

# Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 11th October, 1978

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

## QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

## PUBLIC SERVICE BILL

### Report

Report of Committee adopted.

## BETTING CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Third Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Subsequent to the debate on this matter last night, the fact was pointed out to me that although this matter might be perfectly clear for those of us here who claim full knowledge of what constitutes the calling of the card, there is quite a number of people who read *Hansard* and who may not have that knowledge. It would be as well to record in *Hansard* just what we were talking about.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Would they not be red-blooded Australians like you?

The Hon G. C. MacKINNON: No. There is a considerable number of migrants in this country who take an interest in betting on horses. They would like to know the sorts of habits in which we indulge here.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: But it came from England.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Calling of the card is a European habit.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Some red-blooded Australians in this Chamber did not know about that.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What you are doing is making legal an illegal act.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: "Calling of the card" is a term which is understood to have had

its origin in England more than a hundred years ago when the then chairman of England's principal racing club at a social gathering of the club held prior to an English Derby invited certain leading bookmakers to announce their respective opening markets for the Derby race. The bookmakers invited to do so announced their respective markets in turn and those persons who wished to do so were permitted to place bets at the prices offered by the bookmakers concerned.

The practice is traditionally held at Tattersalls Clubs and similar clubs in Australia prior to classic racing events and simply provides for the announcement of a betting market and the facility for prepost betting on a classic racing event.

In Perth the practice of calling the card has traditionally taken place at Tattersalls Club prior to the running of the Melbourne, Caulfield, and Perth Cups, and the final of the Benson and Hedges Trotting Cup, which is at present the principal trotting event in Western Australia each year. Usually about five bookmakers declare their opening markets.

At the Kalgoorlie Tattersalls Club, the calling of the card takes place prior to the Hannans, Boulder, and Kalgoorlie Cup meetings.

It is understood that a form of calling the card takes place also at some country centres in that certain bookmakers are invited to announce opening markets at functions such as a champagne breakfast. However, it is understood also that betting does not take place at such functions.

I hope that constitutes an acceptable explanation of calling the card and gives a total picture of what is involved.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

## EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

### Second Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney General) [4.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Now that the Family Court of Western Australia is firmly established, it is considered that a reference to that court should be incorporated into the provisions of the Evidence Act, where appropriate.

The Bill contains a number of fairly minor amendments to which I will refer briefly. It is

proposed to amend the definitions of "Court" and "Judge" to include the Family Court of Western Australia and a judge of that court respectively.

Section 18 of the Evidence Act deals with the compellability of a husband or wife to give evidence of communications they may have had during their marriage.

They cannot be compelled to give such evidence unless their case is being heard in the Supreme Court in its divorce and matrimonial causes jurisdiction and both the husband and wife are parties to the proceedings. All cases are now heard by the Family Court and it is desirable that that court should in proper circumstances be able to compel the parties to give such evidence. As there are still a few unheard cases in the Supreme Court, the reference to the Supreme Court in section 18 should be retained. The Family Court has now been included in the section.

The amendment to section 56 which deals with judicial notice of certain signatures is being amended to include a judge, registrar, and deputy registrar of the Family Court.

The final amendment deals with the production in evidence of bankers' books. This authority is at present conferred on magistrates and judges, but does not apply to judges of the Family Court.

In an amendment to the Family Court Act earlier this year, property jurisdiction was conferred on that court, and for this reason it is suggested that the Family Court of Western Australia should be empowered to order the production of bankers' books in the same manner as other courts.

While this Bill is before the House, the opportunity has been taken also to propose minor amendments to sections 56 and 96 of the Act, which relate to the District Court.

The amendment to section 56 requires also judicial notice to be taken of the signatures of the registrar and deputy registrar of that court, and the amendment to section 96 includes a district court judge. This latter power is implied already in sections of the District Court Act, but it is felt desirable that a specific reference to judges of the District Court should be included in the Evidence Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Grace Vaughan.

## RESERVE AND ROAD CLOSURE BILL

### *Second Reading*

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH  
(South—Minister for Lands) [4.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Reserve No. 28402 was set apart in 1966 for the purpose "site of main buildings of the University of WA" as part of a land exchange agreement between the then Government and the university. It is held in fee simple in trust by the university.

The original agreement between the Government and the university for a transfer of land along the Crawley foreshore and relocation of Hackett Drive was made during the time of the Hawke Government, but it is considered the present Government still has an obligation to retain the spirit of the original agreement.

Under the 1966 agreement, Hackett Drive was to be relocated and a road deviation was surveyed for this purpose. The redundant portion of Hackett Drive was deemed to be part of the exchange and was to be included in the Class "A" Reserve No. 28402 when the new alignment was constructed which would divert traffic to The Esplanade. The new road was never built and after several years of deliberation it is no longer considered an acceptable alignment to either the City of Subiaco or the City of Nedlands which favours the use of Princess Road.

The new alignment of Hackett Drive has now been prepared by the Main Roads Department and Cabinet has agreed to changes to the 1966 agreement in order to implement the proposal which involves excision from Class "A" Reserve No. 28402. Two portions of the reserve situated south-eastward of the new road will be excised also and utilised for public open space, and the university is prepared to relinquish all three areas.

Agreement to the new plan has been indicated by the City of Nedlands. The previous Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning held informal talks with the Mayor and Town Clerk of Subiaco, and at council's request the present Minister met with them on 14th September to discuss the issue.

Council believed that it was not bound with respect to the realignment of Hackett Drive on the grounds that it was not a party to the 1966 agreement and that it therefore does not have to agree with the proposed amendment. In addition, council felt that the road would be built too close to the river and that the design incorporating a reverse curve is unsound.

As it is possible that the Subiaco City Council may refuse to request the Department of Lands and Surveys to dedicate the proposed road, it is proposed that all the land to be ceded by the university be vested in the Crown in order that the Commissioner of Main Roads could be requested to construct the road.

This Bill seeks also the sanction of Parliament to permit closure of the deviated portions of road, part of which is already committed to the university. The smaller portion will probably be incorporated with the two portions of Reserve No. 28402 which will be excised.

This Bill seeks authority to amend Class "A" Reserve No. 28402 to exclude the Hackett Drive realignment and Swan locations 9881 and 8177, and to permit closure of the deviated portions of Hackett Drive when the new alignment has been officially constructed.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Grace Vaughan.

## RESERVES ACT AND THE RESERVES AND ROAD CLOSURE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH**  
(South—Minister for Lands) [5.01 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Members will be aware that the Bill now before Parliament is the second measure of its nature to be introduced this session, the first Bill having been ratified by Parliament in the autumn sitting.

The reason for presenting a further Bill during this session is to place before Parliament as many variations to Class "A" reserves as is possible in order that they be not held over until the following year.

The Bill proposes nine separate variations amongst which are those recommended by the Environmental Protection Authority.

Class "A" Reserve No. 30338 was set apart for "park and gardens" in 1970 and was vested in the Melville City Council. Prior to creation of the reserve the land was held as two lots in an unencumbered fee simple estate, by the council and a Roman Catholic Church. Agreement was reached between both organisations to surrender the lots so that the land could be developed as a garden vista which would complement a Catholic church to be constructed on adjacent land. The

church was never built in the envisaged position and no improvements were ever placed on the reserve. These circumstances prompted the church to seek return of the land to its former estate and the council has agreed provided it also obtains the other lot in fee simple.

The Environmental Protection Authority recommended and Cabinet agreed that the purpose of Class "A" Reserve No. 7406, which adjoins Cowaramup Bay, be changed from "protection and preservation of caves and flora and for health and pleasure resort" to "national park and water". This recognises the paramount importance of water and that national parks form a major component of any region's water resources.

Class "A" Reserve No. 15231 which adjoins the northern side of Esperance townsite is set apart for "conservation of flora and fauna" and is vested in the WA Wildlife Authority. The reserve has been utilised for recreational activities for some time and the EPA recommended that the purpose be expanded to include "recreation". Vesting is to remain with the authority in order to maintain effective control of recreational pursuits while preserving the environment.

The Esperance Shire Council and the National Trust desire to protect the remnants of the old Israelite Bay telegraph station and a number of graves of former employees which are scattered around the general vicinity of the buildings. The land affected comprises portion of a large reserve which is set apart for "primitive area for preservation and study of flora, fauna, geological features" and is vested in the WA Wildlife Authority. An area of 20.92 hectares has been surveyed to encompass all graves and fixtures and the authority has no objection to excision of the land from Reserve No. 27632 and to have it transferred to the National Trust.

Class "A" Reserves Nos. 20605 and 23152 are set apart for "national park" and vested in the Narrogin Town Council. The reserves adjoin and are situated in Narrogin townsite. The council intends to establish a picnic-barbecue facility within the reserves and it is considered desirable to change the purpose of both reserves to "recreation and parkland". The National Parks Authority welcomes the alteration in purpose as it believes the reserves are too small to be efficiently managed as national parks.

Implementation of the Wanneroo Shire Council's Town Planning Scheme No. 7A necessitates several land exchanges involving freehold land, Class "A" Conservation of Flora and Fauna Reserve No. 20091, and additional

"C"-class reserves. The council will arrange surrender to the Crown of freehold land comprising 10.8240 hectares in exchange for three parcels of Reserve No. 20091 containing 7.9357 hectares and additional reserved land. The council is to pay the sum of \$16 377 to equalise the exchange which resulted in favour of council by 3 566 square metres. The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife has no objection to the excision and also confirmed that it had no specific interest in the reserve which is vested in the shire council. It is therefore deemed necessary to amend the purpose of the reserve to a more compatible usage associated with a residential area and "recreation and parkland" is very appropriate.

The Environmental Protection Authority recommended and Cabinet agreed that the purpose of numerous reserves extending along the coastline between Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin be changed to "national park". The reserves will form part of the proposed Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge National Park, and various other reserves and sections of land will be included when the necessary arrangements can be made.

Clause 11 of the 1977 Reserves and Road Closure Bill, being Act No. 62 of 1977, provided for excision of 521 square metres from Recreation Reserve No. 5574 at South Perth, Richardson Park, to enable the area to be reserved for "sports pavilion and club premises". The area to be excised should have been 5 211 square metres and this clause is purely a corrective measure.

In compliance with usual procedure, notes on each proposed variation have been made available to the Leader of the Opposition in the House.

I commend the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. F. Cloughton.

## **ACTS AMENDMENT (SUPREME COURT AND DISTRICT COURT) BILL**

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 10th October.

**THE HON. D. K. DANS** (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.09 p.m.]: The Opposition has no opposition to this Bill. As set out in the amending Bill, and as recorded in the Attorney General's second reading speech, it is purely a precautionary measure; and we give it our full support.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

## **TEACHER EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 5th October.

**THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON** (East Metropolitan) [5.12 p.m.]: I have remarked in the past about prospective retrospective legislation, and now we have before us a retrospective consequential Bill that is consequential to a Bill that is not yet before the House. I gather it will come before the House some time next year.

I am wondering whether the Minister can tell me when he expects the Bill to abolish the current Teacher Education Act to come before the House, and when he expects that Bill to be proclaimed, because I think this aspect is important. This small Bill seeks to tidy up something that will happen in the future. Obviously it will not be a good idea to force people to go through the process of being elected to office, and then finding the board is abolished. I can see the reason for the Bill.

I also would like an assurance from the Minister that there is no intention unduly to change the composition of the board; in other words, I am wondering whether it is the intention of the Government, wherever possible, to reappoint to the board the elected person who is retiring. This is desirable, otherwise we might suspect some kind of devious scheme to slip people on the board to change many things before the board is finally abolished. I am not assuming that is the intention; I am accepting the Bill on its face value, although it seems peculiar to me that we are asked to pass this legislation which is prospectively consequential to a Bill that has not been passed.

I shall be saying more about this when the Bill to amend the parent Act comes up in the future. I did think that the establishment of the Teacher Education Authority and a series of individual campuses was a mistake. I still think we would have been better off if originally a multi-campus college of advanced education had been established. We would have gained a lot from this in planning, in balance, and in deciding the best use of resources; but this did not happen.

I cannot see any way of going back to what would have been desirable, had that been possible, so I shall not cavil at the Government's decision when the Bill ultimately is brought before us. I would like to know when the parent Bill, to which the measure before us is consequential, will be brought before the House. Other than that, the Opposition supports the Bill.

**THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH** (South—Minister for Lands) [5.15 p.m.]: I thank the Opposition for its support of the Bill. As the Hon. Robert Hetherington suggested, it might be better to have an overall body. Of course, he is proposing what was suggested in the Partridge report, and I suppose there can always be two opinions on any one matter. As it happens, the Government has adopted the recommendations of the Post-Secondary Education Commission, which considers these bodies should be autonomous rather than collected together.

I understand the parent legislation will come forward early next year. I am afraid I cannot advise who the members of the boards will be. Needless to say the Cabinet appointments have not yet been made. However, I understand that the role of outside members of the community is to be increased and that we will be looking for an independent chairman.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)**

*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) [5.19 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill contains several amendments to the Local Government Act, three of which cover important matters of principle, and three of which are in the nature of improvements in the machinery aspect of local government.

In the first category, the Bill makes provision for councils to charge a penalty against unpaid rates and for each individual council to decide for itself whether it wishes to impose such a penalty.

For a number of years the associations of local government have strongly advocated that councils be empowered to apply a penalty to outstanding rates. They believe that councils have suffered a commercial disadvantage where rates have remained unpaid for an unreasonable time.

However, the Bill provides that, where a council does decide to exercise this discretion, the rate at which the penalty is applied may not exceed the rate which is prescribed by regulation. Therefore, each council will have complete discretion to decide from year to year whether there is to be a penalty, but there will be an upper limit on the amount that may be so charged.

Where a council does apply the penalty, it must do so uniformly against all ratepayers, except those who are pensioners. In all cases, the ratepayer will have an absolute minimum of three months in which to make a penalty-free payment.

The Bill also provides for councils to acquire land for the express purpose of its subdivision and resale.

From time to time councils, particularly the smaller country municipalities, have seen the need to take some positive action to meet a demand for subdivided lots in their urban centres. When owners of broad acres in these centres have not been willing to arrange subdivision to meet this demand, the councils have sought to acquire land, subdivide it, and sell the subdivided lots.

Although the Local Government Act does not at present confer express power on councils to engage in land developments of this nature, it was previously thought that the provisions of the Act empowered the Governor to grant authority where it was intended to finance the work from loan funds or special overdraft accounts.

However, recent Crown Law advice has raised serious doubts as to whether the granting of this authority has been within the power of the Governor.

The Bill therefore makes it clear that authority may be granted for this purpose. At the same time, it sets down the principle that the authority should be exercised only to enable a council to deal with problems occasioned by demand for

subdivided land that cannot be satisfied due to the absence of private subdivision. It does not provide an open ticket for councils to engage in the speculative business of land development.

Members will be aware of recent controversies associated with decisions by certain councils to meet the cost of members travelling outside the State in connection with matters that were deemed to be of some interest to the councils concerned. This has involved both interstate and overseas travelling.

It is believed that this is a discretion that should be largely retained by councils. The increasing number of functions being undertaken by local government and the growing complexity of local government administration point to the desirability of council members having reasonable opportunity to inform themselves by attending conferences and meetings that are concerned with local government matters, and to make a first-hand examination of specific local government problems elsewhere.

At the same time, it is believed that the public interest dictates that some reasonable restraint be built into the Act.

The Bill therefore proposes to amend the present provisions of the Act so that a high degree of—but not absolute—discretion is retained by councils.

It makes clear that a council may pay the reasonable expenses necessarily incurred by a member in carrying out a duty, or performing an act under express authority of the council, as follows—

- (i) within the State, by ordinary resolution of the council;
- (ii) outside the State, but within the Commonwealth, by absolute majority resolution of the council; and
- (iii) outside the Commonwealth, by absolute majority resolution of the council and with the approval of the Minister.

In the second category, the Bill makes provision for other amendments which are in the nature of an improvement in the machinery of local government, rather than the introduction of new principles.

The Bill provides for some change in the formalities that a council is required to follow in raising a loan.

The existing provisions of the Act necessitate a loan proposal being dealt with by at least two meetings of the council. Under the proposed amendment, a council usually will be able to finalise matters at a single meeting. It is

emphasised that this change will in no way curtail the present right for ratepayers to demand that any particular loan be submitted to a ratepayers' poll.

The Bill also seeks to lessen the formality associated with a description by the Governor of the existing district or ward boundaries of a municipality.

As the Act stands at present, the Governor may do so only if a petition has been submitted by the council concerned. However, as this description is merely a convenient way of bringing right up to date the description of present boundaries, the requirement for a petition serves no useful purpose. On the contrary, it adds an unnecessary step to the proceedings. The description of existing boundaries can in no way provide for an alteration to those boundaries.

Finally, the Bill proposes that the owner of a property that is used exclusively for charitable purposes relating to the provision of aged persons' accommodation may formally agree to the land being rated where it would otherwise be exempt from rating.

In a recent instance, an organisation that proposed to develop a property for aged persons' accommodation offered to enter into an agreement to pay rates to the council in whose district the land was located. However, legal advice held that such an agreement would not be binding if this use of the land was a charitable purpose and was therefore exempt under the provisions of the Local Government Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. F. Cloughton.

## APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

### *Consideration of Tabled Paper*

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

**THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON** (East Metropolitan) [5.26 p.m.]: I must say that in the last three days I have felt rather envious of the Leader of the House who had a member of the Public Service Board sitting at his elbow to assist him to deal with the Committee stage of the Public Service Bill. I am not objecting to that; I just felt a little envious and I wondered whether I should lean over and ask him to lend me an adviser for a week or two so that I could get some research done into the Budget and the Consolidated Revenue Fund. One of the problems facing an Opposition is that it is very difficult for

members who tend to be reasonably busy in one way or another to grapple with the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Loan Estimates and all the matters that go to make up a Budget.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You should have seen the situation when we were in opposition.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You were very well provided for.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I am glad to hear that members of the Opposition in the upper House are kept busy. I thought the upper House was rather expendable.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Although one may think a House can be got rid of ultimately, that does not mean while members are there they do not do any work. I would point out once more to the honourable member who has just interjected that the Labor Party policy ultimately—not immediately, because we know people are not prepared for it yet—is to try to replace the present two-House system by a single House with the same number of members as are at present in the two Houses combined, because we know members have a great deal to keep them busy.

As a matter of fact, it has been my personal view for many years when I was lecturing on government—although this is not my party's policy—that we did not really have enough members of Parliament, because a great deal has to be done to represent electors. We have to make a difference between the work members of the House do and the position of the House in the Constitution, which is a matter I have been on about.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: With five members for 7 000 people in the Lower North Province.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: With proportional representation, who will look after the Kimberley?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I think many members travel up there now. Perhaps Mr Pike is not aware of that.

Whatever may have happened in the past, I am talking about the present and about changes which might be made. The Leader of the House once pointed out to me that things change all the time, and I am suggesting to him there is still room for improvement. Things could change even if we do not alter the Constitution.

We could improve the assistance given to members. At present the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly has a secretary, a research assistant, and a Press officer. The Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council is

trying to get a research assistant for his own use—and, I presume, for the use of other members of the Opposition in this House, because it is very difficult for us to get assistance from anybody, apart from the staff of the Leader of the Opposition. Certainly, I managed to talk for a little while to the research officer who was able to answer a question of mine to which I will refer later when discussing the Budget.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: What sort of research assistance would you suggest for back-bench members?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will let the honourable member make up his own case about that. I am making a case for research assistance for the Leader of the Opposition and the official Opposition.

Also, I remind Mr Tozer—had he listened to my speech during the second reading stage of the Public Service Bill, I would not need to remind him—that one of the matters I believe should be inquired into by a public inquiry is the role of the Public Service in giving assistance to members of Parliament. I believe back-bench members need some kind of research assistance; in fact, I have thought this for a long time.

One of the problems with the development of the Westminster system both here and in Great Britain is that, particularly with the increase in the technicality of legislation, and its volume and quantity, and the increase in Government responsibility, the back-bench member is more and more overwhelmed by the facts he needs to acquire and he can be more and more bamboozled by the Government which has at its fingertips its Public Service.

I am not suggesting the Government should not have an efficient Public Service; that is absolutely essential. However, it does raise the whole problem of Parliament as a scrutinising body of the Executive. I know that whatever Government is in power, the Cabinet is not terribly fond of being scrutinised. It is much more comfortable if there is no scrutiny by back-bench members. But if we are going to adopt and adapt and continue a Westminster system, the key to that system is the scrutiny of government.

With the party system, we do not get too much real criticism of government. Certainly, the Opposition is aware most of the time that if it does not have the numbers it is not going to persuade the Government to do very much unless it is informed enough to be able to prove to the Government that what it is doing is wrong and is unpopular, and to shoot home that argument with facts.

Therefore, whatever people might say happened in the past, and whatever might have applied previously to back-bench members, including Government back-benchers, I am suggesting I would find it much easier to make the speech I am about to make if I had some research assistance and if the Leader of the Opposition had better staff than he has.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am sure you mean "more extensive".

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am sorry; I did mean more staff.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: He has an excellent secretary.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: She is very excellent; certainly, I am not saying we could get anyone better than her.

The other point I would like to make is that now we have a system of a shadow Ministry, the shadow Ministers must travel extensively—quite often at their own expense—in order to look at things which interest them and which relate to their shadow Ministry. I have done some travelling around the State already, although not enough. I want to do a great deal more travelling because if, as I hope will be the case, there is a change of Government in 1980 I want to be aware at first hand of some of the problems which would face me as a Minister for Education, if the new parliamentary Labor Party saw fit to elect me to the Ministry and the new Premier decided to appoint me to that post. I am getting around as much as I can.

It is a pity we do not have better travel arrangements. One is a little envious of members of the Federal Parliament, who have unlimited travel by air. I am not suggesting we should have unlimited travel; I am saying one cannot help being envious of them.

Whenever I point this out to a Federal member, the reply I invariably receive is, "If you travelled by air as much as we do you would not use it very often." Of course, we would use it considerably more than we do now, because at the moment we do not have much to use.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am constantly having to remind members that speaking in the House while another member is on his feet is completely out of order. I ask members to pay the member on his feet the respect of not speaking over the top of him.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Thank you, Mr President. In other words, members representing constituents in a State of this size need better travel facilities for which the

Opposition has asked the Premier and for which it will continue to ask of a more sympathetic Premier—we hope—after the next election. Greater travel facilities would considerably help us to be better parliamentarians.

In one sense, the fact that we do not have adequate travel facilities does not upset me too much, because improved facilities would mean I would be away from home more often. It is not as if I enjoy the jaunts away. However, I would be pleased to have the ability to carry out my duties better and to make myself better informed.

I merely make this point as a preliminary remark before I get on with some consideration of the Estimates and the parameters in which they are brought down. I believe we need to consider—as I suggested when speaking to the Public Service Bill—the role of the public servant and the role of members of Parliament. Even if we do have disciplined parties—I know some members opposite deny this, but they have not impressed me with their independence so far—it is a good thing if private members are in a position to make themselves better informed and better able to scrutinise and criticise the Government either from the Opposition benches or within the party room.

After all, we must face the fact that under a system of party government, what goes on in the party room—which is something that is not always published, although variants of it seem to leak into the Press at various times—equally is a part of our parliamentary system. When a Government is in power, pressures can be put on that Government in the party room. With the Australian Labor Party, of course, it is part of the party's constitution that an ALP Government must bring forward legislation, and party members vote on it and can direct their own Government. We have a form of democracy within the party room.

That does not mean that even in the Liberal and Country Parties, back-bench members are not influential in decisions made by their Governments when they are in power. Sometimes more, sometimes less, depending on the narrowness of majorities, the strength of the Premier or the Prime Minister or the vigour of the private members who are in the party room at that time, decisions can be influenced in the party room.

I want to start—if I may put it that way—by reading a couple of quotes from speeches made by the Premier of Western Australia regarding matters on which he and I are in agreement. It



seems to be a good point of departure, and something which does not happen very often.

In presenting his Financial Statement in another place, the Premier said—

The Government is greatly concerned at the continued high level of unemployment and the under utilisation of resources. This problem is not unique to Australia—

The Premier seems to have found this out since the defeat of the Whitlam Government. He continued—

—but is being experienced to a greater or less degree by most countries in the world, and most importantly by our major trading partners.

It was interesting to note from the Premier's speech that he also was disturbed by the pessimism he found overseas. I have been disturbed for some years now about what is said overseas. However, the Premier expressed a note of optimism in the following statement—

The 150th Anniversary of the founding of Western Australia will see a resurgence of investment in our mineral resources and I am confident the year will be highlighted by a decision on the part of the Joint Venturers to proceed with the North-West Shelf gas project and associated liquefied natural gas plant.

