not able to bring a signed agreement to Parliament. Now, when the reports are shortly to be available it is still not sufficient.

Is it any wonder that the people, the Parliament, and the public at large question what it is the Opposition wants? I suggest that the Opposition really wants an excuse. Clearly, the Opposition is in a quandary and in great difficulty in regard to this legislation. I heard a member in another place say that the Opposition would like to be supporting this Bill, and I heard the same comment in this place tonight. Certainly, the Opposition would like to be supporting this Bill, and it has endeavoured to find a way to support the Government. However, that would be a sign of weakness so it looks for another ally. The Opposition has found an ally in the pressure groups—the lobbyists—those who are most vocal and who are in the minority. Once again, the Labor Party has backed a loser.

The Opposition, in another place, has resorted—as it has done on so many other occasions when it does not know in which direction to head—to an attempt to rely on another organisation to be the spearhead for the Opposition. The Opposition has said there should be a committee to inquire into the matter. That is exactly what I believe the Hon. Ron Thompson was criticising when he said the Opposition was plugging for an Honorary Royal Commission or a Select Committee. Despite all the work which has been put into the study of this project as stated by the Hon. Lyla Elliott and by Mr Dave Evans and others, the Opposition is not willing to make a decision; it wants to refer the matter to a committee.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: They are running for cover.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Government members will never understand.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I have digressed at some length. I was about to refer to the studies which have been carried out. I am sure that you, Mr President, will remember that first of all there was reference to the Hunt Steering Committee. That committee was established in 1973 and has been in operation for five years. Who was in Government in 1973? Have we any faith in that committee and the work it has done, and which it will continue to do? It will report on development, water salinity, water catchments, and all sorts of problems which may be encountered in this whole project. In addition, of course, there have been studies and

research by the Forests Department, the university, the CSIRO, and the Geological Survey. Additionally, the EPA—presumably using the teeth which the Tonkin Government put into the legislation some years ago—will also be making a study. There will be an ERMP undertaken by and at the expense of the company. I am sure Opposition members have overlooked the fact that the EPA reports will be open for public discussion, and also the fact that the EPA will submit recommendations to the Government.

If that is not enough, it was recently announced that the Stanford Research Institute will report to the Government on land use planning procedure—not land use, but land use planning procedure. All of those organisations have been initiated by or are totally supported by the Government, and they will ensure there will be no expansion of mining except after the necessary restraints required to conserve our water and forest resources. What greater safeguards can we have? Bearing in mind the comments I have made about the Labor Party attitude to the previous Worsley agreement, surely we could not do any more. Even if we were to try, it is obvious the Government would still be in trouble.

I will summarise what I believe is being achieved. Firstly, we are getting a forests establishment such as we may not have seen for some 60 years. With whatever knowledge I may have had of this area throughout my lifetime, we are confirming and possibly improving our prospects for water conservation. Members must also reflect—because they have seen the area—on the amount of work which is going on. They are aware that when an area is cleared there is a greater run-off of water, and a greater contribution to the catchment, even though it is recognised that for a time there may be greater turbidity.

We are gaining a multi-million dollar industry with employment prospects for thousands of people, despite what Mr Claughton—I think it was—said when he claimed that the project will do little for employment.

We are decentralising a great industry to an extent quite undreamed of previously. We are stimulating shipping, port development, railways, and transport. I want to refer also to a matter which is frequently the subject of interest to this Parliament, and especially to the Opposition. I refer to the building industry which has been subject to a decline in recent years. I will quote some figures on building from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the Shires of Mandurah, Murray, Waroona, and Harvey.

For March, 1978, there were 45 housing approvals granted with a total value for all buildings approved of \$1 674 000. For the March quarter for the same four shires, there were 118 housing approvals with a total value of \$4 358 000 for all buildings. I am aware those are not them was to instance the fact that in my belief a great proportion if not all of those approvals are as a consequence of the Alcoa development.

I ask members to bear in mind the benefits which are shared by local businesses, carpenters, plasterers, painters, earthmoving contractors, and transport operators. Practically every person in the community is bound to receive some benefit.

While I accept this legislation and certainly approve of it, I do not necessarily accept it blindly. This is borne out by views I have expressed on previous alumina refinery agreement Bills. I hasten to say that despite my acknowledgment of the many benefits, there may be some disadvantages and there will certainly be a great many changes.

One of the least enjoyable features will be the actual mining and the blasting which will disturb the countryside and the neighbourhood. I am particularly concerned for the people of Dwellingup because of their proximity to the mining, and I hope the company will be generous in protecting that neighbourhood and the delightful townsite. The late Ruby Hutchison who had an interest in these particular areas would have had a special interest in this legislation. She spent some of her early life in that territory.

I am sorry that the social environment of such places as Waroona, Yarloop, Harvey, and certainly Wagerup will change, but it would be selfish to deny to many other people the benefits of larger and perhaps more sophisticated townships with better commercial, recreation, education, and entertainment facilities. I suggest those who believe this may be a bad consequence of bauxite mining or any other kind of development ask the people of Mandurah whether they would like Mandurah to revert to what it was 20 or even 10 years ago. The town of Mandurah as it is today is a consequence of development of the Pinjarra refinery.

In past debates some members have devoted attention to the sociological problems. I wish they had devoted a little attention to those aspects in considering this Bill, because in my view they could be of more long-term interest than water salinity and reforestation, which are subject to what is almost a semi-spontaneous control whereas the other aspects will not benefit to anywhere near the same extent.

Members will know I have a particular bias towards agriculture, and one of my keenest disappointments in relation to these projects is that there will be a loss agriculturally. I repeat what I have said on other occasions: I do not believe it is in the interests of the State that our food-producing capacity be in any way compromised. I say to the lobbyists that they may have been better employed in looking at that aspect rather than at the forest and water salinity questions.

My notes indicate that I am to refer again to something which has been said many times in this debate and in other debates in this House and in other places; that is, that this legislation provides for an expansion of bauxite mining. I am sure you know, Mr President, and some other members will know, and I want the whole population to know, that that of course is just not true at all. In fact the Pinjarra agreement would have enabled Alcoa to establish a third refinery at Wagerup.

What this Bill does is provide and impose restraints and strictures on Alcoa to ensure there will be no expansion except in terms which meet all the requirements of the impact statements, the scrutiny, and the studies which have been carried out by Alcoa itself and by all the other agencies to which I have referred, and which are all subject to the final judgment and decision of the Government itself. That is the way it should be.

I confess I find the preoccupation with metropolitan water supplies a little tedious. Not much attention has been paid to water for the country and for agriculture, which may be of more importance and significance than metropolitan water supplies. This again is a matter in which I have a very special interest. I have taken it up with the Minister and I am satisfied at this time with the replies given to me by the Minister in correspondence. I will not elaborate on the subject at the moment because it is covered in clause 15 of the agreement contained in the Bill.

The return in export income to the company on bauxite is something in the order of \$600 000 per hectare. That was the figure conveyed to me. I would like to think that beef or any other kind of agricultural production, or even timber production, would yield a return per hectare in the vicinity of that figure.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It would be magnificent, wouldn't it?

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: It would be absolutely magnificent. Regretfully, I have to acknowledge that in beef or any other kind of agricultural production we could not come anywhere near it.

Bauxite is non-renewable, but \$600 000 would buy a lot of beef or timber, although I might add that the beef production on bauxite country would be minimal.

In respect of the timber areas, I know about the establishment of the legumes in the understorey. I was not one who wanted to see the re-establishment after burning on my country of prickly Moses and the other prickly bush which has an objectionable and unparliamentary name. But the fact is that red mahogany, spotted gum, *eucalyptus microcorys*, wandoo, and the black butts which are immune will be established as a result of the great stimulus that has been given to the whole study, which has attracted the attention of the public at large.

We should be grateful to the company and to the alumina industry for a great fringe benefit we have obtained. As one who has had a long association with the timber industry, I can assure members that nothing would have provided the same kind of stimulus. We should promote, encourage, and support the studies that are being made now.

There is much to be grateful for in this whole exercise. Apart from the mining of bauxite and the production of aluminium to satisfy the needs of the people, in my view one of the great targets we will achieve in the exercise is the restoration of a great forest and a great environment in our hills which are in such close proximity to the metropolitan area.

I am not completely confident but I am sufficiently confident that we are doing the right thing in supporting the Government and all the steps which have been taken by all the agencies involved. It must be remembered that the Government is people, not just the Premier and his Cabinet. The Government comprises scientists, technologists, technicians, environmentalists, ecologists, and the many people who are concerned in studying a problem with a view to bringing in legislation in order that our countryside, our hills area, our water catchments, and our whole environment will be retained.

I want to see a better jarrah forest than has been in this area for the last 20 or 30 years. I believe this is one way we can do it. I ask members to bear this in mind, and to do their utmost, not just to support the Bills in this Chamber, but also to ensure that the objectives are well and truly met.

THE HON. D. W. COOLEY (North-East Metropolitan) [9.41 p.m.]: I would like sincerely to congratulate the Hon. Neil McNeill on

the discourse he gave to the House tonight on this subject. Apart from my colleagues who have spoken in opposition to this Bill, he is the only member who has made an in-depth study of this question. I do not place myself in that category because I have not done so. If, during the period allowed to us, we had available the information which the honourable member supplied, together with information obtained from people who have even greater knowledge than Mr Neil McNeill has in respect of the problems facing us in this area, then maybe we would be supporting this measure wholeheartedly tonight. However, all the information Mr McNeill referred to or touched on has been withheld from us, and we have no knowledge at all about the technicalities of the question or opinions of a vast number of people who have expert knowledge.

It is a great pity we have not had this information. It supports our view that we, and Government members, should have such information available before we are rushed into a decision. Mr McNeill is the only Government member to have made any contribution about the technical details of this proposition. All Government members have said is that they support the Bill. Mr Thompson had the effrontery to say that the contribution made by the Hon. Win Piesse—and I am not casting any aspersions on the Hon. Win Piesse—was the finest we had heard tonight. All I heard the honourable member say was that she visited the area for one day, looked around, and then said, "All right, we will go ahead with the proposition." That does not mean she is an expert on the environment and all the other matters involved in this legislation. Even the Attorney-General who presented the Bill did not give us sufficient information. Perhaps in his reply he may emulate Mr McNeill's effort and we will be better informed. At this time we do not have that information.

While praising Mr McNeill, I must take him to task on one matter. It is remarkable how members on this side of the Chamber can gain approbation from members on the other side when they defect in regard to decisions that have been made in a democratic manner by the Australian Labor Party. Such members are then the best fellows in the world in the eyes of Government members. However, let a Government member support something upon which his party has made a decision, and that member will come in for a great deal of criticism.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: I hope you did not misinterpret my comments.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I did not. The honourable member was talking about the good old days when this was a House of Review, and party directions did not come into it.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: Your words—not mine.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I could name a few members in this Chamber who would not, by any stretch of imagination, go against a party decision, and the members I could name do not sit on this side of the House, but on the Government side. There are quite a few of them. I realise that is getting away from the Bill, but I thought it should be said.

A great many statements made in the House tonight by Government members are not in accordance with facts. I will not say they are untrue, but just that they are not in accordance with the facts. Every Government speaker has harped on the point that we have not made a decision in regard to this matter. Indeed, we have heard this said by way of interjection also. Of course we have made a decision; we made a decision that we would support this measure—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You decided not to decide.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —when it came to the House on the understanding that when the Minister rises to reply to the debate, he gives us an assurance that further inquiries will be made.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You decided to be certain to be uncertain.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That is not being uncertain at all. Mr Neil McNeill made the statement that we oppose for opposing's sake. That is not right. In the short time I have been in this Chamber, a number of similar agreements have come before the House. These agreements were signed, sealed, and delivered before they ever arrived here, but they were given our immediate blessing. We do not oppose for opposing's sake.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Have you resolved to be unresolved?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is quite wrong to say that. It is also quite wrong to say we have no concern at all for jobs. Of course we have concern for jobs; it would give me the greatest pleasure, and I am sure it would give my colleagues the greatest pleasure, to come to this House tonight and say, "We heartily support the measures." We know the problems in regard to unemployment; we know them quite well. Do not forget that unemployment in this State was not of the ALP's making, not by any stretch

of the imagination. When we went out of office approximately 7 000 people were unemployed, and today 35 000 are unemployed.

It is untrue to say we are opposed to industrial development. We are not; our record proves that point. However, we do have a concern for people and for the environment.

Our record speaks for itself in regard to development. During the term of office of the Tonkin Government, when unemployment rose from some 8 000 unemployed to 12 000, what did the Tonkin Government do? Immediately it got on with the job of solving the unemployment problem, and in one year that figure dropped to 7 000 unemployed. If the Tonkin Government had remained in office, probably the unemployment figure would have dropped even further.

We believe in creating work for people, and we believe in expansion. We do not believe in creating unemployment. We believe in maximising the wealth of the nation so far as it is possible. It should be the purpose of all good Governments to maximise the wealth of their nation.

