

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 18 August 1982

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

HEALTH: MENTAL

Community Development Centre: Petition

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [2.17 p.m.]: I have a petition addressed to the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia. It reads—

WE, the undersigned petitioners, herewith pray that the Government will reverse its decision to close the Community Development Centre because the Centre provides a unique roll in the promotion of mental health in this State of Western Australia and as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

The petition bears 55 signatures and I have certified that it conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 14.)

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Millstream Station Acquisition Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Mensaros (Minister for Works), and read a first time.

2. Acts Amendment (Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme) Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mrs Craig (Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning), and read a first time.

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Hassell (Minister for Police and Prisons), and transmitted to the Council.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 17 August.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup—Minister for

Education) [2.21 p.m.]: I thank the members, who have spoken on this measure, for their support. Whilst a great deal of discussion did take place on the Kalgoorlie College and it was appropriate it did so—it is of prime importance that the Western Australian School of Mines will be able to continue. Everyone in this Chamber is supportive of that. It will continue in a way which will place it in a position stronger than that which at present exists.

As a former lecturer in history I enjoyed the comments of the member for Kalgoorlie who gave the House the historical background of this most interesting educational institution.

From the time I became a Minister—and prior to that because I have been involved in this matter for some time—it was my desire to ensure that what the School of Mines stood for was maintained and, of course, enhanced. If I had been able to create in Kalgoorlie a single institution which would have undertaken the role which the Kalgoorlie College and the School of Mines will undertake now that is what I would have tried to achieve. When I became a Minister, an expanded interim council had been established as a result of a previous Cabinet decision. Its job was to look at previous recommendations in respect of this aspect of education in Kalgoorlie. In the middle of March the expanded interim council reported to me as it had been directed to do.

It had been investigating this matter for something in the order of 22 to 24 weeks. The member for Yilgarn-Dundas did imply that I was slow in making a decision, but this is contrary to the facts because it has been an issue for a long time. I had been considering the report for only a few weeks when certain people began—using the words of the member for Yilgarn-Dundas—to pressure me. I ignored the pressure because all I was concerned with was making the correct decision. It was only a short time after I had received the report that I made an announcement in Kalgoorlie that the School of Mines would become a branch of WAIT with enhanced powers and greater managerial and financial responsibility. At the same time I announced there would be a Kalgoorlie College.

It was only two months from the time that I received the report to the time I made the decision, but the interim council had spent six months on its investigation. It came forward with two remarkably dissimilar recommendations. The interim council considered there should be an autonomous college; that is, including both the School of Mines and the Eastern Goldfields Technical College. The expanded interim council

proposed what I would describe as a loose federation.

Upon examination of the report and other studies I found that both recommendations were unacceptable. My first consideration was the question of whether or not, if we did establish a single autonomous college in Kalgoorlie including an element of the School of Mines, it would have the status of a college of advanced education.

I, like others before me, met with the Federal Minister for Education and the Chairman of the Tertiary Education Commission. From those discussions I established, to my satisfaction, that there was no way in which we could establish a degree-granting institution in Kalgoorlie. Once I had established that fact I knew I had to consider other methods and I, like other members in this Chamber, was aware of the critical position of WAIT, and this had been canvassed in the broader community. I believed in having an institution that would do both things; that is, retain its links with an important and significant institution, and have greater powers of management and responsibility in Kalgoorlie. That was the optimum, whether or not we could ensure that the School of Mines could look forward to a confident future and that its standards would have full tertiary qualifications so that it could go on with its educational activities.

I look forward, with considerable confidence, to the School of Mines enhancing its reputation even further. I have noted the views of several members in this House in regard to the School of Mines and to the board that will now operate. I have noted also the comment as to whether the Government can ensure that the School of Mines could in some way be the overseer of mining education in Western Australia. I deliberately included in the Act a step in that direction, and provision has been made for the enhancement of the powers of the board. This will provide a balance and will increase the position of those people associated with the School of Mines.

With reference to the composition of that particular body I believe, as the former Minister for Education said in his speech, there will be advantages because there will be two WAIT personnel on that board. He argued strongly that the Director of WAIT should be on that board. I am advised that he will be one of those two representatives. I do not find it an attractive situation to have on the board the director and a WAIT staff member as well because I want to ensure there is a strong element of other interests; that is, a significant number of people who have a professional or community point of view. It has

been indicated to me that the director will be a member of the board and so provide his valuable expertise and knowledge. I received a tremendous response in support of the decisions I made.

Mr Pearce: What about the Kalgoorlie community college?

Mr CLARKO: The member for Gosnells has jumped in before me. I have received strong support. In fact, I think I have had universal support, with the exception of those persons on the staff of the Eastern Goldfields Technical College.

I can understand the concern of people in technical colleges that a college which formerly was within the Technical Education Division of the Education Department now will be separated from that division. I readily can understand the effects on the ambitions and plans of many people within the service, by way of future promotions, and so on.

However, it would be wrong for anyone—whether he be Education Department personnel or a member of the staff at the WA School of Mines—to suggest too strongly that there are not many people who go to Kalgoorlie to take up positions only as part of a promotional pattern, or because they more or less have to go there. Unfortunately, many people do not appreciate Kalgoorlie as much as do we members. I think Kalgoorlie is a wonderful town, and I am surprised that these people do not think that way; however, some people dread spending a couple of years there. Many such people have subsequently admitted they thoroughly enjoyed themselves in Kalgoorlie, both educationally and socially. It is true that some of those in both those institutions would rather be somewhere else.

I always have strongly supported the concept of our having a viable School of Mines, and I believe that, in time, the people of Kalgoorlie will come to accept the Kalgoorlie College with pride because it will have an excellent capacity to provide a first-class system of education and a range of education options and the like. In time the Kalgoorlie community will take the Kalgoorlie College to themselves with the same sort of affection with which most indigenous local residents held the WA School of Mines.

Mr Grill: What are the educational advantages of the decision you have made?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Grill: That is a simple question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has made it quite clear he does not want to answer the interjection.

Mr Grill: He is being absolutely cowardly.

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Yilgarn-Dundas to desist from interjecting on me. I go further, and ask him to desist from interjecting on the Minister, when the Minister has made it clear that he does not want to respond to the interjection.

Mr CLARKO: The member for Yilgarn-Dundas is notorious for having little aberrations of anger. If he wants to indulge himself in that way, so be it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Education is not helping me. He indicated he did not want to reply to the interjection of the member for Yilgarn-Dundas, and he has now proceeded immediately to provoke the member. I ask the Minister to continue his speech.

Mr CLARKO: I accept that, Mr Speaker. However, I believe the use of the word "cowardly" was inappropriate and, in fact, probably was unparliamentary. I will choose my time as to when I respond to interjections; that is my right. I question whether the member for Yilgarn-Dundas is a world-class expert on educational institutions and systems.

The Kalgoorlie College will have the opportunity to do two things: Firstly, it will be able to respond more readily to local desires and needs; and, secondly, it will be able to gain from every other educational institution in this State, including TAFE. The people of Kalgoorlie will enjoy these dual benefits of having a local institution, with local people involved in its running, management, and decision making, as well as being able to draw on educational expertise in other institutions.

I believe the local decision-making concept to be very important. The college will react much more readily to local needs than if it were bound into one central system, based in Perth. Prominent educators who have visited Western Australia over the last generation or so have never criticised the standard of education we provide in Western Australia. However, they have said universally that ours is the most highly centralised system in the world, and they have been very critical of that fact. Many people involved in education—I am sure the member for Gosnells will agree with me—have been critical of the difficulties experienced by people out in the field, remote from Perth; they have experienced problems with the central hierarchical administration, which they believed did not reflect, or react quickly enough, to particular local needs.

I have been questioned about whether I have made up my mind on the Kalgoorlie College. As a matter of interest, I indicate that it was gazetted on 16 July, which demonstrates quite clearly how much my mind was made up. I am quite certain that this opportunity of using all the best of things local, as well as being able to draw on the vast resources of all the other elements of education in this State will ensure we have a better institution.

The Government has been questioned on its policy from this point on. I make it clear that I am not proposing to transfer and change all the country technical colleges so that they become autonomous colleges. However, with the creation of the Kalgoorlie College, we will have a college comparable with those of Hedland and Karratha. I am convinced those three institutions will be eminent successes.

It is true that some technical college staff members have expressed concern at the change. However, Mr Speaker, had you been following this issue, you would know that the previous decision was to remove the Eastern Goldfields Technical College from the technical education division.

Mr Pearce: The previous Minister for Education denied that last night.

Mr CLARKO: I said the decision, as announced. The previous Minister last night was referring to the progression of events. If the member for Gosnells goes through the succession of steps in the matter, he will agree that each of those steps was aimed ultimately at removing the college from the technical education division.

Mr Pearce: Staff members were told that they would be transferred out, but that has been revoked. However, the previous Minister denied it.

Mr CLARKO: I do not believe that is a fundamental point. We did the same this year as we did last year; we told staff members that they could join the new college, or could come across on secondment, and if they did they would retain their rights, privileges, status, and experience. They also were told that otherwise the Education Department would do the best it could to try to fit them into a particular position as early as possible.

Mr Pearce: How many have opted to stay?

Mr CLARKO: The due date was only a few days ago, and the requests are being collated; I do not have the figures. I have received at least one letter from somebody agreeing to join the new college; however, I am not co-ordinating that matter. I have every confidence in the development of the Kalgoorlie College and believe

it will provide the benefits to which I have referred.

It is true the staff of the Eastern Goldfields Technical College expressed disquiet—and more—in regard to this matter. However, it is interesting that a student purporting to represent the student body at the college—I can only assume she spoke for all the students—told me emphatically that the students supported the Government's proposal.

Mr I. F. Taylor: When was that—on the night of the graduation ceremony?

Mr CLARKO: No, she told me at one of the meetings. So, the students of Kalgoorlie are looking forward to the new college with a sense of optimism.

I emphasise quite seriously that my decision was based on the fact that the proposed change would provide benefits for the people of Kalgoorlie; I would not have made a decision otherwise, because it would have been quite easy to leave the college within the technical education division.

I made the decision genuinely and seriously in an attempt to improve the educational facilities in Kalgoorlie and I am confident that is what will happen.

Mr I. F. Taylor: One other point in regard to the college: It appears that there is no tradesman at all on the board you set up.

Mr CLARKO: The board of the School of Mines?

Mr I. F. Taylor: The Kalgoorlie College.

Mr CLARKO: That is true; we do not have a tradesperson on the council.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Don't you believe that is rather an anomaly in a college dealing mainly with trade areas?

Mr CLARKO: Basically I have tried to retain some of the experience that has been gathered by the people who have worked on the previous committees over several years. As the honourable member knows, we are very keen to increase the collaboration and co-operation between the School of Mines and the Kalgoorlie College. I want this collaboration and co-operation to be at a much higher level than it has been over the last few years. The member for Kalgoorlie knows that some people in the community have expressed disquiet about the development of this post-secondary institution. Some of the people on this council have worked closely together in the past.

The honourable member referred to the fact that certain of these members belong to the Liberal Party, or something of the sort. He would

know that we do not hold many seats in the Kalgoorlie area—in fact, it is a long time since we have held any. I assure him that none of the decisions made in Kalgoorlie were made from a party political point of view. In fact, when I reached my decision, I was not supported by the person to whom the honourable member referred. So it is improper to suggest that my decision was made on a party-political basis. I am very keen to ensure that these two bodies reflect this strong local ethos which will ensure that the School of Mines and the Kalgoorlie College will have combined interests.

It is very important that the School of Mines should maintain its links with the mining industry. Everyone agrees that the mining representatives who are members of the interim board will ensure that the mining industry is well represented. We are very fortunate, as others have said, to have Sir Laurance Brodie-Hall as chairman of the board. He will ensure that the connection remains. Also, the provision that a member of the board is a member of the WAIT council is in line with the concept referred to by some of the people who said we must try to maximise our surveillance of mining courses throughout all the institutions in Western Australia. This will mean that the representative of the board of the School of Mines can put forward the board's views to the WAIT council and then report back to the board.

As I have said several times I look forward to a very happy marriage of the Kalgoorlie College and the School of Mines. I believe the time is ripe for a proper interrelationship between the branch at Kalgoorlie and WAIT; and the community generally—correct me if I am wrong—with the exception of the staff of the Eastern Goldfields Technical College, welcomes the merger.

Mr I. F. Taylor: They are not too sure about the Kalgoorlie College because they do not know enough about it at this stage.

Mr CLARKO: That could be true. For proper reasons some members of the staff of the Eastern Goldfields Technical College have said that the change presents some problems. However there is no reason that problems should arise. The technical staff of the Kalgoorlie College should be comparable with, if not better than, the staff presently employed at the Eastern Goldfields Technical College. The Kalgoorlie College will have the opportunity to choose staff from a much broader area. Some people say there are disadvantages in the change, but there are advantages as well. The Kalgoorlie College will be able to advertise throughout Australia for its staff, and it will be able to attract people from the

technical education division as well. Many good people work for the technical education division, but it operates under the system that the staff circulates within that division.

Mr I. F. Taylor: A number of people working there at the moment are afraid that when the Kalgoorlie College commences to operate they will lose many of their conditions of service.

Mr CLARKO: As the honourable member knows, the Pilbara College, the Karratha College, and the Kalgoorlie College will operate for 48 weeks of the year. The staff will receive extra pay to compensate for the additional work. I understand it is approximately \$800 a year at the lecture level.

When people make the choice they will know what they are going into. The member for Kalgoorlie would be aware that many of the staff at the Eastern Goldfields Technical College are not really from the technical education promotional stream. For various reasons they prefer to live in the lovely town of Kalgoorlie. Some of these people are worried that they might face different conditions and that they cannot do very much about it if they want to stay in Kalgoorlie.

Mr I. F. Taylor: That is exactly the situation.

Mr CLARKO: Numerous people in education in Australia have to make similar choices. However, many find that the advantages of working in an autonomous college rather than in a State-wide organisation make such positions very attractive.

I was criticised for taking some months to reach a decision. I made the decision based on the recommendation of a body which deliberated on the matter for 26 weeks. Other bodies have been considering this matter for one or two years. I would like to make the point that my decision was not a political one.

I object to the statement that the Partridge recommendation of 1976 was changed because of input from other people. I was a member of the education committee of the Liberal Party for 15 years or more. When that committee studied the Partridge report, one of its main recommendations was that the School of Mines in Kalgoorlie should not be transferred to the WAIT campus. This recommendation was made at a very early date. We put that particular point very forcibly to our political colleagues in Government.

I am not suggesting that was the only body to put forward that point of view; it would be wrong to suggest that. However, other people should not take all the credit just as I am not trying to take all the credit. However, right at the outset, friends

of mine on the Liberal Party education committee put forward that point of view. I see that my ministerial colleague on the front bench is smiling—he is one of my friends who was a member of the committee at the time.

We long have been in the business of seeking to ensure that Kalgoorlie had a very good and vibrant School of Mines, and now we want a very strong Kalgoorlie College.

I thank the members who joined in the debate and who indicated their general support for the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Crane) in the Chair; Mr Clarko (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8 put and passed.

Clause 9: Heading and sections inserted—

Mr PEARCE: I would just like to reiterate a point which may have become lost in the second reading debate. The Opposition, although not opposing this Bill, does not agree with the arrangements which have been made for secondary education in the goldfields. Our opposition is really to two points and both relate to clause 9, the clause which will establish the School of Mines as a branch of WAIT.

While we accept and support the proposition that the School of Mines should become a branch of the Western Australian Institute of Technology, I make it perfectly clear that does not mean an adherence to the way in which the board is structured in the proposed section 21C of the amended Act; and it does not mean that we support in any way the people to be appointed to that board. It is a little unfortunate, in a sense, that the nominations to the board are to be made only months before a State election, and that the people who are thus appointed will have three-year terms. We could well have the situation that we would not be pleased with the people running the board over the whole three years they are there. Of course, we will be in a position to appoint the next board a few months before the 1986 State election.

The other aspect of making the School of Mines a branch of WAIT rather than the federation or coalition college on the goldfields is that we do not accept, support, or agree with the decision to take the Eastern Goldfields Technical College out of the technical education division and make a separate college of it. The Minister

said that this was being done to improve it; but that implies the proposition that technical colleges are inferior education institutions in themselves. We do not accept the proposition that technical colleges have to be run rigidly by a centralised bureaucracy; and we do not accept the implication that the Minister made.

The Minister suggested that each college should develop an ethos for the community in which it exists. The legitimate extension of the Minister's comments is to say that all technical colleges should reflect the local ethos, and they should be taken out of the technical education division and made into separate institutions. The net result of that would be as the previous Minister for Education, the member for South Perth, suggested last night; that is, that every country town technical college would become independent of the technical education division, and the technical education division would then become a metropolitan technical education division, unless one thought that the technical colleges in the metropolitan area should reflect the ethos of the local metropolitan communities.

I support the member for South Perth in his remarks on this aspect. They were perfectly cogent, and they pointed to the dilemma in which the Minister is placed on this matter.

As I say, we do not accept what is being done, and we will return the Eastern Goldfields Technical College to the technical education division at the earliest opportunity.

Mr CLARKO: In no way do I regard our technical colleges as inferior. I do not accept that that is what I implied. The fact is that I have been to numerous technical colleges, and I know that they operate in a most efficient way. I have recently visited Albany, which has an excellent technical college is operating in a most commendable way.

I regard Kalgoorlie as a very special place. It always has had a very special educational position associated with post-secondary education in this State. Here is an opportunity for this college to have the benefits on both sides. It is not just a question of the Kalgoorlie ethos, but also a question of the greater freedom that the Kalgoorlie College will have to operate as a result of its council making decisions promptly and reacting to the needs of the community. The council will be more flexible than it would be if it were part of a larger institution. I am not trying to say for one moment that the technical education division does not do an outstanding job. It does.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 and 11 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup—Minister for Education) [2.55 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR I. F. TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie) [2.56 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to make one final comment with respect to this Bill or, more properly, to the Western Australian School of Mines. In his second reading speech, and in closing the second reading debate, the Minister indicated that he had the interests of the School of Mines at heart so he would make sure that it is an effective and efficient institution as far as both the teaching and practical matters are concerned. However, I was disturbed to read in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of today that a senior lecturer at the School of Mines (Dr Gupta) has pointed to the shortage in the staff of the school. The following appeared—

Neither of the three disciplines of the S.O.M. metallurgy, mining and geology—had a head of the department.

All three departments had acting heads of department.

The metallurgy department had 73 students and two members of staff—a full-time metallurgist and a full-time chemist.

However another two or three staff members were needed.

The mining department, with about 170 students, had an extreme staff shortage.

The course needed five lecturers but there were only two members on the staff.

The geology department also had a staff shortage but not as serious as the other two departments.

The department needed five staff members to function smoothly but had four lecturers for 25 students.

I call on the Minister to use whatever influence he can bring to bear to try to overcome this staff shortage at the School of Mines and ensure that the school functions in the manner that most of us here today hope that it functions; that is, as an effective School of Mines and one that has a

standard of excellence above that of any other institution teaching mining matters in this State.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup—Minister for Education) [2.57 p.m.]: I acknowledge the points that have been made by the member for Kalgoorlie. I have certainly interested myself in this subject already, and I will interest myself in it in the future. He would be aware that about this time of the year the institutions begin to advertise for new staff members. As a result of this legislation, the stage is now set for people to respond more positively than previously to positions at the School of Mines.

I have had discussions with Sir Lawrence Brodie-Hall on the question of staff, and he has very positive views on this matter. I am sure his influence will play a significant part in ensuring that this problem is met. That will mean that the staff numbers at this institution will increase, and with no reflection on the quality of the people who are already there, we will ensure that we obtain the best quality staff available.

Mr Grayden: Mr Speaker—

The **SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has closed the debate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 4 August.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [2.59 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill. However, there is a brief comment I would like to make in relation to a remark made by the Minister for Local Government at a recent local government conference. On that occasion, she put forward the idea that supervision of local government is necessary because in local government there is no "Opposition", as distinct from the situation in the State Parliament.

I suggest to members of the House that that is a specious type of comment, and because there is no permanent and identifiable "Opposition", it does not mean that, in fact, there is no "Opposition".

Quite obviously when there is a majority in favour of some action being taken by a local government authority, those who are in the minority are the "Opposition".

The point is that councillors are subject to elections in the same way as we are and that is

the real supervision. I do not agree with the Minister's contention that local government must be supervised, because there is no "Opposition" in that system. Clearly that is nonsense. Frequently some councillors do not agree with the majority and they represent the "Opposition". The fact that those in the minority are not called the "Opposition" and do not make up a permanent body, does not alter the situation.

The supervision under which we, as members of Parliament and councillors in local government, labour, is the will of the electors. Local government councillors have to answer to the electors in the same manner as we do.

Mrs Craig: Where did I draw this analogy between the local government system and the Westminster system? At what function did I draw the analogy?

Mr TONKIN: The Minister drew the analogy when she spoke at the local government conference.

Mrs Craig: You must have been asleep during part of my speech because I certainly did not say that. I spoke about those two matters, but I certainly did not draw such an analogy.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister certainly said that, because there is no "Opposition" in local government as there is in Parliament, supervision is necessary.

Mrs Craig: I did not say supervision was necessary.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister said that supervision was necessary.

Mrs Craig: I shall get the speech notes.

Mr TONKIN: Very well; but I certainly was not asleep when the Minister was speaking and I heard all the comments she made. I was surprised at what she said, because the supervision that occurs at local government level is the supervision of the electors.

However, there is the added supervision of local government, and that is supervision by Parliament. We believe local government should have greater autonomy. The degree to which local government must refer matters to the Minister, and the number of ways in which the Minister can interfere in its operations is absurd. When we say that we believe local government should have greater autonomy, we are not just mouthing a cliché; we mean what we say.

The Bill deals with the right of local authorities to lease land to sporting bodies. I ask why that provision should be restricted only to sporting organisations. For too long in this country we have had a fixation about sport and I cannot see

why a local government authority cannot lease land to any kind of non-profit organisation. We are not talking about commercial ventures; we are talking about recreational bodies and the limitation contained in the Bill, which seeks to restrict the leasing of land by local government authorities to sporting bodies, is too narrow. Local authorities should be able to lease land to any type of non-profit, recreational organisation.

The Bill contains also a provision for local authorities to raise loans when work is done by agencies on behalf of the council. That is a very sensible amendment. The Bill seeks to remove from legislation the \$500 limit placed upon the value of assets a council may dispose of without permission, so that it will in future be covered by regulation. The suggestion has been made that Parliament should decide all matters of this nature and they should not be covered by regulation. However, I do not agree with that view, although I do not in any way detract from the importance of Parliament.

It is absurd that if, for example, during a period of inflation, it is desired to increase charges or fees, such changes must be dealt with by the Parliament. After all, regulations are subject to the scrutiny of this House and it is sensible to prescribe a monetary limit in the regulations.

The Bill seeks to make a minor change in electoral provisions by deleting names from supplementary rolls. That is a satisfactory amendment, as far as it goes, but I reiterate that we believe every person should have a vote and only one vote; therefore, our attitude to this matter is quite different from that of the Government. I just repeat our position in respect of that matter, although I realise this Bill does not address itself to that problem.

The Opposition is prepared to support this quite minor piece of legislation.

MR McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [3.06 p.m.]: Although this Bill seeks to make only minor amendments to the Act, the important feature of it is that the Government is adopting a favourable attitude towards giving more autonomy to local government. For many years this has been the subject of some debate, with local government maintaining that the State Government has been eroding its powers and functions and failing to allow it the autonomy it deserves. However, the amendments the Bill seeks to make will give local government greater autonomy and I am sure this will be welcomed.

I will not deal with the Bill in detail, because the member for Morley has done so already. Previously a council could dispose of an asset

worth less than \$500 without first obtaining permission. It is now proposed to deal with that matter by regulation. Such an amendment is in the best interests of councils, because they are responsible to their electors and, therefore, should administer the regulations in a sensible way.

I support the Bill and I believe it will be received favourably by local government.

MRS CRAIG (Wellington—Minister for Local Government) [3.07 p.m.]: I thank members for their general support of the Bill. As they quite rightly said, the provisions contained in it are relatively minor, but they represent another move towards effecting the removal of some of the controls on local government which have existed previously.

Although it has no relevance to the legislation, I indicate to the member for Morley that he misconstrued the comments I made. I certainly made the point that I abhor the intrusion of politics into local government and I drew an analogy between the Westminster system of government and the system of government—that is, not one of government and opposition—that exists round the council table. I said that I believed decisions on local matters were best made in the interests of the community that the appointed people served, and that they ought to be making those decisions on that basis and not on party political lines, which is something relatively new in Western Australia and exists now in a few councils principally in the metropolitan area.

The other matter the member for Morley said I referred to was the checks and balances I believed were necessary for the protection of ratepayers' funds. I certainly made no comment about people who serve on councils not having the opportunity to be judged by their electors, because we know they are judged and that is a very real part of the democratic process of which I am greatly in favour.

Mr Tonkin: But in speaking on supervision you did refer to it.

Mrs CRAIG: I did not refer to one as related to the other. I referred to them as entirely separate matters and it may be the member for Morley ran one into the other.

The member for Morley said he believes local government should be given much more autonomy.

Since the member for Morley has occupied his present role I have been challenging him to indicate to me in which way this autonomy should be increased, but I am yet to hear him make a suggestion.

Mr Tonkin: When was this?

Mrs CRAIG: On each and every occasion when legislation dealing with local government matters has been before the House; and if the member reads *Hansard* he will see where he has made these comments.

I have said that we also believe in that idea. The truth is that over the past few years we have moved consistently towards ensuring that councils do have more autonomy. If members examine the last 50 amendments made they will see that in some way they all lead to this.

Mr Tonkin: You have some way to go.

Mrs CRAIG: If that is so, the member should indicate where local governments have expressed to him that they would like their autonomy increased. I have not been the recipient of a suggestion from local government about a specific matter they would like changed to increase their autonomy.

The other point raised by the member for Morley dealt with sporting associations and I indicate to him that the definition that applies is that under section 446(a) which states that "sporting association" means an association or body of persons who, as a body, and not for their own pecuniary profit, carry on sporting or other recreational activities. So the group of people to whom the member referred are covered, although I can understand that he might not have thought so. We are not precluding those people who have a greater interest in the arts or some other cultural pursuit. I felt that the member would be pleased to hear that.

The electoral provisions amended in this small Bill are minimal, as the member suggested, and that is a matter of some importance because those previous changes to the electoral procedures were of significance and these amendments cover the only anomalies thrown up at the last municipal elections as a result of the practical application of that new section of the Act.

The member for Mt. Marshall indicated both his pleasure at the increasing autonomy being given to local authorities and his agreement with the move to prescribe by regulations the amount of the value of assets that could be sold by councils by private treaty.

I thank members for their support of the Bill.

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

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mrs Craig (Minister for Local Government), and transmitted to the Council.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 4 August.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [3.15 p.m.]: This is a small Bill to cover the situation where, apparently inadvertently, certain officers who previously had power to enter car yards and examine vehicles lost that power when the Road Traffic Authority was merged with the Police Department. Clearly that power should continue and this Bill merely restores that earlier position. The Opposition is quite prepared to support the Bill.

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

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Young (Minister for Health), and transmitted to the Council.

THE COMMERCIAL BANK OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED (MERGER) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 10 August.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [3.18 p.m.]: On behalf of the Opposition I indicate to the House that we have no objection to The Commercial Bank of Australia Limited (Merger) Bill or to The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Limited (Merger) Bill, which is Order of the Day No. 7 on today's notice paper.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Treasurer) [3.19 p.m.]: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his support of this Bill. As members know, it is one to be placed on the various Statute books in the States and the Commonwealth and will assist in the merger involved.

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.

THE COMMERCIAL BANKING COMPANY OF SYDNEY LIMITED (MERGER) BILL

Second Reading

Order of the day read for the resumption of the debate from 10 August.

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.