I sincerely hope the Premier is right, because I think the North-West Shelf project is most important to Western Australia and it is one which my party and I fully support.

When introducing the Loan Estimates, the Premier made the following statement—

I am firmly of the opinion that an increase in Government capital expenditure at this time would not jeopardize the goal of reducing inflation provided it was directed to the construction of income producing assets for the future and financed outside the Commonwealth budget.

Earlier he said—

It is on this point—the curtailment of public sector capital expenditure—that I disagree with the Commonwealth Government's present financial management policy.

The important thing to realise is that in many ways—although not entirely—the Premier is very much curtailed by the parameters in regard to what he can do in his overall Budget; he must act within the parameters set by the Federal Government.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: And the Loan Council.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, and the Loan Council which, as the honourable member well knows for all practical purposes in fact is the Federal Government by another name.

My next quote is one I may have read to the House before; however, I think members would do well to remember it. It is a quote from Alfred Deakin in a speech he made in 1902, and his remarks are still pertinent today. In 1902, of course, the Labor Party was just a splinter party which nobody took very seriously.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Are you going to read the passage where he predicts centralism?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That is right; the honourable member knew the passage I was going to quote. Alfred Deakin said—

As the power of the purse in Great Britain established by degrees the authority of the Commons, it will ultimately establish in Australia the authority of the Commonwealth. The rights of self-government of the States have been fondly supposed to be safeguarded by the Constitution. It left them legally free, but financially bound to the chariot wheels of the Central Government. Their need will be its opportunity. The less populous will first succumb; those smitten by drought or similar misfortune will follow; and finally even the greatest and most prosperous will, however reluctantly, be brought to heel. Our Constitution may remain unaltered, but a vital change will have taken place in the relations between the States and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth will have acquired a general control over the States, while every extension of political power will be made by its means and go to increase its relative superiority.

That statement was made by a man who has given his name to a form of liberalism—Deakinism, or State interventionist liberalism. He was the first Liberal Prime Minister of Australia and, in my opinion, he was the greatest Liberal Prime Minister in Australia's history. He was the Prime Minister who introduced the age and invalid pensions legislation in 1908 supported, of course, by the Labor Party. In fact, there has been great debate ever since about whether it was a Labor initiative or a Liberal initiative. There is no doubt it was an Australian initiative and Deakin had the honour of being the Prime Minister at the time.

He was an important man. When one reads his contributions to the debates during the

constitutional conventions, one comes to realise his prescience was amazing; he really did understand what was going to happen. Alfred Deakin was a thorough political realist.

It was a great pity that after he had introduced a number of reforms he found that his parliamentary style and that of the Labor Party did not agree. Had he remained in coalition with the Labor Party he could have become a very great Labor Prime Minister. Instead he founded the fusion or the Liberal Party and started, as the Hon. Robert Pike well knows, that uneasy coalition within the Liberal Party of the conservative, strongly anti-socialist group and the Deakinite Liberals who believed in State interventionism and the role of the State or Government in providing infrastructure for private enterprise.

There are echoes of Deakinite liberalism throughout the speech the Premier made on the Estimates, because in many ways Sir Charles Court—perhaps not so much as Sir Thomas Playford in South Australia—is an heir of Deakin; his rhetoric is not so similar but his actions are. Willy-nilly the Premier and Liberal Governments are forced to prop up and support private enterprise.

I well remember in 1951, Sir Robert Menzies, in the election which followed the famous election when he promised to put value back into the pound—

The Hon. R. G. Pike: 1949.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: The 10th December, 1949, was a traumatic day for me.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: The pound was never the same afterwards.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It became known as "Fadden flimsy". In 1951 the then Prime Minister (Mr Menzies), with a sweeping gesture to the electorate—and he was very good at that—promised to reduce the Public Service by 10 000. As a matter of fact, I was reminded of that promise and what happened afterwards when we were debating the Public Service Bill the other day. I was pleased to see the clause which made it possible for temporary public servants who were doing their jobs properly to be made permanent public servants.

What Mr Menzies did then to keep his election promises was screw down and make sure people were not replaced and temporaries were frightened off. I was working in the Commonwealth Employment Service at the time as a public servant. I have done all sorts of things in my day. What happened in that section of the Commonwealth Public Service was that the

temporary officers, who had supported the service for so long and done an excellent job, resigned. The service became less efficient because of that.

After the ritual gesture had been gone through the Public Service numbers grew and grew and we saw centralism growing once again, as we will continue to see.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Were you dismissed?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: No, I was permanent.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I thought that might have been the source of your socialism.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I was already a democratic socialist at that stage. I was converted at the age of 17 when I went to work as a clerk for private enterprise on a quid a week; a quid was not a bad wage in those days. I began to realise I was reacting to my birth and that I was really a proper Labor man at the age of 17; I have not changed my mind since. I have discussed, argued, and considered the question but I have not changed my allegiance to the Labor Party; I have merely developed better reasons for my allegiance, not that my original reasons were terribly bad but perhaps they were a little simpler.

The point I am trying to make is that it does not matter who is in power; we cannot think we are not going to be well and truly under the thumb of the Federal Government in many ways. I have been rather interested at the development of the new federalism. What has happened, of course, and what does happen is that when a Government like the Whitlam Government increases grants and Commonwealth responsibilities it also increases political expectations.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: And bureaucracy.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Not necessarily, but it does increase political expectations; and with new federalism we find we get new divisions of taxation which in the case of Western Australia, had Sir Charles Court—and let me pay him due regard here—not been here and seen to it that Western Australia would not be disadvantaged and would not be worse off than under the old scheme, we would have been worse off.

By supporting new federalism and State responsibilities, the States are likely to be pushed back into accepting responsibility for things that until this moment they had not been responsible for. One of the things noticeable in the Budget which amazed me was the item in the Estimates of \$5 million allocated for disaster relief. This amount is much greater than that for the previous

year and I wondered what had happened; I wondered if the Premier was predicting we would have more disasters this year.

In fact, when I looked further I realised the Commonwealth expected Western Australia to pay the first \$3 million and so the Premier had to find more money for disaster relief in his Budget. So it goes on. The Commonwealth cuts back and the States have to look for more money if they can find it. Just how much it is possible to find I am not sure. Certainly the Premier does not seem to think he can find too much.

The Hon. R. G. Pike interjected.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: One has to read it as a whole. What I am suggesting is that it is easier to sheet home responsibility to a Federal Government which is prepared to accept central responsibility than it is to a Government which accepts federalism, because the latter Government will say, "This is the new federalism" and it will wash its hands of the matter.

This was a technique used when Sir Robert Menzies was Prime Minister. It was a technique used on things such as requests—

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: How old is this bloke? The member can go back to Menzies and Deakin!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I can remember Menzies and I have read about Deakin. I have read Professor La Nauze's biography of Deakin. I am sure Mr Pike has read this and I think he should recommend it to members of his party as it makes interesting reading.

What used to happen back in the 1950s when Mr Menzies was Prime Minister was that we used to ask—and by "we" I mean we in the Labor Party, we in the universities, and we who were interested in education—for more Federal funds for education. In South Australia we used to ask for more State funds for education. Sir Thomas Playford said, "I would love to do this but I do not have the money and the Commonwealth will not give it to me."

The Prime Minister would say, "We are under a Federal system of Government and education is a State responsibility. You have to ask the States for more money even though I am not going to give them the tax refunds which will enable them to do it." We had the time-honoured system there of buck-passing and shifting responsibility between Federal and State Governments, which is about to happen again.

At least when the Whitlam Government was in power everyone knew who was responsible for much that was in education. Now we are not sure;

it all depends on Federal funding. One finds with the new federalism that the argument is given, "We are freeing the States and giving them greater responsibility even though they might not get the greater amount of money needed to exercise that responsibility."

The States remain tied to the chariot wheels of the Federal Government. Mr Deakin predicted this would happen. This has been rammed home by this State Budget more than any other State Budget. I am not surprised about what has happened under the present Federal Government, particularly as far as education is concerned, because I remember when the Right Hon. John Malcolm Fraser was the Commonwealth Minister for Education. As far as universities were concerned, which is the area in which I first became aware of Commonwealth Ministers for Education, the moment Sir Robert Menzies left the scene as Prime Minister—and he was interested in universities—we had a succession of Federal Ministers for Education each being worse than the other.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You mean different from each other; it is only a matter of opinion whether they were worse or not.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I thought that while I was on my feet I was expressing my own opinion.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You did not make that clear.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: In that case I shall make it clear and indicate that in my opinion they became worse.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They each concentrated on a different area of education.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: There was a big improvement in 1972.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have to be joking! The only improvement was in this State.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I presume now that the Minister is offering his own opinion on that.

Certainly it is not surprising we get this clamping down on funds and this concentration on trying to bring down inflation with some success and at the same time forcing up unemployment.

One of the problems we have to face in this country—I think this is worth mentioning because much of the things we have today flow from it—is that although we have a worldwide recession and growing unemployment, because of structural changes in our economy we cannot hope that if trade picks up again in some miraculous way we will get back to full employment.

One of my colleagues in another place, Mr Malcolm Bryce, the member for Ascot, asked the Premier a series of questions about computers and the Premier's awareness of them. It seems to me and to my colleague that the answers given do not show a sufficient awareness of the fact that we are in a period of structural change similar to that of the original industrial revolution. Of course, I was not there at the time but I have read of what occurred during the industrial revolution. At that time hand-loom weavers and hand-spinners were thrown out of employment. Unemployment grew and the Luddite machine breakers appeared.

I was reminded of this when the recent Telecom strike was on and the workers were trying to hold back computerised automation. What is happening, particularly with the policies of the present Federal Government with its investment allowances, is that many industries are trying to cut back on costs by installing computers.

Unfortunately this means we throw people out of work. It also means we have machines producing goods which themselves do not buy goods. Once this is happening, it is no good talking about dole bludgers and people not wanting to work. It does mean that even if we regain our growth rate and our trade we will still have a vast number of people unemployed. We have great problems ahead of us, and we have to face them by being realistic about them.

As far as I can see, what we will have is a permanent pool of unemployed numbering between 10 to 30 per cent of the work force, so we will have to cut back on the working hours without a reduction in wages, because we want to employ the people and provide them with the ability to buy goods, otherwise the economy will find itself in difficulties again.

In this respect I know there are great problems ahead of us. This is one of the reasons that members on this side of the House suggested to the Government that we should take the mild step of appointing a member of the Civil Service Association to the Public Service Board. One of the things we will have to do willy-nilly, whether or not we like it, is to develop some kind of worker participation, so that the hard decisions will be made by everybody and accepted by everybody. Thus we will not find a group of new Luddites springing up; but certainly there are many people in the community who would like to see a new wave of Luddite machine-breaking, and take over in the ensuing chaos. I am not saying there is an immediate danger of a revolution; I am saying there are these people I have mentioned, although such a body is not strong at the moment.

We are in a situation where we have to look at the future, and deal with events that will arise. We will not deal with the situation just by cutting back on public expenditure, on wages, and on capital works; and by forcing prices down.

*Sitting suspended from 6.03 to 7.30 p.m.*

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Before the tea suspension I was suggesting that one cannot deal with problems such as the unemployment we are now experiencing—which is not just the result of a trade recession, but is the result of structural changes in the economy—by cutting back on public expenditure, forcing prices down, and encouraging people to invest in further purchases of machinery in order to obtain the investment allowance. I am not claiming that sooner or later we will not go across to machinery, and that computers will not take over. But, I do not see why the Government should exacerbate the present position, and hurry the long-term problems.

We have to face the long-term problems, but we do not want to bring them any closer than we have to. Therefore, it seems to me that, as I said earlier, in this situation when talking about the Federal Budget the policy of the Fraser Government has not helped this State any further. Certainly, I am glad to see the Premier now agrees that we could get some help from loan funding in order to spend more money on capital works which might at least assist us temporarily. But that does not change the long-term problem, and this is what we need to face in this country.

We cannot do much at a State level, but we can do something and can be made aware of the problems. Even if one were to agree that the present Federal Government policies were good policies, which I do not, it seems to me that—and this is something that concerns me particularly, because I am my party's spokesman on education—the Federal Government's policies on the funding of education are disastrous. If we succeed in getting our economy fit again, what we will have to face in the future is that we will have to find employment for the people. We have to find new markets, and we have to decide where we will get the new markets, how we will get them, and what kind of markets we will get.