Somebody tonight said that there was not much movement during the period of the Hawke Government, and then something remarkable happened. The Liberal Party came into power and we had this great industrial expansion. I am sure that had a Labor Government been in power at that time, we would have had the same amount of industrial development in this State as happened in the 1960s. So it is not good enough to stand in this Chamber and say that we are opposing this legislation for opposing's sake.

I repeat, this Bill would indeed have our blessing if we had more information about it. With the possible exception of Mr McNeill, no other Government member has done more work than the Opposition speakers who have preceded me and who opposed the Bill. We oppose the approval of the Bill without further inquiries. The Australian Labor Party has an attitude that it should provide for the welfare of the people and for the protection of the environment, and that is what this debate is all about. That is the reason we are seeking to delay the passage of the Bills so that expert assurances can be given that the environment will be protected.

Mr Ferry spoke about the south-west and I assume it is his opinion the south-west is below Wagerup. However, the true south-west is below a line drawn from Geraldton to Esperance. That is the true south-west of this State, and not below a diagonal line drawn across from Bunbury or thereabouts.

If we were to go into that narrow area about which Mr Ferry speaks, we would find a large number of people opposed to what we are saying tonight. But that does not mean we are wrong; because in the past the Labor Party has opposed a number of issues and has made itself unpopular with the public, generally. However, subsequently the people have come to accept that the Labor Party was right; and indeed the conservative political forces have fallen into line with these policies.

I have a long list of these issues which I will not read out because I would be drifting away from the Bill. The list ranges from abolition of conscription by ballot to send our youth to Vietnam, which was introduced by the Liberal Government; national health, and women's rights; and various other issues which were all at one time unpopular with the public but are now accepted not only by the public but by members opposite also.

Another example is uranium mining. In tonight's Press it is stated the Federal Government has backed down on the matter of mining uranium ore. There is a growing awareness of the policy of the ALP in respect of uranium, and now it is proposed not to go ahead so quickly.

Therefore, there is nothing wrong with our policy of including some restraint on this type of development. We should not have the situation of allowing development just for development's sake; that is neither desirable nor necessary.

The State Parliamentary Labor Party's inquiries into this matter have been most extensive. I have been very impressed by them. I say again that I am not an expert in this field, nor do I claim to know much about it. Studies have been carried out by the ALP of which I have not been a part, and so I come within the same category of all members opposite with the exception of the Hon. Neil McNeill—unless somebody else speaks later who has some knowledge of the matter. That is, my knowledge on this subject is not as informed as that of many people on this side of the House, and I think together with me Government members generally should pay due regard for the views of those who do have some knowledge of the subject before us.

It is not responsible for any Government or any organisation to advocate expansion of any industry if it is not sure of its ground. Perhaps we could be more certain when we come back here for the spring session in August. When the reports have been completed and the opinions of a number of informed organisations are known regarding essential safeguards we could know

with some degree of certainty whether it is safe to allow the development to proceed. At that time we and the Government could be far better informed than we are at the moment.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [9.54 p.m.]: As a member who was in this Chamber when the first alumina agreement was brought to Parliament, my mind goes back to the issues that were raised then. Some other members who were also in this Chamber at that time were concerned about the impact of bauxite mining on the environment. One can read the debates that took place at that time and the questions that were raised in respect of the rehabilitation of the mined areas. The reafforestation of the areas concerned was one of the issues raised, and provision was made in the legislation for reafforestation to avoid environmental problems.

The Hon. Graham MacKinnon, the Hon. Neil McNeill, and the Hon. Ron Thompson were present in this Chamber then, and there may be others; and they would well and truly remember that debate. Since then we have had various amendments to alumina agreements to increase the areas to be mined and the production of alumina.

Yet here we are now in 1978 and we find a great furore over this legislation which provides for an environmental review and management programme to be carried out, and that programme must be approved by the Government before the company may proceed.

Where is the main stirring coming from in respect of this issue? It is coming from the Press and other forms of the media, from people who belong to certain organisations. Most of those organisations are opposed to any sort of progress. Apart from that, the general public as a whole could not care two hoots about this Bill.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What about the responsible organisations to which I referred?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Which ones?

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: The foresters, the CSIRO, and people like that.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: They are not the only groups to which the honourable member referred. The other groups are the only ones who have demonstrated over the issue. The general public as a whole are not really concerned; they are confident the Government is doing the right thing.

I have made inquiries from people in various walks of life; people who work in the city every day, various professional people, housewives, and

country people. I have found that no-one is really concerned apart from those people who like to stir about any matter that is raised.

As one who has flown over the Alcoa area in recent times and has looked at the mining operations from the air, and has travelled to the area by motor vehicle to see what is happening, I can say to all members that it is an eye-opener to fly over the area and see what has occurred.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Could the Government arrange for us to do it?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: We were able to arrange it with one of the companies, and I am sure the honourable member could have arranged something for his party.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We did; we were the first to ask.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: One could drive through the area for days and see only a fraction of what has occurred, because the area is so vast. However, when one flies over the area one sees the forest stretching to the north towards Chittering and south for several hundred miles; and within that total area the mined areas look like pinheads. One has only to consider the total area of Alcoa's leases, which amount to some 12 700 square kilometres. This includes the Darling Range area of 10 730 square kilometres and within the leases is an area of State forest of 6 940 square kilometres. Of that total area, since 1963 less than 20 square kilometres have been cleared for mining purposes and for the construction of refineries, etc. That is a very small fraction of the total area. The area of forest mined also represents a very small fraction of the total forest area.

The Hon. T. Knight: You would probably find more damage has been caused by gravel pits and blasting for blue metal.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Absolutely. It is nonsense to say this will affect the whole jarrah forest area and spread dieback. If that is so, why has not the continuous timber milling over many years spread dieback throughout the jarrah forest to such a degree that the forests would be destroyed? It is merely a tactic to say mining companies will spread dieback through these areas to such a degree that the jarrah forests will disappear; and that is what certain people are trying to say.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley interjected.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That was a statement by the lay of my party. I did not agree with it then, and I still do not agree with it.

As I say, when one flies over this area, one sees clearly how much has been mined in the past. One can also see the area which has been reafforested and which is in the process of being rehabilitated by the mining companies. It makes one realise just how much the company has done in regard to reafforestation in the short period of some 14 years since it commenced operations. I think the Hon. Win Piesse illustrated clearly what can be seen from the air; one can see a very healthy section of new forest growing in an area which had previously been mined.

People seem to have some sort of phobia about replanting jarrah as if, because of its deep-rooted nature, it is the only tree which can lessen the tendency for water to become saline. But that is not the case, because there are other trees which can cope quite effectively with this problem. In addition, a lot of this is only theory. I have farmed in the lower south-west area, in jarrah forest country. I have also farmed in the wheatbelt, and at present I have a property up in the northern jarrah forest area, in the Wundowie-Wooroloo area adjacent to the milling operation there. I think I know these problems of salinity and of mining. I am no expert, but I do have practical experience of these matters.

I am like the Hon. Neil McNeill; I look at the economics of the situation. I do not believe the jarrah forests will disappear entirely due to dieback, but if they do it will not be the fault of the mining companies, because they move through the jarrah forest in only a small way whereas the milling companies moved through practically the entire jarrah forest. If the dieback disease was going to wreck our jarrah forests, the disease would be well and truly spread by now due to the activities of the milling companies.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Have you actually read any of the studies of *phytophthora cinnamomi*?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No, although I have read some reports about the disease. However, one can read all the studies one likes about dieback; it still does not give one the answer. All the studies in the world cannot get away from the fact that, for many years, the mill vehicles and the mill employees have moved through these areas.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: And they have spread dieback.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Members should have a look at the rate of spread of *phytophthora cinnamomi* through the various areas; it is greater in some areas than in others, and in some areas

which are least affected a great deal of milling has taken place. A lot depends on the nature of the soil and the area in which the forest is growing.

Mr Hetherington said there are a lot of things we do not know in relation to trees growing for 15 years or more. We will not know any more about this if the ERMP report comes out in the next six months, nine months or 12 months; we will have to wait to see what the results of re-afforestation will be. I do not doubt that these reafforested areas will still be there in 50 or 60 years' time, starting to grow into big timber. Nature asserts and adjusts itself. It is like any garden in which trees are growing; it does not mean that all those trees will die within a certain period.

When one flies over the area one gets a clear picture of the problem of salinity. It can be seen properly only from the air. There is very little salinity on the western slopes; in fact, one sees more salinity going into the wheatbelt area. However, on the actual farmlands themselves there is very little sign of the spread of salinity, even with the considerable amount of clearing for agriculture which has taken place there—far more than mining will ever clear.

I do not think there is much more I can add; I believe the matter has been covered very adequately by the Minister's second reading speech. However, I felt I should give my point of view in regard to the proposal before the Chair. As has been mentioned by previous speakers, the development of the Wagerup refinery will relieve pressure on the Pinjarra and Jarrahdale refineries, in that the company will not have to increase its capacity. The company is fully aware of its responsibilities in regard to the ERMP reports; in fact, this is a safeguard which was not previously in the legislation to anywhere near the extent for which this Bill provides. I do not think we have any worries about this proposal, because the company, the Government, and the relevant departments are fully aware of the potential problems and are working towards ensuring they are minimised.

Even if the area of jarrah forest were reduced to some degree, it would not worry me to any great extent, because we are not still in the days when a great deal of jarrah was milled, particularly for sleepers and the building trade. We have entered an era where steel, aluminium, and other metals to a great degree have replaced the use of timber in the building trade. There is no great demand for jarrah, and this will give

the jarrah forests a breathing space after many years of milling. I do not think there is any chance of our jarrah forests disappearing, even from dieback. I support the Bill.

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [10.08 p.m.]: I oppose the Bill. I intend to stick to the reasons for which the Opposition has decided to oppose this Bill. We want the Government to delay the passage of this legislation to allow further inquiry either through a Royal Commission or a Select Committee, or until it has received further reports and expert advice.

I do not know what Mr Baxter was doing flapping around over the jarrah forest area. I do not know how many cuckoos' nests he flew over, but he certainly sounded as though he did not see anything which made much sense, because his statement that the only way to know anything about what is happening in that area is to fly over it is not worth even pausing to consider.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I did not say that.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I take issue with Mr Baxter's contention that nobody in the community is concerned about the proposal to expand bauxite mining except a few stirrers. By that sort of statement he is denigrating the very worth-while work of people who are concerned with environmental and ecological matters, and who are not simply going along with the "economic growth for any reason" pattern, which is certainly to the detriment of this State, this country and, in fact, of the whole world.

Let us consider the views about this matter which have been expressed by people of very high standing in the community. On the 26th April the Institute of Foresters came out against the Western Australian Government's plans to allow bauxite mining to be expanded in the Darling Range.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Did they say that?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: This is the Institute of Foresters.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Is that a headline or what they said?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The foresters have said that they are against it without further inquiry. Whether people are concerned about society on an economic plane or an environmental plane, they should still receive the respect of members of this House.

My principal question about this refusal to delay the legislation is: What is the hurry? The agreement was signed only three weeks ago by

the Premier and Mr Mensaros on behalf of the Government, and in the agreement there appears the following—

The State shall introduce and sponsor a Bill in the Parliament of Western Australia to ratify this Agreement and endeavour to secure its passage as an Act prior to the 31st December, 1978;

An agreement which was signed only three weeks ago has suddenly become an urgent matter. Do not these people trust us? Does not the Government trust Alcoa and does not Alcoa trust the Government? We have plenty of time until the 31st December for further inquiries, as not only the Opposition but also many other people in the State of high esteem and prestige have requested. Why cannot we wait a few months or a few weeks? The Government is not prepared to wait even a few days.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You never make a decision.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: We have made up our minds that there should not be this unseemly haste, because there are other reports and expertise in the pipeline waiting to give information. What is the reason for the unseemly haste? Why does it have to be done today when we have another seven months to do it in? In tonight's newspaper there was an inkling of the reason for this haste when one of the men who actually signed this agreement said, in the greatest bit of sophism I have heard for a long time, that the reason we have to pass this legislation in such a hurry is that we have to establish credit so that the State Energy Commission can get the gas to make the Alcoa project a goer. What ridiculous nonsense! The agreement was signed only three weeks ago and suddenly we have to establish credit! How ridiculous it is if the companies which are investing in this State are so unsure of the Government that it has to race something through the Parliament which it does not have to get through for another seven months simply to establish credit for one of its own departments!

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: This is not being raced through.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Of course it is being raced through. Why are we sitting on a Thursday night if it is not being raced through? Do not talk nonsense.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Of course it is not being raced through. How long do you need before you can make a decision? You go on for years.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Mr Masters is meandering along, but we have already told him of our decision, if he had cared to listen. Government members do not understand, because all they can see when looking at this State is economic growth. If there was a market for grandmothers overseas, they would send their grandmothers!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The place would not be the same without you!