MINERAL SANDS INDUSTRY

Radiation Levels: Motion

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [3.28 p.m.]: I move—

That this House notes with concern the conflicting statements from the Government and from internationally recognised experts, as reported in the *Daily News* about the dangers posed by radiation levels in Capel and in the mineral sands industry, and that in the opinion of this House, an independent and authoritative assessment should be made of:

- (i) whether health hazards are posed by the radioactivity levels experienced in Capel and in the mineral sands industry; and,
- (ii) whether codes of practice for the mineral sands industry are adequate to protect the health and safety of workers in the industry.

For this purpose, the House calls on the Government to immediately appoint a judicial inquiry.

The Opposition thanks the Government for this wealth of private members' time. We appreciate it and hope we can take good advantage of it.

Those of us who have been here for more than one or two years will know that the bitter personal controversy that appears to have grown between, on the one hand, the Minister for Health and the Minister for Fuel and Energy, and, on the other, the State's only daily afternoon newspaper, the *Daily News*, is doing no-one any good. It is true to say the bitterness and the allegations slung back and forth between these two Ministers and the *Daily News* are of no assistance whatsoever to the people of Capel, to those people employed in the mineral sands industry, to the companies which operate in the mineral sands industry, and to the public of this State as a whole. It seems to us in the Opposition that it has long gone past the time when someone should attempt independently and objectively to set about the job of reassuring all those people involved in that industry and touched by this controversy concerning what would appear to be the facts of the case.

I do not think any member could deny the compelling evidence advanced on both sides of this argument about an important matter within our community. On the one hand, the Minister for Health, supported by redoubtable experts, maintains that there is absolutely no danger associated with the mineral sands industry at Capel, in particular, or with the processes followed by that industry. On the other hand, the daily newspaper has reported constantly the views of experts in the field that differ from the opinion expressed by the Minister.

Mr Young: Can you quote where I said that there was absolutely no danger arising out of the industry?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I can probably help the Minister.

Mr Young: That is good.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Let us not be smart. I can help by quoting from the *Daily News*—

Mr Young: Touchy!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not touchy. If the Minister wants this matter to dissipate quickly, he should not get touchy.

Mr Young: I will keep quiet.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The *Daily News* edition of 22 February 1982 stated—

The risk to people living in homes with higher than normal background radiation was so small it could not be calculated.

Mr Young: That is exactly the point I wanted to make. Does that relate to the fact that I said there was absolutely no danger in the industry?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: *The West Australian* of 26 March 1982 stated—

People of Capel face no radiation risks.

Mr Young: You are incorrect twice out of three.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not know whether I was hearing correctly. I thought the Minister said he would not interject. He will have ample time to answer. It is well known how this Minister reacts under pressure. I can assure him that I will be through quicker and with less controversy if he keeps his word.

The West Australian of 26 March reported—

Radiation levels adjacent to stored monazite at the Capel plant of Westralian Sand Ltd did not present a serious risk to workers at the plant, the Minister for Health, Mr Young, declared yesterday.

The Daily News of 3 June 1982 reported—

Mr Young said he had more faith in the advice of the State Radiological Council than the opinion of Professor Gofman of the University of California.

In answer to a parliamentary question on 11 August 1982 the Minister crystallised his opposition to the statement reported in the *Daily News* by saying that one of the sources reported in the *Daily News* represented one of the most blatant pieces of false reporting he had ever seen. He said—

As far as I am concerned it is appropriate for the sort of journalism which was stooped to at that time to be read in conjunction with all the articles being run by the *Daily News* in respect of this matter.

Let me assure the Minister that I am not intending to say that I believe there are radiation risks to workers or to residents at Capel. I do not believe the Minister can accuse the Opposition of taking a stand at any time during the life of this controversy that would convict it of being in the van of the opinion that has been published in the *Daily News*.

Naturally, we have read what has been reported and we have wondered about the accuracy and the validity of the expert opinion. Deliberately we have refrained from adding weight to that expert opinion over a number of months, simply because it is not possible for an Opposition in a State Parliament to find definitively in respect of a matter as complicated as is this one.

Some of the experts who support the Minister have said—

The radiation levels never have and never will be a serious risk.

That was said by Dr Fred Heyworth, the Deputy Chairman of the Radiological Council, at a public meeting in Capel on 24 February 1982. Mr B. E. King, Secretary to the Radiological Council, was quoted in the *Daily News* on 18 June 1982 as saying—

There is no suggestion that anybody's health is in immediate danger.

The Minister, in his position is supported by serious and expert advice and we do not intend to detract from the weight of that advice. We state what we think it appears to be and say quite clearly, it supports the Minister's contention. It does appear to us to be the case that the Minister's position has changed marginally from that which he first occupied—but only marginally. We say that the support from the expert advice that he has proffered, in support of his proposition, is compelling and, in terms of what is available in this State, it is significant and to be acknowledged.

We do not argue about any of these things, but we say, on the one hand, that there is a significant body of expert opinion that contradicts the advice or information on which the Minister seeks to rely.

Dr John Gofman, Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of California in Berkeley, says that there is not only a hazard to workers, but a real hazard to the population of the area, and particularly to the children.

Dr Phil Jennings, a leading physicist in this State, said workers in the Capel mineral sands plant were exposed to radiation levels believed to be equal to those levels in a nuclear power plant and that nobody should work under those conditions for more than 20 minutes a day.

They are some of the things Dr Phil Jennings has said, and on first reading we would tend to think that perhaps Dr Jennings is drawing a long bow in using some of the phrases that he has. Nevertheless, the phrases and statements represent an opinion that hardly can be termed less than expert—an opinion bolstered by that expressed by Dr John Gofman.

So, it is equally true to say, about the case the Minister opposes, there is a substantial weight of academic opinion, and there is also the weight of practical experience that was the lot of the New South Wales Government in respect of Byron Bay. The New South Wales Minister for Health said that the readings at Byron Bay posed an "unacceptable risk".

It is true that those readings showed radiation levels of 120 microroms an hour on a vacant subdivision site. The site was declared unfit for

human habitation. Some of the readings taken in Capel, according to information provided to ministerial sources, ranged from 11 microrems an hour to 223 microrems an hour. In the backyards of some of the houses in Capel, the readings ranged from 30 microrems an hour to 700 microrems an hour.

All I have tried to demonstrate to the House is that we have a situation that firstly involves a very important matter, and, secondly, has aroused on opposite sides, significant academic opinion.

Most importantly from the point of view of this Parliament and its demeanour and from the point of view of the public of this State, we have an issue that has aroused doubt over a period of several months about the sort of behaviour, in terms of allegations, flowing backward and forward between the Ministers of the Crown and a daily newspaper that none of us previously have ever witnessed. That is one of the most important things that should be taken into account when considering the Opposition's motion.

It is predicated on the belief that it is time to put a stop to all this nonsense; to the *Daily News* saying all sorts of things about the Government and its attitude in this matter and the performance of the Minister in this matter and the Minister's using this Parliament as a forum from which to launch arrows that are less than dignified—to term it kindly—at the *Daily News* and its performance.

If this Parliament is to have any self-respect, it is time to take some step towards resolving this situation. Are we, in 12 months' time, to continue to see the Minister for Health accusing the *Daily News* of lying and the *Daily News* accusing the Minister for Health of being not fit to hold down his portfolio? If other members do not believe that is generally debilitating, I certainly do and the Opposition is of that view, also. It seems to us it must be a very difficult, if not impossible job, for the Minister for Health to continue discharging his responsibilities in this sort of atmosphere.

We do not know whether or not the things that we think a judicial inquiry should look at are the things that are true or untrue. We do know they are serious and we know there is a divergence of substance of opinion about the accuracy and validity of what has been claimed and counterclaimed. What we also know is this: The way in which this Minister has attacked the *Daily News* and the *Daily News* has attacked the Minister has done Parliament a disservice and, to our mind, it must have rendered it more difficult for the Minister to carry out his responsibilities

and it has certainly created a situation which begs for resolution. It cannot be allowed to continue.

If members want any reminder of the sorts of things of which I am speaking let me refer them to some publicity which has accompanied this controversy. In the comment column of the *Daily News* on 2 June the following appeared—

It is time for the WA government to face the truth about Capel.

The government line, pushed repeatedly by Mr Young and his departmental people, has been ultra defensive and, as it turns out, dangerous.

Referring to the opinion of Dr Gofman it says—

Dr Gofman has challenged the experts to refute his findings scientifically.

Let them take up this challenge.

Mr Young is the responsible Minister. If they fail his future in that portfolio would have to be questioned.

That was amongst various other reports and comments that referred, in a glancing sort of way, to the Minister for Health as the Minister for "Evasion". Amongst the other things the *Daily News* had to say in another comment column—

Mr Nanovich: They would not report accurately, would they?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the member for Whitford is asking for my personal opinion, I would accept certainly that in about one instance the Minister has complained a mistake was made and I think an apology should be forthcoming. That is the very point I am trying to make. If the Minister is confident—even if he is not confident—and the Government has any sense whatsoever, it should support this motion and lay this issue to rest. That is what I am suggesting and what the Opposition is suggesting. We are suggesting it from the point of view that has not escaped the criticism of the *Daily News* either, because if members cast their minds back to the front page editorial of the *Daily News*, they will know the Government is doing nothing about this issue. We have not escaped the wrath of the *Daily News* and we are happy for the matter to be investigated, evaluated, and reported upon.

The article to which I refer reads as follows—

The Minister for Resources Development, Mr Jones, and the Minister for Health, Mr Young, can only answer with abuse or double talk.

The people of WA are entitled to more from their ministers than gibberish.

Attacks designed to bring cheap laughs to a complacent backbench do little to enhance the image of Mr Young in a portfolio as important as Health.

The performances of Mr Young and Mr Jones must be severely embarrassing to the Premier, facing what promises to be a tight State election next year.

Mr Young has refused to face the truth about the Capel radiation issue.

Mr Jones has refused to face the truth about the thorium nuclear fuel issue.

Mr Young would do better to remain calm and direct his efforts to ensuring that the Parliament and the public get accurate response to the facts revealed by this newspaper.

I do not know how the Government can endure that sort of serious criticism. It appears to me that the paper is accusing the Minister of gross dereliction of duty and the Minister's position may well be the one which upon closer examination proves a valid one. If that is the case we simply are suggesting, without attempting to prejudice or prejudge in any way, that a judicial inquiry would be the proper manner in which to determine objectively the truth of the different positions and, most importantly, to lay to rest as quickly as possible this issue.

If there is some danger posed by what has gone on or what is going on at Capel, let us attend to it. If it has been attended to and the minimal danger that may have existed no longer exists, let us make sure the inquiry uncovers and publicises that fact.

The *Daily News* on 13 August said, when quoting Mr Young—and this is the other side of the picture—

Mr Young said the *Daily News* Comment articles were among the worst he had ever seen.

Referring to the *Daily News* and its efforts, the Minister made his position very clear. He said—this relates to two articles on the same page of the one issue—

“Running the two articles on one page is a good journalistic ploy. The truth is put in one article, as the *Daily News* did on this occasion, and then the vitriolic comment, which may be completely unfounded.

It may be completely unfounded. I am not saying it is founded in truth or fact, but I am saying that pages and pages of newsprint have been occupied by what has been an in-house, personal, and bitter dispute between the *Daily News*, which no doubt

believes it is right, and the Minister for Health, who no doubt believes he is right. The problem is that in the face of the intractable position adopted by both combatants in the battle scene the losers are everybody else. The Minister continued—

“The *Daily News* Comment articles are among the worst I have ever seen and I'm going to take up the Leader of the Opposition's recommendation yesterday to have the matter referred to the ethics committee of the AJA.

“The *Daily News* and other newspapers have printed the fact that I am referring the comments of Professor Rotblat and Dr Gofman to the Radiological Council of WA, to the NHMRC and to the International Committee for Radiological Protection.

“The editor himself knows that.”

And he continued—

“I care more than a hoot about getting the truth from the international and national organisations to which I have referred, and making sure that information is given to the journalists of the *Daily News* so it can be used properly than I care about rushing in to answering obviously trite and nonsensical comments that have been made by some other people including the editor of the *Daily News*.”

That is very strong stuff from the Minister for Health. I have no doubt he does not back down one inch from that statement. But I am sure even the Minister can see and understand that the continuing controversy is doing no-one any good. The Minister for Health has put up the shades, and so has the *Daily News*, and it seems we will continue to see a controversy without end in the foreseeable future. It is simply not good enough. If the Government cannot show the leadership necessary to resolve this controversy once and for all, it is high time that Parliament protected itself and its reputation and was seen to be attempting to provide some sort of adjudication.

Members of Parliament complain consistently about the depths to which their reputations sink from time to time. On scales of public appreciation, members of the Parliament loiter near the bottom of the categories about which people are questioned. They have very little respect in the eyes of the public and they enjoy a very mediocre reputation. One of the reasons is that controversies of this sort go on and on without any resolution. I guess the Minister hopes it will go on and disappear after a short while. That has not proved to be the case in this instance. The controversy has dragged on

interminably to damage the reputation of every member of Parliament in this place.

Mr Cowan: I didn't know we had one.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The truth is that we have precious little left of any worthwhile reputation, partly because of things like this where the Minister and the *Daily News* are exchanging the vilest of insults.

The *Daily News* accuses the Minister of talking gibberish and playing to the back bench for cheap laughs. It accuses him of not facing up to his responsibilities and of not being an appropriate person to be the Minister for Health. On the other hand, we have the Minister saying—and perhaps these are not his words—that the *Daily News* is carrying out a campaign of vilification on this issue. He accuses the *Daily News* of engaging in blatant and false reporting, and that its standard of reporting in this matter is so low that it should be referred to the ethics committee of the Australian Journalists Association. He accuses the *Daily News* of doctoring photographs and of employing journalistic ploys that compare the truth with lies on the same page in different stories about the same subject.

I suspect that the Government will say it will not have a bar of this inquiry, and that the *Daily News* is at fault and should be taken to task. Once we despatch this motion we will continue to read the same sort of things in the next few weeks and it will do a disservice to Parliament and every member in it.

Despite what the *Daily News* says about our lack of responsibility as an Opposition, we have refrained from involving ourselves in this matter because we are unable to judge who is right and who is wrong concerning the conflicting statements about the main points at issue. There was no lack of will on the part of the Opposition. I went to Capel with the shadow Minister for Health and spoke to residents, the shire council, unions, shop stewards, workers, and business people and they were as confused as we were about where the truth lay in this matter. We thought it wise, to avoid being convicted of being an irresponsible Opposition simply knocking and criticising and being negative—as often results from charges laid by this Government—not to involve ourselves in the controversy. On our return from Capel we said in a joint statement that the companies had set about the task to clean up the town. We praised them for that and said it seemed to us the companies appeared to want to do the right thing.

Mr Blaikie: Working in conjunction with whom?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The local authority told us it was working in conjunction with the companies involved in the industry.

Mr Blaikie: What about the Radiological Council?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The council and the companies informed us that the original readings were taken by the council, and once the programme had been completed the council would come back to do new readings.

Mr Blaikie: What has happened, or haven't you bothered to find out?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I cannot say that the Radiological Council has been back.

Mr Blaikie: The council and the community have been co-operating, and the only people who have not been famed for fairness have been the Press.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I tried to make the point that the companies had behaved in what we considered to be an exemplary manner. We said that publicly on our return from Capel. We said that the community, while concerned about the confusion on the issue, had been happy to let the company and the council continue. That deals with the first point in my concluding remarks.

The second is that no-one in this Chamber can argue that this is not a serious matter. It is very serious; it is a significant thing about which controversy might be generated. The third point is there is conflicting expert opinion about this matter. I cannot see that that conflicting opinion can be solved by the Minister simply attacking the *Daily News* or by the *Daily News* continuing to attack the Minister and the Government. If nothing is done to adjudicate in an impartial and objective manner the controversy will continue *ad nauseam*. It is clear that on each side the controversy has generated far more bitterness than is usually the case in matters such as this. The Minister has accused the *Daily News* of probably the most serious accusation one can make against a newspaper—something that goes right to the heart of its credibility; that is, of telling lies and involving itself in improper reporting.

That alone needs to be looked at. The *Daily News* has accused the Minister of speaking gibberish and of not being a fit person to fulfil the responsibilities of Minister for Health. It has accused him of playing to his back bench for cheap laughs. That also needs to be looked at. The one certain way in which we can help and be seen by the public to be seeking a solution to the matter is by our having a judicial inquiry. If the Minister has a proposal that substitutes for the

inquiry we are seeking—an alternative, credible, and acceptable one—he has my word that we will accept any amendment he seeks to move. We do not want the Minister to stand up and say he is going to carry out in-house examinations of expert opinion, and we do not want the *Daily News* to refer Dr Gofman's opinion to another expert who will agree with him.

What we want to do is put an end to the confusion and worrying uncertainty that conflicting opinions have created about this serious matter in the minds of the people who live and work in Capel, about the efficiency of the companies which mine mineral sands in Capel, and elsewhere, and in the minds of the public, generally.

I urge members to support the motion. If the Minister is on firm ground, the *Daily News* has plenty to worry about.

MR GRILL (Yilgarn-Dundas) [4.01 p.m.]: I second the motion. The Opposition would not like this motion to be construed as representing any sort of attack upon the mineral sands industry in Western Australia. In fact, we all revere the mineral sands industry as an old and long-standing mining occupation within Western Australia which, over a period of years, has contributed significantly to the economy of this State, which has been an important employer, and which now holds a position in the forefront of the world mineral sands industries.

That is not to say the industry has not been through its trials and tribulations. Those who know anything of the industry can remember back to a few years ago, when the Jennings plant closed, and when the Western Mining Corporation Ltd. plant closed. Both of those closures were tragedies in their own right because employees were put off, and a lot of capital was lost by the companies concerned.

So, in moving this motion today the Opposition hopes it will be strengthening the industry in the long term. This bitter controversy cannot be allowed to continue in the same acrimonious fashion. We are not taking sides in this dispute. We do not wish to take the side of the *Daily News*, although we can see its argument does appear to have some merit; neither do we wish to take the side of the Minister, although we also can see he has on his side eminent people who appear to back up some of the things he has been saying—notwithstanding the fact that, to some degree, he has changed his ground from the beginning of the dispute to the present.

Mr Young: I hope you intend to expand on that claim during the course of your speech, because I cannot recall changing my ground.

Mr GRILL: I did not intend making a long speech.

Mr Young: It need not be long, just accurate.

Mr GRILL: It has been more than adequately dealt with by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Young: It was not; he said much the same as you are saying; he did not deal with it. I thought that perhaps you would not be as "sarky" with me as was your leader, and would explain your claim. On what are you basing that claim?

Mr GRILL: If I can put it in a simple and concise way—

Mr Young: I will understand it if you do that.

Mr GRILL: —it seems to us that at the inception of this dispute, the Minister was not prepared to concede there was any risk of any moment either to the workers in Capel or to the families living there, including the children.

Mr Young: We were the people who started it off, and who said there was a high level—

Mr GRILL: I am putting it in as concise and fair a manner as I can. That is the way we conceived the situation at the inception of the dispute. However, today for whatever reason, the Minister has admitted there could be grounds for some concern. If I am not putting it fairly, the Minister can correct me in a moment.

Mr Young: I will.

Mr GRILL: That is the change in stance to which we are referring.

To return to the point I was making, the Opposition does not believe this controversy should be allowed to continue to rage as it has. It needs to be decided in as cool, impassionate, impartial, and objective a way as possible, and the only way we can see that being done is for the matter to be referred to a judicial inquiry, where the evidence—which we have admitted is strong on both sides—can be considered in a cool and impartial atmosphere, and where a decision on the matter can be made. If the Minister wishes to make some concessions today—as we hope he will—we will give him that opportunity.

The Opposition concedes the Minister has on his side academic and practical opinion of some moment. However, on the other side, there are world authorities who say a very real risk exists to workers at Capel and, what is more important, to the children who reside in the town. Surely, as parents, we would want that question decided as quickly and impartially as possible.

Although this debate has gone on in a fairly acrimonious way, indisputably it has brought some benefits. It has been admitted by the Government that the legislation and regulations governing the handling of radioactive material are sadly out of date. If this debate has done anything, it has hastened the review of that legislation and those regulations.

In addition, at present there do not appear to be any regulations or legislation governing the handling of radioactive waste. This debate has prodded the Opposition—as I hope it will prod the Government—into taking some action to bring down such legislation and regulations; indeed, I remind the House that the Opposition has foreshadowed such action.

It is clear an impasse exists in the evidence presented by both sides in this dispute. Because of its lack of technical knowledge and expertise, the Opposition is unable to come down with a decision either way; in any event, the Opposition does not believe it is its job to do so. However, the situation must be resolved in the most objective way possible. It is for that reason we have moved this motion today, and I urge members to give it their support.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Nanovich.

[Continued on page 2432.]

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Minister for Police and Prisons) [4.09 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act and it contains a package of measures designed to improve road safety by educational and corrective means. It is aimed principally at the areas of proven danger; namely, inexperienced drivers, drivers with a drink problem, and the habitual offender.

In 1981 the Government formed an interdepartmental committee to investigate road safety measures. Some of the recommendations of that committee are contained in this Bill, others are to be implemented through administrative changes. Some have been rejected through considerations of fairness and practicality. The Government has been guided by those considerations and the need to follow a fine line between strong and effective legislation and that which may work unfairly against a particular part of the community.

For example, the Government has not agreed to propose legislation for the impounding of a motor vehicle being used by a driver whose motor driver's licence is disqualified, because of the many obvious anomalies and injustices which would occur, such as the hardship it would place on other members of the family who may be dependent on the vehicle as their only means of transportation. Also, in many cases the offending driver is not the owner of the vehicle in which the offence was committed.

A recommendation that extraordinary motor drivers' licences should not be available during disqualification periods associated with second or subsequent drink driving offences, was not agreed to. This proposal was seen to be too severe when other measures contained in this Bill, such as cancellation of licences and increased penalties, were taken into consideration, especially as it could seriously affect a person's employment and would unduly penalise people in the country where public transport is not available.

The Government believes that magistrates exercise their discretion to grant extraordinary licences very carefully and no doubt they will continue to do so. It is not proposed that the discretion should be taken away.

Other important issues that were considered and rejected were the reduction of the present 0.08 limit to 0.05, and random breath testing.

Accident statistics indicate that among persons with two or more years' driving experience, those involved in most accidents had blood alcohol levels well above the current legal limit. In view of this there is no reason to believe a lowering of that limit to 0.05 will have any effect on this type of driver.

In relation to random testing, existing legislation provides power for a member of the Police Force to test any driver who has been involved in a traffic accident, who has committed a breach of the traffic laws, or whom he reasonably suspects of having alcohol in his body. Using this legislation in conjunction with their existing powers to stop vehicles for inspection, or carry out driver's licence checks, police in this State have legislation believed to be more effective than that in those States with random breath testing. It is considered that the present system provides for more effective deployment of enforcement personnel and a more efficient use of their time, thereby creating a greater deterrent effect than random breath testing.

The Government intends to achieve its objectives through two courses of action, one by

the administrative process, and the other by legislation.

To inform the House of the proposed package I will now relate the administrative measures.

Administrative measures: The written test for a driver's licence will be made more difficult and the practical driving test will be extended in time. However, the practical aspect will be dependent upon whether extra examining staff can be made available.

It was proposed that persons convicted of second or subsequent drink-driving offences incurred within a three-year period, be referred to the Alcohol and Drug Authority and not be eligible for a motor driver's licence until cleared by that organisation. This would have placed an unfair burden on offenders residing in the country, particularly those from remote areas who would have had to attend at the Alcohol and Drug Authority in Perth.

At present the Traffic Board has power under the Act to refuse to issue or may cancel or suspend a driver's licence, where it has reason to believe that the applicant is addicted to alcohol or drugs. It is proposed that the board will exercise this power administratively in the case of second or subsequent offences within a five-year period and require acceptable written confirmation from the Alcohol and Drug Authority or a medical practitioner that the applicant is not addicted to alcohol or drugs, before reissuing a licence.

Provision is made in the Bill for a court to impose a community service order, by way of a penalty, on a first or second drink-driving offender. The Probation and Parole Service will administer that aspect of the penalty and, as a condition of that community service order, a requirement will be placed on the person to attend five two-hour educational lectures on alcohol and its effects before the order is discharged.

The Probation and Parole Service, with the assistance of the Alcohol and Drug Authority, has developed a programme to cater for the needs of this particular aspect.

Other educational measures include a requirement for persons who have had their driver's licence cancelled for a second or subsequent prescribed offence, in accordance with the proposed amendment contained in this Bill, to pass a special written or oral test which concentrates on alcohol and its effects and related legislation, prior to the reissue of a licence. Literature covering the subject matter will be provided to the person concerned who will have to demonstrate a sound knowledge of the material to pass the test.

To be introduced in conjunction with the measures contained in this Bill is a requirement for bicycles to be fitted with approved types of reflectors; that is, in accordance with Australian Standard. These reflectors are to be attached to both sides of the pedals and within the spokes of both wheels, if the bicycle is being used during the hours of darkness.

With the increasing use of bicycles by people of all ages it is considered that reflectors will assist motorists to see cyclists when approaching from any direction.

I now will turn to the legislative measures.

Legislative measures: Alcohol-affected drivers are a major problem on our roads and they are involved in or cause many fatal or serious accidents. The Government, in its endeavour to improve road safety, proposes in this Bill to introduce measures aimed at reducing this problem. One of the key proposals is the introduction of legislation to prohibit persons in their first year of driving from driving a motor vehicle while having any detectable amount of alcohol in their bodies. This group has been found to have a high accident involvement and it is believed the driving task itself is sufficiently complex during the first year without the added complication of their coping with alcohol.

As a corrective and educational measure it is proposed that conviction for this offence will attract a fine of up to \$100 which, by operation of the Act, will result in cancellation of the probationary licence.

I interpolate to indicate that it is not intended that the measure will, of itself, create a new drink-driving offence. It is a particular measure relating to the probationary period of driving and not to drink-driving offences which are dealt with in other places in the Act.

Since 17-year-olds comprise the bulk of probationary drivers, who cannot legally drink in hotels, it is hoped that these persons will be encouraged at any early age to refrain from drinking and driving. If even only a small percentage continue to abstain in the following years, a beneficial result will have been achieved. At the very least, every new driver will have drawn to his attention in a way he cannot overlook the fact that there is a relationship to be considered between drinking and driving.

Basically the intent of this legislation is no drinking and driving in the first year of holding a driver's licence. A detectable amount of alcohol is defined as 0.02, this being considered to be a fair means of defining the word "detectable".

Similar legislation has been in operation in Tasmania since 1970, and although the authorities there have not made an in-depth evaluation of its effectiveness, a significant overall decrease in the fatal accident rate has occurred. Since 1971 the number of road deaths a year in that State has fallen from 130 to a figure of 100 in 1980.

The increasing use of drugs in our society has led to the need for specific legislation to enable samples to be obtained for analysis from drivers reasonably suspected of driving while affected by drugs. As some drugs are readily detectable only in blood samples and others only in urine, it is necessary to provide for samples of both blood and urine to be taken and to prescribe the method of the taking of and dealing with such samples.

Provision is made for samples to be obtained where a person's driving ability obviously is affected, but the presence of alcohol is not detected by the breathalyser, or is not detected in sufficient quantity to explain his condition and, I should add, his conduct. This provision will apply only where a member of the Police Force has reasonable grounds to believe the person is affected by drugs.

Since there may be occasions when a person is unable to supply a sample of urine, provision has been made for it to be a defence if the person satisfies the court that he attempted to give the sample.

I point out that these conditions will apply as a subsequent action after the tests for alcohol have been taken; they will not be parallel with it; they will be subsequent to it if the alcohol test does not explain the conduct of the person.

The monetary penalties for driving-under-the-influence and 0.08 offences are to be increased and although these increases appear large, they are necessary to retain an adequate deterrent effect and keep in touch with inflation. The proposed increases, which virtually double existing penalties, are far from excessive when it is considered that the minimum penalties for driving-under-the-influence offences have not been increased since 1965. In the period since 1965 the Perth Consumer Price Index has shown an increase factor of 3.82, or almost quadrupled.