One of the things some people are saying—earlier in the year it became rather fashionable to knock the education system—is to suggest that somehow education has got away from producing the good old product it used to produce. It is suggested that it is producing—and the schools are producing—less literate, less able,

less capable, and less competent people to fit into industry than was the case in the past.

The Premier—and I am not saying that he rode along on this bandwagon fully—talked about getting value for the educational dollar, which I do not object to in general. However, in the atmosphere in which the claim was made it sounded to me as if we might get greater efficiency in education by going back.

It seems to me we have to face the fact that we have to do a number of things in the next 10, 20, or 30 years—well, for the rest of this century—if we are to have a viable economy, a stable economy, and a stable economy in Australia so that we can go into the 21st century. We have to decide what we are to manufacture, and whether we will rely on primary production and mining. Whichever way we do it we have to adapt our educational system accordingly.

I have had it argued to me by an economist—and I think the argument is worth examining—that it is not much good doing as some businessmen have suggested, not all businessmen but some of them. They have suggested that in this community we should not worry too much about education, because all we need to do is to train people to programme computers, and the computers can do the rest. So can people in South-East Asia. They can compete with us as they are in textiles and a large number of manufactures. It has been suggested that our manufacturing industry, which has never been highly efficient, is under severe pressure in overseas markets. The suggestion made to me was that we should go to other high technology industries where there was less competition. That means we need more highly educated people. In other words, we have to decide—and I know where my decision lies—whether we are to go for less education and trust the machines, or for more education to turn out better educated people.

Of course, one of the things that we have discovered with our education—bearing in mind that people say we can afford to spend less money, so let us go back because we are wasting money—is that as we fill areas of need, and as we spend money to find areas of need, we find further areas of need. We are now finding that in our schools today we are grappling with some problems of literacy and numeracy, and we are not grappling with the good old education system of the past.

I think it has been estimated there are about one million functionally illiterate people in Australia. They were produced by the old system, not the new system. I want to pay full tribute to the education system in Western Australia.

Whether or not we have strikes, we have a new breed of very dedicated teachers, particularly in our primary schools. They are doing very good things with our school children, and they are also finding out areas where there are difficulties and where remedial teaching has to be done in both literacy and numeracy. Then they find the need for many more teachers.

So, we need more money for this, but we also need more money to spend on education in our retraining of people for the new highly technological society in which we will find ourselves. There is no doubt about that. We have a chance of doing that or finding ourselves in a society full of unemployed people who will be a lower class of untouchables. That is not desirable.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Can you tell me where this money is to come from? Your argument is good and it interests me, but where does the money come from?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It will come from higher taxes, among other things; I do not doubt that.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What about productivity?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: As I have said in this House previously, we have to look for new markets and also increase productivity. What we are in fact doing is building up a ramshackle kind of system of protection. We do not need to protect inefficient industries and we have to think about the matter seriously. If we cannot find the money, then we will find ourselves in trouble and, therefore, we have to see what we can do about it.

We have to decide our priorities, but first we have to look at our needs. It is no good saying we cannot find the money, so let us not decide on the needs. We have to look at the needs, and one of the needs is that we require better education in our society. This applies particularly in regard to the need to produce people who can deal with new technologies that are appearing and, particularly, to retrain people.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: We need a few tradesmen as well; people who can work with their hands.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Of course, we do. We need particularly to retrain people. I was glad to see an announcement a few weeks ago that the Government intended to start a policy of retraining people once the North-West Shelf scheme was certain. The Government is to train people to provide skilled labour for that project so that imports from overseas will be minimal.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It will not happen.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: If Mr Masters thinks back he will remember I suggested that in this House some months ago. I can find nothing to cavil at as long as the Government does it. In order to do that we have to find the money; we have to provide a whole range of technicians, not just tradesmen, but technicians and paratechnicians and paramedics. We have therefore to build up the technical and further education side of our educational system. We have to build it up more than we are doing at present. We are trying to provide tradesmen and technicians; we are trying to provide people who can deal with new technologies. I suggested earlier we also have to reduce the number of hours worked by people, in due course, when computers and automation take over.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Also reduce money.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That will not necessarily follow. Certainly, if we encourage overcapitalisation this may follow. That is why I suggest it is very important to encourage education.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Will reduced hours provide more jobs?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Of course it will, if it is done properly.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why do you always talk about inefficient industries; you never bring up the subject that it is possible there are some very inefficient workers.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: There is no point in bringing it up; there are none.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: No wonder there is a smile on your face!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am not talking about the owners of capital. That is rather a different thing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You must feel very lonely, because you are the only spokesman in the Labor Party. For instance, one hears about a motorcar not being up to scratch but the blame is not on the workers, but on the management.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: A number of things can be blamed.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Some politicians are not up to scratch.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That does not include you, Mr Dans. I have the highest regard for you.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: In fact, if one looks at our views one will find a great variance here. Some companies believe efficiency means "time and motion". That means a worker

goes into a factory, hangs up his coat, which is hoisted out of sight, and then goes to work.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is not really an answer to my question.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will get around to answering the question in my own way in my own time. I will not fall for the trap of giving a simple answer to a complex question.

Overall our industry is inefficient, and that is what I am talking about. I am not trying to apportion blame. The blame can be apportioned all over the place. It can be apportioned to a whole series of Governments of all political complexions which have been too fond of piling on the protection—especially, of course, Liberal-Country Party Governments which have been interested in doing that.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: What do you mean by "piling on the protection"?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Just what I say. I want to get back to the theme I was developing, if I may. I would like to develop my speech in my own way.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You do not think it is protecting the public, do you?

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Protecting labour or capital?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Like the 500 people who got the sack at the paper mill in Sydney the other day.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: In the days when we could maintain our internal markets by protecting our own manufacturing industry, we were protecting both the owners and the workers. At one stage this seemed to be the sensible thing to do, but it seems to me that in this country the protection became one of the economic crutches even when it no longer applied. We must have another look at this, and we must look at restructuring our industry.

This whole diversion began when I said that we would have to reduce working hours sooner or later, and there is no doubt about that at all. We will either reduce working hours by having people working shorter hours—a 30-hour week—or we will reduce overall working hours, because we will be supporting perhaps 10 to 20 per cent of our population on unemployment benefits. Some people would be blaming those who are on unemployment benefits as if it were their fault that industry could no longer hold them, because of the structural changes.

One way or another we have to reduce working hours, and I suggest that it would be a good thing if we can reduce working hours so that we can

maintain full employment. If we can do that—and it is not easy—then we will have people who will buy things. The problem with automation is that machines do not buy goods, and unless we have markets for our goods any increased productivity is unsold. We do not just increase productivity—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Costs are too high, mainly wage costs.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Come off it.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I can give you some examples, and you know it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Unemployment is rife in countries that have a very low wage rate.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Robert Hetherington.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy President.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is not an argument at all.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I must say sometimes I feel I should just sit down and listen to all the other speeches for a while. However, I will not do that; I will struggle on.

The other important thing is that we must educate people so they can use the leisure that will come to them. The people who want to stop the reduction of working hours are as much Luddites as the people who want to stop the development of new technologies. We cannot stop this development, and if we did we would have a society in which we would not want to live. Therefore, we have to provide the kind of education that will let people develop their own interests. Then people would work perhaps 20 or 30 hours a week and they could then attend universities, institutes of technology, or technical schools, and they would do things because they were interested in them and not just to provide a vocation.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Do you think everyone wants to do that?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: No, I do not think everyone wants to do all kinds of things. Some people want to farm, and they farm as a full-time occupation, and enjoy it.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Some people want to work, too.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: In Australia 500 000 want to work, and they cannot get jobs.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That is a point we may well consider.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Look at the New South Wales election.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: At the moment 6 per cent of the work force is unemployed, and 5 per cent of the work force want to work and they cannot find work.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: There are quite a few who do not want to work.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I have allowed the figure of 1 per cent.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You know that as well as I do.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not know that as well as the honourable member. I have lived longer than the honourable member and lived in this country longer than he has lived here, and I know the facts. We could be retrogressive, look backwards, and say that it is everybody else's fault without trying to solve the problem at all. We could then laugh happily as we go into economic disaster. That is what we will do if we are not careful.

One of the things the capitalist system has done is that it has largely solved the problem of production. We can produce; we know how to produce, if we can get all the factors working together. One of the problems in this country right now is that our manufacturing industry which, even if it is not entirely efficient is moderately efficient, is working at 75 per cent of its capacity. Why is it doing that? Is industry taking this course because the nasty workers will not work, or is it doing this because it cannot sell the goods it produces?

Not so long ago I visited a factory in Perth. The management of this factory is under very great stress because it cannot sell its goods. This is not an inefficient factory.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why cannot it sell the goods?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: People do not have the money to buy the goods. The demand is not there.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Are the goods too expensive?

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Are they dearer than outside products?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Although people talk about expensive goods, high wages, and all the other things, they could buy the goods in times of economic prosperity and full employment. The problem is not a simple one; it is very complex. We cannot solve this problem by working harder.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That is not right. We certainly will not solve the problem by sitting on our backsides and complaining.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I was not suggesting we should do that. We should try to analyse the situation and do something about it. We should try to provide alternatives and train people—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: One minute you talk about people working, and the next minute you say we will not solve the problem by working.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: If the honourable member cannot follow what I am saying, I am sorry. I am saying that if everybody worked harder we would not solve our problems, because we would produce more goods that we cannot sell. In fact, our productive capacity will eventually go up while our labour force will go down by increasing capitalisation. That is a simple economic fact.

The Hon. T. Knight: I suggest that if you work harder you produce goods at a cheaper price.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That may or may not happen, and it would not be particularly significant. There are more problems than this.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: That did not happen with the beer at the Swan Brewery, with the automation there.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will repeat something which I have said before, and which I will have to repeat again and again until I get my message through: The same kind of arguments were used in the 1930s. It was said then that everything would be better if only people would work harder, and that the 30 per cent of Australians who were out of a job were dole bludgers who did not want to work.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You sound very bitter—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am bitter.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: —when you say that word “work”. You seem to be very bitter about people having to work at all.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am bitter about people not being able to work. I have never objected to people working. As I have told the honourable gentleman before, in Australia during the war employment was available, and our unemployment rate was under 1 per cent. In other words, when the work was available people worked. Most people enjoy their work, although perhaps not everybody because some work is very hard to perform. Perhaps a person employed as a bender in a factory does not enjoy it. These are the people whose job it is to thrust tubular steel in

a machine, pull the lever, and then the machine makes a noise and spits out the bent steel. A friend of mine tried such a job once, but obviously he was not cut out for that kind of work. He tried it, and he lasted for three weeks. It was not one of the most uplifting and creative jobs in the world.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: What did he do after that?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: As a matter of fact he became a very efficient economist.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That follows.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: He found that the theory on the “kinked demand curve”—whatever that means—was wrong.

Some time ago I was trying to say that when people are out of work we have to provide education for them so that they can fulfil themselves as individuals. In other words, I am saying that our productive resources are such that if we organised our society properly we can allow people not only to work, to produce, and to create, but also to develop their personalities in various ways. There are some people who will have one kind of vocation, including tradesmen, but who would like to go to university, perhaps to study history. Some people would like to learn another trade because they enjoy it. Other people may wish to learn to paint or to play music. There is a whole range of activities which people would like to follow, but which they cannot because they do not have sufficient leisure time, and they do not have enough money. We must try to help them.

I am arguing that even if we cut back on public spending—and I believe we are cutting back far too much now—we should also spend more money on education, because we need to have the facilities available. We need to make sure that the primary school children, those in grade 1, will be sufficiently literate and numerate when they grow up.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Are you saying that we ought to have a degree to be able to drive a taxi?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: The other factor is that I suggest we should pay less attention to people obtaining degrees, most surprisingly—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Less?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, less attention. It may be a good idea to encourage some children to leave school and to go out into the work force. They could then come back to study later, and that would be a good thing.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Or take on a trade.



The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I have nothing against trades. Anyone who has ever had a house built for him or extensions added to a house will appreciate that tradesmen are efficient, competent, pleasant, and happy.

The Hon. T. Knight: Hear, hear!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Of course some of them are and some of them are not. I have met some very good tradesmen. Not only were they efficient, but also they were pleasant and seemed to enjoy life.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I hope you are not going to get rude about tradesmen, because I am a qualified tradesman, and I would take exception to any remark like that.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I was not going to be rude to tradesmen.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Our President is a tradesman also.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: In my experience, most tradesmen are capable, competent, and pleasant.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: There are exceptions.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: There are exceptions, but generally they are pleasant people to have around the place.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think we have more tradesmen on our side than you do on your side.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That might be a fact. It is a great pity that some people do not want to be tradesmen; we need more of them.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I would prefer tradesmen to academic snobs anyway.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: And so would I, Mr Gayfer.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I was suggesting that we now need to develop our education field. We need to develop particularly the technical and further education side.