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: What is more, they would rationalise the exporting of their grandmothers by saying they were sending them for a holiday. There are many things they would be willing to export for a fast buck. All they are thinking about is economic growth when there are many more things to life than economic growth.

The Opposition is opposed to this legislation not because it is opposed to the agreement as it stands or to bauxite mining *per se*, but because we believe that when entering into a new agreement the maximum amount of information ought to be available. Obviously those legislators who oppose the Bill have not received the maximum amount of information.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Methinks the lady doth protest too much.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Mr Masters protests too much, because he knows perfectly well that what I am saying is true. We oppose the Bill only because we believe that when a new agreement is being entered into the maximum amount of information ought to be available and, if there is time to do it, the maximum amount of time ought to be used. If we have until the 31st December, 1978, why are we hastening this legislation through to the point of keeping back the country members who are now unable to catch trains and planes to their electorates? Is it because a vote was taken and everybody said, "We would love to sit tonight. Tonight is a lovely night for sitting"? Of course it is not. The Government wishes to have this legislation passed, because of the sort of economic sophism that Mr Mensaros has used. What a lot of nonsense it is to talk about establishing credit!

If the members of the Government are so afraid of this Government's image in the eyes of people who invest in this country, we should be shaking in our boots, because the only thing this Government has to offer is its ability to get on with companies. It has nothing else to offer in any other sphere of our societal existence. Economic growth is the only thing on which it

stands or falls. Obviously it is going to fall, because it cannot get any credit and because it is frightened its numbers might rush away by the 31st December and it will not be able to get the legislation passed! The reason Government members do not want the information is that they have the numbers; that is the plain fact.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: We have vast numbers—the public of Western Australia.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Not the public of Western Australia. The manner in which the Hon. Norman Baxter ascertains the opinions of people, by walking down the street and talking to housewives, is a very objective way of doing so! Are we being told that the people to whom the Hon. Norman Baxter spoke last week at his local housewives' meeting reflect the views of the whole of the community? Even the newspapers have been standing by us on this matter of undue haste shown by the Government to get the legislation passed. I wish to make it very clear that the Opposition opposes this legislation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Some of the Opposition.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Well, the part of the Opposition that is worthy of being an Opposition at the moment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is the nasty side of your nature.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. The Opposition opposes this Bill on the grounds that there should be a Royal Commission so that further information can be made available to the Government before it enters into a new agreement.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [10.20 p.m.]: I think everyone in the House would agree that this has not been one of the best nights for me in this House for a variety of reasons. Let me be quite clear that I am opposed to this Bill. I am opposed to it because of the reasons stated on a number of occasions by speakers on this side of the House.

I am not opposed to industrial development and neither is the Opposition, but I have taken the opportunity to move around the community; and whilst people I spoke with may not have expressed outright opposition to the further extension of bauxite mining in the Darling scarp they have expressed apprehension.

One of the things that has surprised me is the haste with which this Bill is being put through Parliament. I have had quite a number of opportunities to fly over the area involved and to go down there. I accepted one of those invitations and with three other people, including the manager of the company, Mr Lussky, I inspected the area. I received the utmost courtesy from those people, and I might add one of their refineries is in my electorate. I have no reason to doubt any information they gave me.

I managed to attend one or two meetings on this subject and what concerns me, along with the public at large, are the great divisions which exist between the experts. I must confess that on one day I was for this measure, and the next day I was against it. Because of the diversity of opinion I think it would have been a far better proposition if the Government had delayed the introduction of this Bill, even if it was just to get Alcoa's report. The company is producing a report of its own, which I believe will cost \$400 a copy to produce. It intends to make copies available to this Parliament, and perhaps had these reports been available it might have put the Opposition's mind at rest.

After all, we are an Opposition and we have to take notice of people in the community. I do not accept the statements by the Hon. Norman Baxter and the Hon. Ian Pratt about stirrers in the community. One could say that the first stirrers were the original Christians. They were not very popular and were fed to the lions. However, they proceeded with their beliefs and Christianity brought great benefits to the world. Whilst I might not always agree with people dissenting, I will always defend their right to dissent, provided they do so in an orderly and peaceful manner. I do not think Alcoa objects to this.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Then they are right to do so.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It is the people's right to dissent. In the talks I have had with people in the Alcoa Company I was surprised to learn from Mr Lussky, the manager, when I was at Pinjarra, that this Bill would be put through this session of Parliament because the company wanted it through. The man was perfectly frank with me, and it was not up to me to ask why his company wanted it through.

This is what disturbs me. It would have been a better proposition for the whole of the community to have had some independent authority investigate the matter, and this could have been

done. An independent authority might have said it was quite sure that all the things which could be done had been done. Whether Government members like it or not, there is a great deal of public disquiet about this subject.

The editorial in this morning's *The West Australian* indicates that people by and large are starting to suspect politicians and big companies of not being truthful. I want to make my position perfectly clear. I have seen red mud ponds with vegetation growing in them which I thought would never be rehabilitated. I have seen the area at Carcoola and when the Premier of New South Wales was over here he wanted to see it and so we took him there.

There have been some way-out statements made tonight with respect to reforestation. The company has said that this is as far as it can go with reforestation. I agree, and no-one knows whether it will be successful. I asked the company representatives about tallow-wood and they were quite honest and did not say that the species was going to continue growing. The company indicated that the trees grew to a certain height, but there was something wrong with the root system. The company representatives have been perfectly frank with me.

Let us face facts—Mr Neil McNeill will agree with me—spotted gum, blue gum, and red mahogany are very fast growers in the early stage but they might not grow to become a forest. As the Hon. Win Piesse mentioned, the under-storey is a very important part of the eco-system, and no-one knows whether these trees will develop. We will not know these things for a number of years, and already we are suffering water problems in the Perth basin. It is well known that the Perth basin is the most irrigated area in the world and 75 per cent of the water goes in keeping us in an English country garden setting. So anything that may interfere with our water supply has to be looked at very carefully.

That is the basis of our opposition to this Bill. We believe it would have been far better to have had an independent authority to carry out an investigation. Sometimes one is entitled to become a little suspicious of what this is all about. One cannot seriously accept the statement by Mr Mensaros that we have to establish credit so that the SEC can buy gas to supply Alcoa. I do not think we will see natural gas from the North-West Shelf for many years, and I am sure Alcoa itself would want to get the refinery off the ground long before then.

The bauxite being mined in the scarp is amongst the lowest grades in the world. Very high grade bauxite is normally mined in more tropical areas, such as Ghana.

The alumina produced from this very low-grade bauxite in Western Australia, with white labour, almost exclusively is shipped to the United States of America, and what is left goes to Port Henry near Geelong. I am very anxious to see the refinery continue because the company owns a ship, the *Myarra*, which is another avenue for labour.

Another point that came to light in my conversations with the manager was that the alumina plants in the United States, which he did not name, have been closed down. One of the reasons for this is the very cheap alumina that can be produced in Western Australia. I was cheeky enough to ask how much it costs for the company to produce a tonne of alumina, and I was told that was one thing it was not prepared to divulge. One can assume the company wants to get the agreement through quickly, because it is on a good thing, and when one is on a good thing one sticks to it.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Is advertising allowed?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: This provides labour and we are getting money and labour from the company. The company is doing its best, but no-one can tell me with absolute certainty that in 10, 20, or 30 years the trees that have been planted will still be growing. The company itself admits this, and it makes no secret about it.

Most members tonight have referred to mining. I would dispute the fact that Alcoa mines for bauxite. It engages in a limited operation of scraping the surface dirt or, at the very most, we could call it quarrying and it is quarrying large areas. It is doing its darndest to rehabilitate those areas at very great cost. If the company can plough this money back into reafforestation then, of course, one can only wonder just how much each tonne of alumina is worth, because with the vast amount of effort which is put into it no wonder the company is anxious to sign an agreement as early as possible; no wonder if it is onto a good thing it wants to stick to it, because it can produce alumina here more cheaply than anywhere else in the world. Not only because of the cheapness, but also because the plant in Australia is extremely modern the company has been able to close down plants in other parts of the world.

All these matters must be looked at in the course of the stand taken by the Opposition. At no stage have we said, "Do not do it." We would like the public to have an independent viewpoint. As far as I am concerned personally the Government did not even wait for its own report. Sometimes one has to be a little suspicious and I simply cannot and will not accept the view put forward by the Minister for Industrial Development.

I did not ask the people down there why they wanted the decision made at an early stage; but I have read—and I do not know whether it is germane to the eagerness of the company to enter into new agreements—that in the world today there is a system developed by a Hungarian which will allow the extraction of bauxite from ordinary mud. I cannot recall the exact details. It is in the developmental process and as all members know bauxite is a very common element. This system is extremely cheap. It has the major aluminium producers of the world extremely worried. I was told one can extract aluminium from wet grass using this system; whether or not that is a fact I do not know.

As an uninformed citizen one of the matters which worries me—and I have to back away from the deluge of knowledge and reports which were given to me—is that I do not know the part which the jarrah tree plays in our whole ecological system. It has a unique root system which is not fully understood. I do not know what will happen when the trees are removed. People should think deeply about this. No-one has suggested to me that he understands the role of a jarrah tree. I am aware also that the jarrah trees have been overcut and people will continue to cut jarrah and probably chop it out in any case. However, that is not a reason for saying we should dig out bauxite without a thorough, ongoing investigation. I should like to hear something about this.

The question of dieback is a matter which I have not gone into very deeply, because I believe, with no scientific background, that dieback has been in the forests for millions of years. It may have been nature's way of thinning out the forest along with fire. Certainly with the intrusion into the forests of the cars of pleasure seekers and with heavy equipment moving through the forests the disease has been spread. However, by the same token that is not a good reason to say, "Because the forest has dieback we will simply uproot these trees. We will dig out the bauxite." It could all be gone in 10 to 15 years.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: If that argument is being used, I think it is quite wrong.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am not using that argument. I am saying, as an uninformed person like so many other people in the community, I need reassuring. These are the views which have been expressed to me. Many of the people with whom I have had social contact have raised this problem. They do not know or they do not understand what is going on; I will admit that. However, they are apprehensive and when we have a community which is apprehensive the Government should say, "We will wait for one or two weeks for a report." The report would be from an independent body and I believe the people would accept it.

I do not know the role of the jarrah tree. I do not believe anyone else knows it either. I have been told that the Darling Scarp contains the most arid type of soil in the world. The conservation officer from Alcoa told me this and I do not doubt it. It is the most arid soil in which anything grows in the world.

I am left with the most disturbing thought that with all the good intentions in the world—after all, one does not miss the water until the well runs dry—what is going to happen if in 10 or 15 years those trees have not developed sufficient root systems to maintain their present situation? The jarrah trees are there no longer and the trees which have been planted to replace them have fallen over. Apart from anything else, this could have an effect on the water situation. It could remove also great tracts of beauty. I have said before in this Chamber that man needs beauty to survive. It would be a horrible kind of landscape. It would be similar to the landscape on the moon which one saw on television when the astronauts first landed there.

I agree with the Hon. W. M. Piesse that man will never return to the arms of nature. He precluded that when he planted the first grain of wheat or whatever he planted. But we have the ability, ingenuity, the cerebral material, and the muscle to create the kind of environment in which we want to live.

I am not standing here criticising the company. It is doing the best it can. It is a commercial enterprise with a vast volume of committed capital. It does not make any extravagant claims one way or the other.

I want to refute the suggestion that the Labor Party does not have a policy on bauxite mining. We had to make a very soul-searching decision and without relating voting numbers I can say we were very divided in some areas. But we did agree on the stand we are taking here tonight and it is the correct one.

I cannot understand the reluctance of the Government to wait a couple more weeks not only to satisfy members on this side of the House, but to satisfy also a great number of people in the community. We do believe in the jobs which will be created. There would not be a better employer. The company has generated large volumes of business for Westrail. I believe it is Westrail's biggest customer.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Who said that?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not want to take issue with the Hon. H. Gayfer. The manager of Alcoa told me that and I knew I should take up the subject privately with the member at some time, because I thought there might be some conflict of interest.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Perhaps it is the most profitable.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not believe there is much chance the Government will reconsider this.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: There is no chance.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: However, I certainly want to place our viewpoint before this Chamber. Our viewpoint is not, as some members have said, one of not knowing where we are going. The Caucus carried out a most exhaustive inquiry. There have been vast differences of opinion. Members know the many differences of opinion which can arise; but we came up with a unanimous decision.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: We have the same trouble.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I know that; but the honourable member is not having as rough a time as I am having tonight. I have no intention of running up the white flag. I am placing our position squarely before members. We cannot support the Bill when it is presented to us in this manner. I do not believe there is anything snide or nasty about it; but it appears to me the bloody-mindedness of the Government is causing the measures to be rushed through.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is not true.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If there is a reason for rushing through the Bill the Government should tell us. If there is no reason it should tell us that in two weeks' time at least one of the reports will be available which will satisfy the people at large, and that will be that.