While monetary penalties are to be increased, it is proposed to remove the optional imprisonment provisions for a first driving-under-the-influence offence as the rare use of this punitive measure by the courts no doubt reflects the community attitude and therefore shows it to be inappropriate. In the 12 months ended 30 June 1982, there were 4 068 first offence driving-

under-the-influence convictions, and of those only 22 received a goal sentence.

The offence of refusing to supply a sample of breath, blood, or urine for analysis is to be made the equivalent of a driving-under-the-influence offence. This has become necessary as many persons, believing that their blood alcohol level would greatly exceed the 0.08 limit, refuse to have a test in the hope that they will be charged only with the lesser offence of refusing to supply a sample and thus attract the lesser penalty equivalent to the 0.08 offence. In many such cases, it is believed the offender, but for his own refusal of a test, would have been subjected to the penalties of a driving-under-the-influence offence.

Penalties for the offences of refusing a preliminary test and refusing to accompany a member of the Police Force for the purpose of providing a sample for analysis are not being increased. These offences are considered of lesser importance and, therefore, have been incorporated in a new section to enable the penalties for refusing to supply a sample of breath, blood, or urine to be increased independently.

The option is to be given to courts to replace fines with community service orders for drink-driving offences, except where the offence is a third or subsequent driving-under-the-influence offence or refusing to supply a sample for analysis. A community service order will have an educative effect as it is proposed that the recipient will be required by the Probation and Parole Service which will administer the order, to attend five two-hour lectures on alcohol and its effects. Since the offender also will have to give up his own time to perform unpaid work in the community, he will not escape the punitive effect of the penalty. In any event, he will be disqualified from holding or obtaining a driver's licence for the mandatory period prescribed for the particular offence.

To add weight to the campaign against the drink-driver, it is proposed to make provision for the cancellation of motor drivers' licences for certain offences. In order to implement this, it is necessary to define these offences as "prescribed offences". The offences to come within this category will be 0.08, driving under the influence, and refusing a sample of breath, blood, or urine for analysis. Where a person is convicted of two or more "prescribed offences", his licence, by operation of the Act, will be cancelled. However, where the "prescribed offence" is an 0.08 offence, it shall not be considered as a second or subsequent offence if that conviction is more than five years after the last "prescribed offence".

Instances are occurring where a vehicle involved in an accident has more than one occupant, and when the police attend they are unable, without further inquiry, to determine who was the driver. Where the driver cannot be identified within the four-hour statutory limit for taking a sample of breath, blood, or urine from a person, no charge can be preferred. Situations have occurred where the occupants of the vehicle were unconscious or stated they could not remember who was driving. It is now intended to provide legislation to give a member of the Police Force power to require samples from all persons in the vehicle reasonably suspected of being the driver. This will enable samples to be taken from more than one person in the vehicle, and to allow further time to establish who was the driver.

Provision already is contained in the Act which gives the Traffic Board authority to refuse to issue, cancel, suspend, or renew a driver's licence, where the applicant, by reason of the number or nature of his convictions, should not be the holder of a licence. Offences for which demerit points have been allocated at present cannot be taken into consideration. It is proposed to introduce an amendment to allow more serious offences, such as dangerous driving, which are now excluded when demerit points are allocated, to be taken into account.

Although a number of offences in the Road Traffic Act carry a mandatory driver's licence disqualification, dangerous driving causing death or grievous bodily harm, which is considered the most serious offence in the Act, does not include such a disqualification. It is now intended to provide a mandatory minimum disqualification of two years.

Situations have occurred where persons who were disqualified from holding or obtaining a driver's licence have obtained a learner's permit and driven under the provisions of that permit without committing an offence. To overcome this problem, it is proposed to provide for a learner's permit, which is obtained by any person who is disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence, to be of no effect.

Visitors from other States or overseas are permitted to drive in Western Australia under the provisions of a driver's licence issued in their own State or country, but there is no power to require them to comply with any conditions which may be endorsed on their licences. It is proposed to provide for this requirement and create an offence of failing to comply with such conditions, if they can be legally complied with in this State.

The air patrol section of the Police Department uses aircraft to check the speeds of vehicles over measured distances. Currently the required distances are surveyed and marked on roads by the Main Roads Department. Unfortunately, this method of surveying and marking roads is both expensive and time consuming, especially in remote country areas. A machine that will measure distances accurately is now available, and it is proposed to provide for the use of this type of machine in the same manner as is currently the case with radar and other types of speed measuring devices. The equipment will need ministerial approval before it may be used, and to obtain this approval it will be necessary for it to be scientifically evaluated and its accuracy confirmed by an expert in this field, as in the case of other equipment now in use.

Under present legislation, complaints for offences against this Act must be made within six months from the date of the offence, except where the particular sections have had the limit extended. Instances are occurring where drivers of vehicles commit offences and, knowing they do not hold a driver's licence, give a false name and/or address. In many cases the six months' statute of limitation elapses before the offence is discovered and the offender is located. Appropriate action is then not possible, even though the offender may have been driving under disqualification at the time. It is proposed to extend the statute of limitation to two years for the offences of driving while not the holder of a motor driver's licence and giving a false name and address.

Where a person commits an offence against this Act for which no other penalty is provided, he is liable to a penalty of up to \$200. To keep in touch with inflation, it is proposed to increase this maximum penalty to \$400.

The Act limits the penalties which may be imposed under the regulations to \$200 for a first offence and \$400 for a second or subsequent offence. It is now proposed to amend the Act to allow for these limits to be increased to \$400 and \$800 respectively. This will have no immediate effect, but will make provision for any future increase in penalties as necessary under the regulations.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Carr.

MINERAL SANDS INDUSTRY

Radiation Levels: Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR YOUNG (Scarborough—Minister for Health) [4.28 p.m.]: The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Yilgarn-Dundas have moved and seconded a motion which was put forward by the Leader of the Opposition basically on the major premise that the argument between me and the *Daily News* was doing the Parliament of Western Australia no good. Although I have to confess that I agree that any bitter controversy between the *Daily News* and a Minister of the Crown can hardly do anyone any good, the damage that has been done to the reputation of this place has been contributed to in no small way by the entire media and by us over many years.

Perhaps that should not have been the major thrust of the Leader of the Opposition's speech, although if he examines his speech he will find that, basically, he kept returning to that point. At the outset I make it clear that it is not a matter on which I shall dwell.

The member for Yilgarn-Dundas referred to the alleged change of stance I am supposed to have taken on the whole Capel question. Previous to that the Leader of the Opposition, after I told him I would not interrupt any more, had said something similar. I said that I would not interject on the Leader of the Opposition any more after that, but I asked the member for Yilgarn-Dundas to clarify that statement and he then proceeded to say something I am afraid I could not follow in justification of his allegation that I had changed my stance on the Capel issue.

The fact of the matter is that I have not changed my position, and for those people who perhaps are not aware of what triggered off the whole controversy, I will refresh their memories.

I remember very well the day the Commissioner of Public Health contacted me by telephone and said that certain readings taken by the Radiological Council—and I think I am right in saying that these had been taken with the help and assistance of the Capel Shire—had indicated that levels of radioactivity in Capel attributable to tailings were above the levels recommended for domiciliary acceptability.

I immediately called for a Press statement to be issued on the matter and one was issued, from memory, within 24 hours of my being informed of the situation. In the meantime, arrangements were made for officers of the Radiological Council and officers of the Public Health Department to visit Capel. I make it clear and place it on the record for those who do not have the background to this situation, that it was "we", the Public Health Department, the Radiological Council, and I, who took the action that brought

about the situation in which the world, and Western Australia in particular, learnt about the levels of radiation in and around Capel.

It is important that this be recognised because if one were simply to take the general thrust of the comments and attitude of the newspaper to which we have been referring, one would gain the impression it was the newspaper which had alerted the world to the situation in Capel and that I had not evinced an interest in it at all. That could not be further from the truth. We consulted the shire and the company and arranged to clean up the town and remove the tailings wherever it was necessary to do so, and this is an ongoing situation.

A question from the member for Melville on today's notice paper refers to the situation and the answers supplied involve complicated detail. I will refer to that question in a moment, but I make it clear that we have continued the process of cleaning up the town with the assistance of the company and the shire. So I have not changed my stance on the Capel situation at all.

Referring again to the question asked by the member for Melville, I will refer to two parts of it, but obviously the answer will now have been made available to the Opposition and I do not suggest that the Leader of the Opposition or the member for Yilgarn-Dundas would have known the answers before now.

Mr Wilson: They have not been made available yet.

Mr YOUNG: It seems they still may not know the information because the answer has not been made available to them yet. For their edification I will read into *Hansard* the two parts of that very long question and the appropriate answers, because it is very important. The first part read—

- (1) Can he advise me in detail of what action has been taken to date in the town of Capel to reduce radiation levels in the affected houses, vacant lots, commercial premises, school, and recreational areas?

The answer was as follows—

- (1) (i) Tailings have now been removed and replaced with neutral fill in the 10 houses where this was required;
- (ii) tailings have been removed from two vacant lots and is proceeding on the remainder;
- (iii) tests are continuing on commercial premises to determine the most appropriate solution;

- (iv) remedial action at the school is complete; further examination shows that the material giving rise to an elevated radiation level was not, in fact, tailings, but naturally occurring soil in that area commonly called coffee-rock;
- (v) remedial action has been completed opposite the school and the need for action in other areas is being studied.

The answer to part (9) of the question is also pertinent; the question was—

- (9) What action has the Government taken to improve radiation safety procedures in the mineral sands industry?

The answer was as follows—

- (9) Representatives of the Mines Department, the Public Health Department, the Australian Workers' Union, and the mineral sands industry have been co-operating in the preparation of a code of practice on radiation safety in the mineral sands industry. The Public Health Department, the Mines Department, and the Radiological Council have monitored and investigated health hazards in the industry for many years. The industry has been very co-operative, but it is recognised that despite improved practice, the radiation levels of some workers are higher than what could be achieved, although still within the International Commission on Radiological Protection's recommendations.

At the outset of the Leader of the Opposition's speech he started down a track which was not quite accurate; he said that I had said publicly, I think, that there was no danger whatsoever in the practices being followed in the industry. I do not say these were his exact words, but they were the thrust of the point he was making. I interjected and said that was not accurate, but he went on to quote what I had said and they were direct quotes of statements I had made about the safety of people who were living in Capel, and statements about the safety of workers adjacent to tailings at the work site. To his credit, he did not pursue that point for very long, but went on to a fairly soft line which was all good, reasonable stuff, because he made statements with which no-one in this House could disagree.

Mr Parker: I am pleased you agree he was being responsible.

Mr YOUNG: The Leader of the Opposition said a number of very reasonable things, and I will tell the House what they were. He said that I was being advised by eminent and qualified people about this matter and all matters relating to radiation levels and radiation safety. He was quite genuine when making those comments and he was quite right, because I am advised by such men. He pointed out that I appeared to have good reason to rely on that advice from those people, and that was quite right, too. He said also that some eminently qualified people disagreed with my advisers, and there was no question about that. Wherever we find a scientific opinion we find another scientific opinion; there is never anyone so eminent in his field as to allow anyone to take his opinion as the last authority. Opportunity always will be available to challenge that opinion.

The Leader of the Opposition then said that he thought the matter ought to be settled once and for all. Quite frankly, the members on this side of the House could not agree more with that statement; we believe the issue ought to be settled once and for all, and in a moment I will go into a little more detail about the difficulty of doing just that.

Members of the Opposition would agree with me that it is highly unlikely we could ever settle an issue such as this when we are talking about a degree of acceptability of various levels of radiation dosage. Even the question of whether a person is living in an area subject to radiation or working in an area subject to radiation involves a great variance of opinion.

If one happens to be travelling through a particular area where there is radiation, the difference of opinion between one expert and another as to the degree of danger in travelling through that area will depend to a tremendous extent on the time taken to travel through and what one is doing whilst travelling through, and the like.

I would like the matter settled once and for all, but it never will be settled as long as there is someone who will not accept the reasonable comments of the most authoritative people we can get.

That leads me to the next point: I have said that it is accepted that there can be differing opinions on safety standards and there may need to be assessments made of recent happenings that may take time to reach us and to be evaluated. I am referring to the comments made by Professor Rotblat. In view of the seriousness of Dr Gofman's views I wished to refer the matters

raised by the *Daily News* and requested the papers from the *Daily News*, which they readily gave me. I referred them to the international body, the International Commission of Radiological Protection, the National Health and Medical Research Council, and to our own Radiological Council.

It is important that members in this House should know that was done. When it was done it was known by the *Daily News* and the entire news media of Western Australia, as well as the Opposition, because I publicly stated that it had been done. I wish to add that I have the utmost faith in the Radiological Council of Western Australia which is our own expert body which administers the Radiation Safety Act.

I wish to advise members the list of those on the council, so that it is on record—because no doubt the speeches of the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Yilgarn-Dundas, and my own will be read by people who have an interest in this matter—and so that they know who is on the Radiological Council.

The chairman is the Commissioner of Public Health, Dr Jim McNulty, and the members are—

Dr E. Maslen, nominated by the tertiary institutions. He is a physicist of many years experience.

Dr T. Male, a radiologist nominated by the Royal Australian College of Radiologists.

Dr J. H. Turner, a nuclear medical physician nominated by the Royal Australian College of Physicians.

Mr R. W. Stanford, a physicist of many years experience who carried out pioneering work in radiation protection in diagnostic radiology.

Mr G. Bennett, and X-ray engineer of many years experience in X-ray work.

Dr F. Heyworth, Director of Occupational Health.

Mr Barry King who is well known and respected for his conservative view and strict regard for radiation safety, is the Secretary of the council.

If the basis of this motion is the view of Dr Gofman the question is whether we should look into the International Commission on Radiological Protection recommendations or Dr Gofman's opinion provided to the *Daily News* because I think it could be said that Dr Gofman is a person who is not accepted in the scientific community as having the standing of Professor Rotblat.

The question of whether we will accept the advice given to us by the Radiological Council or the views or arguments of the International Commission on Radiological Protection will not determine this issue. It will be determined in the final analysis, not in the columns of the *Daily News*, not in a judicial inquiry, but by the scientific community. All these matters will be determined by the scientific community and we must bear in mind that they are the people who made these statements, upon which these stories are based.

Another expert, Professor Joseph Rotblat of London was reported in the *Daily News* of 7 July under the heading, "Capel needs a clean up, says A-bomb expert". It is not clear what his being an A-bomb expert would have to do with the Capel situation, but Professor Rotblat is a scientist with a distinguished record and who appears to be recognised by people throughout the world for his knowledge of radiological matters.

It is important to note that the Radiological Council agreed with many of the comments made by Professor Rotblat and it was difficult to understand what the comments in the *Daily News* actually meant.

The Radiological Council already had recommended—and the work had started—that there should be a clean up of the town. It seemed to me to be a little unnecessary for the *Daily News*, some months later, to be telling us that a world-renowned scientist had suggested we should be cleaning up the town when the Radiological Council's suggestion that it be done had started the whole question.

Professor Rotblat raised other matters in that article and I have made it quite clear that I must consider them. I must consider them and get the best possible advice I can. That is why I contacted the *Daily News* and asked if it would give me the papers. It readily did that and knew that I had submitted them to the bodies to which I have referred.

The article quoted the Professor on the recommendations of the International Committee on Radiological Protection, but the radiation levels given were a factor of 10 lower than those of the international commission and that is quite incorrect because the commission, as I understand, confirmed as recently as within the last few weeks that its recommendations have not been changed. That is one aspect that ought to be cleared up.

I am not saying the *Daily News* deliberately misquoted and I am not saying that the *Daily News* was even wrong, but it is something that

must be cleared up. That information will not be clarified other than by information being obtained from those people to whom I have referred.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the damage being done to this institution by the controversy, and he referred to the allegations flowing backward and forward between the Minister for Fuel and Energy, the *Daily News*, and me. He said that was bringing this place into disrepute. I want it to be clearly known that there have been recriminations between the *Daily News* and me, but at a time when it was considered we had reached a stage where something had to be done about the matter, I wrote a letter to the *Daily News*. I referred to the co-operation that had existed between certain reporters and me on other matters and wound up by saying that there was no good purpose in the paper's continuing to shoot at me when its representatives could come down and look at the files in my department.

There was no answer from the *Daily News* to that invitation.

Mr Brian Burke: When was that?

Mr YOUNG: It was somewhere in the vicinity of July, but I can get a copy of the letter and advise the Leader of the Opposition. There was no reply to the invitation. It was such an important matter that it required the attitude that my officers, my Press secretary, and I had taken with journalists on other important matters in the past.

I will give an example. Bill Power and Kay Maisey came to see me about the Penn-Rose and Berryman affair, and were provided with everything I could give them. I may not have been able to give them everything they wanted, but I gave them everything I could, including access to the files upon which they wanted to base their story, and they acknowledged that fact. Jim Carr came to see me about the case of Mr Barry when his eyes were apparently removed from his body without authority. Every piece of information that could have been given to Mr Carr and everything he wanted to see was made available, and he acknowledged that fact. Frazer Guild, who was the journalist on this particular set of articles, had been welcomed into my office and given all the information he wanted, all the papers he asked for, and the assessments he needed to have with top officers in respect of the Tronado machine.

In the middle of that, this letter was exchanged with the editor of the *Daily News*, and the suggestion was made that all he had to do was to ask those reporters whether co-operation existed and send his man, whoever it might be, down to my office and he would get the same co-operation.

There was no reply to that piece of correspondence.

Mr Brian Burke: I do not want to delay you, or to interject unnecessarily, but you have left unanswered your reasons for believing there was a change of attitude on the part of the *Daily News*.

Mr YOUNG: I do not know the reason. This is an important question which stands out. I can venture some opinions, but that is all they would be, and I do not know the answer. I think it did not please the *Daily News* that when Parliament resumed I made it clear that a particular photograph had been tampered with. It was an incorrect photograph, and it was an important part of the leading articles at the time. I pointed out that the statement in respect of the photograph was incorrect or played down to such an extent that it needed to be made in a public forum.

That may be one of the reasons the *Daily News* has run the comment. Perhaps members of Parliament stand alone in their not being allowed to tamper with things like photographs on which they base or found their stories. Perhaps members stand alone in that they are not allowed to make a mistake—even an honest one—in the course of a debate across the House without their getting flayed. I do not hold any grudge against that. I ask that, if a very important matter is brought to light in Parliament, the Press will pick it up. The only article that mentioned that particular matter was run by the *Daily News*, and I thought it was important the next day to make the point on how that paper had run it.

I do not want that situation to continue any more than does the Leader of the Opposition; nor is it in the best interests of the *Daily News*, because the reporters to whom I have referred, with the possible exception of one, know that they have a pretty good entree into my office, and that they always have had. Even the reporting staff of the *Daily News* must have grave reservations about the editorial attitude on this matter. Certainly, the rest of the Press and news media must have a little misgiving that a daily journal will say the things it has when caught out on an issue like this.

The Leader of the Opposition said it must cause me a great deal of concern and alarm. It does, and it must cause the same degree of concern and alarm to journalists in other news media, and perhaps even to the people who work on the *Daily News*. I am sure it would have. I would have thought that most of the reporting staff on the *Daily News* would be pretty ready to admit that on the issues I have mentioned the co-

operation they received from most people was not too bad. I cannot think of any where they have not received that co-operation.

The *Daily News* was invited, but chose not to come, to see me on this issue. The Leader of the Opposition has missed the point in calling for a judicial inquiry. Most members would agree that the debate has been a dispassionate one, and that it would be fair to say that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Yilgarn-Dundas did not make a great deal of play about the fact that they were calling for the inquiry. I believe they genuinely feel it might do some good. I take the opposite view. I think it would be most inappropriate for the House to carry a motion to set up a judicial inquiry now. I will tell the Leader of the Opposition why in a moment.

I recognise that the Leader of the Opposition said that if I had any reasonable solution that was different from a judicial inquiry, he would ensure that it was supported. There is not really any need to move an amendment. The actions I have taken already to refer the information upon which the series of *Daily News* articles were based to the three most eminent councils I can think of pertinent to Western Australia is the proper course at this stage. The answers from these people and a proper evaluation, not only of the articles, but also of the papers upon which they were based, is essential to the basis of any other inquiry or examination we might need to have. I do not believe the proposal contained in the motion would serve any purpose in getting the answers to the questions I have raised.

I do not believe the *Daily News* would deem it appropriate that anyone should take action, particularly the Government, to start a judicial inquiry into a matter that is ill-defined by the Leader of the Opposition's motion without giving the *Daily News* the courtesy of replying. I promised I would do that when I asked for the information on which its articles were based. I said, "If you believe what Gofman and Rotblat have said and it is valid comment and you have read it fairly, and you have all the information upon which to base a fair report, give me the papers and I will have them examined by people whose opinion would be respected throughout the world. At least give it to me so I can make an evaluation because my knowledge of radiation and radiological matters is nil." They readily agreed to that. I said that when I had the information and had made an assessment and was ready to respond on the matter, I would do so to the *Daily News*. I am not yet in that position.

Mr Stephens: Will you be prepared to table the information?

Mr YOUNG: Yes. In addition to giving the information to the *Daily News*, I will table in this place the result of the assessment. The Leader of the Opposition is quite right when he says that nobody is going to believe a fight between a paper and a Minister. The only people who can make a proper scientific assessment of the *Daily News* challenges and the advice I have are proper scientific bodies and the peers of the people who have made these assessments. An assessment is needed of the material on which the *Daily News* is basing its story. That information has been requested by me and readily given by the *Daily News*. I have sent that to the Radiological Council of Western Australia, to the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, and to the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

When that assessment has been carried out—and I think, although I am not quite certain, that some information has come back already to my advisers—and all the facts and opinions are summarised, as I say, I will reply to the *Daily News* and I will table the summary in the House. The Leader of the Opposition offered to allow us to amend his motion in any way we liked, and provided it was reasonable, the Opposition would support it. That was a gesture which, under normal circumstances, would have been taken up readily had there been some reasonable way in which the motion could have been amended. There is no sense in our doing that for the reasons outlined. I want that information so that I may reply to the *Daily News*. If there is any justification for the allegation made by Gofman and Rotblat—it may be that Rotblat made no allegations at all but Goffman did—these things have to be answered, but not by means of a judicial inquiry. I cannot see any reason therefore to move an amendment to the motion, and I recommend to my colleagues that they should vote against it.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [5.02 p.m.]: The Minister has just said, "Let the scientific world decide who is right in this matter". Of course, that will not happen. The Minister says he has access to first-class advice, but in the ultimate the decision will be made by the Minister and the Cabinet, not in the public open forum, but as a matter of confidentiality. If we were to say, "Instead of a judicial inquiry, hold a scientific inquiry which is open", that suggestion might have merit. The Minister really is saying that he will make the decision. That is our system, but the fact of the matter is that we are wondering whether the Minister is really in a position to make such a decision.

I would like to make it clear that I believe the *Daily News* has performed a public service by bringing these matters to the attention of the public. Had it not been for the series of articles over a long period of time—I am not saying they are accurate in every respect—there is a possibility we would not be debating this matter today, and the public would not have been apprised of the problem. So it is important that the media should be able to expose problems when a Government shows dereliction of duty.

Mr Blaikie: You know that is quite unfair.

Mr TONKIN: Therefore, I believe the *Daily News* performed a public service. As I said before, that is not making a judgment as to whether the *Daily News* articles have been accurate in every case.

Mr Blaikie: To understand this matter, you must know it was the Minister who advised the Press of the tailings at Capel. Be fair on this.

Mr TONKIN: The Minister has asked for more time. He says that he is still waiting for information to come to light. I believe we are entitled to ask: How much time does the Government want? For example, the code of practice has long been recognised as being inadequate and we believe that rules by which people in the industry should be required to work for their own safety at least should have been written to take cognizance of modern knowledge and modern working practices. These working practices are not adequate. So what we are talking about is not giving the Minister another week or two as though this has been sprung on him recently; we are talking about governmental neglect in this area for some years. The Government has had a long period of time in which to see to it that the codes of practice for the mineral sands industry were updated in line with modern knowledge.

When we ask for the judicial inquiry, we are really saying we believe in some form of open government. I think the Government has demonstrated that it is not prepared to take action on this matter.

Almost eight years ago, in this House, I moved to set up a standing committee on the environment. The matter we are discussing now is the very sort of issue to which I was referring when I spoke to my motion on 28 August 1974. I pointed out that although we in this place are not experts and that radiological matters are very complex, at least everything we do is in a public forum. That is the reason for our bringing this motion to the House.

It is not good enough for the Minister to say, "I will get advice from the top scientists and I will decide what is to be done", when we know the practice has been for a Government to suppress advice and not to inform the public of the nature of advice if that advice is against its own narrow interests.

So this is yet another plea by the Opposition for a degree of openness in government. History has taught us that Governments cannot be trusted; that Governments should be required to be more open in their deliberations and their decisions.

Mr Blaikie: That is a fair comment you have made because I have just returned from New South Wales and many people are saying that there, and they are saying it with conviction.

Mr TONKIN: I do not know how the member gets comfort from that, but if he does, I am pleased for him. I do not think we are debating the situation in New South Wales. This Government has a poor record on environmental matters.

Mr Blaikie: Absolute rubbish!

Mr TONKIN: This has been shown once again. The Government has not really been able to come to grips with radiological matters that are different qualitatively. We believe that the Government should be required, in the public arena, to justify its decision that the public have a right to hear competing advice given by various experts in the area so that the public will be able to make a decision on the subject by following the inquiry.

The Minister stood up and asked us to believe him. The *Daily News* wants us to believe that what it prints is correct. That is the reason we have put the emphasis on a judicial inquiry—a tribunal made up of people who are competent to weigh the evidence and who would have access to the best scientific advice. So it would not be a question of members of the judiciary making a decision on scientific matters, but, rather, it would be a matter of members of the judiciary weighing up, in public forum, the various kinds of advice given to them. That is in contrast to the Minister's, with much less expertise, weighing up the advice given to him, not in a public forum, but, rather, in his ministerial office, within his department, and in an inquiry to which the public does not have access. If some access is granted by the Minister, it is selected access. I cannot see that a judicial tribunal would put the Government at any disadvantage. I am not making a point about this particular Minister; I am making a point about the normal practices of government. We have grown up in this State and in this

country with a kind of tradition of closed government.

Mr Blaikie: You have to admit that the Minister has been very fair, though.

Mr TONKIN: I do not have to admit anything of the kind.

Mr Sibson: That is tantamount to saying it is, though.

Mr TONKIN: No it is not. I am telling the member for Vasse that I will not allow him to decide the words I will use. He certainly does not have the right to say I have to say anything, any more than I have the right to say to him, "You have to admit it". He does not have to admit anything of the kind and it would be foolish for me to say, "You have to admit this and that". I hope the member recognises it is foolish of him to suggest that to me.

For the reasons outlined, we believe the Government has had far too much time. It has wasted time. The Government has been fiddling for a long period while the working practices have not been brought up to date. It is inappropriate for the Government to ask for more time. Any action it wants to take in the months ahead should have been taken years ago, and we do not have faith that the Government will take the action that is in the best interests of the State. Governments often confuse their own security with the security of the State.

We are well aware that the Government suppresses information; staff members say that certain information is classified. In fact, the Government did not make out a case to show that it is not in the national interest to reveal this information. The information is suppressed in the interests of the security of a particular Government, and once again I am not making a complaint about this particular Minister but, rather, I am making a complaint about the nature of government.

The Government has shown inactivity over a period of time about the subject matter of this motion. We believe the Government has had the time to do something, but it has not used its time well. It is time for the whole debate to be shifted into the public arena. It has been in the public arena to some extent, but we are saying that the heat should be taken out of it and more light shed upon it. That is the reason for our suggesting a judicial inquiry in the public arena. We would not then be relying on a Minister of the Crown, with the kind of political pressures which are placed upon him and his colleagues—the kind of pressures to which all members of Parliament are subject—but rather the inquiry would be in the

hands of members of the judiciary who do not have that kind of political pressure. That is the reason that the Leader of the Opposition moved the motion.