It follows from what I have just said that people need to develop new skills. I was very pleased to find that at the proposed new Perth Technical College, it is planned to actually have gymnasiums and squash courts; in other words, this technical institution will not just be a place to attend to acquire skills. Unfortunately, I find there is a difference between the attitude to technical schools and technical colleges which were originally places for the working class to acquire skills so they could be properly employed, and universities which were the places for the children of the middle and upper classes to go to be educated. The universities had to have cricket

pitches, rugby grounds, and in Australia an Australian rules football ground, whereas the people who went to technical schools just had to learn skills that their employers would find useful. People to whom I have talked in technical colleges think it is time we did more about this.

Many of the people who go to technical schools are people who are trying to improve themselves. Quite often they are from under-privileged socio-economic sections of the community—not all of them, but quite a lot of them. They need counselling; they need recreation facilities and they need places to develop.

I would like to see the technical schools and colleges developed more fully. They are very, very necessary. I was glad to see that the Commonwealth Government actually gave more money to the State for technical schools and further education, which is included in the Budget before us. I would like to see more planning ahead. As an example, let me use Albany because I have been down there. Albany is about to get a second high school which I hope will complement the first but will do slightly different things so that there is a choice. Albany has a very efficient and good technical college situated next to a large tract of land which has been set aside for a high school.

Yet at the same time if we really believe in decentralisation and regional development we need to develop in Albany things which will increase the population, and simultaneously develop the schools and turn the technical college into a community college so that the people of Albany may have available to them a full range of education. If we do that then we will enrich their lives, and the State will be the better for it. I hope nobody will ask yet again where the money will come from. I realise that we cannot do all this at once and that it is not easy. However, I think it is something we must aim for.

Therefore, it seems to me that our expenditure on education is of vital importance if we are to be prepared for the new, far more highly technological society that is developing, in which the tertiary sector is growing while the secondary sector has problems. If we can do this, then there might be some hope for the country in the end.

Because of these things I think the Federal Budget is deficient. It is allowing unemployment to grow; it is tinkering with the problems of technology, but I do not think it is delving into the problems wholeheartedly enough. I think the Federal Budget is neglecting the whole area of education; and certainly we need to look into this more carefully.

I want now to mention briefly the State of Western Australia. If one reads the economic statement presented by the Treasurer with his Budget, one finds our economy is not in a very happy position. In the year 1977-78 there was a downturn in the Western Australian economy. The key indicators suggest that we have an economy in trouble. Our inflation rate is the highest in Australia, our unemployment continues to grow, and our building and construction industries as well as our general secondary industries are in trouble.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Is our unemployment rate the highest?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: In Australia? Undoubtedly.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not know that it is the highest, but it is fairly high.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I was just wondering.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will get around to our unemployment rate in a moment; but certainly it is high and unemployment is growing. It is growing at a rate which is faster than the rate of population growth. Our rate of growth in employment is 1.5 per cent, and in that respect we are doing better than some States which are falling back. One State has recorded a fall of 0.2 per cent. Our rate of growth in employment is 1.5 per cent and our rate of growth of population is 2.3 per cent. Therefore, we are dropping behind and unemployment is growing.

Some people say, "Bully for us. This is all happening because the East is inefficient and people are coming to Mecca—Western Australia". In some ways there is some truth in that.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It also happened in the 1930s, as you would well know.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Western Australia is a State that did grow rapidly, economically speaking, in the 1960s. There is no doubt about that. In many ways both the Federal Government and the State Government are looking towards our mining industries to develop and to take us into an economic recovery. Mining is regarded as important by both the Federal Government and the State Government.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The Federal Government is backing this, too.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, I think they are regarding it as important, but I do not think they are backing it sufficiently financially. In other words, I agree with the Premier—it is terrible that I am in agreement with him yet again—

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is about the third time tonight.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Well, he has some justified complaints that the Federal Government is not expanding its grants at the rate at which they should be expanded in accordance with our needs and our population growth, if Western Australia is to provide the impetus for the rest of Australia through the development of its mining industries. Therefore, we are not being well treated by the Federal Government. There is no doubt about that at all.

In 1977-78 unemployment did rise by 8 870, which is a large number. At the end of June 34 443 people were out of work, which was an increase of 34.7 per cent over the previous year. In other words, unemployment is growing rapidly. But what I find particularly disturbing, as I have mentioned before and will mention again, is that one-third of the people out of work are aged between 15 and 19 years.

If we are going to have people who do not want to work, it will be those people who have not the opportunity to get into the habit of working and who become depressed and turned off with the whole of our society. They are a source of worry to us, and if they do not want to work in the future I hope people will not blame them for it, because they are at a stage where they cannot get work. It is very difficult to obtain work, as I know, because I know young people who are genuinely and honestly looking for work. Sometimes they find it and sometimes they do not; and sometimes finding a job takes a very long time.

On occasions a 17-year-old may obtain a job and be put off after a week because a 15-year-old can be employed at less cost to the employer. Sometimes this occurs because the Federal Government will assist young people who have been out of work for a certain time, and will assist employers who will employ them for six months, and after that period the employers put them out of work and employ other young people.

In other words, when members opposite point to some people in the work force who are exploiting the system—and of course some are—but I would claim the incidence is not as high as members opposite claim it is—they also have to look at the employers who are exploiting the system. This happens, of course, when the system is malfunctioning. What we have to try to do is to get the system functioning again and to place people back into employment. At the rate we are going we could have 50 000 people out of work next year.

At the end of the 1976-77 financial year—and these statistics are in the Budget papers for anyone to read—there was one vacancy for every 14 people out of work. That means that if all those 14 people chased one job very hard, then once one person got the job there were still 13 others out of work; and if all the vacancies were filled there would still be people out of work and it would not necessarily be their fault, because the jobs were just not available.

In the 1977-78 year there was one vacancy for every 27 people out of work. In the nation as a whole there is one vacancy for every 23 people out of work. Therefore, Western Australia is worse off than the national average. Our employment is rising, and yet our population is growing at a faster rate than our employment, and we are not solving the problem.

In 1977-78 savings bank deposits increased by 9.2 per cent, despite a rise in prices. What is this? Is it an indication that we are happy and confident, and so there is a lot of money around? Of course it is not; it is an indication that people are fearful of the future, and out of what little additional money they have many of them are saving. They are concerned for the future.

For the first time since 1971-72 new motor vehicle registrations declined; they fell by 6.8 per cent.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why would that be?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I presume it would be because there are more people out of work, because there is no money around, because people are afraid to commit themselves to a new car because they may be out of a job—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Cars are a lot more expensive too, you know. They are just too costly.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: —or because the price of cars has increased. With the changes in sales tax we might see a great variation next year, and it will be interesting to see what happens.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Is the purchase of cars a barometer in this respect?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It has been a barometer in the past; usually when we are in trouble new motor vehicle registrations fall. It happened in 1960-61, it has happened in the past, and it happened in 1971-72 which was the last year of the McMahon Government. I told people then at a time when money was flooding into the country and was not being put into productive uses, that it was inflationary; and it caused the economic problems which hit the Whitlam Government full and hard.

It has been fashionable ever since then for the simple-minded to say that all our problems were caused by the Whitlam Government. When things have become worse since then those people do not say our problems are caused by the Fraser Government; they still say they were caused by the Whitlam Government. I just wonder how long that can go on.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Indefinitely.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I would not be at all surprised.

Retail sales of electrical goods, furniture, and floor coverings in Western Australia have all fallen significantly in real terms. I mentioned earlier that the manufacturing industries of Australia are operating at 75 per cent of their capacity, and the situation is worse in Western Australia. Employment is down, and in the manufacturing industries more than 1 300 jobs were lost. We are in trouble. The complete system is in trouble.

In the last financial year the number of dwelling improvements fell by 16.2 per cent, the number of building commencements fell by 22.3 per cent, and the number of completions fell by 18.8 per cent. In the 11 months to May, 1978, the volume of loans approved for housing fell by 2.6 per cent in real terms.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why do you think there is less activity in those areas? Obviously it is because there is no money available or because costs are too high.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I would say it is a little of both. It is caused partly by inflation. One of the factors is that the price of building materials in Western Australia has increased at a greater rate than the prices of other supplies.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: It is not just due to increased costs.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I ask the member what is not due to increased costs?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: They are quite enormous now.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I will put you down to answer that later in the sitting.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That is just crazy. It really is absolutely crazy.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I agree.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: As a matter of fact, I have the figure here. Since the present Government came into office, the price of building materials has increased by 44.5 per cent, which is the highest increase in Australia.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: That is for materials?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: For building materials. The national average is 38.5 per cent. Are members going to tell me wages are more in Western Australia than in the rest of the country? Are the unions more militant in Western Australia than in New South Wales? Is there some other reason?

We know that we have maintained a very high rate of inflation. We have managed to achieve better than the national average since the present Government has been in office. We were below the national average when the Tonkin Government was in office. Perhaps that is accidental; but if members are going to blame the Whitlam Government, they should say it is a pity we lost the Tonkin Government. It was a good Government. It was a fine Government. It managed to keep some prices down, and it managed to keep the inflation rate below the national average.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: And keep development fairly restricted, too.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I have not noticed there has been very much development going on lately. Of course, Mr Masters will say that is because of labour costs. I cannot win, because whatever I say he says, "Labour costs, labour costs". He just parrots that across—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I see that as a very important issue.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It is not as one-sided and as simple as that.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I am sure it is not.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: One of the problems is that our overseas exports are down by 1.9 per cent.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why would that be? I am sure you have the answer to that.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: One of the reasons, of course, is that overseas countries do not wish to import our goods. Sometimes their economics have taken downturns as well. There is not the same demand. That may be because some of our goods are too costly.

Our overseas trade surplus is 9 per cent. All I am saying at present is that we are not doing very well. We have problems.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: We agree there. It is the reason that we are arguing about.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am pleased we have reached some minor point of agreement.

Our iron ore shipments are down by 4 per cent. The value of production is 4.8 per cent less than the inflation rate. In the preceding five years, when I suppose our wages were still high, the average annual increase in iron ore production was 20.6 per cent. Is Mr Masters going to tell me—because he can if he wishes to—that wages have increased relatively in the rest of the world? They have increased much less rapidly in the last year than in the years before. In fact, wages have been dampened down, as inflation has been dampened down.

Wages have been kept below the inflation rate by partial indexation. This year, after we have cut back our average annual increase from 20.6 per cent, suddenly people have said, "Your costs are too great." I think the situation might be more complex than that.

We have the sad prospect of Goldsworthy closing in 1981. The profits of Hamersley are down. I count that as a minus. I do not object to profits, Mr Masters will be happy to know. It is necessary for private enterprise to make profits.

In 1977-78 the value of nickel and concentrates fell by 9.5 per cent in money terms. There is a tremendous loss of employment in the mining industry. I will not list all of the figures, but people are going out of work, and mines are closing. There have been 750 jobs lost.

The timber industry is depressed. So it goes on, and on, and on.

This is not all the fault of the Government. Certainly I am not standing here to say that all this has happened because of the Court Government. I do not regard the Court Government as the best Government in Australia. It is fairly well down my list. I put it above Queensland, but I do not regard it—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is only just above, though.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes. I do not blame the Government for everything that has happened. The Government cannot help the fall in demand overseas for iron ore and nickel.

This situation makes nonsense of the Premier's repeated call for greater efforts and greater productivity. It makes nonsense of this Government's cliché which says, "Let us take our coats off and get on with the job." That is what the Premier says on an average of about twice a week. Not everybody heeds his call. Not everybody has a job. Not everybody has a coat!

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Your speech has a fairly large cliché content also. Think about it.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will look after my clichés, and the Premier can look after his. I do not use my clichés as frequently as the Premier uses his.

We cannot produce and develop our way out of trouble. This situation makes nonsense of the attempt by the Federal Government to solve economic problems with investment allowances. People invest when they believe there is an actual or potential demand.

We are in trouble! Bearing all that in mind, I wish to have a look at the Budget. When we speak about the Budget, we do not mean just the Consolidated Revenue Fund. We mean the whole range of economic measures the Government is adopting.