I do not want members to go away with the idea in their minds that everyone in the community is happy about the situation irrespective of his

political leanings. I agree with Mr Baxter that people do not understand, but many are worried about what may happen, and they are worried for a variety of reasons. If that worry can be allayed a number of things will be achieved for the good of the people at large. The institution of Parliament will be reinforced.

It is all very well for people to laugh, but things have gone wrong before. Earlier tonight someone referred to our salinity problems. I was reading a report the other day about the Eyre Peninsular by a professor who was doing work at Flinders University. He said it was no good blaming the drought situation for the way the Eyre Peninsular looks. The problem goes back a number of generations when the area was planted to wheat and the trees were chopped down. He said that we will never recover that area; it is too late. He pointed out that we must be careful in the future that we do not do the same thing again.

Given the will and the confidence of the population we can still mine bauxite without any of the waves we have had up to date and which we will have in the future.

I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [10.42 p.m.]: We have had an interesting debate and I have listened intently to a number of speakers. Some members have made a valuable contribution to the debate. It is of interest to observe that the two members opposite with ministerial experience and the greatest experience of government have both supported the Bill.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: A good observation.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: There are two major aspects we must consider when studying the Bill, and they are quite obvious. One is the environmental aspect and the other is the economic aspect. I believe we should examine the Bill carefully in that light. We should not allow our flights of fancy to wander too far into the sky when faced with decisions of this nature. We must make a decision based upon the knowledge we have at this time and the precautions we will write into the agreement to cover the present defects in our knowledge. That is precisely what the Government is doing in the Bill before the House.

Without taking up very much time of the House at this late hour, I must comment on one or two of the matters raised by some members.

It should be made quite clear that the company itself—Alcoa—will be preparing the ERMP pursuant to legislation of the State. That is in the agreement. If it were being done under Commonwealth legislation the company would still be the prime mover in that environmental study because under the Commonwealth legislation the company would be referred to as the proposer and it is the proposer which makes the study. Likewise under our legislation, the study is made by the company; and there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about this. Nothing unusual is happening. The study is being made by the company because the company is the one required to make it under the legislation. It is quite a normal arrangement.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did not challenge the right of the company to make the study. I would have liked to see the study.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I did not say that the Leader of the Opposition did challenge it, but there were many other speakers.

This is done in all cases; there is nothing extraordinary about it, because it is the perfectly reasonable and proper thing to be done.

The amended legislation under which the study is being made was introduced by the Tonkin Government. The EPA will advise the Government when the ERMP is made. The ERMP will then be submitted to the Government. The EPA will advise the Government on that. In other words, the company makes the study and the EPA examines it and advises the Government in the normal way. There will be nothing unusual about it. The EPA will report to the Government on that study. It is all entirely in accordance with normal procedure.

Reference was made to the Pacminex Bill and the attitude of the Liberal Party to that legislation. I draw the attention of members to the fact that it was in this House that the Pacminex legislation was amended. The name of the Bill was the Alumina Refinery (Upper Swan) Agreement Bill and it was passed by Parliament in 1971. In this place it was amended to require an environmental study to be made. That study was made and, as we know, it was unfavourable and the Act was repealed. There is nothing very different about the proposal in the Bill before us. The company is taking a terrible risk, I suppose, but that risk must be taken.

So the report will be made public. No doubt it will be the subject of comment in the Press, and it will be the subject of comment in the Parliament and by anyone who wants to comment on it. There will be nothing secret about

it; and what is wrong with that? I am sure that any honourable member, searching his conscience, could find nothing wrong with it.

This Bill contains what I can only describe as the most advanced environmental package ever heard of in Western Australia, or as far as I know, anywhere else. I do not know of any other Bill in the history of the Western Australian Parliament which has had so many environmental safeguards written into it, and they are referred to in the second reading speech. There must be an ERMP made by the company in relation to the Wagerup refinery. That is the first safeguard, which, as I have just pointed out, must be submitted to the Government, referred to the EPA, and made public. That is the No. 1 inquiry.

There must be continuous monitoring and research throughout the life of the refinery. There must be annual reports submitted by the company to the Government; and three-yearly reviews as well. Written into the agreement is the provision that there must be a continuous observance of the laws and regulations in regard to the environment or anything affecting the environment in force in the State from time to time, which means that from day to day and from year to year throughout the life of that refinery, if the Government changes its laws or regulations, they must be observed.

What a contract that is! It has never been heard of before that I know of, certainly not in this State.

In addition, if the refinery reaches the estimated maximum of two million tonnes within 15 years it cannot move or budge beyond that figure without going through the process all over again of another ERMP or EIS, call them what we like; they are both the same thing. In other words a complete ERMP must be made on the situation again before the company can budge one tonne over that figure.

It was well pointed out by the Hon. Ron Thompson and the Hon. Claude Stubbs that there has never been an Act of Parliament previously which contained so many environmental safeguards. It is due, no doubt, to the change in public opinion, and it is to the credit of the Government that it has taken note of that change. The critics of the Government should bear that in mind. We must come down out of the clouds and into reality. I have been endeavouring to bring some members down to reality.

Doubts about the future have been raised by various speakers. One member said he wondered whether the forests could survive. He wondered many things, but mainly he wondered whether the forests would survive. I suppose we could wonder about almost anything. We can wonder whether the most secure institutions will survive.

In another place, a member cast doubt on the financial solvency of Alcoa, which I think is laughable. Mr Claughton has pointed out the enormous assets of the company and how much money it makes. We can cast doubts on anything, but we must think of reality. We have an obligation—not only the Government, but every member—to be realistic in our approach to these problems.

With all the wonderment which came principally from Mr Hetherington, there was nothing substantial in his comments to overcome his wonderment. I can raise doubts about anything, and so can any member in this Chamber. In fact, we have done it on occasions. I have even heard you, Mr President, raise doubts about all sorts of things. That is part of an argument, but let us be realistic. A responsible Government has to face the fact that the people in the community need the Government to help them by providing the employment that is necessary; that can be done within the safety range by stimulating the economy. Consideration has to be given to all these things, and they have to be weighed up in the balance.

It is not true to say that the expansion of the company is the prime motive of this proposal. Of course, there will be some expansion if all the conditions are fulfilled, and if the environmental statements come up to the expectations of the company and of the Government. If the reports are favourable there will be some expansion by the company, because it will increase production by two million tonnes over 15 years.

I remind members of the fact that the Kwinana refinery produces 1.2 million tonnes per year and the Pinjarra refinery produces 2.3 million tonnes per year. That is a total of 3.5 million tonnes—which is the present figure. If another two million tonnes are ultimately produced within the next 15 years at Wagerup, that will mean a production of 5.5 million tonnes per year. The company, in its recent submission to System 6, stated it was aiming to produce 9.5 million tonnes. So, the expansion of the company will be limited by this proposal. The expansion will be cut down and instead of having the ability, as it has at the moment, to proceed in an unlimited way to expand its Pinjarra refinery—which is not

utilised to its maximum capacity—the company will be hindered by environmental limitations. The company will be restricted and asked to do its work at Wagerup; to go into another safe area until sufficient time has elapsed to enable adequate experiments to be carried out to ensure that the eastern area which it could go into now, will be safe.

The capacity will be cut down quite deliberately purely for environmental considerations. So, it is not right to say that this measure is designed to increase vastly the capacity of the company. The company has the capacity to expand now, legally. It could expand its present Pinjarra refinery to four million tonnes, virtually without any impediment.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: It could do that now, even with the passing of this Bill.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It can do that now, exactly.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Even with the passing of this Bill.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: This Bill is designed to prevent that expansion. It is providing another area for the company to move into.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: It will not prevent expansion.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: The company will not expand in the way it is entitled to do under the existing agreement which does not contain any environmental restrictions of the order now set out. Subject always to an ERMP, there has now been a limitation placed on the possible actions which the company may take.

As far as the economic aspects are concerned, I think they have been dealt with adequately in the second reading comments, and also by some members who have spoken. Indeed, I think we are indebted to some members for stressing the economic aspects. The number of employed people will increase to between 8 500 and 11 000, and there will be a spin-off of work into secondary and tertiary industries, contracting, supplies for the company, railways, road transport, and the SEC. Other material benefits will accrue as a result of co-operation between the SEC and the company in power generation, and there will be a general increase in prosperity.

The increase in employment was more than adequately pointed out by one or two members here tonight. Frankly, I was very touched to hear the comments made by one or two members who looked at this matter in the light of the ordinary

men and women who have no special qualifications, and who do not have jobs. Those are the people we must not overlook. With all the sympathy I have for environmental issues, I must say I have a great amount of sympathy for those people.

I sometimes wonder when I speak to an environmentalist who has a safe job—a medical technician, a person in some tertiary industry repairing television sets, a person working in a job of a specialist nature, a person who, living in the city, boasts of having gone into the country once or twice a year—whether those people are really qualified to talk about the environment in terms of human beings.

The environment is not just nature; the environment is men and women in nature. The environment is looking after people as well as looking after nature; the people are just as much a part of the environment.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You are talking as though this proposal is the only prospect of providing employment. That is nonsense.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: A man out of a job is a reality.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You are trying to denigrate people who do not have jobs.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: A man who does not have a job has a burden to bear.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have touched Mr Claughton on the raw.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Some people who do not have jobs are also environmentalists.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: These are things we must not overlook. Therefore when we hear comments made by people who are in reserved occupations—the kinds of occupations I am speaking about, and I do not begrudge them their views—we must weigh up those views against the views of the ordinary people who depend upon us to do our best to give them gainful employment and a decent life. A decent life to them, to you, Mr President, to me, or to any member of this House does not mean hand-outs. It means having employment and some way in which people can gainfully occupy themselves.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Mr Cooley says, "What is your hurry?"

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I would not like to ask that question of a man who is unemployed. Our hurry is that we can never delay a project of this kind in terms of human suffering. There is no excuse for holding up the betterment of ordinary people.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You said a while ago they have the right to go ahead now.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I think I should comment on the remarks made about company profits. Mr Claughton implied quite clearly that this company was making its profits out of its projects in Western Australia.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I said a substantial proportion of them.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: When he examines the balance sheets he will see at least a third of the company's activities, its capital outlay, its funds, and its profits are derived from outside Western Australia. It carries on quite extensive activities in brown coal, power generation, and smelting at Point Henry in Victoria. Its other activities are quite well known, and they are not exclusively in Western Australia.

Another point Mr Claughton made about the company's making so much money was that it was giving away shares to its shareholders. He said bonus shares were given away. Bonus shares are in fact issued to shareholders and they represent simply handing over to shareholders, in the form of bits of paper, the revaluation of the assets which are already held.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: No money changes hands.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: No money changes hands. It was implied the company was doing so well it was giving away its assets to its shareholders, but it was simply dividing up among the owners of the company the revaluation of the assets. The revaluation could have come about for a number of reasons, and I suggest the principal reason is the inflation which has occurred over the years. I remind the honourable member that the company was earning less than 10 per cent on the assets before they were re-valued.

The question has been asked, "Why can't we wait?" A number of speakers asked that question. I invite members to consider the facts. How long are we expected to wait? A number of periods were mentioned. Some said a few days, some said a fortnight, some said a few weeks, and I heard a few months mentioned. I also heard a reference to 12 months, by which time the trees would have been growing for five years; and I heard it said that in 15 years the trees might die. The same speaker said we cannot be certain for 25 to 40 years.

Of course we cannot be certain of everything but we cannot afford to wait any lengthy period in a situation like this without good reason. The

project in fact is being held up until we have an environmental review and management programme which is satisfactory to the Government. It was said we must at least await the current reports. How many reports are there? There are half a dozen. Most of them are ongoing reports. The Hunt report has been going for some years; it is a very good report. Some other reports are coming up. Half a dozen reports were mentioned in a debate in another place, and some have been mentioned here.

These are ongoing reports and we cannot await all those reports because more reports will be coming out of them, and if this project gets off the ground those very reports will result in new laws and regulations which the company is bound to observe under the terms of the agreement. No-one who can read can deny that.

As far as water and forests are concerned, I believe the Hon. Neil McNeill and some other speakers have dealt more than adequately with those matters. Water and forests are prime responsibilities of the Government. We could not abrogate our responsibilities in regard to water and forests. How long would a Government last in Western Australia if it overlooked its responsibilities in regard to water and forests? That is exactly the reason we are taking the precaution of making this agreement subject to the ERMP and all the other requirements to which I have referred.

The company may lose its money if the ERMP is not acceptable. That is a condition of the agreement. The agreement must be executed and ratified because the company cannot really take any effective steps in regard to finance and banking or making its commercial arrangements, generally, unless it can say, "We have an agreement with the Western Australian Government. Here is the agreement."