MR BLAIE (Vasse) [5.14 p.m.]: The motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition calls for a judicial inquiry into—

- (i) whether health hazards are posed by the radioactivity levels experienced in Capel and in the mineral sands industry; and,
- (ii) whether codes of practice for the mineral sands industry are adequate to protect the health and safety of workers in the industry.

The motion is based on conflicting statements, as the Leader of the Opposition says, from the Government and from internationally recognised experts as recorded in the *Daily News*. That is the basis of the Leader of the Opposition's request to this Chamber to support his motion for a judicial inquiry.

I bring back members to the salient point that the Leader of the Opposition's motion is based on reports in the *Daily News*. He has not referred to any other newspaper or journal, nor has he said whether the move was made by a political paper or the community. His motion is based on the reports in the *Daily News*.

I shall correct a comment made earlier by the member for Morley who implied the Government had been hiding the issue of radioactive tailings at Capel. That implication could not be further from the truth. In February of this year the Minister for Health issued a public statement to the media which it was free to circulate to the community of Western Australia. That statement indicated the Radiological Council had carried out a survey in the Capel region and had found in certain areas radiation levels above those recommended.

Mr Davies: What prompted the Minister to take that action?

Mr BLAIE: That action was taken at the request of a Capel shire councillor (Mr Michael Tichbaum) which was voiced at a meeting of the shire. He requested the Radiological Council to undertake a survey to ascertain the position in the Capel district following similar surveys conducted at Byron Bay and Geraldton.

Mr Davies: You have answered my question. I did not ask it with any malice. I just wondered what the reason was.

Mr BLAIE: I am not answering the member with any malice; I am just trying to give him a full explanation. That was how the matter started. It did not arise from any devious activities or a

desire on the part of the Government to hide the facts. In his dealings with this matter the Minister has been quite open and has reported the facts clearly, conscientiously, and honestly. I believe that has been generally overlooked. It has certainly been overlooked by the Press in its reporting of the Capel tailings issue.

The substance of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition is based on reports in the *Daily News*. Let us look at some of those reports to ascertain the basis of the facts placed before the House by the Leader of the Opposition. Initially I shall refer to a story and photograph which was mentioned earlier and which appeared in the *Daily News* of 1 April. What a significant date that happened to be! I trust most members have taken the trouble to go to the library to look at this article, but on the completion of my speech I shall ask that these newspaper excerpts be tabled for the benefit of members who may not yet have read them, so that they can examine them and form their own conclusions.

The story and photograph appear under the caption "Areas roped off at Capel school" and the article is written by Mr Jim Maher. Under the photograph the following words appear—

A Capel primary school pupil retrieves a ball from inside the roped off area in the school playground.

Picture from Bill Plowman.

The story reads, in part, as follows—

Children at Capel Primary School are forbidden to use radioactive areas of the school grounds.

But none of the hazardous mineral sands landfill has been removed since the Public Health Department reported on high radiation levels in the town more than a month ago.

Two areas of the playground were roped off by the headmaster and gardener, shortly after the release of the PHD report on February 22.

One of the spots—a 10 metre square near a classroom—has radiation levels of 170 microrems an hour.

The other, a 50 metre by 20 metre section of the school's oval, has radiation of 120 microrems.

The acceptable level of radiation is 120 microrems.

More than 160 children attend the school and many of them play close to the roped areas.

That report indicated that children were playing close to the roped off area, but the picture shows children playing inside it. The report went on to say—

The headmaster—who requested his name not be published—said he did not know when the material would be taken away or who would do it.

This is the type of journalism which has led to the people of Capel feeling uncertain about their future and the way in which the media reports these matters. All I can say is "Thank goodness the people of Capel are reasonably well aware of the facts and abhor this type of journalism."

The article continues—

The banning of children from certain school areas conflicts with repeated PHD assurances that the radiation levels in the town pose no risk.

Again that implies that the school is taking certain action while, at the same time, the PHD indicates the community is not at risk, despite the radiation levels which have been recorded in the town.

In conclusion, the article says—

Monazite contains traces of radium and thorium.

Therein lies the fear of radioactive material.

I am concerned about the safety and future of the people of that community or, indeed, of any community. However, let us return to the article and photograph which shows a child playing within a roped off area. That article caused a great deal of concern to the community, because it led people to believe the principal of the school had been derelict in his duties by allowing pupils to play inside the roped off area. However, we all know now the truth which, fortunately, was published in the *Daily News* the following day. The article appeared under the caption, "Pupil in safe area" and reads as follows—

Because of a misunderstanding, a pupil of Capel Primary School was shown in the *Daily News* yesterday to be inside a roped-off area of monazite radiation when in fact she was outside it.

The girl was pictured on Page 2 with stories of monazite radiation. Artwork was carried out on the picture incorrectly. The *Daily News* apologises for any concern caused to the pupil or the girl's parents.

However, the report did not offer an apology to the school which the girl attended, to Kevin Rainbird, the principal of the school, or to the Education Department of Western Australia. A

very smug apology appeared in the *Daily News* and I am thankful that at least that was supplied.

I ask members to look at the size of the apology and compare it with the size of the story which gave prominence to the suggestion that this girl was playing inside a roped off, monazite tailing area.

Mr Bryce: Unfortunately that is par for the course for apologies, isn't it? Whenever there is an apology it is usually in small print right at the back of the paper.

Mr BLAICKIE: That is right, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and I know that only too well, having had some experience ourselves in this field. Notwithstanding the apology, the damage had been done already.

The Leader of the Opposition has asked this House to agree to his request for the establishment of a judicial inquiry based on a report in the *Daily News*. The substance of that report and subsequent reports in that newspaper is suspect. Although an apology was issued, I question the motives behind those articles.

That is only one example of this type of reporting. Last week another report relating to the suggested exportation of thorium from Australia appeared in the *Daily News*. That report suggested Western Australia was the key source of the exportation of thorium used in the "nuclear fuel cycle". Mr Frazer Guild from the *Daily News* sought information from the office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr Anthony) in relation to this matter. A reply was sent to the *Daily News* office in the form of a telex none of which appeared in the article which gave a distorted story.

The following day a further report appeared in the *Daily News* printing in full the telex received from the office of the Deputy Prime Minister. However, the telex was printed in such a way that it would be very difficult for people to read it properly. An explanation of the original article—not a retraction—was printed also. I think that is probably the best way in which one could describe the matter.

One finds it very difficult to understand why the town of Capel has been singled out in this manner by the Press. The Leader of the Opposition indicated he and the shadow Minister for Health visited Capel, and spoke to the people there; they received him well, but were generally concerned—

Mr Brian Burke: They were confused.

Mr BLAICKIE: I believe it would be fair to say the people of Capel were concerned as to the

general nature of the work which was being carried out. Be that as it may, the issues have continued to be aired in the Press and the Leader of the Opposition said the community was becoming confused about the matter. The blame for that can be placed at the door of the Press.

Another article on the same issue appeared in the *Daily News* of 8 July. Once again, the article was written by Mr Frazer Guild and appeared under the heading, "Capel needs a clean up says A-bomb man"; it appears we are not now talking about the radioactive levels of mineral tailings.

It goes on to say—

A scientist who helped to develop the atom bomb is alarmed at the radiation levels in mineral sands at the town of Capel.

We have gone from concern expressed about tailings to comments made by people involved in the making of atomic bombs. I accept that journalists have a degree of licence in these matters, but I question whether it should go as far as it has in this matter. Again I refer to conflicting statements. On 13 August the *Daily News* carried this article written by Jim Maher entitled "Thorium 'wrap' in A-bomb"—

Thorium was used to make "dirtier" atomic bombs exploded in tests in South Australia 25 years ago.

The material was "wrapped around" bombs tested by Britain at the Maralinga test site.

Thorium was one of the materials obtained from the Capel area, and in a sinister way the *Daily News* again tried to link Capel with atomic energy. The only reason I could determine for the Opposition's moving this motion was that the references to nuclear fuel and atomic energy related to the part of the Labor Party's policy which opposed the use of nuclear fuels.

Mr Evans: What about public health—the health of the community?

Mr BLAICKIE: If the member for Warren would like me to read chapter and verse during the 27 minutes I have left the Australian Labor Party's attitude on the contentious issue of nuclear energy as it relates to nuclear power, and its stand on other nuclear issues which have split the Labor Party between Mr Bowen and Mr Hayden, I will accommodate him, but I do not think his colleagues would appreciate my doing so.

Mr Bryce: As a matter of interest, would you be quoting those remarks from newspapers?

Mr BLAICKIE: If I could continue, Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr Bryce: I think you had better. Would the journalists be right on those occasions?

Mr BLAICKIE: I am attempting to understand the basis for the Opposition's motion. I, for one, cannot support the motion on the premise that the reporting of this matter by the *Daily News* has, as it has been proved, not given a fair and reasonable report to the public of Western Australia. I did not believe the Leader of the Opposition or any of his colleagues believed in all fairness and honesty that the reports of the *Daily News* as they related to the Capel community were a fair representation of the facts. Accepting that, I sought other reasons for the moving of the motion, and came to the conclusion that the Opposition moved the motion as a result of its political policy of non-acceptance of the use of nuclear materials, a policy which in any case I do not believe is foundation for its having moved the motion.

I am not prepared to support the motion for the reasons I have given.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [5.34 p.m.]: I found the debate interesting and its standard rather better than usual for this House. The case put by the Leader of the Opposition was quite convincing, and equally convincing was the reply by the Minister for Health, a reply for which I congratulate him. Saying that at this early stage of my remarks does not indicate my stand.

Mr Davies: I'll take a small punt on it.

Mr STEPHENS: The Minister's reply almost convinced me that he was right. I do not intend to touch on the pros and cons of all the aspects because they have been covered ably by speakers from both sides. I am concerned for the integrity of the Parliament. The argument that has gone on between journalists of the *Daily News* and the Minister for Health must be of concern to us all, and certainly it is of concern to many of the people I represent.

Theoretically the Minister is responsible to this Parliament. Any reflection on his integrity reflects on the Parliament, so it is essential we get to the bottom of the matter and determine where right prevails, and which arguments are incorrect.

The Press quite rightly brought the matter before the public. I accept the role of the Press to protect the public interest, and its role to question the actions of not only the Government and its Ministers, but also this Parliament. One could say the Press acted properly, provided its arguments were correct or put in good faith, and genuinely in the public interest. If I had my way I would alter the laws of the land to enable the Press to be involved in a more investigatory role generally

within the community, a course which would be in the interests of the community and might tend to combat some of the problems associated with a Parliament dictated to by rigid party discipline—however, that is a matter not the subject of this debate.

I cannot go along with the Opposition's belief that a judicial inquiry is necessary. Members of this House have a specific role to play, and if they are prepared to accept fully their responsibilities they should be willing to listen to arguments for and against, and be prepared to make judgments on matters before them. For that reason I intend to move an amendment to delete all words after "that" in line 6 up to and including the word "of" in line 8. In that way the words "in the opinion of this House, an independent and authoritative assessment should be made of" would be deleted. If my proposed amendment were successful I would move to insert in place of those words the words "a Select Committee be appointed to assess". If that further proposed amendment were successful I would move to delete the last paragraph of the motion—the request.

Mr Tonkin: Why didn't you support our motion in 1974 for a standing committee on the environment?

Mr Davies: They were still friends with the Country Party.

Mr STEPHENS: That was eight years ago.

Mr Davies: He has seen the light since then.

Mr STEPHENS: I know what the member for Morley is trying to put. I was a Minister at that time and did not agree with him. I have never objected to the appointment of select committees, but the member referred to a standing committee. I do not think he would say that a standing committee and a select committee are the same. If a select committee were appointed to investigate these radioactivity levels it would be able to take into account the information the Minister said he was prepared to table in the Parliament. I am sure the Minister would accept that the cost to the Government of a select committee is minimal and certainly less costly than the conduct of a judicial inquiry. If the Minister is sincere about this matter I am sure he accepts that a select committee would be the appropriate body to investigate the matter, a body which in the process of time clearly would prove his case and would condemn the *Daily News* journalists to whom reference has been made.

Amendment to Motion

Mr STEPHENS: I move an amendment—

Delete all words after "that" in line 6

down to and including the word "of" in line 8 with a view to inserting "a Select Committee be appointed to assess".

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [5.41 p.m.]: The Opposition opposes the amendment; we think it is silly. I am not sure where the National Party has been throughout this debate, but presuming its members have been listening I am amazed—

Mr Stephens: If you were here you would know that I have sat in this seat for all the time of this debate.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —they have not had the nous to understand that the motion seeks to remove from this Parliament decision on this contentious matter.

Mr Cowan: That is why we want it brought back to the Parliament—for that very reason. You said it reflects on the integrity of parliamentarians so we want to do something about it ourselves.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If something reflected on the integrity of footballers, I take it the National Party would get footballers to determine what should be done.

Mr Cowan: Why not?

Mr Stephens: You are reflecting on the ability of parliamentarians to be able to make a judgment.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is so in respect of some of them.

Mr Cowan: You don't have to include all.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I would not. We think this matter is best decided without the Parliament's interference or involvement. I am surprised the National Party does not understand that a decision made by members of Parliament on this particularly contentious matter, and presumably a majority of one side or another, would remain open to question on the ground of political prejudice. I made it quite clear when moving the motion that we were not necessarily pinned to the concept of conducting a judicial inquiry because it was obvious that, too, would be inappropriate in some ways.

We put squarely to the Minister that we would support whatever inquiry he thought appropriate provided it was reasonable. I cannot see any reason whatsoever for the National Party to move an amendment such as this unless it is an attempt to differentiate its members from others, and I do not see much point in that as an end.

Mr Stephens: You are not quite experienced enough yet. You need a few more years' experience to enable you to differentiate.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have been here a mite longer than the member for Stirling!

Mr Stephens: You haven't as Leader of the Opposition.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: This member's career has been marked by a rapid advance to the rear.

Mr Stephens: You have had a rapid advance up the ladder.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Whether or not it is his experience that has relegated him to the echoing distance of the far back bench, it is still true that to refer this matter to a group of members of Parliament, remembering that the context in which I moved this motion was one in which we put the proposition that we were being reflected upon by the controversy, is to me entirely unacceptable. We do not intend to support the amendment.

MR YOUNG (Scarborough—Minister for Health) [5.45 p.m.]: The Govt does not support the amendment moved by the member for Stirling because, as I outlined in my speech in reply to the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Yilgarn-Dundas, the Government had already instituted a move to try to obtain information for the purpose of assessing the claims that have been made by the *Daily News* in relation to the situation at Capel. I cannot envisage this House setting up a Select Committee in order to review this situation because it is one added step only on a journey that should be shortened rather than lengthened. That Select Committee can only call for more information and because of the lack of expertise in this area it could not come to any conclusion. Further, the Select Committee would only look for the information I am seeking to allow me to inform the *Daily News* accordingly and table a report on this matter in this House. Based on that information, the Government opposes the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Mr Stephens	Ayes 2 Mr Cowan
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(Teller)

Noes 46

Mr Barnett	Mr Jamieson	
Mr Bertram	Mr P. V. Jones	
Mr Blaikie	Mr T. H. Jones	
Mr Bridge	Mr Laurance	
Mr Bryce	Mr MacKinnon	
Mr Brian Burke	Mr McIver	
Mr Terry Burke	Mr McPharlin	
Mr Carr	Mr Mensaros	
Mr Clarko	Mr O'Connor	
Mr Court	Mr Old	
Mr Coyne	Mr Parker	
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton	
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson	
Dr Dadour	Mr Sodeman	
Mr Davies	Mr Spriggs	
Mr Evans	Mr Tonkin	
Mr Grayden	Mr Tubby	
Mr Grewar	Mr Watt	
Mr Grill	Mr Williams	
Mr Harman	Mr Wilson	
Mr Hassell	Mr Young	
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Nanovich	(Teller)
Mr Gordon Hill	Mr I. F. Taylor	(Teller)

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Davies.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

MINERAL SANDS INDUSTRY

Radiation Levels: Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [7.32 p.m.]: Since we last debated this matter, we have had half an hour of scintillating question time and then dinner, so it might not do any harm if I were to recap the position.

The Leader of the Opposition has moved a very apt and practical motion asking the Government to inquire into all the health hazards caused at Capel because of the mineral sands industry, and into whether the codes of practice are adequate to meet the safety requirements of the people working in the industry. That is a very reasonable and proper request. It is more reasonable because of the doubt that exists.

I had not intended to speak on this motion, because I did not want to delay the House to any great extent and I thought the facts were put properly by the Leader of the Opposition. I heard most of the Minister's reply; he seemed a little piqued, unfortunately, and claimed that we were trying to score points rather than take a serious look at what could be a potential hazard. However, I am speaking at present.

It has been widely rumoured during the dinner break that we will not be sitting tomorrow, so I do not mind speaking and I do not apologise for taking the time of the House. If the Government is running short of business again, we will be only too happy to come back and deal with some more of the private members' business. The Government has been generous with us during this part of the session. On two occasions it has allowed us to deal with our private members' business—

Mr Stephens: Is the Government really being generous, when we are helping it out of a fix?

Mr DAVIES: We are not biting—

Mr Barnett: The hand that feeds us?

Mr DAVIES: I was going to use a different simile. Perhaps I could say "looking a gift horse in the mouth", but even that is too terrible to contemplate. Perhaps all I should say is that we are only too pleased to take every opportunity to debate private members' business. We have a very lengthy list of private members' business on the notice paper, and of course we see one or two motions from the National Party. Indeed, one motion moved by a member of the Government is still on the notice paper.

We are grateful for the opportunity to continue debating this motion. It does not make it seem so bad for me to want to speak tonight, when normally I might be requested to cut the debate so we could move on with other business.

The SPEAKER: I suggest to the member for Victoria Park that I do not mind his taking his full 45 minutes, so long as he is debating the motion before the Chair and not some other matter.

Mr DAVIES: That is not unreasonable. I was explaining why I was taking this opportunity to speak. I might speak for a little longer than I would otherwise have done.

Mr Stephens: Are you trying to tell us you are only filling in time, not speaking because of the importance of the motion before the Chair?

Mr DAVIES: I was trying to say that we would be happy to come back tomorrow, if the rumours

that we will not be sitting are correct, and debate all of the business on the notice paper.

In the motion, we seek an independent and authoritative assessment of the questions to which I have already alluded. We need an independent assessment, and that is why we did not vote before the dinner break for the amendment moved by the National Party requesting that the inquiry be conducted by a Select Committee. It is true that we have moved on many occasions for Select Committees; but on this occasion the matter is so important that we should take the opportunity to have the highest possible form of inquiry, and that is why we suggest a judicial inquiry.

I have some qualms about even a judicial inquiry. The judicial inquiry into the electoral system was conducted several years ago, and I thought there were obvious errors in the proceedings of that inquiry. People who worked within the electoral system know that. Therefore I believe that any inquiry must be independent; it must be authoritative; it must be far-reaching; and it must be apart from this House. That is why we are seeking a judicial inquiry.

Much play was made by the Minister and the member for Vasse about the way the Minister has been treated by the *Daily News* evening paper. As one other member said, we should have more investigative journalism from time to time; if we have any complaint about the papers, often it is that they have picked up a subject, given it a headline, and then dropped it completely a day or two later. But, one cannot say that about the radiation scare—and I use that word advisedly—at Capel, and the way it has been treated by the *Daily News*. The journalists of the *Daily News* have been consistent and responsible in their reporting. Some will say they have not been responsible in their reporting because they showed a picture of children playing in a roped-off area.

Mr Old: That's right.

Mr DAVIES: I heard the Leader of the National Country Party say, "That's right."

Mr Old: That's right.

Mr DAVIES: So I repeat that the *Daily News* showed a picture of a child playing in a roped-off area.

Mr Old: And then they reprinted it.

Mr DAVIES: They reprinted it; and the Minister says, "That's right." We can be caught very often by reading things that are not actually there. If one takes that paper and looks at the caption underneath it—and I am quoting from the *Daily News* of Thursday, 1 April—one finds

it does not say that there is a child playing in the roped-off area. It says no such thing. It says—

A Capel primary school pupil retrieves a ball from inside the roped-off area . . .

On looking at the picture, it is obvious that the ball has rolled in there and the child is using a leg or something to pull the ball out.

Mr Blaikie: But, in fact, it said the child was "inside the area".

Mr DAVIES: It may be sensational journalism, and it may be that the photographer waited down there for two hours to obtain a photograph of someone in or near the area; but it does not say, as members heard the Leader of the National Country Party say it said, that there were children playing in the area. The photograph shows a girl retrieving a ball from six inches inside a roped-off area, if that much. Yet the Minister is hot under the collar; the Leader of the National Country Party has just said it said something which it did not say—

Mr Blaikie: And the member for Vasse is angry.

Mr DAVIES:—and the member for Vasse said the same thing. The worst feature about the picture is that it has been retouched to show the rope behind the girl instead of in front of her. It would probably be six inches one way or the other. That certainly is poor journalism; but if one reads the whole article—

Mr Blaikie: What do you believe the story and the picture sought to portray to the public?

Mr DAVIES: They portrayed to the public that there was radiation from tailings in the school playground, that an area had to be roped off, and that therefore it was dangerous. It does not say that children were playing in the area. To the contrary, it said the area was roped off. Nowhere in that story did it say that children were playing in the area. It said that children were forbidden to use the radioactive areas of the school ground. It said that two areas of the playground were roped off by the headmaster. It quoted the dimensions of those areas. Then it said—

The headmaster—who requested his name not be published—said he did not know when the material would be taken away or who would do it. .

The banning of children from certain school areas conflicts with repeated PHD assurances that the radiation levels in the town pose no risk.

That was the story. Do the radiation levels pose any risk, or do they not? No-one can tell us.

With the best of intent, the Minister has made widespread inquiries, and he is continuing to make inquiries; but he cannot tell us the result, and he is unlikely to for a long time. No-one knows whether or not there is a risk. All we are saying is that some action should be taken to allay fears, and the best way that action can be taken is along the lines suggested.

We must be fair to the *Daily News*. I have had plenty of reason to be angry about the reporting at times—we all have—but the paper does not say that the children were playing in forbidden areas. It showed a photograph of a girl retrieving a ball from six inches inside what is supposed to be a forbidden area. I am sure that people have misread the article. Obviously the Leader of the National Country Party misunderstood it.

Mr Old: I did not say what you said. I said that there were—

Mr DAVIES: Here we go—I said, you said, they said, we said!

Mr Old: You check *Hansard*.

Mr DAVIES: I was going to ask the Minister to do that.

Mr Old: You check *Hansard*. You should speak the truth occasionally.

Mr Evans: Steady on!

Mr Old: I said that the photograph—

Mr DAVIES: I will forgive the Minister for that insult.

Mr Old: You said that I said that the children were inside a roped-off area retrieving a ball, which I did not say at all. Get your facts right for a start.

Mr DAVIES: Does the House remember my repeating it and asking the Minister to confirm it?

Mr Old: You did not ask me anything at all. Why listen to you? You are a great twister.

Mr DAVIES: I am terribly sorry, but, in fact, I gave the Minister the opportunity on two occasions. It is unfortunate that the Minister did not listen closely, or he did not read the article correctly. We shall read *Hansard*, because I was quite deliberate in what I said.

Mr Old: That is nothing unusual for you.

Mr DAVIES: We shall see exactly what I said, and what I was able to have the Minister confirm. We know what the result will be, because I was choosing my words very carefully. It is not up to me—

Mr Old: It was a very misleading photograph. I am happy to go on record as saying that.

Mr DAVIES: I never said it was not a misleading photograph.

Mr Old: But you are trying to whitewash it.

Mr DAVIES: I said the worst feature was that the photograph had been retouched, and that the rope was shown in the wrong position.

Mr Old: In other words, it was not an accurate photograph.

Mr DAVIES: No-one has denied that. No-one has said it is an accurate photograph. Members have been saying that the *Daily News* said or implied that children were playing in the roped-off area.

That is not mentioned in the story; it is not mentioned in the caption beneath the photograph, but it suits the purpose of the Government and the Minister to say that. As I say, it is unfortunate and wrong for the *Daily News* to have drawn in the rope as it did, but if we read the story properly we will see it does not say the young girl was in any danger. Indeed, the headmaster of the school is to be applauded for roping off sufficient areas to keep the children back from any likely hazard.

Mr Blaikie: Which he did in consultation with the shire and the Public Health Department. Do you realise that the *Daily News* had a photographer at the school for two or three hours? He took in excess of 20 photographs and that was the best they could find to publish. That is not fair photography or fair reporting.

Mr DAVIES: I know nothing of that and I will take the member's word that did happen. The paper may have been trying to sensationalise the matter; but the fact remains that if the photographer sat there for several hours taking 20 or more photographs and this was the best of them, it shows the position was properly policed and that the children understood what the danger was. A girl retrieving a ball from six inches inside the roped-off area does not constitute a hazard likely to cause danger to her. The fact is that if positive action is taken along the lines suggested by the Opposition we might get close to the truth. This problem involves areas of extreme concern and already the Government has made one serious blunder.

I suppose any Government over the last 20 years must take some of the blame for the situation at Wittenoom Gorge. For years everyone thought it was an exotic spot, and the scenery still ensures that it is. However, a danger was brought about because of the fibres from the blue asbestos and after 20 years or so we find mesothelioma becoming increasingly noticed in the community. Many people who worked at Wittenoom Gorge

now suffer from this incurable disease which after diagnosis limits their life to something like six months.

It is a matter of great regret that people did go to the area. In those days they went there to make what they thought was big money working in the asbestos mines with the idea of bringing home their fortunes, but, unfortunately, many have caught a disease which we did not know about at the time. Had we known the disease would hit these people, I am sure positive action would have been taken to prevent it. Indeed, to the Government's credit, but also to the displeasure of some of the people now at Wittenoom, the Government has decided that the town should cease to exist where it is and should be moved elsewhere. So the Government has taken some positive action because of a danger it knows exists or imagines exists. Not every person who worked there has contracted the disease, but far too many have or are likely to in the future. In this instance the Government recognised a danger and took action. I know some of the residents of the town want to remain there despite the danger that exists. The Government is prepared to let them remain there for the present although it will not continue to provide utility services for much longer.

However, in another situation where a danger is thought to exist and where specific evidence is known to exist suggesting there is a danger, and this is at Capel, the Government will not take every positive and practical step necessary to eliminate that danger or to remove the people from the danger. Why will the Government not take this action? I am quite certain that if the Government found a health hazard did exist, the people of Capel would be only too glad to move. At least they would be informed of the situation and if they did not move on it would be to their own disadvantage and their own responsibility.

Do we know all we need to know about radiation? Of course not. *The West Australian* of 7 August contained an article which indicated that an American Federal judge had reversed his own 27-year-old decision involving radiation following an atomic test. Judge Sherman Christensen overturned his own decision reached at the time which he had made following evidence presented by the Government of the day suggesting the fallout following the atomic explosions at Utah in the 1950s had not been a danger to animals or people. Since then we have found radiation is no respecter of persons and a number of people have died. The judge listed among the deaths the names of people who were involved in the production of the film *The*

Conqueror. Among the cast and crew involved was John Wayne and out of the 150 people involved, 91 later developed cancer and, of those, 46 died from the cancer. Their deaths were attributable to radiation following fallout from the atomic tests in Utah in the 1950s. All this occurred after a Federal judge had said that Government evidence indicated there was no danger to people or animals from radiation following atomic fallout. That judge, 27 years later, has overturned his own decision. Members can imagine the significance of this should it be found that in fact a danger from that fallout had existed to people and animals. Members can imagine the number of claims that will be made on the United States Government if those 91 cases of cancer can be traced to those atomic tests. In 1954 people did not know whether the radiation was dangerous, but it seems that is not the case 27 years later; therefore the same position exists at Capel today.