Despite what the Premier might say about charges not being taxes, we have to include charges in the Budget. After all, charges for services provided by Government instrumentalities are included in Government revenue. That revenue has to be balanced against expenditure. They are not taxes, but they have much the same effect. They are added to revenue. In relation to some Government instrumentalities like the State Energy Commission, there is a 3 per cent tax.

We have had increases of \$34 million. That is well in advance of the Budget. In country water charges, there has been an increase by an average of 33 per cent. There have been increases in Westrail freights, country bus and train fares, State Shipping Service freights, electricity charges, and gas charges. Metropolitan bus and train fares have increased by 5 per cent. Metropolitan sewerage rates have increased; metropolitan drainage rates have increased; and State Housing Commission rents have increased by an average of 9.2 per cent in the metropolitan area and 6.3 per cent in the country areas.

We have to wait to see what will happen to water rates. They are in a dicey situation at the moment because of the intransigence of some of the Government back-bench members.

There is an estimated increase of 14 per cent in revenue shown in the Budget for charges in public hospitals. This suggests it is likely that there will be an increase in hospital charges before the financial year is finished. We have to deal with this balanced Budget which has been introduced by the Premier.

When one looks at this Budget, it is difficult to sort out who is doing what, to whom, and where. It all depends how one uses the words "balanced Budget". One economist suggested to me that it is not a balanced Budget—that Budgets are never

balanced nowadays. In fact, he suggests it is a balanced Consolidated Revenue Fund, which is the result of a trick, anyway.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: The economist would probably have said it was a good Budget, to be honest?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: No, he did not say that at all.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I am surprised.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Would Mr Masters like to know some of the remarks the economist made?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are going to tell me whether I want to know or not.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I thought Mr Masters might be interested. I was glad to hear his question. He was showing interest.

The economist was not very happy. According to the economist, it all depends how one defines the terms. He said that the way the Federal Government does its accounting, the Budget is balanced when the total expenditure equals the current revenue and proceeds of the sale of assets—that is, where no new liabilities are issued. Of course, the State Government borrows each year through the Loan Council, so new liabilities are being incurred all the time.

In addition to that, it is difficult to compare last year's loans with this year's loans, because we have expanded the right of public authorities to borrow. The amounts they borrow should be included in the total loan moneys; but they are not.

It is confusing to try to work the accounts through. It is impossible, I am told, to reconcile completely the expenditure and receipts data in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The only items which show great variability are the items in cash and bank balances, and in "other" items.

The economist estimated as a "guesstimate"—and I am not saying this, because I am not an economist—that there was probably a deficit of between \$280 million and \$350 million in 1977-78, and there may be one between \$300 million and \$350 million in 1978-79. That is a deficit Budget. The balancing of the Consolidated Revenue Fund is achieved by juggling.

If one looks at the 1977-78 Estimates, one will see there is an interesting thing. That was a balanced Budget. During the year revenue fell by \$18.7 million. Miracle! Expenditure fell by \$18.7 million. Actually, that is to the nearest dollar. It was balanced exactly.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Good housekeeping!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, I am sure it was.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: You will have to explain those deficits.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: That is the judgment of a so-called economist.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: But you agree with him?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not profess to be an expert—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: What was his qualification?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are not suggesting Government deficits have something to do with housekeeping?

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: The member said that the deficits occurred last year. I believe he should explain that for us.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: He is making the speech—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: And he intends to continue making the speech.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member is supposed to be making the speech.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Thank you, Mr President. I am doing my best.

I am saying that a reputable economist, whose name I will not mention, has made this estimate. He says it is difficult to reconcile the Budget papers because of the kind of accounting the State adopts.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Do you agree with what he says?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: When trying to reconcile receipts and expenditure, it seemed that the term used to balance the books at the end of the year was that quoted under "Treasury Department" on page 18 of the Estimates. I would like the Minister who replies at the end of this debate to tell us firstly if this is the case, and secondly if the \$13.9 million interest from short-term investments mentioned on page 10 of the Treasurer's speech is in fact included under this item. If it is not included under this item, where is it included? In fact, the Treasurer said that there was \$13.9 million put in from short-term investments to balance the Budgets. However, when I look at the receipts, I cannot find it listed separately anywhere.

There is this mystical item which talks about recovery of debt charges "and other". It is quite interesting and fascinating, and obviously—I hope members will not take this the wrong way, but

they will—I have a lot to learn about sorting through Budgets. I intend to do a little more of it during the year.

I would also refer the Minister to page 14 of the Premier's Budget speech which he made last year. It suggests there that this, in fact, is where the item is.

I note, too, that actual funds for the Treasury in 1977-78 fell short of the Estimates by \$5.2 million which is nearly the amount saved by the failure to spend the estimated amount on salaries for the Education Department. In fact, last year the shortfall in the actual expenditure below the Estimates in the Education Department salaries was \$5.1 million. The year before the shortfall was \$9.4 million.

I am beginning to wonder about the fine promises about expenditure on education. I wonder whether the promises are spurious and whether the education estimate is there to provide a buffer for falls in receipts, because it seems to do this each year. If the receipts fall the amount is not spent on salaries, and yet with that \$5 million a large number of the unemployed teachers could have been employed.

Each year we hear grandiose promises about an increase in the staff-student ratio and in expenditure on education, but each year the money allocated is not spent.

I would like to quote from page 21 of the Budget speech of 1977 as follows—

Despite an estimated increase of 3 450 in primary school enrolments the pupil/teacher ratio will decline to 23.3 to 1 in 1978 following the appointment of 250 new teachers. These additional teachers include a further 80 specialised teachers in physical education, music and art and 68 relieving teachers who will enable the release of colleagues for special duties.

The portion to which I wish to draw special attention reads—

In the field of secondary education, 160 additional teachers are to be appointed to high schools in 1978. The lift in teacher numbers will have the effect of reducing the pupil/teacher ratio to 13.5 to 1 and allow specialist teachers to be engaged on problem areas such as remedial reading.

In 1978, on page 12 of his speech, the Premier promised to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools to 22.3 to 1. This is an advance, so we did improve on last year. However, in regard to secondary schools the Premier said—

An additional 120 teachers will be employed in secondary schools, 60 of whom are needed to provide for increased pupil numbers. The additional 60 will allow a further reduction in the pupil/teacher ratio from 14.0 to 13.5 on predicted enrolments.

For two years running we have been promised that the secondary school teacher-pupil ratio will be reduced to 13.5 to 1, but it was not reduced last year and, in effect, if we look at the number of teachers actually employed in secondary schools in 1977-78 and 1976-77 we will find the additional number is 71.

An amount of \$5 million was not spent; 71 of the promised 160 additional teachers were employed; and the staff-student ratio did not move, because the moneys included in the education estimates apparently were included so that they could be used as a buffer to balance the Budget.

I wonder what the promises are worth this year, because if this is what the Government is doing we cannot have very much faith in the promises. I would rather the Premier said, "We cannot spend the money, because we just do not have it." At least that would be honest. I will be interested to see how many teachers are employed next year and what the staff-student ratio is.

Of course, none of this is new or special. From a reading of the speech one would believe that the money was there in order to employ teachers to mop up the pool of unemployed. However, it is not, because a move towards teacher-pupil ratio reductions has been on for some time. The Government's intention—which I applaud—can be found in both the WAPSEC and the Teacher Education Authority reports. This means, of course, that once again we will have teachers unemployed and once again we will have an increase in the pool of unemployed teachers. The Government might then have some kind of pool of unemployed to use if the teachers continue to strike, although I think this is hardly very likely.

I was trying to find the \$13.9 million from short-term loans. It certainly is not shown in the Budget papers. The fact that money is available is shown on page 32 of the Auditor General's report which has just been tabled. On that page it is revealed that on the 1st July, 1977-78, the interest on short-term loans was \$24 million and during the year interest of \$23.6 million was earned. Of this \$2.7 million was transferred to Consolidated Revenue and \$7.5 million was transferred to the General Loan Fund, which left a balance in the Suspense Account of \$33.4 million. I am wondering whether this means that not only was

the Budget balanced, but that there was a surplus of \$33.4 million tucked away in a suspense account to be used wherever it was required. I also wonder what other kind of money is tucked away in a whole range of trust and suspense accounts which do not appear in the Budget papers. If I want to find out I presume I will have to get some help and spend a great deal of time reading the Auditor General's report to see whether I can ascertain where the money is and how the system works.

It means that this year we are going to put \$13.9 million into Consolidated Revenue from the interest from short-term loans, and \$10 million into the Loan Account. That represents \$23.9 million which is approximately the amount which we earned from short-term loans last year. So I suppose there will still be \$30 million in the Suspense Account at the end of the year, and I wonder whether it will sit there to be used either to mop up the deficits which appear this year or to featherbed the Budget next year in order to produce a soft Budget prior to election year.

I find the whole accounting system very difficult and unsatisfactory. Perhaps more experienced members in the Chamber will be able to assist me and explain the situation.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I have already mentioned to members that it is completely out of order for them to carry on an audible conversation while a member is on his feet.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Thank you, Sir. Perhaps more experienced members can show me where I am wrong and just what is going on. It seems to me we are presented with a confidence trick or a juggling act. Whether or not it is proper I do not know, but it does not look very proper to me. Certainly we are not being given the information in the Budget papers in a straightforward manner. Such information we get we must fossick for and ferret out.

This is one of the problems I mentioned when I began my speech. It is very difficult for a busy private member, who is not an expert on these matters—I have no doubt that as I gain more practice I will become more expert, and I wonder then whether sums will be hidden more efficiently so that members cannot find them—to sort out the mass and maze of figures, trust accounts, and various other accounts a Government can use. Clearly the Government has about \$30 million it is not spending. I am not quite sure what else it might have, and I am not sure what it will do about the matter.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Over many years all Governments have produced these figures in exactly the same way.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: In that case it is about time State Governments did it differently. I am inclined to agree with Mr McGuinness who, in an article in *The National Times* criticising the Wran Government, said that all State Governments were much the same and that it was almost impossible to understand their accounts. Certainly if he did not understand them I do not feel so badly about the matter, because he understands these things much better than I do. I find it very difficult to follow accounts and this raises the question—whether or not all Governments do it—of whether, under our Westminster system, all Governments are being properly accountable, because it is difficult for back-benchers to weave their way through the accounts.

Mr Baxter is probably in a better position than I am in, because he is a man of long experience and broad understanding of these matters and perhaps if he cares to get on his feet he could inform me about the intricacies of the Government's accounting system.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Who are the members of the Public Accounts Committee?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not want to discuss the Public Accounts Committee, because that would give me the basis of another speech I do not particularly want to make and neither you, Mr President, nor the House would thank me for doing so.

I want to mention two other points about the Budget itself before I deal with several other matters. The amount included for housing is appallingly low, but I will allow other people to deal with the detail of that. The amount to assist employment in miscellaneous works is \$4 million being the same amount as last year. The Public Works vote is appallingly small. It is merely a gesture. It will not do anything serious at all.

We have a shuffle between the various aspects. We have a Budget which does not really do much for the economy. We have a set of promises about a huge expenditure on education but, judging by the Government's performance last year, the promises will not be kept. This remains to be seen.

I have no confidence that this Budget, even within the narrow parameters left to it by the Federal Government, will do anything successful or useful in assisting unemployment in this State.

Certainly, in the areas of growth where we would expect expenditure to increase, it has not increased. In the areas of agriculture and

industrial development the increases are either non-existent, pitifully small, or behind the inflation rate. So I am most unimpressed by the Budget and by what it does. If it does what it claims to do it will be better than I think it will be, but after looking at the promises made last year and the year before, and the promises made this year, I am left with a feeling of no confidence that those promises will be carried out.

I hope the Treasurer's optimism is justified in hoping that in the 150th year of this State's existence there will suddenly be a burst of investment and exports and that confidence will suddenly come from somewhere, but I can see nothing in the Budget, the economic papers, the Treasurer's explanations, or anything else which suggests that is likely to be the case, unless some of the things tucked away in expense accounts will be used to produce a bit of a boom next year. I would like to see something rather better than that.

I want to mention some other matters—three which do not relate to my electorate and a couple which do. The first, of course, is the one which, as shadow Minister for Education, is concerning me I suppose as much as it concerns the Minister, but in a different way; that is, the present teachers' strike.

I am very perturbed, as I have said before, that since the present Minister has been in office he has taken three steps without adequate thought or consultation. One was to abolish the Pre-school Board, which I spoke about when I first came here. Another was to abolish the Teachers' Registration Board; and I have some evidence that, despite what the Minister in another place claimed, not all members of that board asked for or agreed to its disbandment, and at least one member was not asked about it. I hope my information is wrong, but I am beginning to wonder.