This project will run into millions of dollars. Who will lend a cent to a company which cannot say, "We have an agreement"? Obviously, until the company has an agreement it is in peril. Another company could get an agreement. There are plenty of cases of claim-jumping in matters of this kind, just as there are in mining leases. And the agreement is still subject to the environmental conditions.

We have heard about the fragile balance of the environment. It is a term we hear very often. It is a term of which I am very well aware and I have often used it myself. It is indeed a fragile balance.

But there is another balance which the Government must weigh up and of which it is very conscious; that is, the balance between environmental considerations and the economy. If we become emotional about the environmental considerations, we can also become emotional about the economy, and the Government must avoid being emotional about either issue.

The Government must be realistic and factual. It must get its facts right and make a considered and balanced judgment. It has to weigh up these issues. It cannot push them into a corner and say, "They are too hard; we will leave them for someone else", or, "We will have another look at it in six months' time." We cannot do that in a situation like this.

The Government will not flinch from facing its responsibility. It is facing these problems now in the interests of all the citizens of this State.

I thank members for their contribution to the debate, and I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) in the Chair; the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 10 put and passed.

Clause 11: Fourth Schedule added—

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I wish to move a purely nominal amendment to correct a typographical error. I move an amendment—

Page 5, line 19—Insert before the word "deemed" the words "shall be".

Amendment put and passed.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When the Hon. Neil McNeill was speaking he referred to the Bill introduced in 1973 by the Tonkin Government. It appears to me that when he was addressing himself to the Alumina Refinery (Worsley) Agreement Act Amendment Bill he referred to the variation clause in that Bill as though it were something sinister. He said that for the first time a variation clause in a Bill could possibly rewrite the Bill—I think they were his words—

The Hon. Neil McNeill: No, they were not my words.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —after the agreement was signed. Well, they were very close to his words.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: No, a long way off.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Perhaps the honourable member would stand up to tell us what his words were.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: I will check it.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I think that is very close to it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member is not prepared to stand up and tell us.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: Why do you mutilate things?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When we come to debate the next Bill we will see that no amendments are proposed to the variation clause. I would now like to turn to page 17 of the Bill before us. I would like members to look at that, while I read the variation clause in the original Worsley agreement. It reads as follows—

(1) The parties may from time to time by agreement in writing add to substitute or cancel or vary all or any of the provisions of this Agreement or of any lease licence easement or right granted hereunder or pursuant hereto for the purpose of more efficiently or satisfactorily implementing or facilitating any of the objects of this Agreement.

(2) Where in the opinion of the Minister an agreement made pursuant to subclause (1) of this Clause constitutes a material or substantial alteration of the rights or obligations of either party, the agreement shall contain a declaration to that effect and the Minister shall cause that agreement to be laid upon the Table of each House of Parliament within the twelve sitting days next following its execution.

(3) Either House may, within twelve (12) sitting days of that House after the agreement has been laid before it, pass a resolution disallowing the agreement, but if, after the last day on which the agreement might have been disallowed neither House has passed such a resolution the agreement shall have effect from and after that last day.

Of course that is the same provision. The fact that the Hon. Neil McNeill tried to make out there was something sinister in the 1973 agreement is only proof that he was nit-picking and did not read the Bill presently before us. He would not have made those comments if he were conversant with the variation clause in this Bill.

Let me remind the member that all agreements coming before this Chamber contain variation clauses. We have questioned them from time to time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You used to put on performances about variation clauses in the days of the iron ore agreements.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Not me.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, but your colleagues did. You were a very sensible fellow, and we now realise it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It may have taken the Leader of the House a long time to realise that, but I knew all the time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is only in the last year you have done one or two sensible things.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: With respect, I believe the Hon. Neil McNeill may be sorry for making the statements he did.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I feel that the Hon. Ron Thompson was inviting me to make some comment. First of all, I reject his contention that I claimed there was something sinister in the variation clause, a variation clause of a very wide nature.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You were, and you were caught out by it.

I am prepared to read what *Hansard* took down, and I quote as follows—

I ask Mr McKenzie to bear in mind what I am about to say.

The Tonkin Government as part of its policy—I do not say I disagree with it—submitted an unsigned agreement to Parliament, seeking its ratification. In it was a variations clause of the widest possible nature in order to give the Tonkin Government room to manoeuvre—

After an interjection from Mr Dans, I carried on and said—

—after Parliament had given consideration to the legislation.

Then I continued on to say—

That was not all, because to the great credit of the Government at that time it also tabled in this House a number of documents concerning the Worsley agreement, including EPA documents and a number of others. I have referred to some which were not included in the papers tabled, but the important point was that despite the tabling of those papers, and despite the studies carried out and the reports delivered to Parliament—which were available for public perusal—the

Tonkin Government was unable still at that stage to come to Parliament with a signed agreement.

So I suggest to the Hon. Ron Thompson that he has committed a disservice in respect of my remarks, because I do not believe anyone can interpret them as being sinister in any way.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What was the purpose of your remarks?

The Hon. Neil McNeill: I made three points which were the subject of debate in the 1973 agreement; firstly, that the agreement was unsigned; secondly, it contained a wide variations clause which provoked some comment; thirdly, EPA and other documents were laid on the Table of the House, and some manoeuvrability was available to the Government at that time. However, it still could not provide a signed agreement for the consideration of the Parliament.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It didn't want to, and you accepted that.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: There is no argument about that; I have already repeated my words that it was the policy of the Tonkin Government and one it had every right to follow. However, at the time I did not believe it was right. In fact, Mr Thompson was the Minister and he asked me, by way of interjection, whether I agreed with the principle and I replied that I had analysed the proposition and on balance I did not agree with the practice of bringing unsigned agreements to Parliament.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General), and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

ALUMINA REFINERY (WORSLEY) AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [11.25 p.m.]: Members on this side of the House have already raised most of the matters they wish to raise on the previous Bill, so we will not spend a great deal of time on this Bill.

We have supported this company in the past when in Government, and we are aware it has gone through a very difficult period in trying to get this project off the ground. We do not see problems applying to this project to the same extent as they apply to the Alcoa project.

However, I might say by the way that I would have liked the opportunity to debate many matters raised by members opposite. I could make a very long second reading speech to cover all those points. However, I do not intend to spend time on that matter tonight. I hope members opposite will take care to study the problems a lot more seriously than they give evidence of having done up to this point.

I was most disturbed at the very limited extent of knowledge displayed by Mr Baxter and I would adjure him and certain of his colleagues to study the matter more closely. Some members opposite have had an elementary education and have not gone beyond that; on the other hand, some such as Mr Neil McNeill have received tertiary education; and one would expect him to make statements different from those he made in respect of matters of bauxite mining and forestry. I think either Mr Neil McNeill has not studied the matter or has skipped over the difficult parts of the story, and that is not good enough when we are endeavouring to arrive at decisions. One must face up to the hard parts, as well as the easy parts.

This Bill is the easy part as far as the Labor Party is concerned, although there are some matters of concern. When the Bill was in the Assembly it was suggested that it be withdrawn until such time as the matters of concern were cleared up; but the matters were not viewed as being major obstacles.

I refer to matters of concern such as safeguards applying to red mud ponds and the method of conveying bauxite from the mine site to the refinery, particularly in respect of preventing the spread of dieback. Such matters are really more of a technical nature and could be cleared up by further examination of the methods the company intends to use. They do not present real reasons to object to the proposal.

We wish the company every success and hope it will be able to fulfil the desire expressed today to commence construction towards the end of the year.

THE HON. R. G. PIKE (North Metropolitan) [11.30 p.m.]: I rise to associate myself with this Bill and to speak in support of it. I must say

the Hon. Roy Cloughton seems to be able to compress the most words into the smallest idea. Certainly, he did so on the previous Bill, and I thank him for being brief on this occasion.

Collie is a town which, like Micawber, has been waiting optimistically for something to turn up. I refrained from speaking to the previous Bill, because I considered there were sufficient speakers already. However, I did speak to the President of Collie Shire in regard to the Bill now before the House and he expressed his complete and absolute support of the Bill.

I think it is relevant for me also to refer to a debate in another place where the comment was made by a member that nobody was more keen than he to see Alwest established, because it would be located 10 miles outside of Collie.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are not allowed to do that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! To what document is the honourable member referring?

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Mr President, I am referring only to my own notes in regard to a comment I ascertained was made in another place.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You cannot quote from speeches made in another Chamber.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I know that.

Point of Order

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Mr President, I take a point of order. The honourable member is quite entitled to refer to "another place" because the "place" to which he refers could well be a shop in town. "Another place" means any other place.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Chair was questioning the document from which the member was reading; I did not question his right to refer to another place.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: Thank you, Mr President; that quickly makes the point I wanted to make. I merely mention that the member in another place to whom I referred is not a member of the Liberal Party, which of course is the party of which I am a member.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: At the moment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are being nasty tonight.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: There are a whole lot of names; there are Joneses and Browns and others, but it is not my intention to name any particular name.

It is a significant and perhaps historic occasion that when Bills of this import come before our House we should see such basic commonsense being illustrated in another place and in this place to support the propositions put forward by the Government. I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [11.33 p.m.]: Like previous speakers, I support this Bill; I would be nothing but a hypocrite if I did not support it, because it is a continuation of the Bill introduced in 1970, and amended in 1973. When Mr MacKinnon spoke he made the point that, following the introduction of the 1973 legislation, there was great concern in the town of Bunbury as to the effects on that town of pollution, additional traffic, etc. Although Bunbury welcomed the establishment of the industry, there was a feeling of disquiet. When the company was buying up land around Picton, it realised there could be some threat to the environment, and as a result moved to Worsley. It was as a result of that move that the agreement of 1973 came about.

The 1973 agreement stressed the benefit which the Collie area would derive in the future, because the energy used at Worsley was to be derived from coal mined on the Collie coalfields, in conjunction with the SEC or private works. The Bill before the House contains an amendment in that it will be the State Energy Commission, in conjunction with the company, which will supply power or buy power and sell it, or whichever the case may be. I cannot see anything wrong with that proposition provided that, in the main, coal from Collie is to be used.

I have read in the newspapers—I do not regard that as gospel, but as fairly authoritative—that if the two agreements did not get off the ground the natural gas pipeline from the north-west would not be built for many years. Nothing to this effect has been spelled out in the Bill or the Minister's second reading speech, and I sincerely trust it is still the intention of the Government to use Collie coal for power generation purposes wherever possible. That was the original agreement we had with the company, and if it is to be varied it should be spelled out, otherwise Parliament is being hoodwinked. Perhaps the Attorney-General can reply on this point.

The Town of Collie is the town which will benefit from this agreement, and the Port of Bunbury is the port which will benefit. The previous Bill contains a provision which will aid the Port of Bunbury, but in this Bill we can only hope the product will be shipped from the Port of Bunbury.

The other point which concerns me and which I would like the Minister to answer relates to compensation. When the 1973 Bill was before this House there were four speakers; namely, the Hon. Neil McNeill, the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, the Hon. Arthur Griffith and now Sir Arthur Griffith, and the Hon. Tom Perry. All speakers except the Hon. Tom Perry asked about compensation for mining on private land. The 1973 agreement was very brief, and I think I should read it because it might save the Minister looking it up. I refer to page 27 of the agreement where, at paragraph (9) under the margin heading of "Mining on privately owned land", the following statement is made—

The Joint Venturers will not commence any mining or related operations for the purposes of this Agreement on any privately owned land within the mineral lease unless and until—

- (a) they have entered into a written agreement with the owner and occupier of such land for the purpose of providing for adequate restoration of the land after mining and that agreement has been approved by the Minister; and
- (b) they have entered into a written agreement with the owner and occupier of such land for compensation arising out of their operations or proposed operations on the land, and within fourteen (14) days after the date thereof or (in the case of an agreement entered into before the date hereof) after the execution of this Agreement lodge a true copy of the agreement with the Minister for Mines.

It then goes on to deal with matters not applicable to my argument.

I wish to refer now to pages 10 and 11 of the new agreement. I will start by referring to page 11, because what I have just read from the original agreement is covered up to page 11. I commence at subparagraph (iii)—

- (iii) the Joint Venturers have entered into a written agreement with the owner and occupier of such land for the purpose of providing for adequate restoration of the land after mining and that agreement has been approved by the Minister.
- (b) (i) Where an owner and/or occupier unreasonably withholds or refuses consent as provided in subparagraph

(i) of paragraph (a) of this subclause, the Joint Venturers may apply to the Warden to dispense with such consent.

The Warden shall have jurisdiction to hear such application and his decision shall be binding on the parties.