We do not have sufficient evidence to make a value judgment on whether a danger exists to the people at Capel, but if a mistake was made in the past, it can be made again. The Government might say that if we appoint a judicial inquiry the judges could make mistakes, but in the light of evidence now available and the different attitudes towards radiation, there is reason to suppose that the expert evidence which would be presented to such a judicial inquiry would lead to the same conclusion about the mineral sands industry as was reached about the radiation in Utah.

We have moved this motion in the hope the Government recognises that something positive needs to be done; something more than the Government is doing now. We do not decry what the Government is doing, but we believe it could be more positive and more prompt in taking action. Every person with a genuine concern for the health and welfare of our community should support our motion. Further, and as I said at the beginning of my remarks, it is a matter of regret that the *Daily News* story was not read properly and not referred to properly during debate in this House.

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Resources Development) [7.55 p.m.]: I will not delay the House for long, but there are one or two facts to which I want to refer. This has been an extraordinary debate. The Leader of the Opposition has indicated he is wanting to lay the matter to rest, but even the introduction of the motion has exacerbated a matter that need not be taking up the time of the Parliament. What we have been discussing *ad nauseam* is a lot of

information in the *Daily News*, and I do not know why we are discussing that paper.

Mr Pearce: Because the Minister for Health spent so long discussing it. It is the only thing he knows about Capel.

Mr P. V. JONES: The Opposition has been at great pains to divorce itself from the attitude of the *Daily News* and to indicate that this is a matter about which it has no criticism of the mineral sands companies. The member for Yilgarn-Dundas went to great pains to say that the mineral sands industry is an old-established one that needs the protection of the Government and is one which should be encouraged. I believe I am right in saying that he was not critical of the industry.

Mr Pearce: That is right.

Mr P. V. JONES: What are we talking about? Why are we wasting the time of the Parliament in view of the answers to questions and other comments made? The Leader of the Opposition commented on the attitude of the *Daily News* towards the Minister for Health and me. In no way am I speaking for the Minister for Health; he has done that adequately already. I have no argument with the *Daily News* whatsoever. The fact that it has chosen to group me with the Minister for Health in an editorial which talked about the abuse I have supposedly heaped upon the paper is of no concern to me. I am not going to break into a sweat about a story in the *Daily News*, because most of it is rubbish.

Mr Sibson: Hear, hear!

Mr P. V. JONES: The Opposition has introduced this motion for a very simple reason; that is, the Opposition is in something of a bind. It is caught between the pressures being exerted by the unions involved with the shipping of monazite through Fremantle and the attitude of the TLC on radioactivity. I do not question the need for concern about radioactivity even though most questions about it, if not all, have been answered.

Mr Grill: You are wrong there.

Mr P. V. JONES: Are the unions not concerned about the shipping of monazite?

Mr Grill: Perhaps, but they have not spoken to me.

Mr P. V. JONES: The Opposition also is in difficulties with the Capel question because we are very well aware of the concern which the Shire of Capel has expressed about the attitude of the Opposition.

Mr Brian Burke: Where was that attitude expressed?

Mr P. V. JONES: Is the Leader of the Opposition suggesting that the Shire of Capel is not concerned at the way his party has stirred up the mineral sands industry?

Mr Brian Burke: They told us they were not concerned; but you tell us where they were. You made a statement; you said they were concerned. You are so fond of making statements without justifying them.

Mr P. V. JONES: Is the member saying that the Shire of Capel is not concerned at the threat to the future of the mineral sands industry due to the publicity caused by the promotion of this question of radiation at Capel? Is he suggesting that the shire is not concerned for the future of the industry and employment in the area?

Mr Brian Burke: Of course it is concerned. You should have left the Opposition out that time. Don't you understand?

Mr P. V. JONES: Is the Leader of the Opposition telling me that the Shire of Capel is not concerned at the way the Opposition has promoted the threat to the future of the mineral sands?

Mr Brian Burke: I spent two hours with them and they expressed no concern. I am happy for you to tell me how you know they are concerned. You cannot answer a straight question.

Mr P. V. JONES: The shire has expressed concern.

Mr Brian Burke: About the industry, but not about the Opposition's position. Where is your source?

Mr P. V. JONES: I wanted to make a comment related to the actual content—

Several members interjected.

Mr Brian Burke: The Minister for "Evasion", the *Daily News* has called you.

Mr Tonkin: Living up to your name.

Mr P. V. JONES: —of the very first of the articles concerning this latest saga. One newspaper heading stated "Western Australia is in a back door nuclear deal" and the by-line stated that Western Australia is selling nuclear fuel to Europe and America through the back door and how the *Daily News* investigator in Europe and Australia uncovered the story about the nuclear fuel, about which the public had not been told. There were various statements of this sort. The article said—

The fuel is thorium 232, which has been used in European nuclear power for more than 10 years.

The article goes on in the same vein to say what might have been and what could have been done if such and such occurred. It makes a specific inference regarding the Rhone Poulenc plant. I wish to place on record that the company mentioned has denied the inference that is contained in the article. I will quote from a communication received from that company, but firstly, I must ask members to bear in mind that we do not export thorium. The communication stated—

The sales of thorium compound are very strictly controlled by the French Government and the EEC.

We do not sell thorium for nuclear application either for industry or weapon use. The only exception is a spot sale of a very small quantity of thorium oxide for the Fort Saint Vrain reactor in Colorado (USA) last year.

The communication continued to state—

As we told you, the sales are strictly controlled. For any shipment whatever the quantity (even 100 g) we must get an export licence from the French authorities. Six different ministries must give their approval (defense, Foreign, finances, energy, etc. . .).

Should one of them give a negative answer, we cannot get the export licence. Before giving its final approval, the French Government refers to the Euratom.

Every kilo of thorium which is sold is controlled and files are kept by the French Administration.

There is absolutely no nuclear plant in France using thorium. As you know, thorium can be used in the HTGR plant (high temperature gas reactor). As far as we know, there are only two small pilot plants of 330 megawatt in the world. One is the Fort Saint Vrain Colorado plant the other is the Hamm (Germany) plant.

I repeat we are talking of a pilot plant for experimental or research purposes, in keeping with the answer I gave in the Parliament about these sales and the so-called thorium fuel cycle. Indeed, I have referred to Hamm and the subsequent story in the same newspaper about living in the nuclear shadow in Hamm, in the Ruhr district in Germany, where a reactor was being constructed, and so on. The quite deceitful and misleading inference has been refuted by the company named.

I would like to make it clear that the inference in these sources was refuted as misleading rubbish

by the company and the Federal and State Governments at that time. There is nothing new in those statements: we have been exporting monazite for a long time and the export is strictly controlled.

It has been suggested that I evaded a direct question about the State's attitude by saying it was a Commonwealth matter.

The administration of nuclear safeguards and the export of radioactive material is approached rigorously by the Federal Government and in addition to that, the State has an involvement, although it is not a statutory one. We are not involved in the granting of an export licence, but we are involved because we are fully aware and work in liaison with the Commonwealth on this matter. We are fully aware of the procedures which are the key parts of the administration.

As I indicated by way of answer to a question, the administration of the various monitoring procedures is completely in place. Reference has been made to the source, by way of a question to me, and to the uses of the material in the United States, and again the same source has been very willing to make available a communique which states—

Absolutely no Thorium cake from this source has been sold or moved for any use in civil or military nuclear applications.

Let me give a further example of the twisting and misleading that can occur. Today the member for Melville asked a question regarding a report of the national energy advisory council which states that a commercial nuclear reactor, using three tonnes of thorium fuel per annum is in operation in Fort Saint Vrain in Colorado in the United States. As I have indicated, not only is that correct, but the question implies that a report of the national energy advisory council in Australia contains a clear commitment that thorium is being used for that purpose.

I am advised that a general reference is shown in the report, but it should be noted that it refers to a uranium-thorium combination. To quote from the report—

Thorium cannot be used directly as a nuclear fuel but is transmuted into uranium-233, a fissile material with characteristics similar to uranium-235. Increased demand could result if thorium is extensively used as an alternative fertile material (instead of U238) in certain types of thermal nuclear reactors.

To continue—

The only commercial HTGR using a uranium-thorium fuel cycle commenced operation in late 1976 at Fort Vrain, Colorado, USA. This reactor has a design capacity of 330 MW(e) and reloads will require 3 tonnes of thorium.

It refers clearly to fuel not being used; it is not used as was inferred in the question. It is used for experimental purposes, but then only in conjunction with and as part of a uranium cycle.

It is no good referring this to anyone—as the motion suggests we should do—because as the Minister for Health said, it has been done and it is being done all the time. The International Commission on Radiological Protection is the recognised international expert body and the codes and regulations in Australia are based on its recommendations.

The questioning of that body recently has been severe. It has been questioned by those in academic and scientific circles, not because it is too lax and not because it has not been monitoring or watching what has occurred, but the reverse: It has been criticised because the standards which it seeks are up to 10 or more times too high. Various people have said much about this matter and if members wish to know their names I have a list available for perusal.

The conflict addressed by this motion is not so much what the Government should be doing or what this House should be doing by referring the matter to various experts, but whether the standards on Australian safeguards are too high, as is the view of some people, or whether the standards are correct, which is the view of the Federal Government. In other words, we support the high level of standards, protection, and monitoring, and not a lesser standard, as many are seeking to have implemented.

The member for Yilgarn-Dundas would be aware also that matters being reviewed currently within the State with regard to nuclear codes and radiological safety regulations relate to this industry—the mineral sands industry.

I am advised other related matters have been drafted or are almost completed and will be considered by industry and all parties before being presented to this House for gazettal.

I do not think the time of this House need be spent in more review of these questions. We have an adequate system. It is a system that has been questioned as being too tough by the international authorities who are monitoring the situation, but that is no excuse, from our point of view, to make it any easier.

As to the question of the *Daily News*, that newspaper can fight for itself without any help from me.

By inference, suggestion, and some element of fact, an extraordinary and rather flamboyant picture has been painted which is not the truth of the situation and this has been denied by the companies about whom these allegations have been made. The fact that this is now a matter for investigation by the Press Council prevents too much consideration of the motives of the *Daily News* by this Parliament.

Suffice it to say that the motion should be rejected. There is no need for the Opposition to waste the time of the House by presenting a motion such as this and one must question why it is seeking to introduce such a measure.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [8.15 p.m.]: The motion deals with radioactivity, which is a subject to which members of the public are particularly sensitive. Members who have spoken in the debate not only have dealt with radioactivity, but also have referred to the accuracy of Western Australia's print media, or part of it—that is, the *Daily News*—and the role of parliamentarians in this State. The Leader of the Opposition in particular referred to these matters. Both of these subsidiary topics are very important to me, and they should be quite important to this House.

The quality of the Press in Western Australia is of extreme importance. We expect to be reported accurately, and we want to have someone in the media whom we can trust. The public would expect to have members of Parliament whom they can trust. These two topics are as important as the motion before the Chair.

Mr Sibson: Do you think members have degenerated beyond public trust?

Mr COWAN: Possibly the member for Bunbury is quite right. When the Leader of the Opposition spoke to the motion he claimed he was not looking for any political kudos and was prepared to accept amendments. The National Party tried to move an amendment because we believe sincerely that we are responsible for the image we create. Therefore, we are required to do something about the very poor image that we have. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that members of Parliament are not one of the more favoured species in the State. We should be the first people to do something about it. That is why we moved for a Select Committee of this House to be set up. I am inclined to agree with the Leader of the Opposition that if the integrity of parliamentarians is questioned because of the activities at Capel we should take an interest in

our public prestige. The amendment moved by my colleague, the member for Stirling, was denied by Parliament so now we must return to the motion.

The motion deals with levels of radioactivity, but it is important that we take some notice of the other subjects that were raised—the quality of reporting in Western Australia and the public acceptance of politicians. While we are happy to achieve the secondary aim of our amendment—to have the Government voting with the Labor Party—we would have preferred our amendment to be accepted because we believe that parliamentarians should be responsible for ensuring that their image improves in the eyes of the public.

I am disappointed that the Minister for Health in his speech—and I think some of the replies he gave were quite good and valid—did not agree to allow the matter to go to a Select Committee for consideration. The Opposition should have borne in mind that the Minister stated quite clearly that the Government was going to reject the Opposition's motion. One would have presumed that the back-bench members of the party supporting the Government once again would demonstrate their blind loyalty, and the Leader of the Opposition should have recognised that his motion would be defeated. We gave him an alternative, but he rejected it as did the Government.

We believe that the question of radioactivity levels is important and should not be left to a debate between the *Daily News* and a spokesman for the Government—the Minister for Health. Why cannot this Parliament become involved? There is no reason that it should not, other than that there are too many members on this side afraid to say that it should.

Mr Nanovich: That is not true, and you know it.

Mr Sibson: It is a non-issue.

Mr COWAN: I suggest to the member for Bunbury that radioactivity levels in the sand mining industry in the south-west is not a non-issue. The prestige of parliamentarians is very much an issue, as is the quality of reporting in Western Australia. There are three issues and I do not think the member for Bunbury would deny that any of them is worthy of consideration by Parliament.

We hoped the Opposition would accept our amendment. We believed radioactivity levels deserve further public scrutiny.

Mr Sibson: They are getting it.

Mr COWAN: Why can they not receive it through the medium outlined by the Leader of the Opposition? Why does it have to be done by members on this side of the House? I have been in this House nine years, which is not long, and, on many occasions, I have heard members tell the Government that it is wrong and the Government has then denied that fact. Yet within 12 to 18 months the Government has had to introduce amending legislation or admit it was wrong.

Mr Sibson: It is fully accepted that there is radioactivity.

Mr COWAN: It should be debated publicly. There is nothing wrong with the suggestion we put forward, or that put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. We said that because the Opposition has introduced the matter of the prestige of parliamentarians we should do something about it rather than give it to a judicial inquiry.

Mr Sibson: The most important thing to do is to clean up the radiation. The prestige of politicians will not help that. You do not understand that point.

Mr COWAN: Members of Parliament showing an active interest in the cleaning up of this particular problem—

Mr Sibson: If members want to do something useful they should get a truck and go to Capel and help shift the tailings. They should not just stand here talking.

Mr COWAN: I am not suggesting we do nothing. The member for Bunbury is suggesting that we leave this in the hands of the bureaucracy and that we do nothing. The member for Stirling suggested that as parliamentarians we should take an active interest. That was rejected by the House.

Mr Sibson: The Leader of the Opposition went down and had a look.

Mr COWAN: The Leader of the Opposition has suggested that we have a judicial inquiry.

Mr Sibson interjected.

Mr COWAN: I do not accept that is doing nothing. The member for Bunbury is saying we should leave the matter in the hands of the Minister for Health and the Minister for Resources Development, and he as a back-bench member of Parliament will do nothing.

Mr Sibson: If you want to help you should get some trucks and shift the tailings.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Watt): Order! I remind the member for Bunbury that the member for Merredin has the call. If the member for Bunbury wishes to engage in meaningful

interjections he should turn this way so that *Hansard* can record the conversation and it will have some meaning.

Mr COWAN: I assure you, Mr Acting Speaker, that it is not worth while *Hansard's* recording some of the comments of the member for Bunbury. To return to my speech, it is a question of how one defines the term "doing nothing". I suggest the member for Bunbury, by his tacit support for the Government's rejection of our amendment, and I presume also of the motion put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, is saying that he is prepared to do nothing. Radioactivity levels are a matter of public interest, and they will be debated publicly for a long time. The greater the contribution we can make to that debate, the greater will be our image in the eyes of the public. We will be seen as members of Parliament who take our responsibilities seriously. Despite the fact that our amendment was rejected, we support the motion.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [8.27 p.m.]: The Opposition is disappointed at the Government's decision not to support the motion we moved. I can understand and appreciate the contribution made by the Minister for Health. He spoke sensibly and represented his point of view faithfully in an honest and forthright manner. The member for Vasse represented a point of view which I do not accept but I respect it. The same is true of the member for Stirling and the member for Merredin in putting forward their amendment seeking that the matter be referred to a Select Committee. I disagreed with that proposal but I understand the contribution they made. Members of the Opposition who spoke put their points of view precisely and without any great rancour or a want to create controversy or division. However, I cannot understand the Minister for Fuel and Energy at all.

He has been called the Minister for "Evasion" by the *Daily News*. I am not one to endorse anything the *Daily News* has reported, but it seems to me that no more apt a title has been attached to anyone in this place. I am sorry the Minister is not present, but I will not be deterred because his entry into the debate showed clearly that he is incapable of answering directly any question put to him.

Mr Grill: It was the performance of a charlatan.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Minister said that the local authority at Capel had expressed alarm at the way in which the Opposition has provoked the controversy concerning Capel mineral sands. I

asked him when the local authority expressed that alarm. The Minister said, "I will ask you a question. Aren't you aware that the local authority is concerned at the effect of the controversy on the future of the industry."

I said to the Minister, "But you have left out the fact, as you previously stated, that it was the Opposition with whom the local authority was alarmed," and the Minister moved on to another point. If that is not evading the question, I would like to know what is. If any member in this place can quote for me any concern expressed by anyone associated with the mineral sands industry, anyone associated with the local authority in Capel, or any other party involved or not involved in this dispute, about the role of the Opposition, I will pause to let that member speak. The silence is deafening, Mr Speaker, because it is true, and even the Minister for Health endorsed the fact that the Opposition has made no statement that would provoke or in any way cause concern about what was happening at Capel. Rather, the reverse is the truth.

For the Minister for Fuel and Energy to treat this Parliament in such a dishonest fashion as he did this night is reminiscent of the worst abuses of the Standing Orders and dignity of this place that I have ever witnessed. The Minister for Fuel and Energy and the truth are strangers, and that point needs to be made and hammered home time and time again. To have that Minister stand at the conclusion of a debate that had been as sensible and rational as had this debate tonight is absolutely appalling. For the Minister to make a statement that the local authority was alarmed at the way in which the Opposition had provoked this controversy, then to say, when challenged, that he did not have the cutting on which he based his claim, and when further challenged to say that the Opposition was not involved in the process by which the local authority became concerned, is the hallmark of a man who cannot tell the truth.

The SPEAKER: Order! In my view the Leader of the Opposition has twice now used an expression which I believe to be unparliamentary, and I ask him to desist from implying that the Minister to whom he refers or any other member of this House is a liar. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Mr Speaker, perhaps you can enlighten us as to what we can say when presented with an example as barefaced as that.

Mr MacKinnon: A barefaced liar!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I heard the Minister then say "barefaced liar" so he is not too far off the mark from what the Opposition is saying.

Mr MacKinnon: I was not talking about the Minister.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not know about whom the Minister could be speaking, but perhaps he would like to defend the performance of the Minister for Fuel and Energy.

Mr MacKinnon: I was not here.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If the Minister was not here during the debate, he should not be entering into this part of the reply.

The Opposition is presented squarely with a problem. It is typical of this Minister—he made a statement, and when challenged he amended the statement, and when challenged again he discarded the statement. The proof of that fact is in the verbatim report of the Minister's answers to questions in an interview with Channel 9 which was reprinted in the *Daily News*. When reading the transcript, one sees that the Minister did not even finish his sentences. Tonight we had another example of his evasions. At the conclusion of a debate to which no-one could take exception, a debate which had been well managed, moderately conducted, and in which the subject discussed intelligently—

Mr Harman: Where is the Minister now?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Minister for Health did well. He stated his position, and although it is a position with which I disagree, one could not complain about it. The same could be said of the speeches of the member for Vasse and the members of the National Party. Then the Minister for Fuel and Energy had to stand, as he does time and time again, and attempt, knowingly or unknowingly—the former, I suspect—to mislead the House. It is absolutely disgraceful, and I tell you now, Mr Speaker, that the Opposition is not about to allow the Minister to persist in this way. We should have known from his history, from the way in which he knifed his former leaders in the back—

Mr O'Connor: All you are doing is personally attacking an individual.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier was not in the Chamber, either.

Mr O'Connor: That is all you are doing.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier can talk, but he was not here, either.

Mr O'Connor: I happened to be here when the Minister spoke.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier was not here when the Minister was talking about the way in which he said the Opposition had provoked the controversy.

Mr MacKinnon: You are the first one to squirm—

Mr O'Connor: I am talking about your personal attack.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Why does not the Premier, if he were here as he claims, take exception to the personal attack by the Minister for Fuel and Energy, a personal attack which bore no resemblance to the facts of the matter? What is good enough for one is good enough for the other, whether Government or Opposition.

Mr MacKinnon: Hear, hear!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We have had enough of this Minister carrying on in this way. While we say to other members of the Government who contributed, "We can accept your point of view as being yours and we cannot take exception to it," we will not brook the way in which this Minister stands and twists reality. Clearly tonight he has demonstrated the capacity he has for doing so. I support the motion.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 18

Mr Barnett	Mr Grill
Mr Bridge	Mr Harman
Mr Bryce	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Jamieson
Mr Terry Burke	Mr McIver
Mr Carr	Mr Parker
Mr Cowan	Mr Stephens
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr Evans	Mr I. F. Taylor

(Teller)

Noes 22

Mr Blaikie	Mr McPharlin
Mr Court	Mr O'Connor
Mr Coyne	Mr Old
Mrs Craig	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grewar	Mr Trethowan
Mr Hassell	Mr Tubby
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Watt
Mr Laurance	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Nanovich

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr A. D. Taylor	Mr Shalders
Mr Bateman	Mr Clarke
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Young
Mr Bertram	Mr Herzfeld
Mr Hodge	Dr Dadour
Mr Wilson	Mr Mensaros
Mr Pearce	Mr Sodeman

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

Joint State-Federal: Motion

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balcatta—Leader of the Opposition) [8.40 p.m.]: I move—

- (1) That this House express its alarm at the fact that the apparatus available to the State to conduct elections and ensure that the democratic will prevails is in shambles and has been deliberately undermined by the current Government.
- (2) That having regard to the fact that the Liberal Party cannot be trusted on electoral matters this House calls for the implementation of—
 - (a) a return to common enrolment provisions to enable a move to joint State/Commonwealth rolls with suitable input and surveillance by the State Government;
 - (b) provision of additional staff to the State Electoral Department to enable that department to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

There is substantial reason to believe that the results of elections in Western Australia are other than the proper expression of the democratic will of the majority in this State. The Opposition intends tonight, as dispassionately as possible, to demonstrate that fact to the Parliament.

During the past six years of Liberal Party Government in this State we have seen the rigging of electoral boundaries and the malapportionment of voters. We have seen the introduction of amendments to the State Electoral Act designed to make it more difficult for people to register and, therefore, to qualify as voters. We have seen the understaffing and the underequipping of the State Electoral Department so that effective administration has been made almost impossible, and the development of a fair and just electoral system in WA very difficult to attain.

We have seen a Government which has failed to implement measures or to pursue policies aimed at full enrolment.

Let me address myself briefly to the first point; that is, to the rigging of boundaries and the malapportionment in the State. To demonstrate the fact conclusively it is necessary to look only at the number of voters responsible for electing members to this place and to the other place. Sixty-five per cent of the State electors are assigned to the metropolitan area; and 35 per cent are assigned to the statutory seats in the north

and to the agricultural division. The 65 per cent of electors assigned to the metropolitan area elect 52.6 per cent of the members of the Legislative Assembly. So that 65 per cent send just over half of the members of the Legislative Assembly to this place. Sixty-five per cent in the metropolitan area also elect 36.8 per cent of the members of the Legislative Council. So there is the first problem which needs explaining. Why should the difference in those proportions be so marked? What is the justification? What is the explanation? Why is that not a case of electoral boundary rigging and malapportionment?

Of the State's electors, 31.5 per cent send 47.4 per cent of the members of the Legislative Assembly to this place, and the same 31.5 per cent elect 63.2 per cent of the members of the Legislative Council. Clearly it is an unfair situation. It is something we should not tolerate, and it is something about which none of us could boast. On average a vote in the agricultural, mining, and pastoral area has almost twice the value—in terms of members elected—of a vote in the metropolitan area.

To put it exactly, the quota of electors for a metropolitan area seat is 16 224, while the quota for electors in a seat in the agricultural, mining, and pastoral areas is 8 583; that is, under the Electoral Act almost twice the value of a metropolitan vote is accorded to residents in the agricultural, mining, and pastoral area.

The extremes are quite impossible to contend with. The smallest electoral district, Murchison-Eyre, has 1 932 electors; the biggest, Melville, has 17 117. In the Legislative Council the smallest province has 5 694 electors, and the biggest province has 83 667. I ask members: Where is the justice, equity, and fairness in a system that boasts extremes of that nature?

A vote in Murchison-Eyre has nine times the value of a vote in Melville and a vote in Lower North Province has almost 15 times the value of a vote in Metropolitan Province. The extremes in those absolute numbers translate themselves, in the Legislative Assembly, to a weighting of 9:1 and, in the Legislative Council, to a weighting of 15:1. I ask members: Where is the fairness?

I have yet to see the time come when any member on the Government side of this Chamber is prepared to put forward an argument that justifies or even seeks to justify a weighting of 9:1 when one compares Murchison-Eyre and Melville, or a weighting of 15:1 when one compares Lower North and Metropolitan Provinces.

Mr Pearce: They are not justifying it now. They are pretty quiet, all things considered.

Mr O'Connor: Well, you are supposed to be, too.

Mr Pearce: Right between the eyes that time!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The practical application of that warped sense of electoral thinking was seen in the Pilbara when the changes were made recently to that seat and the Minister responsible for the legislation stood in the Parliament and said, "We admit there is no community of interest." Across 1 000 kilometres of desert we saw like and unlike grouped together, with inland mining towns in the Pilbara being grouped with traditional Kimberley centres.

The Minister admitted there was no community of interest; in fact, he admitted its absence. However, the one thing he could not deny was the presumed weighting, in political terms, of the result; a weighting he saw very clearly in the Government's favour, because in fact, on the latest election figures that decision to gerrymander the electorate of Pilbara increased of the Government's margin on the 1980 election figures, from 1.7 per cent—which was the margin by which it might have expected to win had the old boundaries been retained and had the voters of Pilbara repeated the choice they made at the election—to 5.7 per cent. That was the political implication of the practical application of that sort of twist of logic.

I am pleased to be able to report to you, Sir, that, notwithstanding that practical application, there was a swing of more than 17 per cent to the Labor Party in the seat of Pilbara at the recent by-election.

Mr Stephens: Was that on the old boundaries or the new boundaries which will come into effect at the next election?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The swing of 17 per cent to the Labor Party was on the old boundaries of the Pilbara seat; on the new boundaries the Labor Party's vote in the Pilbara was 63 per cent, which showed it had a margin of almost 2 000 votes.

The point I make, for the enlightenment of Government members for whom the penny has not yet dropped, is that one of the major reasons for that was the way in which this Government has set about changing the boundaries.

Mr O'Connor: Why was the Kimberley vote not down like that?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: In Kimberley the swing to the Labor Party was 5.5 per cent in a situation where only slightly in excess of 60 per cent of the people voted and where Kimberley had been comfortably won for the Labor Party at the last State election.

Mr Pearce: It was a big swing.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I would not expect that, on top of the big swing recorded by the Labor candidate at the last election when he won the seat, we would amass another swing of the size of that recorded in Pilbara.

But I repeat the point—and this Government would do well to learn the lesson—that one of the main reasons that the people of the Pilbara turned to the Labor Party—for example, in Karratha where we have never previously won a box and where, on this occasion, we won both boxes—was simply that they would not tolerate the way in which electoral boundaries had been interfered with.

The people would not tolerate the Government's decision to close the electoral rolls when about 1 000 people, whose completed cards were simply awaiting registration, could not be entered onto the roll in order to vote. That is the truth. I do not know whether the Minister for Police and Traffic understands that one of the main reasons the people in that area voted so resoundingly for the Labor Party was that they resented the way in which this Government had gerrymandered the seat of Pilbara.

Mr Pearce: They also resented the Government.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: One of the other points I made in the motion and on which I shall expand briefly is the understaffing and underequipping of the State Electoral Department.