The third matter is the whole holiday issue, which in many ways seems to be a minor issue but is symptomatic of a major lack of confidence in the Minister and the department. The Leader of the House might say the lack of confidence is unwarranted. I am not saying whether or not it is warranted; I am saying it exists.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think the teachers have been badly led by their own union, not by anybody else.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yesterday I received a letter from 14 teachers at a primary school saying they were not going on strike, because they did not approve of strike action, but they did approve of the attitude of the Teachers'



Union on the issue. My discussions with teachers suggest their dissatisfaction and malaise are much stronger than the Minister here or in another place thinks. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction and a feeling that they are not being treated as professional people. I am sure the Minister will not interject again and say they are not professional if they go on strike. I would object to that very strongly, as I did the other night, because it means doctors and civil servants who go on strike cease to be professional. I wonder how long after one has gone on strike one becomes professional again.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is interesting to read in the Oxford dictionary what constitutes a professional.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Is the Minister sure that no professional can go on strike?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am quite sure on reading the Oxford dictionary that the man who sweeps the street is a professional.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: No-one should go on strike.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I do not think teachers should go on strike.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I think it is unfortunate that they have gone on strike.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: One of the earliest recorded strikes in England was of professional cricketers.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am surprised at the amount of support the Teachers' Union is getting.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There is always some support for any stand against authority, even when the authority is good.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are you suggesting it is not good now?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: This authority is not particularly good but I understand an attempt has been made to have confrontation with the teachers and it is having some degree of success. Despite what the Leader of the House says, I still think that had he remained the Minister it may not have happened, because had he had to deal with teachers he might not have been so cavalier as he sounds now.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The first two actions would not have occurred—the abolition of the Pre-school Board and the Teachers' Registration Board.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Perhaps I am giving the Minister credit far too much virtue;

I do not know. I must remember that in the future. Never mind; I do not want to upset him, because I now want to put to him quietly and seriously an argument about parking at Perth Technical College, to which I hope he will listen.

I have spoken to people at the Perth Technical College and I think they have a case. As the Leader of the House well knows, the Perth Technical College is being rebuilt with the building of the cultural centre. At present there are 150 parking bays for staff and students in James Street and 110 in St. George's Terrace. These will be reduced to 44 with the new building.

The argument advanced by the Minister for Education in a letter which was sent by a Government member to a member of the staff is well put and I am not knocking it. I will not cite either name; I merely say the letter seems to put the Government case reasonably well. It says—

As you mentioned in your correspondence, there will be 44 parking bays available at the new College. However, negotiations are at present in progress between the Library Board and the Perth City Council for the provision of a car park underneath the new Library building, opposite the College, with space for between 600 and 750 cars. With other parking available in the area, there should altogether be provision for about 1 000 cars.

Submissions are being made by the Perth Technical College and the Library Board to the Metropolitan Transport Trust for the provision of a clipper bus service up Beaufort Street to Francis Street and then down William Street.

Unlike W.A.I.T. or the University of W.A., the new Perth Technical College is well related to public transport. This is one of the advantages of being in the City, but on the other hand it is impossible to provide full parking facilities, for either students or office workers, so close to the City centre.

I understand your concern with the problems of parking, but I am sure you will see that there are also advantages in having the Technical College located in the City rather than in the outer metropolitan area, where access would be difficult.

It is easy to say, as people on both sides of the political fence have said to me, "What are they on about? There is plenty of parking around the place. Do people who work for Boans get special parking privileges?" It is also easy to say, "There is plenty of public transport; therefore the students who go to the college should use it." But

if one says either of those things one is missing the nub of the nature of staff at a tertiary institution and also of human nature as far as students are concerned in relation to parking cars; and it may give rise to real problems.

Members of the staff say that even if there is adequate parking at present, all the space in the Perth City Council car parks is gone by 8.30 a.m., and the nature of their occupation is such that they are not working from 8.30 or 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Many of their courses start at 5.30 p.m. and finish at 8.30 p.m.; others are in the morning.

In my own experience as a lecturer at the University of Western Australia, when I had a lot of work to do I sometimes stayed home so that I would not be interrupted by students. Normally one goes to the university so that one is available to students, but if one has a pile of essays to mark one stays home and might whip in to give a lecture. If I could not find parking space, it was unfortunate not only for me that my particular lecture could not be given; it was unfortunate for the 300 students who came to hear me. As I have pointed out to other people, there is no accounting for taste; they were there and they wanted to hear me.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I trust they did hear you if they came along in spite of lack of parking.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I managed to get parking space, because provision is made for staff parking at the university.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think I attended three meetings concerning removing certain elements from that location, and this matter was vented at every one of them. The difficulties were accepted by the students and the staff, with full appreciation of the problems you have mentioned, because the alternative was out near Bentley.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I realise that, but nevertheless I think we should try to overcome some of the difficulties. The Minister is aware of them and I know the staff do not want to move. I think it would be possible to overcome the difficulties.

I just want to make another point so that it is on record for the Minister to read before replying to what I have said. About 180 of the staff work part time, and part-time staff are quite often busy people who have to go in, park their cars, give their lectures, and go away again. Another problem is that there is more than one venue for the college, so some of the staff have to go to different places. They need, somewhere close by, some parking space which is theirs. If 260 places are sufficient now—I do not know whether they

are, but no doubt the Minister can obtain that information—perhaps at the Perth City Council car park being built on land which at present belongs to the Perth Technical College, a certain number of places could be reserved for students, or staff and students, with parking stickers provided.

What is concerning some of the staff is that, if no such action is taken, not only will they have difficulties but the difficulties will become known and other people who might otherwise have looked for transfer to the institution will remain on the periphery; and, despite public transport, if students cannot park their cars they may go to other technical colleges and this one may become a white elephant. If that happened it would be a tragedy and a waste of the taxpayers' money, and the Government would be most upset. The Minister would not want that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That will not arise, because there are sufficient alternate uses for the building. It could be used for a museum, a library, or an art gallery.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I would be very upset if we did lose the building, because I am told it is a good institution with a good reputation. It has an excellent tradition, and we do not want to lose it.

The other matter, of course, is whether or not students are expected to use public transport. Many of them in fact park in the city and then drive up on their way home at 5.30 p.m. What could well happen—and this would be undesirable as far as both the Government and the Opposition are concerned, because both our philosophies believe in encouraging small businessmen—is that we might find students' cars occupying parking spaces in front of restaurants in West Perth.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I wish the honourable member had been with me when I had the original meetings that led to the building being put where it is now. If he had been with me we might even have had it put out at Bentley.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not think so, and I am glad it is not to be located there. I am not criticising the Government for leaving the building where it is, because I have always thought it is a great pity that the University of Western Australia could not have been left in the city. I think there are great advantages in tertiary institutions being in the city.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There are disadvantages too.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: There are a few disadvantages, but I think there are many

advantages. I do not want the building to be lost or to become a white elephant. Therefore, I am asking the Minister if he will have another look at the matter to see if somewhere a sufficient number of parking spaces can be made available—even if students are required to pay an annual fee.

I am not saying students should not pay anything. Some tertiary institutions charge for parking. It has not yet happened in Western Australia, but certainly it occurred in Adelaide before I left. We paid a nominal sum; at that stage it was \$10 a year, but it is probably greater now as a result of inflation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I will have a look at it.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I would be glad if the Minister would, because this matter is worrying the staff quite a deal. I interviewed a number of them, and they asked me if I would do something about the matter. As the Budget debate is before the Chamber, I thought it appropriate to place the matter before the Minister now.

I wish now to depart from the metropolitan area and to raise a matter relating to Karratha, where the senior high school has a bus service, and the parents concerned have been at the Minister for Education since the middle of last year in an endeavour to get an air-conditioned bus. They have been trying to get the regulations changed, because at present the bus is not air-conditioned and children must sit three to two adult seats.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Below a certain age.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes. The parents think that this might be all right in the south of the State, but it is not very comfortable in Karratha. I will not read out the temperatures the parents have charted for me, but in February and early March they average a maximum of 35°C in the morning and 43°C in the afternoon.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What is that in real temperatures?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I think it is from 90°F to above 100°F.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: You need not bother taking this to the Minister because he has heard all about it.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Well I am sure that if the Leader of the House has heard all about it he will still take it to the Minister for Education.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It gets that hot in the south, you know.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, but not day after day and morning after morning in buses which must travel quite a long distance. I hope the Hon. John Tozer has made representations to the Minister on behalf of the school.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: I agree with the governing council, yes.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: In that case, I am only too happy to join the honourable member in asking the Minister to do something about it. I am sure that if Mr Tozer and I stand shoulder to shoulder the Minister might have another think about it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You would do better if you took up a collection in this Chamber.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It seems to me to be a straightforward case, and something should be done about it. I hope the Government can see its way clear to do something about the matter, even if only to spend a little of the money it will save on salaries in the present year, if last year's Budget is anything to go on.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you mean to take it from teachers' salaries?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That is what happened in the last two years. If it is to happen this year, perhaps the money could go towards the children of Karratha.

The Hon. G. W. Berry: How far do they have to travel in the bus?

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: It is 50 kilometres.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am informed by an impeccable authority it is 50 kilometres each way. I will probably write to the Minister in due course and I suppose I will receive a letter from him.

The other matter that is concerning me—and it is something the Minister for Housing has been asked to consider previously and will be asked to consider again—is in respect of an increase not in taxes but in charges. I refer to State Housing Commission rentals. Some pensioners in State Housing Commission rental homes are facing an increase of \$2.40 or \$3.20 a week. I have a case of a woman in my electorate who is receiving an "A"-class widow's pension. She has one child, and is facing a \$3.20 a week increase.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How did that come about?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Well, the rates of rentals have been changed.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: She pays a percentage of her pension, not a percentage of the rental.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: She has not done that to date. This has been changed recently; I think it dates from the 2nd October. At the present time she is paying just below the percentage, but it will increase by \$3.20 a week. Her electricity and other charges have increased, and in November the Federal Government will give her another \$1.75 a week for the next year.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Then her rent will increase, because she pays a percentage of her pension.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It will not increase then, because it has increased already. I do not think it will increase again. She finds she will be paying an additional \$6.40 a fortnight.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I hate to argue with you, but if I were you I would not elaborate too much on that. Pensioners pay a percentage of their pension, not a percentage of the rent charged.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: That has been reviewed only recently.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The formula has been changed.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Let me read to the Leader of the House the answer to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition in another place. The following is the answer supplied by the Minister for Housing—

The rebated rent of \$10 per week, paid by a single pensioner is 17.7 per cent of current pension income, and the rebated rent of \$15.20 per week paid by a married pensioner couple is 16.7 per cent of current pensioner income. These proportions are below the 20 per cent base of the new rebate scale adopted by the Housing Commission, and no further relief for pensioners is contemplated.

So there is a new rebate of 20 per cent which has in real terms increased the rent of such people.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, what they pay is based on the amount of pension they receive.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: But the base has been changed so that without any change in the pension the amount these people pay in rent has increased; and even when they receive an increase in their pension, it will increase by less than the amount by which their rent has increased. Therefore, they are a little upset, because people on pensions are not extremely well off. I would be glad if the Minister would make inquiries with his colleagues in another place to see whether out of the goodness of his heart his

colleague can do something about the matter. He seems to be doing nothing about it at the moment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: A pensioner is paying \$10 a week in rental for a house?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: No. I will leave that, because my colleague will explain it more fully to the Minister when he rises to speak.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought you were the last speaker on this.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: If I am the last speaker then it looks as though the Leader of the House and I will be the only speakers, judging from the enthusiasm of members opposite.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is the information I received.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I thought I was the first speaker, but perhaps I was wrong.

Another matter that is worrying me concerns the former suburb of Maniana, which has recently received the cosmetic facelift of being named North Queens Park.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What a horrible name.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: That is what I thought. This has been done because the suburb is next to Queens Park; and because Maniana has become a rather depressed area it was decided to integrate it with Queens Park.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I always thought Maniana was a pretty name, didn't you?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Yes, but it is relative to what the name is attached to. Maniana by itself is a pretty name. However, the area—which the Minister and I worked out one night was developed in order to meet a temporary emergency when the Hon. H. E. Graham was the Minister for Housing—is not very pretty at present. It contains small houses which in my opinion should be bulldozed and rebuilt. If I had my way every time a tenant moved out of a house I would have it knocked down and rebuilt. I know Mr Gayfer will ask once again where the money will come from.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have a feeling the Treasurer would ask that, too.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Ideally the houses should be knocked down and rebuilt. However, in fact the State Housing Commission in its wisdom has decided they will be upgraded. The commission proposes to upgrade 12 units as a pilot scheme so that people may look at them and say, "I want my house to be like that one" or "I want my house to be like this one." I will be interested to see this pilot scheme, and I will

probably have more to say about it, because when I made inquiries I could not find whether any real plans had been made for the development of the rest of the suburb.