- (ii) Where the Joint Venturers and an owner and/or occupier are unable to reach agreement as provided in subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (a) of this subclause, then where a reasonable time has elapsed after the commencement of negotiations either party may apply to the Warden to determine the amount of such compensation and the provisions of sections 169 to 172 inclusive of the Mining Act shall apply. The Joint Venturers shall lodge a copy of the Warden's determination with the Minister for Mines.
- (iii) Where the Joint Venturers and the owner and/or occupier are unable to reach agreement as provided in subparagraph (iii) of paragraph (a) of this subclause, then where a reasonable time has elapsed after the commencement of negotiations either party may apply to the Minister to determine the restoration to be carried out by the Joint Venturers and the determination of the Minister shall be binding on the parties.
- (c) The Warden shall have power to adjudicate on matters arising pursuant to subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of paragraph (b) of this subclause, concurrently.
- (d) If pursuant to this subclause the Joint Venturers become entitled to commence mining or related operations on privately owned land the Joint Venturers shall be deemed under this Agreement to have an estate or interest in such land sufficient to support a caveat under Part V of the Transfer of Land Act, 1893.

This is putting a lot of verbiage into the agreement. It appears to me that if a private agreement is entered into between the owner and/or occupier and the company, it is all right for the company to carry out mining and effect restoration, and the clause gives the right for the

Minister to intervene. I should like the Attorney-General to tell me whether I am correct in saying that this amending clause gives the right to the company, with the permission of the warden, to mine on privately-owned land. The Attorney-General nodded. I am pleased with that answer. When the Worsley agreement was before us on a previous occasion the Hon. Neil McNeill was the principal speaker in the debate and, although he nit-picked and made no constructive comments, the point I have just raised took up the major part of the debate at the Committee stage. It was raised by the present Leader of the House, Mr Neil McNeill, and the Hon. Arthur Griffith.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Perhaps you were inadequate in your explanation.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was not inadequate because my explanation was quite simply what the Bill said—that if the owner and/or occupier and the company did not come to an agreement no mining took place on that land. But under the provisions of this amending legislation if agreement is not reached between the owner and/or occupier and the company the warden can determine whether mining can take place on private property. In no circumstances in 1973 would Mr Neil McNeill have accepted that because he said that privately-owned land was sacrosanct.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Has the thought crossed your mind that you might have been more persuasive than you thought?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: My answers were accepted without question. No amendments were put forward although it was the right of every member to seek to amend the unsigned agreement. As a matter of fact, I moved an amendment to the agreement. I should like to get the views of those members who have spoken on this matter very loudly in the years that I have been a member of this Chamber about the rights of the Government or the company to enter private land and undertake mining. It amounts virtually to a resumption of the minerals for the benefit of the company. Admittedly the Crown owns the minerals—we do not dispute that—but this action could upset farming activities.

We know that the Public Works Act has never provided adequate compensation except to the Swan Brewery and to the owners of a house in South Perth in the 20 years' experience I have had of it. But the Public Works Act does not apply to this situation; the mining warden will make the determination.

What sort of situation will the landowner or farmer be put in? What is his future? On a previous occasion the debate on this topic continued

for hours and hours. Yet in the Minister's second reading speech on this occasion there was no explanation for this about-face. I am not prepared to accept the situation unless a thorough explanation is given, and I hope I get an answer to that question from the Minister in charge of the Bill.

The other question I would like to ask concerns the areas of land involved and I would like to know whether they are the same as those marked on the maps placed on the Table of the House in 1973. A nod from the Minister would satisfy me. We have not had any indication in this Bill whether the areas of land are the same as those shown on the map tabled in 1973.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think they are the same.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: I believe they are.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Attorney-General believes so.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We are almost certain, because if there had been changes they would have been brought to our attention.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not make such casual statements when I was handling the 1973 agreement. I could not afford to be so casual as I was being given a tough time. I answered most of the questions asked of me.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: You have asked me to answer by nodding but you have not given me a chance.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Attorney-General did not say whether he knew.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: No, I did not. Would you like me to signal in semaphore?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Let us assume that the maps are the same and that the areas of land are the same. Another subject about which I was questioned at great length was that of the railway lines which will be going through Alcoa land. Alcoa will have the mining rights of the land under the railway line and the Hon. Neil McNeill will remember this, because in 1973 he spelt it out to me about five times. Will the company have the rights to the alumina under the railway? We have not been told.

Where are the railways going? When I was asked that question my answer was that no plans for railways had been drawn. If the Minister will give that answer I will accept it. Certainly over the last five years the Minister has had time to do his homework.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Do you mean to say I have had nothing else to do for five years?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Hon. Neil McNeill has done nothing else, because he was adamant about the point that the company owned the bauxite under the railway and should receive compensation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The thought has started to cross my mind that you are trying to be difficult.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will not be difficult for two hours as the Hon. Neil McNeill was when he spoke on the 1973 agreement, during both the second reading stage and the Committee stage. These were the sorts of questions I was asked and I was accused of not doing my homework. Like the present Minister I, too, was handling the Bill on behalf of a Minister in another place. Nearly five years have elapsed so someone should know the answers.

At that time I delayed the Bill and I hope this Bill also will be delayed until we receive answers. I have *Hansard* reports here of that time and I could quote tedious speeches made by then Opposition members. I will not read from them, because it will just waste the time of the House.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You might in the Committee stage.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Perhaps I will if I do not receive the right answers.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Are you going to sit down?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I do not have to tell the Hon. Gordon Masters when I am going to sit down. The environmental studies that were initially placed in the 1973 agreement have been extended, and I agree with this as I did with the previous Bill. I think they adequately cover the situation and I trust they will be of benefit to the State.

I know that in the area involved we have heard of salinity problems. I do not know the area all that well and I am not an authority on this subject. Perhaps members representing the area might be able to voice an opinion on this problem. Salinity has become a big problem in some areas and I trust it can be overcome. I support the second reading of the Bill; I feel sure I will have more questions to ask in the Committee stage.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [11.57 p.m.]: Like the previous speaker I support the second reading of this Bill. Again, like Mr Thompson, I am desirous of having certain matters ironed out in the Committee stage. I support the Bill, because I believe I have done

enough homework to convince myself that this industry will be an asset to the area and there is nothing diabolical or sinister about the mining proposed by the company under this agreement.

I believe the new agreement is certainly a lot better than the 1973 agreement. I can go a step further than that and say that ever since I have been in this place—since 1962—I have supported all the agreements which have gone through this Parliament. I welcome this one, because it is an improvement on the previous agreement.

Tonight we have been accused of not being expert enough to be able to make a judgment, and we have been told that we should listen to the experts. I remember the Hon. Grace Vaughan saying this during the debate on the previous Bill. She said the experts were not pinpricking and we should take heed of them. Of course we can get experts on both sides of the fence.

I knew very well this argument would be raised so I thought I would try to locate a practical man, someone who might know something of the Mt. Saddleback area, had lived in the area for many years, and who knew something of its progress. Consequently I thought there was only one man in the whole of the south-west who had the respect of everyone in the timber game, so I decided to ring him to hear his opinions on this subject.

Of course, the man I contacted was Mr. Lou Stagbouer. Everyone in the area knows him to be a huge man. His physique is not only huge, but he also walks 10 feet tall amongst the timber people. Many members will have seen him at Royal Shows. Members have seen the man in charge of the log chops there. He is Mr Lou Stagbouer.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: He is very well respected.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I have known him for many years, as has Mr Ferry. I worked with him 20 years ago on a developmental council. At that time he opposed the opening up of the area around Boddington for farming purposes purely and simply because of the area of forests which would be removed. That happened many years ago.

If he wants to tell one what he thinks, he is not afraid to whom he is speaking. Some important people have taken a tongue lashing from Mr Lou Stagbouer; but he is respected by everybody. He is respected by the people who have worked in the forests and the people who in fact control the forests.

For these reasons I spoke to Mr Stagbouer and I said, "I would like to know your opinion. I do not want to be told over the phone. I would like you to write me a letter." I should now like to read the letter he wrote to me. It is as follows—

Dear Sir,

Following a request to give you as our MP my idea of the Bauxite mining in our District by Alwest I will endeavour to set out my thoughts on the matter.

Having been associated with the timber industry for over 50 years in cutting sleepers, poles, piles, and also actively engaged in sawmilling for over 20 years I feel that I am qualified to comment and expect to be taken notice of.

That is typical of Lou. To continue—

Firstly the timber on the Mt. Saddleback area was always considered a third rate forest in keeping with all the area north. You can find a definite change in timber about 30-35 miles east of Pinjarra where the jarrah begins to tail off and the wandoo starts and whilst there are pockets of reasonably good jarrah in this area the majority is of course inferior. I have personally cut timber right around the perimeter of Saddleback and north a little beyond Mt. Wells and have found this the case without exception.

The amount of dieback in the Saddleback area is confined to a few small areas that could if necessary be isolated.

The area to be mined I understand is approximately 300 acres per annum including roads over a period. The marketable timber would be used at commencement and when the area mined is sufficiently large to enable contouring to be done efficiently replanting with suitable species of eucalypts will be carried out so that there would not be any great area denuded at any time.

Salinity will not be affected to any degree as the whole of the area south of Mt. Wells is drained into the Murray River which for many years has been well over the accepted limits. As you probably know both the Williams and Hotham Rivers have their source east of Narrogin and finally form the Murray, south-west of Mt. Saddleback draining a large area of farm land north to Wandering. Any fresh water streams that enter the Murray are south of the Junction. From advice given by scientists there is quite a

considerable amount of salt content in the ore taken so if anything there could be an improvement in the water from the area.

Decentralisation and employment must play a big role in a project of this nature and I cannot in any way see that there should be any opposition to it by any unbiased person. Of course stories are told that are not based on facts and are inclined to appeal to emotional people who once they wave a banner are not inclined to "back off". First hand information from a qualified source never seems to have the same appeal to the emotionally inclined as fiction or vivid imagination.

Dr Beard had a letter printed in last Saturday's paper which I feel was the most sensible and practical opinion that I have seen quoted on the subject yet.

You are probably aware that apart from a small block and a home out of town I have absolutely no pecuniary interests in the district; neither has any of my family but it is disappointing to see a project such as this threatened with extinction by "antis" when one has spent a lifetime working for a district that has a record second to none for self-help in community projects.

In conclusion I would like to express my thoughts that each case should be treated on its merits and this one not "generally" linked with Alcoa as they are entirely different setups and as the original Freeman of the Shire I hope you as our Parliamentary representative can assist in bringing about a satisfactory result.

Yours faithfully,
Lou Stagbouer.

That is the opinion of a practical man. He is well known to Mr Ferry, Mr Neil McNeill, the Hon. Graham MacKinnon, the Hon. Norman Baxter, the Hon. W. M. Piesse, and many others.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He used to be king of all the woodchoppers.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: He is a man whose opinion one does not take lightly. He is a man who has walked through the bush, as he said, for 50 years. He knows every inch of it. I decided instead of using my own personal opinion which, like the opinions of some other members of the House, might be based on a smattering of scientific knowledge, I would seek a practical opinion.

I received a telegram from the Boddington Shire Council which reads as follows—

Council supports the Governments legislation relating to bauxite mining by Alwest Co. Ltd stop We believe environmental issues are adequately protected by legislation stop Benefits to the State-nation and the Boddington district cannot be allowed to be jeopardised by vocal minority groups stop . . . H. E. Carrots, President, Shire of Boddington.

I checked with the shire council and found the telegram had the unanimous support of the members.

One can go into the facts and see the protection offered by the proposed amendment to the Bill introduced in 1973, however, I do not think it is necessary because this has been covered adequately by many members in this Chamber and indeed it has been covered excellently by speakers on the Opposition benches. Nevertheless, I should like to say, as I did before, I support it. In fact when the Bill was introduced in 1973 during the second reading debate in another place, of which I was a member at that time, I was one of the four speakers. Consequently, the Bill was acceptable to the present Government when it was in Opposition at the time the Bill was introduced in 1973 by the Government of the day which is now in Opposition.

I do not see any reason for objecting to a Bill which is tightening up the agreement and providing certain safeguards. However, since Mr Thompson spoke, I find myself in a quandary about one point. When the Mining Act Amendment Bill was passed in 1970 I thought it was one of the greatest pieces of mining legislation I had seen. At that time mining was rampant and people were tending to go silly. They were moving onto private land and onto farms. As a result, we were receiving complaints about farming land and backyards being pegged out. I should like to read section 140 of the Mining Act, 1904-69, as amended. It reads as follows—

Except with the consent in writing of the owner and the occupier of the land, no mining tenement shall be granted or occupied comprising private land—

- (a) that is in *bona fide* and regular use as a yard, garden, orchard, vineyard, plant nursery, plantation or land under cultivation;
- (b) that is used as a cemetery or burial place;
- (c) that is used as a reservoir;

(d) on which there is erected a substantial improvement; or

(e) of less than one-half acre in extent, unless the grant or occupation is limited to a greater depth than one hundred feet from the lowest part of the surface of the land.