Under the present Government, the State Electoral Department has been rendered almost incapable of discharging its responsibilities. To give members an example of the dissipation of the department, it is interesting to note that, in 1971, the Electoral Department had a total staff of 26 to service a recorded electoral population of 537 122. In the 10 years to June 1981, the staff of the department increased by just four and the number of enrolled people over whom it had responsibility jumped by 170 000. Therefore, members can see that, for an increase of four people in the State Electoral Department's complement of staff, there was an increase of 170 000—or 32.3 per cent—in the total enrolled electoral population.

As far as the Opposition is concerned, that is a symptom of the dissipation of the Electoral Department at the deliberate design of this Government which does not want people to get on the roll. This Government is content to exclude as many people as can reasonably be excluded from the voting lists.

During the period that I quoted—from 1971 to 1981—and particularly over the last two years, the Government repeatedly has denied

submissions from the Electoral Department seeking additional staff. Also, we have seen severe backlogs and delays in the processing of electoral claims. There is no doubt about that; it has been acceded to by the Electoral Department and, I suspect the Minister, from time to time.

As well as the severe backlogs and delays as admitted by the Government, we have seen that regional enrolment services and electoral education programmes have become quite impossible, especially in isolated areas with a high population turnover. The systems research and electoral analysis that is properly the function of the Electoral Department is non-existent and impossible. Section 39 of the Act, which provides for the preparation of quarterly rolls by means of a census conducted under the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer, effectively is inoperative. It is almost impossible of operation because of the way in which the Electoral Department has been left way behind in the provision of adequate and appropriate staff.

Members know from their own experience in the past few weeks the way in which the situation has degenerated. We still cannot get new rolls. They are still not available, yet the redistribution was carried out months ago. Inquiries of the Electoral Department are met with gasps as it is explained that the department is still doing the street directory.

If members want to look at another facet of the sort of work the State Electoral Department might be doing were it able to be sincerely responsible for discharging its obligations, members can consider door-to-door monitoring of electoral enrolments. The Commonwealth does it. I do not think the State has done it—certainly not in my experience—during the past eight or nine years. If the Commonwealth does it, why cannot the State do it in co-operation with the Commonwealth? Why cannot the Commonwealth officers be asked to check State enrolments at the same time?

Mr Davies: There is no shortage of canvassers.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The objective of full enrolment effectively has been abandoned under this Government and its abandonment has been reflected in the discrepancies between relevant statistics showing census counts, Commonwealth enrolments, and State Electoral Department enrolments.

Briefly put, at 30 June 1981 the census count showed there were 873 816 people at the age of 18 or over entitled to register. At that time a total of 752 806 people were enrolled on the

Commonwealth electoral roll. As at 29 June 1981, 715 457 people were on the State roll.

Therefore, it can be seen a discrepancy exists between the census figure and the Federal roll, and between the Federal roll and the State roll. There is a total of 37 349 fewer people on the State roll than on the Commonwealth roll, and 158 359 fewer people on the State roll than the total census estimated electoral population of this State.

It can be seen full enrolment has been abandoned. The State Electoral Department has fallen into the state of disrepair to which I alluded and which I demonstrated by reference to those five points, and the Government's policy is clearly one designed to hinder enrolments as far as possible.

The Opposition believes that, unless the Government realises and accepts its policy of deliberately making it difficult for people to enrol together with its policy of gerrymander and malapportionment is a massive disincentive for the electors to vote for the Liberal Party in this State, it will continue to suffer electoral reverses of the sort it experienced in North Province. I do not care how Government members attempt to explain away that result.

It was atypical at this time when the Premier said, "Well, the by-election swing against the Government of about eight or nine per cent"—exaggerating a little—"is not an indication of what will happen at the State election." Even if he is given room to manoeuvre he cannot explain away a swing of about 14 per cent. I am saying to the Premier that he and his Government and his political party have been seen as not being able to be trusted in respect of electoral boundaries. That view reflected itself at the ballot box. Whether or not he accepts that, lack of trust is determinant as to how long he will remain in office.

We on this side of the House seek the reinstatement of a system of election and representation based on fairness, justice, and equity. We say the Government should be about the job of providing sufficient support and facilities to the Electoral Department to make it possible for that department to administer effectively the Act under which it operates. At present that department cannot effectively discharge its responsibilities. We do not blame the Chief Electoral Officer or those people who work in his department, people who work far harder than they should. We say this Government is strangling democracy in this State, and one of the fingers of the hand around the throat of that

democracy is the finger that deprives the Electoral Department of sufficient staff to carry out its responsibilities. The Opposition says, too, that the time is long overdue when the Electoral Act, should have been amended—particularly the enrolment procedures, so that the rolls in this State synchronise with those of the Commonwealth in order that co-ordination is possible in the first instance, and a combined Commonwealth-State roll is possible in the second.

At a time of financial stringency it makes good budgetary sense to talk about saving hundreds of thousands of dollars by embarking upon a combined Commonwealth-State roll. There is no question of abdicating our State responsibilities. It is possible in the face of a combined roll to maintain the State Electoral Department in a checking or supervisory role over the electoral rolls; and it is possible to upgrade the facilities available to that department to enable it to indulge in more sophisticated, valuable, and beneficial electoral analyses and research.

What is needed in respect of isolated areas are mobile electoral enrolment and education services run by the State Electoral Department. At least four teams should be provided, perhaps in groups of two or three people responsible in isolated areas for the roles of electoral enrolment and education which the department has a responsibility to fulfil.

We say, too, that the department requires the facilities necessary to allow it to embark on systems research and electoral analyses. Those facilities should be available, but the department does not have facilities to enable it to accept the fundamental responsibilities thrust on its shoulders, let alone to provide the valuable additional services that should be provided by research personnel who should be installed within the department. Sufficient additional staff and facilities are necessary but are not available for it to be able to carry out just what it has been told to do by the Act, let alone to do the additional things which are necessary and legitimate parts of its role.

A special officer should be appointed to liaise with the Commonwealth. If the Government will not accept a joint roll, let us have a liaison officer to take advantage of the work done by the Commonwealth in its enrolling electors. Let us have a liaison officer to save the State money by checking on Commonwealth enrolments not listed on the State roll.

Mr Coyne: There is no great disparity between the Commonwealth roll for Murchison-Eyre and

the State roll for that area. You can't say there is any electoral activity by the Commonwealth in Murchison-Eyre.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not sure whether a disparity exists in respect of Murchison-Eyre but I do know it has a 9:1 imbalance in terms of voting power.

Mr Coyne: That's not the point.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Simply, I do not know whether a disparity exists, but I do know that more than 40 000 more voters are on the Commonwealth rolls for this State than on the State rolls. Perhaps Murchison-Eyre does not suffer a difference, but other electorates do. If a difference exists in other electorates, a necessity exists for the appointment of a liaison officer, a person to check with the Commonwealth in regard to the success of its people who knock on doors to get people on the roll. The State liaison officer simply would repeat the process for the State office. That would not cost much; in fact, it would be likely to save money.

Mr Coyne: In mining communities the turnover of people is almost 100 per cent per annum.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The liaison officer may have difficulty in remote areas, but as the member has said, no difference exists in the remote area he represents. Perhaps the duties I have suggested will have to be carried out in remote areas by the electoral enrolment and education services about which I spoke earlier; they may fill the need in those areas. As I have said, a huge discrepancy exists which should not exist and can be resolved easily—that is all.

I will recap briefly the points I have made. Absolutely no doubt exists that under this Government electoral democracy has been one of the first victims of its eight years in office. The Government has gerrymandered and has malapportioned electorates; it has deliberately deprived the Electoral Department of the staff and facilities necessary for it to carry out its work; it has tampered with enrolments under the Electoral Act making it more difficult for people to enrol; it has abandoned the objective of full enrolment; and it has deliberately refrained from taking basic and simple steps to overcome problems associated with the alarming discrepancy between State and Commonwealth electoral figures.

We have suggested tonight that because of this Government's performance in electoral matters it can expect the electors of this State to begin—indeed, we say they have begun—to express their opinions about the Government's persistence with its electoral policy. We say, too,

that because of the way this Government has throttled the electoral system of this State serious doubt exists as to the outcomes of elections in this State truly reflecting the democratic will of its people.

The by-election in North Province was an example. It attracted 63 per cent of the enrolled electors to vote. That is hardly a satisfactory situation. The day after the by-election even the Chief Electoral Officer expressed some concern about the turnout to vote; however, we have not heard the Government evince any such concern. In fact, rather the opposite has been the case.

I wanted to touch briefly on a point of passing interest. I will try to do so without rancour, but this matter disappointed me in respect of electoral procedures. Although it involves the Premier, I do not think he was treated in regard to this matter as fairly by his members as he might have been. At the time of the debate in this place on the closing of enrolments for the North Province by-election the Opposition pointed out to the Government that if the writ were issued immediately upon the receipt of the resignation of the then member for North Province the electoral rolls could close as early as 8 May, even though the resignation would be effective on 22 May. I do not doubt the Premier's *bona fides* at the time, but he did say as reported at page 990 of *Hansard*, of 22 April this year, that he very much doubted the rolls could close as early as 8 May if the then member for North Province submitted in April a letter effecting his resignation from 22 May. Mr Withers during debate in another place had said it was his intention to submit his resignation effective from that date.

Mr O'Connor: That wasn't the first time.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It was the first time in Parliament; I did not think he was telling lies, I thought he meant it. The Premier said on 22 April, "It is not my intention to hustle this matter along in the quickest possible time." In fact, the rolls closed on 7 May, which I thought was fairly poor form for the Government. I know the Premier was not available; I had heard on the radio at Karratha his saying that he was not here, but presumably someone went ahead to close the rolls.

Mr O'Connor: I think the President of the Legislative Council did that, and he is the one who has the control.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not saying he does not have that control, but the Premier's indication was that it was not the Government's intention to hustle the matter along, and he said he doubted very much whether the rolls would close as early

as 8 May, when in fact they closed before 8 May. It was a fairly poor display by the Government and the President of the Legislative Council. Before the rolls closed I discussed the matter with the President who assured me he would again discuss the matter with me before issuing the writ. I had expressed the same concern to him as I had expressed in the debate in this place. Needless to say the President did not bother to talk to me again before issuing the writ. I said after it had been issued that he should have resigned, and I stick by that statement. He has turned into something of an autocrat.

An Opposition member: In mini-steps.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: He is not the first to stride in mini-steps in the corridors of this place, but certainly he is an autocrat. The Opposition has cause to complain about the way in which the electoral rolls were closed, especially since 800 or so people were not able to be enrolled even though they wanted to be. Admittedly they were late in placing their applications and negligent in doing so, but certainly they had completed their cards and were waiting to be registered. As a result of the 14-day period people required to wait to comply with the Act were ineligible to vote.

The early closing of the rolls was not a fair way of doing things, and was another reason for the Government's polling so badly.

That message was brought home well and truly to the people in the Pilbara and those people who came along on voting day—who filled in the cards—became angry at what had happened; it was sufficient to indicate to me that it was one of the major reasons the Liberal Party did so badly.

I hate to do this to the Premier, but I do not really think I should let the matter rest without referring to a story that appeared in the *Weekend News* I heard the Premier say he was away, and he said again tonight that it was the responsibility of the President of the Legislative Council.

Mr O'Connor: Do you disagree with that?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Do I disagree with the fact that he was away? In the *Weekend News* of 29 May a story was printed and in it the Premier said he had been kept informed of the matter. There has been no retraction of that statement since then and I was amazed to hear him say that he was away at the time.

Mr O'Connor: That is correct.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier should have directed some influence in relation to this election. The Premier indicated to the House—

Mr O'Connor: I will clarify the point. When I was away I was notified that an election had been called on a certain day. I recalled making a statement in the House concerning an election and I immediately telexed my office to check *Hansard* to ensure that nothing was in conflict with what I had said in this House.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I know we are hitting the papers these days—

Mr O'Connor: When I came back the election had been called.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I know we are having a bit of a witch-hunt about the papers these days, but what the Premier is telling us now is not what he told those people. It was quoted in the paper as follows—

Mr O'Connor said this week that when he had been told that the writ was to be issued, he had caused his words in *Hansard* to be checked.

Mr O'Connor: By the time the telex had been received at my office the election had already been called.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Therefore, the Premier had been informed of the election and before his wish that *Hansard* be checked could be fulfilled someone had gone ahead and issued a writ. I hope the Premier has taken some action about that because if he has not it places him in an invidious position.

Mr O'Connor: As you would realise the Premier is not the person who calls a by-election.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier should have remembered that point before he spoke on that debate in this Chamber. The Premier is creating an image of *bonhomie* and he should have considered this matter more carefully. The point he is making is that the telex had not reached his office before the decision to hold an election was made. The Opposition was operating under the assurance that the Premier had previously given—I would take that as an unequivocal assurance.

The Premier went on to say, "Burke is just jumping up and down."

Mr O'Connor: I am saying that it is not the job of the Premier to issue a writ. It is done through the President of the Legislative Council and the Government has little say in it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is not strictly true. It really does not ring true with what happened. The Premier was told that the writ was to be issued. Therefore, it is not as though the President of the Legislative Council went ahead and did something that he was obviously told to do by the Chief Secretary.

Mr O'Connor: I know there were questions asked about the President acting in that way.

Mr Parker: He could have done it in such a way as to conform with the debates in this House.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: What we are getting at is that the Honourable R. G.—Bob—Pike is not to be trusted with his own money.

Mr O'Connor: You are accusing everyone tonight.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Come on! The Premier has said that the President of the Legislative Council went ahead and did it, but then he said that before he went ahead and did it he got in touch with him in Korea.

Mr O'Connor: I did not say that at all.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier said the writ was to be issued by the President.

Mr O'Connor: Not by the President.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: When I refer to the Government I refer to the Premier and the Minister and the President has not operated in a vacuum. Beside the Government Ministers someone has obviously been involved. The Premier took umbrage at my suggestions about the Hon. R. G. Pike. The Premier said that he got in touch with him. I am suggesting that had the Premier been here at the time things would have been different.

The Premier said that he telexed back and said to check the situation first, and before that message got through, the writ had been issued.

Mr O'Connor: It was not the Hon. R. G. Pike who contacted me; it was the Deputy Premier.

Mr Parker: Who told the Deputy Premier?

Mr O'Connor: I am not going through every conversation I have had.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier knows as well as I do that this is how the system works—it is the same as the election date, the Premier announces that. We are not accusing anyone of impropriety in respect of the writ. It has been done fairly and squarely. What has happened is that the assurance made by the Premier has not been kept.

I re-emphasise the point I made earlier. Unless this Government wakes up to the fact that it is starting—if it has not already started—to encourage the wrath of electors generally on the issue of electoral matters, it will be the Government—which will suffer greatly.

The Opposition knows that the Government will not support the motion, but it moves it and

supports it as intelligently as it can. Unless the Government starts to fall into line in matters of fairness and equity it will not be the Government as far as this State is concerned.

MR PARKER (Fremantle) [9.24 p.m.]: In seconding this motion I think it is fair to say there is no more grave or serious an issue affecting the State of Western Australia than the way in which our electoral procedures are carried out. The very basis of government—the legitimacy of the basis of government—in this State depends on the fact that the electoral processes produce a Legislature which truly reflects the will of the people of Western Australia. Therefore, the Government elected as a result will be respected by all those who are required to serve under it and observe its laws and procedures as having been the Government truly put there by the people of this State.

It is not some minor issue we are discussing. Members opposite are frequently talking about freedom and democracy and I am a supporter of both. While they talk about it they talk about freedom in ways not related to the fundamentals of democracy. I do not care what they say about freedom, but on this occasion this Government is disagreeing with the concept of basic democratic rules and needs of the system in Western Australia.

This Government is deliberately undermining the system by which this Parliament is elected. It has done it in a number of ways—by legislation, administrative action, and administrative inaction, and by undermining those administrative arrangements that are in place. As the Leader of the Opposition has already stated, there is no doubt that the State Electoral Department is severely understaffed.

Earlier this year I issued a statement to the Press indicating that from May until July this year there had been no processing of electoral cards and that people who had submitted their cards within the required time—as amended by the Government during the autumn session—found that after 60 days had lapsed those cards had still not been processed.

Mr Davies: That included the card of the member for Avon.

Mr PARKER: Yes, he was trying to change his address from one part of Northam to another. One would have thought those responsible would be careful about processing the card of the member for Avon. The staff were even unable to process the card of a member of Parliament.

Within hours of that statement being issued in the Press and by radio, additional members of

staff appeared in the department—staff that the Chief Electoral Officer had been begging the Government to provide for some time.

We now find that preliminary rolls for the redistributed seats have been provided to us in the last few days. There will be some problems with these preliminary rolls. We still do not have a street directory related to the redistributed seats available to us, despite the fact that the redistribution was finalised seven to eight months ago.

For some reason, this Government has decided that it is to its electoral advantage to keep the electoral rolls in a way which does not truly reflect the will of the people of Western Australia.

It is not new to Western Australia for there to be gerrymanders to boundaries. This has been the situation historically. It is not new for Governments in this State to redistribute boundaries in such a way as to afford themselves maximum protection. It is not new even for the Legislative Council, when in charge of some portion—and I repeat only some portion—of electoral distribution in this State to overturn recommendations—concerning distribution. They have rejected any proposition that the electorates should be redistributed.

The boundaries remained undistributed for over 20 years, because the Legislative Council rejected a proposition put to it in 1937. That proposition for redistribution of electorates was rejected because the Council was in the hands of a party of conservatism.

Mr Davies: Until they went to court in 1960 to get a redistribution.

Mr PARKER: As the member for Victoria Park has indicated, this Government has shown reluctance to do anything about electoral matters. It is required to be taken to court and to be embarrassed publicly before it is prepared to provide a fraction of the staff which is required for the operation of the system.

Earlier this year the new Premier appointed a new Chief Secretary. Because the last Chief Secretary had been so much a part of the gerrymandering that went on—he was the architect of it—in both the metropolitan area and in the north-west of Western Australia, it was probably too much to expect that he would have been prepared to implement some sort of fair system of distribution of electorates or of running the electoral processes of the State.

Bearing in mind that a new Minister had been appointed, I wrote to him and suggested various policies which I thought could improve the

situation with regard to electoral matters in this State.

It long has been the policy of this party to have joint State-Commonwealth electoral rolls for a number of reasons: one being common sense and another being finances—especially when we consider the considerable sums of money that could be saved if we had one joint roll.

It would save us also from the confusion which occurs when people must enrol on two separate rolls under two separate electoral procedures. Anyone who has attempted to canvass people to go onto electoral rolls would know the confusion that can arise. So many people will say that they are on the electoral roll and when pressed on the point and shown the computer printout, they then believe they are not on the roll. They will perhaps have put in a blue card, but not a yellow card. I am sure members on both sides of the House would be able to identify with that situation.

I made suggestions to the Chief Secretary about things he could do, one being that he could implement the system of a joint Commonwealth-State roll. This was not a new suggestion; it had been made long before I came to this place. The member for Welshpool had advocated it for a long time and has done so on a number of occasions since I have been here.

I pointed out the advantages of a joint roll and I felt the new Minister would be prepared to consider it. The Minister replied that the suggestion was an example of socialistic centralism. A more ludicrous reply could not have been expected from anyone but the current Chief Secretary. To give the former Chief Secretary credit, he would not have written such a ludicrous reply.

The Chief Secretary said that one of the reasons we could not have joint Commonwealth-State rolls was the method of the keeping of Commonwealth rolls. He said they were kept in such a way that if the Telecom technicians were to go on strike, the lines that were being used for the computer information between Canberra and Perth would be inoperable and they could not get the figures and names of enrolments for electoral purposes.

There are two things wrong with that. It is never so urgent for there to be a need for a roll that a flight time cannot lapse between Canberra and Perth to ensure that those figures and lists are available, even if the way in which the Minister describes the process of the keeping of the Commonwealth rolls were correct. However, I am advised by people from the Commonwealth Electoral Office that the Minister was not correct.

I am advised that lists are kept on computer and are not transmitted via Telecom lines, but, are transmitted by the use of hard computer tapes which are physically transported from one part of the country to another, as the case may require. Copies are kept so if there is a computer failure or the like, the valuable records which are needed for the running of the Commonwealth electoral system are not lost.

It is to the credit of the Commonwealth Government and its predecessors of a number of political ilk that they have kept the enrolment procedures in a reasonably adequate fashion.

However, in some cases there have been discrepancies between the census figures and the enrolment figures, but in general terms the rolls have been kept in a reasonable fashion.

One does not get complaints in Commonwealth elections. Like other members here, I have been involved in canvassing and campaigning in many of both and there are not the same complaints about Commonwealth elections as we get at State elections. It would be sensible to move to a system of joint Commonwealth-State rolls. Money would be saved, people would be less confused, and we would know there was one roll which was the definitive statement on who was entitled to vote in Western Australia, whether at a State or Commonwealth election. In some other States which have a more democratic system for electing local government councils—a universal franchise—these same rolls are used as the basis of that franchise as well as for the State-Commonwealth franchise. That is a sensible arrangement which would assist local government in this State. It must be a great expense for local government to keep their separate rolls.

Bearing in mind that the Liberal Party in this State has shown that it is not prepared to accept that proposition—partly because it was proposed by the Labor Party, and partly because the Liberal Party regards it as being to its electoral advantage to do so—I suggested various other measures. The other stupid thing the Chief Secretary said in his letter to me was that to put the Commonwealth in charge of electoral matters in this State would be like putting Dracula in charge of a blood bank. The Chief Secretary I believe told all and sundry that he was very proud of that statement and he rang several people and asked them whether they thought it was a good piece of witticism. I first heard that remark when I was in about grade five at primary school and it was used by one of my teachers. The Chief Secretary's remark is not original.

Mr Pearce: Did he have to tout it around to the journalists for a week before it was printed?

Mr PARKER: It was not printed until a feature article was written. The Chief Secretary was touting it about hoping that it would be printed. He probably touted it to the same radio station to which he sent his photograph. The Chief Secretary said we could not let the Commonwealth have charge of our electoral procedures. It is obvious that if there is anyone who should not be in charge of the electoral procedures it is the State Government and the Chief Secretary. Almost anybody, including the Commonwealth Government and Dracula—and I agree at times the Commonwealth appears to be like Dracula—would be better at carrying out electoral procedures than is the Chief Secretary or the Government.

It is not necessary for joint Commonwealth-State rolls to be administered by the Commonwealth. One other State, South Australia, administers its own rolls and conducts the enrolment procedures for both the State and Commonwealth. I would be surprised if Malcolm Fraser would be prepared to relinquish a fairly efficient department to one run by this Chief Secretary. But assuming we could overcome these obstacles, there would be nothing to stop financial and administrative arrangements being made so that enrolment procedures were conducted by a State instrumentality in the same way as the Attorney General organised the Legal Aid Commission as a State organisation, or the Family Law Court. The Chief Secretary ignored that possibility and did not have the courtesy to reply to my suggestion in the letter I wrote.

Another suggestion I made was that it would be possible to have one card even if separate rolls were required. I know members will say enrolment procedures are different due to the fiddling by the State Government in the last few years in order to preserve the seat of the former member for Kimberley (Mr Ridge) and now to preserve the seat of Pilbara for the Government. Assuming that could be overcome and that this Parliament came to its senses and returned to common enrolment provisions, it should be possible to have one card. That is the situation in every other State, even in Queensland which has separate rolls like Western Australia, but has one card. A person fills out one card and is enrolled on two separate rolls.

The Minister did not acknowledge that suggestion and ignored it in his reply and in the Press statement he issued. Even with separate enrolment procedures, there could be one card with two sections for enrolment. Then people

would know they had to fill out the whole card, rather than have to find two separate cards. I suggested that and the Chief Secretary ignored it. That could have led to an improvement in the electoral position in this State.

I also suggested there was no reason the Commonwealth should not carry out the canvassing function for the State. The Commonwealth canvasses on a regular door-to-door basis—the habitation survey—to ascertain whether people are properly enrolled, or households are enrolled. There is no reason the Commonwealth should not undertake that function for the State. It could be provided with the State cards and some financial arrangement could be arrived at with the Commonwealth. It would be of mutual benefit financially to both parties and would result in people knowing they were on both rolls.

Again, the Chief Secretary did not have the courtesy to respond to that in the letter or the Press statement he issued. It is a sensible, commonsense proposal and one which has the support of a number of people who are trying under difficult circumstances to administer the system at present. The Chief Secretary said he was not prepared to vary the current position.

What is the current position? This Government makes it almost impossible for people in remote areas to go on to the roll because there are many areas in which there is no justice of the peace, no police officer, and no electoral officer qualified to sign the cards of people who are not enrolled. Those people might be young, or Aborigines, or they may have been struck off the roll for some reason. They find it impossible to get on the roll unless they go to the considerable expense of making a trip to the nearest town which has a police station, justice of the peace, or electoral office. In the latter case it would mean their travelling to Perth.

This Government is discriminating against people in remote areas when it claims it is their major supporter. We have more representation of remote areas now than the Government does, but it often claims it is interested in the people in those areas. It is discriminating against young people in the cities and elsewhere who have to find a police officer or justice of the peace in order to get on the electoral roll. It discriminates against Aborigines, and anyone who has spoken to Aborigines and suggested they should go to the police station to enrol will know the reaction. In many cases, they do not regard the police station as a place which is terribly conducive to go to ask someone to sign something. That is unfortunate

and perhaps the Minister for Police and Prisons can do something about that in his other capacity.

With all these difficulties we see the sort of cheap tricks such as those implemented by the President of the Legislative Council prior to the by-election in North Province.

Point of Order

Mr HASSELL: On a point of order: We have heard the Leader of the Opposition tonight making vitriolic and unwarranted personal attacks on the Chief Secretary, and they were allowed to pass. I do not believe that we should allow the President of the Legislative Council, who is a senior officer of the Parliament, to have his actions in carrying out his statutory duties referred to as "a cheap trick".

Mr Carr: It was.

Mr HASSELL: I suggest the member should be required to withdraw.

Mr Carr: It was.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): I have been asked—

Mr Pearce: Under which Standing Order?

Mr HASSELL: In case there is any doubt, I refer to Standing Orders Nos. 131 and 132.

Mr Pearce: There is nothing unparliamentary about "cheap trick". Standing Order No. 131 does not touch on it.

Mr HASSELL: No, it is No. 132.

Mr Carr: Everyone knows it was a cheap trick, anyway.

Mr Parker: It refers to "Member of the House". He is not a member of the House.

Acting Speaker's Ruling

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): I believe that the remark is unparliamentary, and I would call upon the member to withdraw. Standing Order No. 132 provides—

All imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections on Members, shall be considered highly disorderly.

I rule accordingly.

Points of Order

Mr BRYCE: On a further point of order: Surely the Minister for Police and Prisons is not suggesting seriously that the President of the Legislative Council is a member of this House—

Mr O'CONNOR: On a further point of order—

Mr BRYCE: —and the Standing Orders—

Mr O'CONNOR: On a further point of order—

Mr Carr: What sort of shambles is this?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): You have to move to disagree with my ruling.

Mr BRYCE: I beg your pardon?

Mr Pearce: He wants you to disagree with his ruling. He is asking for it.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): You cannot debate my ruling. You will have to move to disagree with it.

Mr BRYCE: You have given a ruling?

Mr Pearce: It is a ridiculous ruling.

Mr BRYCE: But, Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr Hassell: Why don't you sit down and get on with it, you outrageous substitute—

Mr BRYCE: You ought to talk. You are a disgrace!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): I ask the member for Ascot to take his seat. I have made a ruling. He will have to move to disagree with it.

Dissent from Acting Speaker's Ruling

Mr BRYCE: I have absolutely no other possibility, so therefore I move—

That the House dissent from the Acting Speaker's ruling.

I find it hard to believe that you could be conned into this by the Minister for Police and Prisons. It is extraordinary that the Minister could suggest to you that, on the basis of Standing Order No. 131—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Tubby): Standing Order No. 132.