I am wondering just when it will be upgraded and whether there will be a decent pause. I am wondering how long it will be before Maniana becomes North Queens Park in reality as well as in name, and whether the upgrading of the State Housing Commission will be satisfactory. I am very anxious that something be done about the matter as quickly as possible so that we can look at the upgrading and criticise what the Government has done if criticism is warranted, or praise the Minister if praise is warranted. If praise is warranted I will be the first to give it, because I often give praise where it is due. As somebody has pointed out, three times tonight I have agreed with the Premier which seems to be some sort of a record.

I support the motion; and you will be grateful to know, Sir, that I am about to sit down.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Neil McNeill.

### ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), read a first time.

*House adjourned at 9.15 p.m.*

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### MINING

##### *Coal Reserves*

350. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) (a) Does the Government plan to initiate a comprehensive study of known and possible coal reserves in this State;
- (b) has such a study previously been undertaken; and
- (c) if so—
  - (i) when; and
  - (ii) where is the report of the study published?

- (2) (a) Does the Government plan to initiate a comprehensive programme of coal exploration in this State; and
- (b) if not, why not?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) (a) No, but the Mines Department continually updates information held.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) (i) From time to time since World War II.
- (ii) Reports are published by the Mines Department from time to time as it reviews or studies various portions of the State. The information is available at the Geological Survey Branch of the Mines Department.
- (2) (a) No.
- (b) It is not necessary at this time when the amount of extractable coal already demonstrated is estimated to be sufficient to supply the State's needs for the next forty years. In any event once the investment climate as a result of Government policies is satisfactory private enterprise does the exploration. Under this Government exploration activities increased markedly.

#### PORT

##### *West Pilbara*

351. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is serious consideration being given to the development of a general purpose port to serve the West Pilbara?
- (2) Is the favoured site for such a port on or near Dixon Island in Nickol Bay as recommended in the Pilbara Study?
- (3) If the answer to (2) is "No", what location is favoured, and why?
- (4) In general regional planning terms, what date has been established as the desirable target when the proposed new port will be capable of receiving ships?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) Consideration is being given to the possible development of a general purpose port facility as part of the overall planning for the North-West Shelf gas project.
- (2) No.
- (3) The location of such a facility cannot be fully considered until a decision on the site of the Woodside group port facilities and process plant has been made. This decision is imminent. Dixon Island is not one of the sites under consideration.
- (4) If such a facility is made possible as a result of Woodside's development in the Dampier area such a general purpose wharf would need to be operational some time towards the end of 1980.

#### TRANSPORT: ROAD

##### *Frozen Goods: Complaints*

352. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Transport:

Further to question No. 331 on the 4th October, 1978, will the Minister ascertain from the Commissioner of Railways whether any approach has been made by G. J. Coles and Co. to have the carriage of frozen goods revert back to Westrail because the firm is dissatisfied with the service given by private road transport operators?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

No such approach has been made to Westrail. However, a freight forwarder who uses rail transport is catering for some of Coles' refrigerated traffic.

#### TRAFFIC

##### *Motor Cycles: Safety Recommendations*

353. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the recommendations on motor cycle safety accepted by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Road Safety that met recently in Perth?

- (2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes", what action is the Minister taking to have the recommendations implemented?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Most of the recommendations of the committee suggest action by Commonwealth Departments or Standing Committees serving the Australian Transport Advisory Council and it is presumed they are being currently evaluated.  
This State has virtually conformed with the total recommendations on accident data. It has also specified Australian Standard 1609 as a requirement in respect to eye shields. We will, no doubt, also adopt other measures recommended if and when they are accepted by the Australian Transport Advisory Council.

#### LAND: BUILDING BLOCKS

##### *Gosnells, Somerville, and Ballajun*

354. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) How many home building lots are available for purchase in the localities of—  
(a) Gosnells;  
(b) Somerville; and  
(c) Ballajun?
- (2) How many newly created lots further to the above are expected to be available for sale in these localities within the next six months?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) It is assumed that the question relates to the suburbs named and since (b) Somerville is a promotional name of an estate at Kardinya, the comment will relate to that suburb.  
(a) Due to the multiplicity of owners, an accurate assessment is not possible. However, it is understood that in excess of 50 lots are available for purchase.  
(b) 170 lots.  
(c) Nil.
- (2) (a) 192 by two developers. Additional lots may be created by other developers.

(b) 165.

(c) 535.

It is anticipated in all three localities that supply will continue to the limit of the land available subject to demand.

## BOAT: PATROL

### *North-west Coast*

355. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

(1) Has discussion with the Commonwealth Government, relating to the establishment of a patrol boat base at a port on the north-west coast, progressed to the stage where a favoured site has been selected?

(2) If so, what port will be used, or established for use?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

(1) and (2) I am advised that no firm decision has been made by the Commonwealth Government. I am endeavouring to ascertain when such decision will be made.

## TRANSPORT

### *Taxis: Fares*

356. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Transport:

(1) Will the Minister confirm that taxi fares are to rise 12 per cent on the 1st December, 1978?

(2) Is it a fact that this proposed increase did not contain a component to offset recent increases in the cost of petrol due to the Federal Government decision to lift petrol prices to world parity?

(3) As petrol is now costing taxi drivers an average of at least \$12 per week extra—

(a) why has the decision been made to delay the fare increases to the 1st December; and

(b) is it proposed to allow a further increase in taxi fares to offset the recent petrol price increases?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No. Proposed fares include increased fuel costs as a result of the Federal Budget.

(3) (a) Calculation of increased taxi operating costs were delayed pending the presentation of both the Federal and State Government Budgets. Following ministerial approval of the proposed new fare schedule, arrangements then have to be made for the calculation and printing of fare conversion cards, fare schedules and purchase of replacement fare meter parts by meter mechanics. The 1st December, 1978, is considered the most practical date on which the new fares could be introduced.

(b) Answered by (2).

## LAND

### *Great Northern Highway-Broome Turnoff Junction*

357. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is it planned to release a road-side site on the National Highway at or near the junction of the Broome turn-off road?

(2) If so—

(a) what is the precise location;

(b) what method will be used, i.e. auction, tender, etc.;

(c) will the site be advertised for a specific purpose, i.e. service station, road-house, motel, etc.;

(d) when will such action be taken; and

(e) what other special conditions will be applied?

(3) Can the Minister provide some information about previous applications for a portion of land at or near the proposed site, details of date and purpose for which such applications were made, and the reason for rejection, if any?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) The release of a roadhouse site in this location is planned.

(2) (a) 30 metres north of the Broome Road alignment in a position 200 metres west of the present Broome Road and Great Northern Highway intersection.

- (b) Applications will be called for the leasing of the site from the Crown for a term of 21 years. Freehold may be granted on application and subject to conditions of development. The nominated purchase price is to apply for a period of 3 years from the commencement of the lease.
  - (c) Yes, a service station/roadhouse.
  - (d) It is intended that applications for leasing will be called when action for the resumption and withdrawal of the site from Pastoral Lease 3114/499 has been completed.
  - (e) The department's usual conditions for such a site will apply but Main Roads Department must approve access and egress arrangements.
- (3) (a) Mrs E. V. Hamlett applied 15th March, 1977, for 15 acres in freehold for "a botanical garden and a tourist amenities area". On 19th October, 1977, she cancelled her application for freehold and requested a 10 year lease. On 1st March, 1978, she withdrew her application for land.
- (b) Messrs D. A. Goodwin and L. S. Ravenscroft applied 21st September, 1977, for a roadhouse site.
  - (c) Mr Alex. F. Reid indicated by telex 17th October, 1977, that North West Bus Tours Pty. Ltd. would apply for any roadhouse site at this road junction.
  - (d) Mines Department advised 31st January, 1978, that an application under the Mining Act for business area 04/1 from N. B. Lennane had been refused by the Warden on 25th January, 1978.
  - (e) The Minister for Regional Administration and the North West in a letter dated 21st February, 1978, indicated he had received inquiries from Mr P. L. Joy of Broome.
  - (f) On 14th March, 1978, Eric M. Fitzgerald applied for the site on behalf of his son Colin Richard Fitzgerald and himself.

No application has been rejected.

## ENERGY: ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

### *Charges: State Comparisons*

358. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Does the Minister agree with the statement of Sir Thomas Titterton "that electricity charges in Western Australia were already the highest in Australia" reported in *The West Australian* of the 20th July, 1978?
- (2) If not, will he advise the comparative charges in each State?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) The electricity charges in Western Australia are the highest of the major electricity supply authorities in Australia. Compared with other States, Western Australia has—
  - (a) high fuel cost
  - (b) large supply area
  - (c) low population density
  - (d) uniform tariffs apply throughout the State.
- (2) Not applicable.

## ENERGY: NUCLEAR INDUSTRY

### *Health Hazards*

359. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of data in a report of the advisory committee on reactor safeguards of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission indicating a dramatic increase in cancer mortality in the vicinity of nuclear reactors, and which decreases directly with increasing distance from the reactor?
- (2) Is there an officer or officers in the Public Health Department with the responsibility to research and collate information on the health hazards associated with the nuclear industry?
- (3) If so—
  - (a) how many officers are involved;
  - (b) does this activity form a substantial part of their responsibilities; and
  - (c) have they made recommendations—



- (i) in support of; or
- (ii) against;

the construction of a nuclear power station in this State?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes, I am aware of a memorandum to the advisory committee dealing with a request for a review of changes in cancer mortality in the vicinity of two nuclear plants on the basis of an alleged increase in cancer mortality of the kind referred to by the honourable member. As far as I am aware, however, there is no report of the committee itself suggesting such an effect.
- (2) Yes. Officers of the State X-ray Laboratory and of the Occupational Health Branch have a responsibility to research and collate information on the health hazard associated with radiation and radioactive materials in general.
- (3) (a) Nine.  
(b) No, there is no nuclear industry in this State.  
(c) No. No recommendations have been requested or offered.

#### LAND

*Kulin, Kondinin, and Lake Grace Shires*

360. The Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) With respect to the land adjacent to the Dragon Rocks Reserve in the Kulin Shire which is to be released for agricultural purposes—
  - (a) has all surveying of the area been completed;
  - (b) how many blocks are available for release;
  - (c) will priority be given to farm build-up rather than establishment of new farms;
  - (d) when is it proposed to invite applications for the blocks to be released; and
  - (e) has the Kulin Shire Council been kept aware of this land release?

- (2) Are any other releases of land within—
  - (a) Kulin Shire;
  - (b) Kondinin Shire; and
  - (c) Lake Grace Shire;
 being considered or proposed?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.  
(b) Three.  
(c) Because the parcels are relatively small and scattered the department has farm build-up in mind.  
(d) Applications will be called as soon as release details can be finalised.  
(e) The locations arise from finalisation of approved Conservation Through Reserves' recommendations which were well publicised. Kulin Shire Council will be provided with full details when the release is finalised.
- (2) (a) to (c) Systematic release of further agricultural lands is not planned for Kulin or Kondinin Shires but there could be more land made available in Lake Grace Shire.

#### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

##### EXPLOSIVES: DEVICES

##### *Warnbro Area*

The Hon. I. G. PRATT, to the Leader of the House representing the Deputy Premier:

In relation to the news release dated the 4th October, 1978, concerning unexploded ammunition in the Warnbro Sound area—

- (1) What are the boundaries of the area of about 1 270 hectares in which it is thought unexploded shells could be found?
- (2) To what extent is this area smaller than was originally thought?
- (3) What methods have been used to determine the extent of this more limited area?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

I thank the member for giving some prior notice of his intention to ask this question. The reply is as follows—

- (1) The primary impact area appears to lie generally between Walyungup Lake and the coast, bounded on the west by the shore line; on the east

by a line running north-south through the lakes; on the north along the extended alignment of Okehampton Road; and on the south by an extension of the alignment of the boundary between Lot 584 and Lot 606.

- (2) Insufficient data was previously available for any worth-while estimate to be made.
- (3) Information was made available by the Department of Defence from a study of military records.

=====