(2) Without affecting the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, no mining tenement shall be granted or occupied comprising private land that is situated—

(a) within fifty yards of any land referred to in paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section; or

(b) within one hundred and fifty yards laterally from any land referred to in paragraph (b), (c) or (d) of subsection (1) of this section,

unless—

(c) the consent in writing of the owner and the occupier of the land so referred to in paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d) of subsection (1) of this section, as the case requires, has been obtained; or

(d) the grant or occupation is limited to a greater depth than one hundred feet from the lowest part of the surface of the land.

And so it goes on. It was great protection, we felt, in the wheat-lands particularly because at that time there was an interest in mine pegging which was not prevented. I think it was the alterations to section 155 which permitted prospecting and a great number of samples to be taken.

If a person fitted into one of the categories I previously read, no warden would say that the land could be mined. In fact, the Mining Act reigned supreme. I had thought that the Mining Act would reign supreme with regard to the circumstances surrounding Worsley. Maybe it does and maybe the Minister will tell me that. Nevertheless, having read the Bill and the lines referred to by Mr Thompson I began to have a few doubts. However, I am not qualified in law to be able to read into the Bill the provisions I have just read from the Mining Act.

With those reservations and with the understanding that in the Committee stage I will make further comment on that clause, I support the second reading.

THE HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [12.13 a.m.]: As the hour is late I will not keep the House for any great time. It seems that in most of the discussions on alumina this evening the same attitude is being adopted by some members as has been adopted in discussions on other Bills. It has been stated that the Government is heartless and cruel by racing Bills through and not giving anyone time to study them.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Who said that in connection with this Bill?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If Mr Gayfer had listened he would have heard me referring to discussions on alumina this evening.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: No-one said that in respect of this Bill.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: No-one has alleged that anyone has said it in respect of this Bill.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You are talking on the wrong Bill.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: When Mr Gayfer becomes President, maybe I will not be in the Chamber.

It appears to me that we do get bogged down in unfortunate legal wrangles. I believe the Mining Act does reign supreme, and I will not test my knowledge of law against that of the Attorney-General. Members will be well aware of what I think of the Mining Act, because I have had many things to say about it in the past.

The great beauty of the agreement is the number of jobs it will create not only as a result of the alumina itself, but also in the coalfields, and as I represent that area, the more jobs created, the better I will like it. It could be said that I am a developer at any price. I am not, but I do become a little worried when I hear people say that there has not been enough time to witness the redevelopment of forests. It has been said that we have not waited long enough to ascertain what the redevelopment will be like. However, I emphasised that in the country covered by Alwest, there are very good examples of regeneration—natural regeneration and regeneration by companies mining in the area. I refer of course to Greenbushes tin.

If people saw the jarrah forest in that area most of them would be convinced that there is a great opportunity for the forest to be regenerated.

Some people have referred to guarantees regarding the growing of trees. I would like someone to guarantee that the jarrah forest will not die

from dieback anyway, especially if people take vehicles and camp on the top of Mt. William, thus transporting dieback through the forest.

When I hear of the hundreds of hours of work put into a study of the alumina agreements, I wonder whether anyone did bother to visit the area and see for himself the regeneration which has taken place. Did the committees go by themselves and ask anyone to show them areas where regeneration had been undertaken? Did the committees ever study the situation at Greenbushes and the regeneration of the jarrah forest around that area? If any forester had been asked, he would have been only too willing to take anyone to such an area.

No-one who is fair could do anything but support the Bill. No-one should want any more time. We have been discussing alumina, and the Alwest agreement in particular, for a number of years. I believe that in another place a letter from the previous Premier to Mr Whitlam was read. The letter urged that Alwest be permitted to go ahead without any delay at all. It is most unfortunate for the joint venturers that time has lagged as much as it has. We have reached the stage where the costs of the infrastructure have, for various reasons, increased enormously and I believe that any delay in a venture of this magnitude would be detrimental.

It is ridiculous for anyone to suggest that we have not had enough time. Reference has been made to credits and the question has been asked: Why do we talk about credits? The credit difference between now and the 31st December represents many millions of dollars even with the low inflation rate the Australian Government has today.

Unfortunately, the joint venturers also have had to face huge inflation rates which have occurred over the past few years. That has been a detriment to the company and to the project.

It seems that some people are worried about salinity of the water supplies, but I understand from my reading of the agreement that the salinity problem will be covered. Mining will not take place in the Collie catchment area.

It seems to have been my misfortune always to be on the wrong side of any argument. I refer to matters such as the wood chipping industry, and now bauxite mining. From time to time we are constantly told what one or another expert has said. Thank the Lord this Government makes decisions, and then goes ahead with them. Those decisions are made on the best possible advice and by men who have just as much concern for the future of this country as has the Opposition. The

sort of emotional outbursts we get from the Opposition, with regard to any project which is proposed, seem to indicate that the Government has no feelings about what will happen in 50 or 100 years' time. That is not so.

Many of us in this House—if not all of us—from all political parties are concerned about what will happen in the days of our grandchildren. I want to put to rest this sort of proposition that the Government is hard-hearted and that it could not care less for the future of this State.

This Government makes decisions—the best possible decisions—and gets on with the job. It does not stall and wait for more and more reports. Quite frankly, a Government which waits for more and more reports becomes more and more confused. I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [12.22 a.m.]: It seems to be thought that to be a member of Parliament one has to have a degree in economics in order to study all the technical papers put forward by various people. The Hon. R. F. Claughton implied that because I had not read a certain publication I was not competent to discuss issues of this nature. Far from that, I have done quite a lot of research on this Bill. As a matter of fact, Mr Gayfer and I spent some hours yesterday morning on our knees pouring over maps and studying various reports. We have not taken this matter lightly.

Accompanied by other members, I flew over Collie and Worsley, and the proposed site for the mine development. We then returned to Perth, and went back to the area by car. We drove to the top of Mt. Saddleback and observed the drilling which had been done earlier. We drove right around the area in order to get first-hand knowledge of the situation and to observe the country. We saw how much clearing had been done. Although I know that area fairly well—it is part of my province—it was quite an eye-opener to see what had taken place.

Mt. Saddleback is surrounded by cleared farming land. The rivers in the area are very saline, so there is little problem in regard to increased salinity in that area. It has been claimed by some people that the mining of the scarp at Mt. Saddleback will increase the salinity of the water, but the water is already saline.

The method of mining in this area will be different from that carried out in the ore-bearing deposits on the western side of the scarp. The mining will go down to a depth ranging from 25 to 100 feet.

The Manager of Alwest assured us—the Hon. Win Piesse, the Hon. Tom McNeil, and myself—that agreement had been reached with the freehold landowners in the district, and that there were no problems. Of course, when the mining operations are extended at a later stage to areas other than Mt. Saddleback the company may run into difficulties with some freehold landowners.

It appears that most of the freehold landowners in the Boddington district are only too happy to co-operate with the company, and to see the mining take place. Those people are confident the company will look after them and put the land back into good shape.

There were one or two other matters I wanted to discuss but the hour is getting late. I am confident, after talking to the managers of the companies involved, that they are anxious to press on as soon as possible. They want to finalise planning before they actually start work and build the refinery. Time is important to them.

The development will mean a great deal to the township of Boddington, and the surrounding districts. The people in Boddington are aware that the mining venture will provide employment opportunities, and there will be a requirement for additional housing. Boddington has a transport problem because there is no bus service to the main road. With an increase in population it will probably be worth while for a bus operator to commence transporting passengers to and from Perth on a daily run basis.

Together with Mr Gayfer, I am a little concerned about the provision which will give a warden the right to allow mining on freehold land. I am wondering, as did Mr Thompson, whether the provisions of paragraph (b) on page 11 of the agreement will override the Mining Act. I would like to hear the Minister comment on that point. I support the measure.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [12.29 a.m.]: Very briefly, I wish to record my support for this Bill. I agree with much of what has been said tonight. I will not repeat it, except to say the project covered by this legislation will provide a tremendous impetus for the south-west region.

One of the benefits which will flow from this measure is an improved water supply for the town of Boddington, both in quality and quantity. I believe the benefits which will flow from this project will have an effect on most people in the area.

I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

THE HON GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [12.30 a.m.]: I rise to say again that the Opposition is opposing this Bill only because of the refusal of the Government to delay even for a short time its consideration of the agreement. The agreement has been signed, and in this Bill—

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Didn't Mr Claughton say you were supporting it?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: No.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: He wished the company success. You are opposing it, are you?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Of course we are opposing it. As *Hansard* will show, Mr Claughton did not support the Bill but said we were not opposing it with such vehemence because there were not so many problems associated with Alwest as with Alcoa. In fact there have been more environmental impact statements and there is less danger of damage being done to the environment in this area.

Nevertheless, we do oppose it on the same principle; that is, the Government has not told us of any reason. In fact, the Attorney-General said in respect of the previous Bill that the agreement already allows for expansion, further employment, and all the other things we heard would be affected by our opposing the Bill. In the Attorney-General's own words he showed it was not so and that in fact things were going ahead.

Unless we are to believe there is no faith and trust between the companies and the Government, we really cannot accept that there is a need to hasten the Bill through. I am making our position clear that we did not ask for a Royal Commission in this case but simply asked that the Government delay ratifying the Bill.

I say again the numbers are there and they will not run away in the next few months. Perhaps there may even be more information so that we can be sure that when we enter into the new agreement we will have the utmost information as a background for making the decisions.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [12.33 a.m.]: I am sorry I misunderstood Mr Claughton.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I must confess I kept my remarks extremely brief—perhaps a little too brief.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I am sorry he is not supporting the Bill. It appeared he had wished the company every success.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: He did.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: However, I appreciate that he has indicated he is not supporting it. I am sorry about that. I gather from the Hon. Grace Vaughan that she is not supporting it. There was no doubt about what she said.

I thank other members for their support of the Bill and can assure them their support is appreciated. This is a worthy venture.

In answer to the questions raised by the Hon. Ron Thompson, I just say it is quite clear that it is intended to use Collie coal. The refinery will generate its power and steam requirements from Collie coal, which will require an expansion of the coalmining force at Collie. It is hoped there will be additional production from Collie which will contribute to the township and to the well-being of the people in Collie.

However, as the honourable member will have noted, there is a reference to the fact that the Government will supply to the company information as to alternative sources, and if at some future date there is an alternative arrangement in relation to gas or oil which becomes more economic, the Government has bound itself to supply that information to the company. That is included in the agreement.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Does the provision in the agreement still stand with relation to coal?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Yes. There is no question that compensation is payable if privately-owned land has to be acquired and consent is refused. It is payable in those terms by arrangement with the warden, and the provisions of the Mining Act do apply. It will be just as though it were a proceeding under the Mining Act. In that respect it may be different from what occurred previously. At any rate, it has been expanded in that way and there is no question that compensation is payable.

There is no reference to any change in the leases, which leads me to assume they must be identical with the ones which were there previously.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I did not raise the question of the leases.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: On the question of the railways, as far as I am aware the situation is exactly as before. There is provision in the original agreement with the WAGR—now known as the Railways Commission—to have the railway upgraded at the cost of the company, to have a new railway constructed from the lease to the

refinery and the Port of Bunbury to link up with the existing railway system, to upgrade the old railway if necessary, and also to upgrade the railway from Collie.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Has it ever been surveyed?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I do not know.

In answer to Mr Gayfer, who raised a very relevant point, there is no reference to section 140 being deleted. He will appreciate from his experience with other agreements which have been before the House that some agreements contain a specific reference to deleting sections of certain Acts. In fact the original 1973 agreement deletes certain sections of the Land Act in relation to the leases at that site. But I can find no reference in either the original agreement or the amending agreement to deletion of any sections of the Mining Act, and I have no doubt section 140 would still apply and protect the landowners.

With those comments, I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) in the Chair; the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title and citation—

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I feel I should clarify the matter that arose. The attitude of the Labor Party is that the legislation should be withdrawn until the relevant reports have been presented and consideration has been given to them. That matter has been contested in the other place and, as I said in opening my remarks on the previous Bill, I saw little purpose in going through the whole exercise, because it was quite obvious the legislation would go through.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 6 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General), and passed.

RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE AND LAND REVESTMENT BILL

Tabling of Document

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Transport) [12.42 a.m.]: Before moving the second reading of the Bill, I would like to draw the attention of members to section 21 (1) (h) of the State Transport Co-ordination Act, which reads as follows—

(1) The Director General is charged with the duty of—

- (h) recommending to the Minister the closure or partial suspension of any transport service, including a railway;

In addition to that, section 26 states—

Before the second reading of a bill for the construction, or for the closure, of a railway, the Minister shall cause the report or the recommendation, as the case may be, made by the Director General in that regard, pursuant to section twenty-one, to be laid before each House of the Parliament of the State, in turn.

Accordingly I table that document.

The document was tabled (see paper No. 165).

Second Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Transport) [12.43 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The purpose of this legislation is to effect closure of the Rocky Bay railway, which was built in the 1920s initially to provide rail access to the Colonial Sugar Refinery Pty. Ltd.