Mr BRYCE: —or Standing Order No. 132. Both Standing Orders were quoted, and they clearly and explicitly refer to members of this House. What sort of protection racket are we running?

Mr O'Connor: Come on!

Mr BRYCE: It is a protection racket for somebody in another House. A clear and deliberate reference was made to the President of the Legislative Council, and we saw the Minister for Police and Prisons standing in his place, using the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly to suggest through some distorted form of reasoning that reference to the use of unparliamentary or offensive language against "any member" ought to be extended to cover the President of the Legislative Council. It is absolutely absurd.

Consider the words used in Standing Order No. 131—

No Member shall use offensive or unbecoming words in reference to any Member of the House.

The expression "the House", I suggest with the greatest of respect, refers to this House. These are the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly. How absurd it is for the Minister to suggest that some reference to the President, or to any other member of the Legislative Council, for that matter, would warrant a withdrawal.

Standing Order No. 132 goes on in precisely the same vein, for precisely the same reason, as follows—

All imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections on Members, shall be considered highly disorderly.

With the greatest of respect, I say that reference to "Members" relates to members of this House, not to members of that other place. That is why, when I stood initially, I was going to seek some clarification from you. I believe, in all seriousness, that the decision that you have just made constitutes a very serious and dangerous precedent.

There is no way in the wide world that those two Standing Orders can be used by the Minister for Police and Prisons to protect his friend, when the Minister was reacting in a moment of pique during the course of the remarks by the member for Fremantle. The Standing Orders cannot be distorted or extended in any way to provide protection for the President of the Legislative Council.

Mr PEARCE: I second the motion moved by the member for Ascot, and I draw your attention and that of the House to the fact that if your ruling with regard to the use of "Member" stands, it would apply also, for example, to Standing Order No. 120 which provides—

No Member may speak twice to a Question before the House . . .

Standing Order No. 121 provides—

A Member who has spoken to a Question may . . .

That would allow members of the Legislative Council to come down here and make speeches. The Standing Orders apply, as the member for Ascot said, to the members of the Legislative Assembly. If the Minister is looking to protect in this House his colleagues in another place, he will have to find some other Standing Order to enable that to be done.

As I interjected to the Minister for Police and Prisons across the Chamber, Standing Orders Nos. 131 and 132 have no bearing whatsoever on any statement made about any member of another place. These Standing Orders simply do not apply.

If we are to rule as unparliamentary terms like "cheap trick" we may as well give up. If we cannot use terms like that on the ground that they are unparliamentary, particularly when they refer to a particularly cheap trick, we are making this a pure kindergarten business in which people cannot say anything about anybody.

In fact, if the Minister had listened carefully to what went on before, he would know that it appeared that the Premier confirmed the proposition put by the Leader of the Opposition that word had been given that action would not be taken. That seems to support the proposition that the Premier cannot be unhappy to have it called "a cheap trick".

The point is that the phrase ought not be considered to be unparliamentary. Even if it were, it is not an unparliamentary term because it has not been applied to any member of this House.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I rise briefly to support the motion for dissent moved by my deputy, and to draw your attention to part of the Standing Orders under which the Minister for Police and Prisons moved for the withdrawal of the remark, "cheap trick". It is clear to me that the part which you need to take into account involves a consideration of the word "improper" in respect of Standing Order No. 132, and the word "unbecoming" in respect of Standing Order No. 131. You need to have regard to whatever has gone on previously.

By a nod of the head earlier in the evening, the Premier indicated that he conceded the assurance he had given had been given in respect of the issue of the writ.

Mr O'Connor: I did not say that.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Premier nodded his head to me.

Mr Hassell: For goodness sake!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I took the Premier at face value. I am not saying the Premier did anything wrong. However, that is the context in which the debate proceeded.

It seems to me that instead of "unbecoming" in Standing Order No. 131, and instead of "improper motives" in Standing Order No. 132, you need to take note of the context in which the remark was made. It is true that, if we are to have a situation in which an Acting Speaker makes a

ruling, and that ruling will be adhered to regardless of its substance or otherwise, we will have a set of precedents created that will not serve well the debate in this Chamber.

A mistake has been made, and we have heard a reference to "cheap trick". Certainly that does not rank among what I said, for example, during my contribution to the debate. However, no-one took exception to what I said, and therefore the Speaker did not see fit to seek a withdrawal.

The other evening we had an instance where someone was called a "coward". No-one took exception to that.

Mr Pearce: That is unparliamentary.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I would have thought the word "coward" was unparliamentary.

Mr Pearce: I have had to withdraw it in the past.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I would have thought that was definitely unparliamentary.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask interjections to cease.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member for East Melville who was in the Chair at the time saw fit not to ask for the withdrawal of the word "coward" and I would have thought that more squarely fits into the category of a reflection on someone than does the phrase "cheap trick".

This is an instance in which the House might adjourn in order to reconsider what has been ruled by your deputy, Sir, in your absence, because if we are going to be holding as unparliamentary phrases such as, "cheap trick"—

Mr Tonkin: We may as well close up the place!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —it will be very difficult, especially when we are debating motions like the one which is before the Chamber in the context of the motion that has been moved this evening. I repeat that, in a frank exchange, the Premier and I came to agreement on the question of the issuing of the writ and the closing of the roll, and the Premier said that he had attempted to convey his wishes prior to the issuing of the writ, only to find the wishes could not reach the State of Western Australia prior to the writ's being issued.

I would say it is time for everybody to cool down and for the import and meaning of the words "cheap trick" to be reconsidered.

Mr O'Connor: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! I was absent from the Chamber at the time the ruling was given and the motion was moved to dissent from that ruling. I

had the opportunity to discuss the matter briefly with the Clerk before I resumed the Chair.

I shall leave the Chamber until the ringing of the bells in order that I may study the *Hansard* report of the exchange and I shall return to the House after the ringing of the bells and make an announcement as to my attitude about what occurred.

Sitting suspended from 9.58 to 10.25 p.m.

Speaker's Ruling

The SPEAKER: At an earlier stage this evening, prior to the suspension of the House, the Acting Speaker (Mr Tubby) ruled that certain words were unparliamentary and required the member using them to withdraw them. Objection was taken to this ruling and dissent moved.

The particular expression used by the member for Gosnells—

Mr Parker: The member for Fremantle.

Mr Pearce: That is force of habit.

The SPEAKER: My apologies to the member for Fremantle. In fact, my apologies to both members.

The particular expression used by the member for Fremantle in referring to the President of the Legislative Council was—

With all those difficulties we find the sort of cheap tricks such as those implemented by the President of the Legislative Council prior to the by-election in North Province.

I am aware that members have been referring to Standing Orders Nos. 131 and 132 and that these have been quoted already this evening. However, I shall draw the attention of the House to Standing Order No. 146, which reads—

When any Member objects to words used in debate by another Member, the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees shall, if either considers the words to be objectionable, or unparliamentary, order them to be withdrawn; and, if necessary, an apology made.

The point at issue is whether or not the Speaker, or in this case the Acting Speaker, considers the words either objectionable or unparliamentary. The Acting Speaker clearly did so, and ruled accordingly that the words should be withdrawn.

There is no requirement for me to rule in this matter. The House is proceeding according to its own standing orders and procedures. However, it is my view that the Acting Speaker has ruled quite correctly and in conformity with the practice of this House. Reflections upon members

of either House of Parliament are disorderly and this is dealt with in May's *Parliamentary Practice* at page 428.

*Debate (on dissent from Acting Speaker's ruling)
Resumed*

Motion put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 16

Mr Barnett	Mr Grill
Mr Bridge	Mr Harman
Mr Bryce	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Jamieson
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Parker
Mr Carr	Mr Pearce
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr Evans	Mr I. F. Taylor

(Teller)

Noes 24

Mr Blaikie	Mr O'Connor
Mr Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushton
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grewar	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr McPharlin	Mr Nanovich

(Teller)

Pairs

Noes

Ayes	
Mr A. D. Taylor	Mr Shalders
Mr Bateman	Mr Clarko
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Young
Mr Bertram	Mr Herzfeld
Mr Hodge	Dr Dadour
Mr Wilson	Mr Mensaros
Mr McIver	Mr Coyne

Motion thus negatived.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Fremantle to withdraw the words to which objection was taken.

Mr PARKER: Mr Speaker, I have tremendous respect both for you and the office you hold, but in the circumstances which prevail with both the original ruling and the nature of the matters to which I was referring in my speech, I am afraid I cannot withdraw the words in question.

The SPEAKER: Again I ask the member for Fremantle to withdraw. I do not think it does anything for this Parliament—

Opposition members interjected.

The SPEAKER: —for me to have to name the member and for the suspension procedure to take place. I ask the member to reflect—

Opposition members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr PARKER: I say again that under these circumstances and bearing in mind that this is not something I have sought or attempted to achieve—I have never attempted to achieve this now or previously—I find myself with no other alternative but to refuse to withdraw.

The SPEAKER: I name the member for Fremantle.

Suspension of Member

Mr O'CONNOR: I move—

That the member for Fremantle (Mr Parker) be suspended from the service of the House.

Mr Pearce: That is another cheap trick.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 24

Mr Blaikie	Mr O'Connor
Mr Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushton
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grewar	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr McPharlin	Mr Nanovich

(Teller)

Noes 16

Mr Barnett	Mr Grill
Mr Bridge	Mr Harman
Mr Bryce	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Jamieson
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Parker
Mr Carr	Mr Pearce
Mr Davies	Mr Tonkin
Mr Evans	Mr I. F. Taylor

(Teller)

Pairs

Noes

Ayes	
Mr Shalders	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Clarko	Mr Bateman
Mr Young	Mr T. H. Jones
Dr Dadour	Mr Bertram
Mr Mensaros	Mr Hodge
Mr Coyne	Mr Wilson
Mr Herzfeld	Mr McIver

Motion thus passed.

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Fremantle to withdraw.

[The member for Fremantle left the Chamber.]

Adjournment of Debate (on motion)

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Minister for Police and Prisons) [10.34 p.m.]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 24

Mr Blaikie	Mr O'Connor
Mr Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushton
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grewar	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr McPharlin	Mr Nanovich

Noes 15

Mr Barnett	Mr Grill
Mr Bridge	Mr Harman
Mr Bryce	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Jamieson
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Evans	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Shalders	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Clarko	Mr Bateman
Mr Young	Mr T. H. Jones
Dr Dadour	Mr Bertram
Mr Mensaros	Mr Hodge
Mr Coyne	Mr Wilson
Mr Herzfeld	Mr McIver

(Teller)

Motion thus passed.

Debate (on motion) adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Premier)
[10.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until
4.30 p.m., Tuesday, 24 August.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the House
at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m., Tuesday, 24
August.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Divide!

A Government member: That's a stunt.

Points of Order

Mr PEARCE: I seek withdrawal of the word
"stunt" which is clearly objectionable.

The SPEAKER: The opinion of the Chair is
that it is not unparliamentary, and a withdrawal
is not required.

Mr BARNETT: Standing Order No. 146
states—

When any Member objects to words used
in debate by another Member, the Speaker,
or Chairman of Committees, shall, if either
consider the words to be objectionable, or

unparliamentary, order them to be
withdrawn; and, if necessary, an apology
made.

The word "stunt" has been ordered previously to
be withdrawn as it was considered to be
unparliamentary, and that was either by yourself
or another Speaker. I suggest you reconsider your
previous ruling and order the word "stunt" to be
withdrawn as it is unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: I adhere to my earlier ruling.

Debate Resumed

Question put and a division taken with the
following result—

Ayes 24

Mr Blaikie	Mr O'Connor
Mr Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr Rushton
Mrs Craig	Mr Sibson
Mr Crane	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Spriggs
Mr Grewar	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr McPharlin	Mr Nanovich

(Teller)

Noes 15

Mr Barnett	Mr Grill
Mr Bridge	Mr Harman
Mr Bryce	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Jamieson
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Pearce
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Evans	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Shalders	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Clarko	Mr Bateman
Mr Young	Mr T. H. Jones
Dr Dadour	Mr Bertram
Mr Mensaros	Mr Hodge
Mr Coyne	Mr Wilson
Mr Herzfeld	Mr McIver

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLES

Production Date: Identification

1086. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for
Consumer Affairs:

(1) Advertising to question 2358 of 27
October 1981, is the motor vehicle

industry generally complying with the agreement that a standard "built date" be introduced as from January this year?

- (2) Which corporations, if any, are offending against this agreement?
- (3) Is it intended to introduce mandatory compliance?
- (4) In practice, has the "built date" been an improvement on the older concept of year model?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I am not aware of any offenders.
- (3) No.
- (4) Yes.

PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT

Amendment

1087. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Is it intended that amendments will be introduced to the Painters' Registration Act this year?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) when can we expect the Bill;
 - (b) what will be the nature of the amendments?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) and (2)—
 - (a) Consideration is being given to the introduction of amending legislation.
 - (b) It is premature to release details of proposed amendments.

HEALTH: NURSING HOMES

Waiting List

1088. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) With reference to my question 1034 of 1982, relevant to "C"-class hospitals for the aged, since there are no such hospitals in my area and there are many elderly people who cannot find accommodation in such establishments because of the lengthy waiting period, would he make funds available to the two city councils in the Canning electorate to build such facilities?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) There is a Commonwealth/State committee which meets at the Commonwealth Department of Health, which recommends to the Commonwealth Minister for Health the number of new nursing home beds which should be licensed in a geographic area. The councils referred to in the member's question should make application to that Minister who will seek a recommendation from the co-ordinating committee.
- (2) Answered by (1).

STRATA TITLES ACT

Amendment

1089. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

In view of the Law Reform Commission's decision to set 30 September 1982 as a target date for completion of the report on strata titles, can the Attorney General give an indication whether there will be amendments to the Act introduced in the current session of Parliament?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The matter of legislation will be considered after the Law Reform Commission's report is received.

It is not possible at this stage to indicate whether any amendments will be introduced in the current session of Parliament.

MINERAL SANDS: CAPEL

Remedial Action and Surveys

1090. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Can he advise me in detail of what action has been taken to date in the town of Capel to reduce radiation levels in the affected houses, vacant lots, commercial premises, school, and recreational areas?
- (2) In view of the possibility expressed in the State Radiological Council report on Capel that some radioactive contamination could have been due to windblown dust, will he ensure that Capel is regularly surveyed to prevent recurrences of the recent radiation problems?

- (3) What plans does his department have for locating other possible areas of radioactive pollution in the Bunbury, Busselton, and Capel areas as a result of mineral sands mining in these areas?
- (4) Has he considered the possibility of an aerial survey of this region by an airborne gamma ray spectrometer?
- (5) Is he aware that radioactive elements are often associated with heavy metals such as tin, tantalum, lead, and gold?
- (6) Have other mine sites been surveyed for possible elevated radiation levels due to uranium and thorium?
- (7) If so, which mines were surveyed and what were the results of these investigations?
- (8) (a) Has a complete survey of the town of Geraldton been undertaken following the radiation alert there in 1979;
(b) if so, could he make available to me the results of that survey?
- (9) What action has the Government taken to improve radiation safety procedures in the mineral sands industry?
- (10) When does he intend to introduce the updated regulations for the Radiation Safety Act which he promised in reply to my question 467 of 7 April 1982?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) (i) Tailings have now been removed and replaced with neutral fill in the 10 houses where this was required.
(ii) Tailings have been removed from two vacant lots and removal is proceeding on the remainder.
(iii) Tests are continuing on commercial premises to determine the most appropriate solution.
(iv) Remedial action at the school is complete. Further examination shows that the material giving rise to an elevated radiation level was not, in fact, tailings but naturally occurring soil in that area commonly called coffee-rock.
(v) Remedial action has been completed opposite the school and the need for action in other areas is being studied.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) A great deal of work has already been done and is continuing. It may not be appreciated that it is the work of the local authority and the council's officers which have brought these problems to light.
- (4) to (6) Yes.
- (7) At the request of the council a number of underground mines were surveyed some years ago in co-operation with the Australian Radiation Laboratory. A copy of the report giving the names of the mines and the results will be tabled. Currently studies are being conducted at Greenbushes Tin NL.
- (8) (a) No, but all locations where there were known to be mineral sands tailings were surveyed following the successful removal of the tailings which presented the problem in the first place;
(b) yes, the results were within the council's guidelines.
- (9) Representatives of the Mines Department, the Public Health Department, the Australian Workers' Union, and the mineral sands industry have been co-operating in the preparation of a code of practice on radiation safety in the mineral sands industry. The Public Health Department, the Mines Department, and the State Radiological Council, have monitored and investigated health hazards in the industry for many years; The industry has been very co-operative; but it is recognised that, despite improved practice, the radiation levels of some workers are higher than what could be achieved, although still within the International Commission on Radiological Protection's recommendations.
- (10) As indicated by the Attorney General, the updated regulations will be gazetted by the end of this year.

FUEL AND ENERGY: NUCLEAR

Monazite: Export

1091. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is he aware of report No. 2 of the national energy advisory council which

reports that a commercial nuclear reactor using three tonnes of thorium fuel per annum is in operation in Fort Vrain, Colorado, USA?

- (2) Is he aware that nuclear reactors using thorium fuel are also in operation in Julich in West Germany?
- (3) Will he confirm that thorium derived from Western Australian monazite has been used in these nuclear reactors?
- (4) Is he aware that thorium 232 is converted in a nuclear reactor to uranium 233 which is a proven nuclear weapon material?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) I am advised that a general reference is contained in the report referred to. It should be noted, however, that it refers to an uranium-thorium combination.
- (2) I am advised that a prototype installation at Julich is using experimental quantities.
- (3) No.
- (4) I am aware that it is possible to convert thorium 232 in a nuclear reactor to uranium 233.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Press Secretaries and Public Relations Officers

1092. Mr PARKER, to the Premier:

- (1) Did any Government departments or instrumentalities engage any new—
 - (a) Press secretaries;
 - (b) public relations officers;
 - (c) public relations consultants or firms;

between 1 January 1982 and 30 June 1982?

- (2) If "Yes" to any of the above—
 - (a) which ones;
 - (b) how many; and
 - (c) in what positions?
- (3) Have any Government departments or instrumentalities engaged new—
 - (a) Press secretaries;
 - (b) public relations officers;
 - (c) public relations consultants or firms;

since 1 July 1982?

- (4) If "Yes" to any of (3)—
 - (a) which ones;
 - (b) how many; and
 - (c) in what positions?

- (5) Have any departments or instrumentalities asked for an advance on any future budget allocations to enable them to engage any—

- (a) Press secretaries;
- (b) public relations officers;
- (c) public relations consultants and firms;

and if so—

- (i) which ones; and
- (ii) for what purpose?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (5) The information requested by the member is being collated and a considered reply will be provided in due course.

ROAD: FREEWAY

Western Suburbs Study

1093. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Transport:

Bearing in mind that *Transport 2000—A Perth Study* includes, amongst its 162 pages, only one page on the western suburbs freeway which is simply a summary of previously expressed viewpoints by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority—

- (a) what independent study and analysis was undertaken on this proposed freeway reservation; and
- (b) what were the results?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (a) *Transport 2000—A Perth Study* independently developed a set of computer models which were used to forecast future travel within the metropolitan area. From the output of these models, an estimate of the likely growth in north-south traffic within the western suburbs was compiled.
- (b) The likely growth in traffic was estimated by the Perth "Transport 2000" study at 43 per cent. This is broadly consistent with the traffic forecasts used as a basis for the MRPA's detailed western suburbs study.

"STATE REPORT"

Distribution

1094. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

How many copies of each issue of *State Report* are distributed by post?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Copies of *State Report* are directed to 508 individual addresses. In some instances, more than one report is forwarded in the envelope.

WATER RESOURCES: COUNTRY AREAS

PVC Piping

1095. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) How long has PVC piping been allowed from mains to homes in rural zoned property?
- (2) Has it proved satisfactory, or is PVC piping unsuitable off mains pressure?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The Public Works Department has allowed the use of PVC piping from mains to homes in rural zoned properties since February 1968.

In respect to the Metropolitan Water Authority, PVC pipe, class PF, up to and including 25 mm diameter, was approved for water supply plumbing in January 1970. This includes rural zoned areas under MWA control.

- (2) PVC piping has proved suitable off mains pressure provided that it is manufactured and laid in compliance with departmental requirements and/or appropriate by-laws.

ELECTORAL: ENROLMENTS

Kimberley, Pilbara, and North Province

1096. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

How many people not enrolled in the North Province prior to polling day on 31 July used that day to enrol for the Legislative Assembly seats of—

- (a) Pilbara;
- (b) Kimberley,

and the Legislative Council seat of North Province?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (a) and (b) I am advised that an analysis of the claim cards received during the North Province poll was not made, and as the cards are dispersed for processing this is no longer practicable.

MEAT

Lamb

1097. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Primary Industry:

- (1) What number of lamb carcasses have been delivered to Western Australia from the Eastern States from 15 July 1982 to the present date?
- (2) What number of lamb carcasses have been rejected or condemned by the Public Health Department during the same period?
- (3) What has been the landed price of these carcasses compared with the Western Australian Lamb Marketing Board price for the same period?
- (4) What number of lamb carcasses have the Western Australian Lamb Marketing Board packed for frozen export during that period?

Mr OLD replied:

During the four-week period 15 July to 13 August—

- (1) 9 300 lamb carcasses were imported (based on Public Health Department records).
- (2) 860 were condemned due to refrigeration breakdown.
- (3) This information is not known by my department. Market reports indicate saleyards price for lamb for the week ending 13 August as—

Gepps Cross (SA)—79.91c per kg

Midland—86.5-102.5c per kg

- (4) 6 945 lamb carcasses were packed for export.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Toxic Poisons

1098. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Would he take the necessary steps to ensure Total West does not consign toxic poisons with general cargo, which evidently is the current situation at Kewdale?
- (2) If "No", would he state his reasons?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) I am informed that Total West do consign poisons with general cargo as indeed did Westrail in the past. In almost all circumstances poisons are carried with traffics that are conducive to this mix, such as building materials, hardware, and other non-contaminable items.

In a few areas though, due to the general paucity of loadings, poisons are carried in the same vehicles as consumable-type goods. However, the loadings are clearly segregated and insulated against contamination.

The carriage of poisons is administered by the Public Health Department and very rigid controls are laid down for the movement of such items.

If the member has any specific knowledge of difficulties with the existing controls, it is suggested he submit the information to the Public Health Department.

RAILWAYS: FREIGHT

Joint Venture: Charges

1099. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) As rolls of carpet to Bridgetown previously handled by Westrail were \$13.50 and are now \$34.20 as per latest invoice from Total West, does he still claim country people will pay less for freight under the joint venture concept in view of the above example?
- (2) Does he claim the joint venture will provide greater employment opportunities having regard for the fact that Total West are currently retrenching staff?
- (3) If "No", what are the reasons?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) In regard to the case quoted by the member, I am advised that an error was made in calculating the freight rate for this particular consignment and the correct charge is \$18.10. It is suggested the sender contact the company for a refund.

It is noted that the member has stated a 1981 Westrail freight rate and also omitted a \$5 local delivery charge from his comparison figure. Total West's charge for the consignment in question

is in fact less than that which applied under the old regulated system.

I am disappointed with the member's apparent negative approach on the matter of freight rates. Nowhere has he mentioned the many cases of freight charge reductions or the positive improvements which have occurred through deregulation.

With introduction of freedom of user choice and the opening up to competition from 1 July, it is considered average prices and services will improve in comparison with continuation of the old inefficient "regulated" system.

- (2) and (3) Some job opportunities have been lost because of current general economic conditions and greater productivity. However, what has been said is that job opportunities have also been created amongst other transport operators and local carriers now that small traffics have been deregulated.

HOSPITALS: ST. JOHN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

Fund

1100. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In view of the ever increasing number of unemployed people in the metropolitan area, whom do they approach and what relief can they obtain regarding payments to the St. John Ambulance Fund?
- (2) If the payments cannot be made, what restriction does this place upon a person requiring ambulance assistance?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) There is no Government scheme whereby unemployed people can obtain assistance in meeting subscriptions to the St. John Ambulance fund.
- (2) The St. John Ambulance Association does not refuse ambulance assistance to any person. If the patient is not a member of the fund, he is expected to pay the appropriate charge. In special cases the account may be reduced, payment by instalments accepted, or the accounts written off.

"TRANSPORT 2000—A PERTH STUDY"*Western Suburbs Freeway*

1101. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) Since *Transport 2000—A Perth Study* states that the traffic between the northern suburbs and the Fremantle corridor will increase substantially over the next 20 years, due in the main to the lack of job opportunities for the predominantly white-collar residents within the Joondalup corridor and the surplus of appropriate jobs in the older suburbs along the Fremantle corridor, was not the proposed western suburbs freeway justified by connecting the north-west corridor to the south-west corridor, not by getting workers from the north-west corridor to the Fremantle corridor?
- (2) Did not amendment 410/33 of the metropolitan region scheme specifically designate this road as a controlled access road to by-pass the western suburbs and thus of little benefit to those persons wishing to travel in the vicinity of Subiaco and Nedlands?
- (3) Where are the job opportunities in the corridor referred to in "Transport 2000", and why is it that they will not be filled by the residents of the western suburbs?
- (4) How is it that the western suburbs freeway will be able to serve job opportunities in the Fremantle corridor given that the jobs will be located much further east of the highway reservation?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (4) The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority's amendment No. 410/33 to the metropolitan region scheme does not propose a freeway. The questions you ask have been raised in the submissions about the amendment and they are debated in the authority's report before me for consideration. The report will be made available when that amendment is tabled in the Parliament.

"TRANSPORT 2000—A PERTH STUDY"*Predictions*

1102. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Transport:

"Transport 2000" states that congestion on the Narrows Bridge will lead to

diversion away from the Kwinana and Mitchell Freeways towards an alternative north south route using the Fremantle traffic bridges—

- (1) In the year 2000, how many vehicles will be diverted from the Narrows Bridge to the Fremantle bridges assuming construction of the western suburbs freeway and the Fremantle eastern by-pass?
- (2) In the year 2021 how many vehicles will be diverted from the Narrows Bridge to the Fremantle bridges, assuming the construction of the western suburbs freeway and the Fremantle eastern by-pass?
- (3) The western suburbs study predicted a total of 206 000 vehicles per day crossing the Fremantle bridges and the Narrows Bridge; where does "Transport 2000" get its figures for the Swan River crossings (on page 50) which shows 426 000 crossings for the year 2000?
- (4) What origins and destinations surveys have been conducted to show who will in fact be diverted from the Narrows Bridge to the Fremantle bridges, and what cost benefit analysis has been conducted to justify the expense and cost of the western suburbs freeway in relieving the Narrows Bridge congestion?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1), (2), and (4) These matters have been considered fully by the MRPA during the submission and hearing process on amendment 410/33. I understand that they have been addressed in a report prepared by MRPA which is currently with the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development and Town Planning.
- (3) The Swan River crossings quoted in *Transport 2000—A Perth Study* include many other bridges than Fremantle and the Narrows.

"TRANSPORT 2000—A PERTH STUDY"*Narrows Bridge: Duplication*

1103. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Does "Transport 2000" state that no detailed plans are available for the duplication of the Narrows Bridge?

- (2) Why have no such detailed plans been produced, given that the Perth area transport study of 1970 recommended as a first priority the construction of a duplicate Narrows Bridge by 1980?
- (3) Is the Government prepared to allow amendment 410/33 to be passed when there has been no comparative analysis giving a detailed cost benefit study of the western suburbs freeway proposal and the Narrows Bridge proposal?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Perth transport regional study recommended many proposals as first priority including duplication to four lanes in each direction of the Narrows Bridge. This particular recommendation was not adopted but a reversible lane system has now been installed such that four lanes are available for the peak period movement in each direction.
- (3) The two routes are to a large extent independent. This matter has been considered by the MRPA and I understand that it has been addressed in a report prepared by the MRPA on amendment No. 410/33 which is currently before the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development and Town Planning.