The line is of very poor construction, in light rail, and on very steep gradients, and it is not suitable for conversion to standard gauge.

Trains have not run over the section of line serving the refinery for more than 10 years, and the lease agreement for the only other siding on the line, previously used by the Ford Motor Company, has been cancelled.

Closure of the line is required because a portion of the land on which it is situated is being sought by the Western Australian Society for

Crippled Children as a site for the erection of residential accommodation. As members would be aware, this is at Mosman Park.

Under the terms of an agreement entered into in 1932 between the State of Western Australia and the Colonial Sugar Refinery, however, the company is entitled to enjoy access to the railway system of the State until the year 2028.

In view of this, the company indicated that although it had no objection to the Rocky Bay line being closed because rail access was no longer needed to the refinery, it would require suitable land at North Fremantle for the erection of a sugar warehouse which could be connected to the rail system.

Negotiations between Westrail and the company have resulted in agreement being reached on an area of railway land at North Fremantle which will be leased to the company for a period of 50 years.

The Railways Department has undertaken to take into account the obligation to connect the site to the rail system in any further planning of the North Fremantle railway yard and the rail link will be constructed to the warehouse when the company requests this facility.

The requirements of Colonial Sugar Refinery Pty. Ltd. will be adequately met by these arrangements; and as the Rocky Bay railway is no longer needed, I recommend that the Bill for its closure be approved by members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. F. E. McKenzie.

BILLS (2): ASSEMBLY'S MESSAGES

Messages from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council to the following Bills—

1. Police Act Amendment Bill.
2. Murdoch University Act Amendment Bill.

RESERVES BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General), read a first time.

RURAL HOUSING (ASSISTANCE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney-General), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [12.48 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The Rural Housing (Assistance) Act, 1976, at present limits eligibility for assistance only to those farmers holding land under freehold title or conditional purchase and pastoral leases granted under the Land Act.

It has now become evident that there is a need to cover the situation in respect of those persons who own farming properties under perpetual leasehold conditions.

Perpetual leases were allocated to farmers under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme following the Second World War and at the time included the provision of a suitable dwelling on the property. A suitable dwelling could consist of a new home or, as applied at that time, an existing dwelling of up to 20 years old.

The older dwellings, in some instances, are now in a poor state of repair, uneconomical to renovate, and require replacement. Many of the dwellings erected by the War Service Land Settlement Board, and which have not been previously replaced, are also in need of repair and require either complete replacement, suitable modernisation, or extensive renovations.

During its first 12 months of operation, the Rural Housing Authority has received applications from farmers holding land under perpetual lease conditions, but has been unable to assist them under the Rural Housing (Assistance) Act, 1976. In addition, during its tours of country areas, the authority's attention has been drawn on numerous occasions to the unsatisfactory condition of many dwellings on perpetual lease holdings.

This Bill seeks to rectify the anomaly by enabling the holders of land under perpetual lease conditions to be eligible for assistance under the Rural Housing (Assistance) Act, thereby satisfying a real need for improved housing within the farming community.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. F. E. McKenzie.

AERIAL SPRAYING CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Transport), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Transport) [12.50 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. Section 10 of the Aerial Spraying Control Act currently provides for security to be lodged by the owners of aircraft, from which aerial spraying is to be carried out, against damage to property caused by any agricultural chemical.

The Act states that such security is to be in the form of a contract of insurance for an amount of not less than \$30 000 which indemnifies the owner against liability up to the insured amount.

Liability can be in respect of loss of or damage to property, including livestock, of any other person caused by any agricultural chemical released from the aircraft in respect of which the contract of insurance exists, whether in the course of the aerial spraying or by spray drift.

Some problems have arisen in relation to the administration of this section of the Act in that the insurance coverage as presently required may not necessarily indemnify the owner against liability where there is more than one claim.

However, it has been found that the insurance companies writing this type of business have provided policies which stipulate a maximum amount of \$30 000 for any single claim, but with unlimited cover during the time the policy is in operation.

This cover is more than actually required by the Act and this has been a fortunate circumstance. On one occasion a claim was made against an operator for \$30 000. This would have meant that if he had only the minimum cover required by the Act he would not have been insured against causing further damage for the rest of the season.

The Aerial Operators Association and the insurance companies agree that the present type of policies provided are desirable rather than the minimum cover set out in the Act.

The changes to the Act are therefore bringing the official requirements into line with actual practice.

This Bill provides for the amount of cover to be changed so that although the contract of insurance places a limit of \$30 000 on any one

claim there is no limit to the number of claims possible. Such an arrangement will protect farmers in situations where an operator may already have had claims against him totalling \$30 000.

There will be no increased costs to the operators because policies at present available provide unlimited cover.

Provision is also made for the appointment of inspectors under the Act. This will give authority for undertaking inspections required to administer the Act in an effective manner.

The penalties provided in the Act have been increased and have been more directly related to the importance of the offence committed.

I wish to inform the House that I will be moving an amendment to clause 7 of the Bill during the Committee stage.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. T. Leeson.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Legal Aid Commission Act Amendment Bill.
 2. Legal Practitioners Act Amendment Bill.
- Bills returned from the Assembly without amendment.

House adjourned at 12.55 a.m. (Friday).

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ENERGY

Tidal Power

135. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Attorney General, representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that a paper entitled "Kimberley Tidal Power Revisited" was presented at the Institution of Engineers, Australia, conference on energy resources held in Melbourne in October, 1974?
- (2) Is the Minister satisfied that the author carried out checks to satisfy himself that the figures he quoted of an installed capacity of 570 megawatts, and an estimated energy yield of 1.65 million megawatt-hours annually, were appropriate to the volume of water flowing in and out of Secure Bay with the tides?

- (3) Is the Minister in a position to explain why the installed capacity and estimated annual energy should be two or three times disproportionately less than that of the tidal power plant operating on the Rance tidal estuary in France?
- (4) Did the terms of reference supplied to Maunsell and Partners when they prepared their report entitled "Kimberley Tidal Power" issued in 1976 prevent them from checking the appropriateness of the figures of 570 megawatts and 1.65 million megawatt-hours?
- (5) Will the Minister table a copy of the terms of reference supplied to Maunsell and Partners?
- (6) What tidal power research has started since the Adelaide meeting of the Minerals and Energy Council reported in *The West Australian* of the 22nd August, 1977, as having allocated a leading role in tidal power research to Western Australia?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. In fact later checks carried out during the Maunsell study in 1975 also confirmed the figures.
- (3) The La Rance scheme has an installed capacity of 240 megawatts, yields approximately 0.5 million megawatt hours annually and has a 13 per cent higher tidal range than Secure Bay. For a more detailed comparison I would refer the member to the State Energy Commission.
- (4) Yes, because a very detailed and expensive study was carried out by a French firm of consulting engineers, SOGREAH, in 1965. They established those figures from a detailed analysis of tidal range and water flow. However, Maunsells did confirm the figures, as I mentioned in (2).
- (5) Yes. I will table the relevant documents that were issued to Maunsell & Partners prior to the study. Details were agreed during the course of the study.
- (6) The State Energy Commission is monitoring developments world wide in tidal power and as soon as there is a significant breakthrough in capital cost reduction they will initiate further detailed studies.

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 164).

ROAD

Beechboro Road

141. The Hon. F. E. MCKENZIE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Referring to question No. 122 on the 2nd May, 1978, does the Minister agree that the Main Roads Department is showing a callous disregard for the safety of aged persons at the Mertome Village and the children from the Special School in the same vicinity?
- (2) Has not the Bayswater Shire Council strongly supported the provision of a median strip to provide some form of refuge for persons crossing Beechboro Road in the vicinity referred to?
- (3) In view of the Bayswater Shire Council's support and its awareness of the need to have the facility provided, would he agree that such investigations were a futile exercise embarked upon as a means of delaying the installation of the median strip?
- (4) Will he now undertake to have the Main Roads Department give urgent attention to the pressing needs of the aged and the young concerned?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) I understand that the Bayswater Shire Council is in favour of the construction of a median refuge island.
- (3) No.
- (4) As stated in my reply to Question No. 122, I arranged for the Main Roads Department to undertake investigations. A survey will be made tomorrow, 5th May, to enable the preparation of a construction plan with a view to arranging for the Bayswater Shire Council to construct the median refuge island at an early date.

ROAD

Darling Range Scenic Drive

142. The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Transport:

Referring to the gazettal of a Scenic Drive along the scarp of the Darling Range within the Kalamunda Shire—

- (a) has the exact alignment been decided;
- (b) to what extent has the planning been developed;

- (c) will the Minister indicate if and when it is anticipated construction will take place; and
- (d) to what extent will the public and local authority be consulted?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (a) The route commonly known as the "Scenic Drive" has been shown as an Important Regional Road on the Metropolitan Region Scheme Map since 1963.
- (b) To my knowledge the only planning which has been carried out was for the route to be marked on the Metropolitan Region Scheme Map. However, the proposal does follow sections of existing roads.
- (c) The question of construction is a matter to be determined by the local authorities concerned. The Main Roads Department has no plans to carry out any work on the "Scenic Drive".
- (d) Answered by (c).

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

W.A. Opera Company

143. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Cultural Affairs:

Further to my question No. 126 of the 2nd May, 1978, regarding assistance for the W.A. Opera Company, will the Minister advise what action the Government is taking to support the representations of the W.A. Arts Council and the W.A. Opera Company to the Australia Council for continued financial assistance?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

I am pursuing the question of financial assistance with my Federal counterpart.

ROAD

Kalamunda Access Route

144. The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Can the Minister indicate if a third access route from the foothills to Kalamunda, is to be undertaken?
- (2) If so, to what stage has planning been developed?
- (3) When will details be available for public perusal?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) to (3) The planning and construction of a third access route to Kalamunda is primarily a matter for consideration by the local authority. I understand that the Kalamunda Shire Council have carried out preliminary investigations into a possible route. I am unable to advise when information may be available for public perusal.

FISHERIES

Hunts Canning Co.

145. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

Adverting to the answer to Part (3) of my question No. 121 of the 2nd May, 1978, in view of his ability to explain how he was convinced that he should force all professional fishermen operating on the South coast to sell their salmon to Hunts Cannery, even in the knowledge of that company's failure to produce evidence in Court, will he now do so?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

No.

EDUCATION

Burma Road School

146. The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) When is it anticipated the construction of the Burma Road Primary School, Lesmurdie, will take place?
- (2) Is it correct that construction may be delayed pending the MRPA's recommendation on the realignment of Connor Road to join Burma Road at the junction of Falls Road for the eventual development of Connor Road as the third access route to Kalamunda?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) The Falls Road School will be constructed during the 1978-79 financial year. Tenders will be called for the work before the end of June.
- (2) No.

EDUCATION

Swan View High School

147. The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the Education Department establish Year II classes at Swan View High School for the 1979 school year?
- (2) If not—
- (a) why not; and
- (b) when is it anticipated Year II classes will be established at this school?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) To do so would leave under-utilised accommodation at Governor Stirling Senior High School, while at the same time necessitating additional buildings at Swan View High School.
- (b) This will depend upon enrolment trends at the two schools concerned.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: ALCOA ALUMINA REFINERIES

Cessation of Operations

148. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

Is it a fact that the Premier was informed by Alcoa interests in America that the alumina refineries in Western Australia would cease operations if it is not in the interests of the State to extend bauxite mining into the eastern portion of the Darling Range?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

ALCOA—both Australian and American interests—have assured me that they would never endanger the Perth water supply with any of their operations if such operations are proved to do so.

149. *This question was postponed.*

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment Benefits: Rural Areas

150. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the fact that workers being retrenched in rural areas, particularly mineworkers, are in many

cases suffering extreme financial hardship due to delays in Social Security payments?

- (2) Will he take steps to ensure that rural officers of the Community Welfare Department are provided with facilities to assist such cases, including the ability to give emergency cash assistance as exists for persons who live in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Rural officers of the Department of Community Welfare are extremely active in providing emergency assistance to persons suffering financial hardship due to delays in Social Security payments. Rural offices generally do not have the facility to make cash payments; however, where a cash payment is absolutely vital, this can be arranged by telegraphic money order from Perth, otherwise local financial assistance vouchers are used. These may be used for food, accommodation and other immediate requirements.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND WATER RATES

Rebates: War Widow Pensioners

151. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Are persons whose sole income is a war widow's pension entitled to receive a rebate on local government rates and water rates?

- (2) If not, why not?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) It is not at present provided for in the Pensioner (Rates Rebates and Deferments) Act. However, this and related matters are currently under review in accordance with the undertaking which was given last year when the legislation was introduced.

152. *This question was postponed.*

BIRDS

Research

153. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

Further to my question No. 128 of the 3rd May, 1978, and the Minister's reply to part (3) of that question, that the information requested is not available, will he advise the reasons why this applies?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife does not have such information.