ROAD: FREEWAY

Western Suburbs: Justification

1104. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

In the year 2000, it is predicted by the Main Roads Department that 69 000 vehicles per day will cross the Fremantle bridges. However, a majority of these trips will have their origins and destinations within a 10-kilometre radius of the Fremantle and Stirling Bridges. Only 24 per cent of all trips using these bridges will cross a 20-kilometre radius around these two bridges—

- (1) Given the weak interaction between Joondalup and Rockingham-Kwinana, using 2000 predictions, (less than 1 000 private vehicle trips per day) how can amendment 410/33 be justified to serve such a small market given the cost of constructing both this freeway and the Fremantle eastern by-pass?
- (2) Is it not a case that beyond the year 2000 the likelihood of interaction between the north-west and south-west corridors will remain weak, given that the population growth will occur north of Joondalup and south of Kwinana, resulting in almost 1½ hour journeys from the extremes of the two corridors?
- (3) Is it not a case that the Stirling Bridge and Narrows Bridge will experience a slowing down in traffic growth after the year 2000 because of a slow down in population growth in the developed area of the metropolitan region and that the population growth in the north-west and south-west corridors will have an increasingly smaller impact on both bridges because of the increasing travel distances?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (3) See answer to question 1101.

ROAD: FREEWAY

Western Suburbs: Forecasts

1105. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

Originally, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority justified the western suburbs freeway on a perceived need before the year 2000. The engagement of an eminent transport engineer from Melbourne to do a study for several local authorities and strong public criticism have seen the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and "Transport 2000" now argue that it will be needed at some time in the next 40 years:

(1) Given that the justification no longer rests on traffic requirements for the next 20 years but some vague notions of what might be required in 40 years, what traffic forecasts have been carried out for the year 2021 and what population and employment distributions for that year have been published for the Perth metropolitan area?

(2) What is the estimated number of vehicles per day crossing the Narrows Bridge and the Fremantle bridges for the year 2021, assuming that the western suburbs freeway and the Fremantle eastern by-pass are not constructed and also what are the figures, assuming that both roads are constructed?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) See answer to question 1101.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Asset Valuation and Interest Payments

1106. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Commencing at the end of the 1980-81 financial year, what is the amount and interest rate on State Energy Commission loans expiring thereafter?
- (2) Referring to the commission's 1981 annual report whereon assets are valued at \$759 317 million and the depreciation allowance as \$28 244 million with a consequent depreciation rate of 3.73 per cent—
 - (a) would this not appear to be unrealistically low, especially as assets appear to be valued at historical cost and not replacement cost;
 - (b) if proper provision was made for depreciation at replacement costs, would not a figure of \$100 million plus be modest?
- (3) Referring to the full page advertisement placed in *The West Australian* of 14 August 1982, and more particularly the statement by James Dominguez that "the \$7.4 million statutory contribution to the Western Australian Government be added to the operating surplus", is this not akin to the Swan Brewery adding Commonwealth excise to its profits; and further that to add back the losses on country services of \$43 million to operating surplus is even more spurious?
- (4) Is it not correct that most other States' power authorities sustain losses on their country operations?
- (5) Can he tell me for example, the estimated loss made by Queensland on its country electric power services?
- (6) Referring to the aforementioned article in *The West Australian*, is it proper to compare figures for the interest liability as a ratio of net operating surplus before interest, when in Western Australia the loss on country services is added back to the operating surplus, whilst in the other States that loss is not added back?
- (7) Referring to his statement in the aforementioned advertisement wherein he states that capitalisation of interest payments on major capital works is a procedure practised by Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, does not the same company also use replacement cost for depreciation?
- (8) Why does not the State Energy Commission follow BHP's example in this respect?
- (9) What State Government authorities capitalise interest payments?
- (10) (a) Where the State Energy Commission capitalises interest, is the interest rate on this the same as the interest rate on the principal;
 - (b) if not, what is the rate?
- (11) What would be the impact on State Energy Commission current charges if interest payments were not capitalised?
- (12) (a) When did the practice of capitalising interest begin in the State Energy Commission;
 - (b) if recently, does that mean that past consumers have been paying costs relevant to current consumers?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (12) The information sought is extensive, and I will respond to the member by letter in due course.

ROAD: FREEWAY

Western Suburbs: Congestion Savings

1107. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Since "Transport 2000" states that unless a high capacity north-south route is constructed then a number of what are now residential streets will be converted to major traffic carriers, what are these residential streets which will become major traffic carriers?
- (2) (a) Should a high capacity north-south route be constructed in the western suburbs;
- (b) where will the on and off ramps be located along the route;
- (c) what are the current volumes of traffic along those streets now; and
- (d) when the route is constructed?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) In addition to Servetus Street it would be expected that there would be the other existing principal north-south roads in the area such as Brockway Road, Selby Street, and associated streets.
- (2) The Government has yet to make a decision on amendment 410/33. Until that is made specific answers cannot be given to your questions.

MEAT

WA Meat Commission

1108. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Will he state the level of involvement of the Western Australian Meat Commission in the local trade market?
- (2) (a) Have there been any losses incurred during any of the past five years;
- (b) if so, how much?
- (3) Will he detail the remuneration paid to all executive level members involved in the operations of the commission?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Since its inception in July 1979 the marketing division of the WA Meat Commission has made local sales of—

1979-80—\$3 847 512

1980-81—\$4 381 883

1981-82—\$4 746 111

- (2) Losses incurred by the marketing division were—

1979-80—\$111 360

1980-81—\$148 690

1981-82—Not available*

*Subject to Auditor General's certification.

- (3) General manager, marketing division \$50 226
Chief executive officer of WA Meat Commission \$50 226

FUEL AND ENERGY

Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd.

1109. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Further to questions 925 and 1003 of 1982 relevant to Government coal contracts, what was the date that the contract between the Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. and the State Energy Commission was signed for the supply of coal to the Government instrumentality?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The date of the signing of the contract between the Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. and the State Energy Commission for the supply of coal to the Government instrumentality was 21 December 1978.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Demand

1110. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Will he detail the average yearly increase in the demand for electricity in Western Australia for the years 1972 to 1982 inclusive?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Demand for electricity is measured in two ways. The Energy Commission is concerned with the maximum demand—the highest level of load occurring during the year—and the total electricity energy generated over the year. Maximum demand is measured in megawatts (MW) and energy generated in gigawatthours (GWh).

The average annual increase in maximum demand for the

interconnected electricity system in Western Australia from 1971-72 to 1981-82 was 6.1 per cent. A similar figure for the increase in annual generation was 283 gigawatthours (7.5 per cent per annum). Growth rates were lower in the second half of the decade than those in the first half.

WATER RESOURCES

Balingup

1111. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Water Resources:

When is it anticipated that a new water supply will be provided to service the Balingup district?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The Public Works Department has been investigating alternative sources for Balingup to improve the water quality. It is proposed to augment the supply at Balingup from Dimpling Gully this financial year, subject to funds being provided in the Budget.

ROAD

Coast Road: Reconstruction

1112. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it intended to construct a new highway adjacent to the coast road ex Bunbury to by-pass Australind and Eaton?
- (2) If "Yes", will he please give details of the project?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) A proposed plan for such a road is shown in a report "Bunbury Region Plan June 1980" prepared for the State planning and co-ordinating authority and the Bunbury and district regional planning committee. The report was made available for public review, and comment received is being considered by the planning authorities concerned.
- (2) No firm proposal for the road is yet available.

EDUCATION: TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Fremantle: Parking

1113. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has he received representations from the Fremantle Technical College, or its

advisory committee, concerning the increasing car parking problems of that college?

- (2) Has he had discussions with his ministerial colleague, the Minister for Housing, concerning the appropriate sections of those representations?
- (3) Will he advise what he is prepared to do to assist in these matters?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) Yes, on 11 August 1982.
- (2) No.
- (3) Departmental officers are assessing the feasibility of the various options.

RESEARCH STATIONS

Research and Trials

1114. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What research projects and/or trials in any form are currently being undertaken at each of the following research stations—
 - (a) Denmark;
 - (b) Mt. Barker;
 - (c) Wokalup Bramley; and
 - (d) the Animal Breeding Institute (Katanning)?
- (2) With respect to each of the above and for the year ended 30 June 1982—
 - (a) what was the total cost of capital and expenses respectively;
 - (b) of these amounts how much was provided from private sources?
- (3) What other research projects and/or trials are currently being undertaken outside the facilities outlined in (1), but in the general regions of those stations?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Research is carried out into pasture, crop, livestock, and viticultural problems at Mt. Barker and Bramley, into pasture, crop, and livestock problems at Katanning, and into pasture and livestock problems at Denmark and Wokalup.

In view of the difference in size and scope, the quotation of numbers of experiments is meaningless.

- (2) (a)

Station
Denmark
Mt Barker

Capital	Other
5 907	191 396
42 345	567 996

Station	Capital	Other
Bramley	3 335	67 204
Wokalup	19 490	385 260
ABRI	125 000	272 600

- (b) One private donation has been received at Katanning where substantial industry research funds have also been used. Some industry funds have been used for plant breeding at Mt. Barker. On other stations only minor use has been made of industry funds.
- (3) There is extensive research on farming properties in the regions of these stations.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Albany

1115. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Further to his answer to my question 993 of 1982 relevant to accommodation at Albany Senior High School, could he please advise details of "the necessary work" as mentioned in (2) and (3) of his answer?
- (2) Does this refer only to the work to be commenced early in 1983 or does it include two stages of the proposed redevelopment?
- (3) If it does not include the second stage of the redevelopment, will he give an assurance that every effort will be made to commit sufficient funds next financial year to allow the work, identified by the school as being necessary, to proceed without further delays?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) By 1985 the Albany Senior High School is expected to have reduced from 43 classes in 1982 to 32 form classes. By 1989 there could be fewer than 30 form classes at this school. Planning is based on the necessary work to ensure that there is adequate accommodation for 30 form classes as the long-term requirement.

The work will entail demolition of some buildings, upgrading and reorganisation of the administrative areas, rationalisation of the commerce area within permanent buildings, and improvement of student facilities and comfort.

- (2) and (3) The work is to be undertaken as a continuous programme across two

financial years for funding convenience. There are real limits on funds available but every endeavour will be made to include as many of the school requests as possible.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Geraldton

1116. Mr CARR, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government given any consideration to building a State office block in Geraldton to house all or most of its departmental officers under the one roof?
- (2) If "No", has the Government considered negotiating for a private developer to build such an office block and to lease office space to the Government?
- (3) If "No" to both (1) and (2), does the Government intend to rent or lease any additional office space in Geraldton to meet its requirements in the foreseeable future, and if so, will he please give details?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) No.
- (3) Yes. Depending on availability of funds, some leases of relatively minor areas of accommodation will be required from time to time to meet future needs.

ELECTORAL: NORTH PROVINCE

By-election: Section Votes

1117. Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) How many persons applied for section votes at the recent North Province by-election?
- (2) How many of these section votes were admitted to the count?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) 1778.
- (2) 27.

FRUIT

Apples

1118. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What quantity of apples was produced in the—
 - (a) 1981 season;
 - (b) 1982 season?

(2) What quantity of apples was exported from Western Australia in the—

- (a) 1981 season;
(b) 1982 season?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) (a) 1981—2 692 600 cartons;
(b) 1982—2 783 000 cartons (estimated).
(2) (a) 1981—997 311 cartons;
(b) 1982 (January-31 July)—766 604 cartons.

RAILWAYS

Boyup Brook, Bridgetown, and Manjimup

1119. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Transport:

What has been the number of—

- (a) train crew men;
(b) office staff;
(c) other workers,

employed by Westrail at—

- (i) Manjimup;
(ii) Bridgetown;
(iii) Boyup Brook,

in each of the past four years?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

	1978-79			1979-80			1980-81			1981-82		
	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)
(a)	32	—	6	31	—	6	30	—	6	27	—	—
(b)	9	7	4	10	6	4	9	5	4	7	4	1
(c)	14	9	7	14	8	6	14	8	4	11	7	1

RAILWAYS

Manjimup

1120. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it intended to terminate the position of head driver at Manjimup?
(2) If "Yes", what is the reason for taking this action?
(3) (a) Is it the policy of Westrail to move towards operating trains using the Bunbury-Manjimup line with crews stationed at Bunbury;
(b) if "Yes" to (a), when is it intended that this situation will be introduced?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) I am advised that the staff position at Manjimup, similar to other locations which may be affected by transport deregulation, is being reviewed.

- (3) (a) and (b) Westrail does not have any current proposal to alter train crews working between Bunbury and Manjimup but, as is the case with all other aspects of Westrail's train operations, such working is under continual review to ensure the most efficient and economical use of available resources.

WATER RESOURCES

Greenbushes

1121. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it intended to upgrade the Greenbushes town water supply in the 1982-83 financial year?
(2) (a) If "Yes", in what way will the supply be upgraded;
(b) what will be the cost of such works?
(3) If "No" to (1), what is the intention of the Government with regard to the upgrading of this water supply?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No.
(2) Not applicable.
(3) The present intention is to augment Dumping Gully storage which supplies Greenbushes from storages owned by Greenbushes Tin NL as required.

TIMBER

Pine: Production

1122. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What has been the quantity and value of pine timber produced in Western Australia in each of the past three years?
(2) What is the expected quantity and value of pine timber which will be produced in Western Australia in the years—
(a) 1985;
(b) 1990;
(c) 1995; and
(d) 2000?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

(1) Total Pine Volume	Value
1979	\$27 424 000
1983 071	
cubic	
metres	

Total Pine Volume	Value
1980 196 190 cubic metres	\$31 408 000
1981 204 540 cubic metres	\$38 106 000

Derived from total wood, wood products, and furniture values published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

(2)	Total Pine Volume	Value*
(a) 1985	326 000 cubic metres	\$61 million
(b) 1990	585 000 cubic metres	\$109 million
(c) 1995	1 099 000 cubic metres	\$205 million
(d) 2000	1 394 000 cubic metres	\$260 million

* Expressed in 1981 dollar values and derived from total wood, wood products, and furniture values published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOLS

Byford and Mundijong

1123. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it intended to establish a district high school in Mundijong?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) What plans exist for a high school or district high school in Byford?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) and (2) Preliminary discussions have been held about establishing a district high school by about 1984-85 to serve the Mundijong, Jarrahdale, and Serpentine areas.
- (3) Until a town planning scheme for Byford is finalised, and a high school site identified, planning for future schools to serve the Byford area is in abeyance.

POLICE

Quiz Nights

1124. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Police and Prisons:

- (1) Have any instructions been issued by any section of the Police Department "tightening up" conditions under which fund raising quiz nights may be held in hotels or taverns?
- (2) If so, what motivated such action?
- (3) What are the details of these instructions?
- (4) As quiz nights for local fund raising for parents and citizens' and other local worthwhile organisations have proceeded for a number of years, would he ensure that the least possible interference is exercised by the Police Department to these necessary community functions?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).
- (4) Police do not interfere with fund raising quiz nights in hotels and taverns unless breaches of the Liquor Act or Lotteries (Control) Act are taking place.

ROADS

Dianella Drive and Morley Drive

1125. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can he confirm that the access from Dianella Drive into the north carriageway of Morley Drive will follow the former alignment of Grand Promenade at this point and that this access will be offset to the west of the junction of Grand Promenade and the south carriageway of Morley Drive?
- (2) Can he also confirm that northbound traffic in Dianella Drive will be prevented from turning right into Adur Place, and if so, where will traffic, including buses currently using this street, be redirected?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

- (1) and (2) This is a matter the member should refer to the City of Stirling.

EDUCATION

Teachers: Withdrawal from Schools

1126. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware of the possible disruption and hindrance to individual student progress caused by withdrawal of staff from schools when student numbers fall below set figures during the course of a year?
- (2) Has any consideration been given to maintaining staff levels during the course of a year at a minimum of the number appointed at the beginning of the year, as a means of overcoming any consequent disruption to schools and adverse effects on individual student progress especially in the case of children in their first three years at school?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) Adjustments of teaching staff in primary schools are made in the first two weeks of the school year to balance staffing with school enrolments. After that time every attempt is made to maintain the stability of staff in primary schools.
- (2) The suggestion made is basically the principle adopted in primary school staffing in 1982 after the staffing adjustments were made in the first two weeks of the year.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Applicants: Metropolitan and Wait Turn

1127. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

Referring to his answer to question 997 of 1982 in which he indicates that 47 per cent of those on the State Housing Commission waiting lists are awaiting two-bedroom accommodation, what special efforts is the Government taking to overcome the critical shortage in this type of accommodation?

Mr SHALDERS replied:

In the construction programme proposed for 1982-83, 45 per cent of the family rental programme is for two-bedroom accommodation.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Power Cuts: Machine Operators

1128. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is he aware of possible dangers to operators of machinery such as saws and presses as a result of sudden power cuts during strikes or other emergencies?
- (2) What consideration has been given by the State Energy Commission to providing radio warnings prior to power cuts in particular areas to try to lessen such dangers?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) I am aware of possible dangers, and it would be appreciated if the member would advise union organisers and others of this danger.

- (2) Every effort is made to provide the fullest information to all Western Australian radio stations and other media prior to power cuts where these are anticipated. This has been the practice of the commission for many years.

The member will appreciate that on 12 August the union involved gave the commission practically no warning of its action which caused power rationing. The operation of industrial machinery using electricity was not authorised during the period of the strike. This point was made clear in advertisements which appeared in the Press on the morning of 12 August.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Balga

1129. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When was work begun on the gymnasium building at the Balga Senior High School?
- (2) Can he confirm that the building was due for completion in September 1981?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), can he explain why the building has not yet been completed?
- (4) Who are the contractors responsible for the construction of this gymnasium?
- (5) In view of the abnormally lengthy delays involved in the completion of this building, will the performance of the contractors on this project be taken into account in letting tenders to the same contractors for future projects?
- (6) Have any further Government contracts been let to these contractors since problems occurred with the completion of this contract?
- (7) What measures is he taking to expedite the completion of the gymnasium, and when will the building now be completed?

Mr CLARKO replied:

- (1) The tender was let 29 April 1981; work commenced soon after that date.
- (2) Yes, 23 September 1981.
- (3) Yes. Block work in walls was found to be "out of plumb", beyond the legal building code limits, requiring extensive examination by structural engineers and subsequent rectification by the contractor, at his own cost.
- (4) A Ravi (Builder) Pty Ltd.

- (5) and (6) Yes.
- (7) Pressure is being maintained on the contractor for earliest possible completion, however, precise completion date is not known.

PASTORAL LEASES

Jennings Report

1130. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What recommendations of the Jennings report have been introduced?
- (2) What recommendations is it proposed to implement?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- (1) and (2) A number of new initiatives have been implemented or are in the course of being implemented, many of these closely relating to recommendations made in the Jennings report and others relating to improvements sought by the industry.

These include—

- (a) the beneficial interest limitation on the area of pastoral lease holdings has been increased from 404 700 ha to 500 000 ha;
- (b) the Pastoral Board has been created in place of the old Pastoral Appraisal Board, the new board being directly responsible to the Minister and having wider responsibilities;
- (c) the board has been enlarged by the inclusion of two members representing the industry;
- (d) the board has been established as a separate unit within the Lands and Surveys Department, with its staff headed by a new executive officer;
- (e) lessees now have the right to establish non-indigenous pastures on their leases;
- (f) wider rental remissions are now available in extenuating circumstances;
- (g) the activities of the Rural Housing Authority have been extended into pastoral areas;
- (h) there have been various other successful initiatives relating to vermin control, drought and restocking concessions, transport of wool concessions, and soil erosion controls, some as a result of approaches to the Commonwealth;

- (i) legislation will be introduced during the current session of Parliament covering new compensation provisions, the appointment of deputies to members of the board, and sundry minor matters; and
- (j) matters currently being investigated include the commercial exploitation of donkeys and goats, the State-wide monitoring of pasture conditions, the question of non-viable leases, and related restructuring.

COURT: FAMILY

Act: Amendment

1131. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Who are the members of the advisory committee set up to consider possible amendments to the Family Court Act as reported in *The West Australian* of 16 March 1982?
- (2) What has been the result of the committee's investigations?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Chairman:

Judge Anderson, Family Court of WA.

Members:

Mr R. M. Davis, Registrar of the Family Court of WA; Dr A. Dickey, Family Law Practitioners' Association (WA); Senior Inspector P. C. Ayling, Western Australian police; Mr P. Gorton, Deputy Director, Department for Community Welfare; Mrs M. A. Yeats, legal officer, Crown Law Department.

- (2) The committee has had a number of meetings. Its work is still proceeding.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Connections: Cost

1132. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What is the estimated cost of connecting a new consumer in both the country and metropolitan areas for each of the following categories of users—

- (a) domestic consumer;
- (b) industrial low voltage consumer;
- (c) industrial high voltage consumer?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (a) to (c) The cost of connecting a new customer of the State Energy Commission is a complex matter, and is very much individually customer-related. It is likely to result in misunderstanding if figures are quoted without details of the specific circumstances being stated, and I would be happy to try to assist the member if he has more specific instances.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

James Dominquez and Dominquez and Barry

1133. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What business dealings and/or relationship does the State Energy Commission have with or has had with James Dominquez and Dominquez and Barry, stockbrokers?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The commission does not have any direct business association with Mr James Dominquez. He is a partner in the stockbroking firm of Dominquez and Barry, who have acted from time to time as underwriters to commission public loans.

The underwriting of these loans is subject to tender and, in all, two loans have been underwritten by Dominquez and Barry for a total amount of \$43 300 000.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

STATE FINANCE: CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND

Investments

423. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Treasurer:

Does the Treasurer have the legislative authority to credit to the Consolidated Revenue Fund all income derived from investments of moneys raised for the purposes of the Consolidated Revenue Fund?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

My understanding is that the Treasurer does have that power.

INCOME TAX: AVOIDANCE

Legislation

424. Mr HERZFELD, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Premier seen the legal opinion written by a leading QC, Mr Ian Temby, arguing that the proposal to bring down retrospective legislation against the bottom-of-the-harbour tax evasion schemes, was immoral and unconstitutional and unlikely to catch true offenders?
- (2) Does the opinion reinforce the comments he made in this House last week?
- (3) In view of the fact that the Leader of the Opposition is continuing to adhere to his support for the retrospectivity of that legislation and in view of the fact—

Points of Order

Mr EVANS: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, is this question which seems to seek an expression of opinion out of order?

The SPEAKER: I am concerned about this question. The question being asked of the Premier relates to nothing for which the Premier is responsible in this House. The Premier may well have expressed an opinion on what legislation the Commonwealth proposes, but this House has no power to involve itself in Commonwealth taxation.

I have been listening carefully to the member's question and unless there is some way in which it will fall within the jurisdiction of the Premier's portfolio—at this stage it does not—and unless the member can assure me that the question ultimately relates to something for which the Premier is administratively responsible to this Parliament, I will rule the question out of order.

Mr HERZFELD: On a point of order, the House spent a great deal of time last week discussing matters associated with this particular legislation.

Mr Tonkin: Questions have different Standing Orders.

Mr Brian Burke: You can move a motion about this.

Mr HERZFELD: Last week the Premier was expected, by this House, to express a point of view on this very question. It now appears to me that the matter with

which this House was dealing last week was out of order.

Mr Tonkin: Different Standing Orders.

Mr HERZFELD: My question to the Premier is an appropriate one and if, in fact, I am given the chance to ask the whole question I think the point of it will be seen by the members of the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! Perhaps members would like to settle this matter with a discussion between themselves. My responsibility is to see that Standing Orders are adhered to. It is within the competence of any member to introduce a motion into this House calling upon the Government to do, I suppose, any sort of thing. In the event of there being a motion on the notice paper it is within the competence of a member to ask a question of the person who is responsible for moving a motion in relation to that particular matter. In the case of questions, questions can be directed to Ministers of the Crown relating only to the matters for which they are administratively responsible to this House. I cannot find that the question posed by the member for Mundaring—or that part he has enunciated thus far—is one that can be allowed.

Mr HERZFELD: On a further point of order, the whole question of this Federal legislation is one which has been considered on a number of occasions and will require the co-operation of State Governments if it is to be fully implemented.

Mr Brian Burke: You said that your Premier has said he had not seen it?

Mr HERZFELD: If that in fact is true—I can only go on what others more expert than I have said—it seems to me the matter is of some relevance to the State Government and therefore to the Premier who heads that Government.

Speaker's Ruling

The SPEAKER: The member's point of order is based on the hypothesis that there will be a requirement of some kind of this Parliament in respect of something the Commonwealth is going to do. I cannot predict what might happen in the future and therefore I rule the question out of order.

Questions (without notice) resumed STATE FINANCE: CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND

Investments

425. Mr I. F. TAYLOR, to the Treasurer:

Why did the Treasurer credit only \$4.2 million to the CRF in 1981-82 when the total available investment income amounted to over \$43.5 million?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Once again, the member for Kalgoorlie is obviously alluding to the \$31 million that the Government achieved from the investment of Treasury funds that were placed on the short-term money market during the year. It has been the normal custom of Governments to tack that money onto the following year's Budget and having been in Treasury, the member would know this himself and probably participated in it in the past.

Mr Bertram: It does not make it right. It is wrong.

Mr O'CONNOR: As has been the case for a number of years, this money has been carried forward to the following year to finance various programmes and to balance the Budget.

Last year the sum was about only half the amount obtained this year because interest rates were higher and we were able to obtain more money from that source. The money this year has been carried into this year's Budget in an effort to balance it and to carry out the works required.

SMALL BUSINESSES

Small Business Advisory Service Ltd.

426. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Industrial, Commercial and Regional Development:

Following a news item earlier this week in which it was said that a change in operation was being considered for the operation of the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd., can he advise the following—

- (1) Since the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd. was established, what has been the State Government's financial commitment to the service?

- (2) What is the number of staff employed?
- (3) How many inquiries have been received?
- (4) Why is the Government considering reducing visits to country areas by counsellors?
- (5) What steps are being taken to maintain this valuable service to small businesses in the city and the country?

Mr MacKINNON replied:

- (1) In the short time available, I have not been able to obtain full information relating to the financial commitment to the service prior to its being incorporated as a company in 1980. I undertake to obtain the necessary figures for the member. However, I can inform him that, in 1980-81, the Government assisted the company to the extent of \$170 000 and, in 1981-82, to the extent of \$240 000, an increase of 41 per cent.
- (2) When the service was a section of the then Department of Industrial Development, the staff was four, comprising three counsellors and one secretary. The staff now numbers eight, comprising a manager, four counsellors, a training co-ordinator, a typist, and a receptionist.
- (3) Since its inception, over 20 000 inquiries have been received, one-third of those occurring during the last 12 months. In other words, there was an 86 per cent increase in inquiries over the previous year.
- (4) The Government is concerned at the poor response received by the service to its activities in country areas. The counsellors spend one week in every three in regional areas and a reverse charge telephone call facility is available for country people. It is expensive to mount such an operation, but still the response has not been good.

- (5) To maintain and improve the service, the service itself is examining why country response has been so poor; it is investigating alternative ways of approaching the administration of matters relating to country areas. Perhaps this could be done through seminars and through co-operation and co-ordination with chambers of commerce. We are approaching regional development committees, and individual promotional organisations in the various towns. Indeed, if the member for Albany or other members have suggestions relating to the service provided in country areas by Small Business Advisory Service Ltd., we would certainly welcome them and pass them on to the service as part of its overall review.

TIMBER

Karri: Cutting Level

427. Mr EVANS, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What will be the permissible intake of general purpose Karri sawlogs available in each of the years 1987, 1988, and 1989?
- (2) What was the number of workers in the Manjimup region directly dependent for their jobs on forest and saw milling activities in 1982?
- (3) Based on the current relationship between jobs and wood production, what expected to be the number of jobs directly dependent on wood production in the Manjimup region in each of the years 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989?
- (4) (a) What was the level of wages paid to employees directly concerned with wood production in the Manjimup region in 1981;
(b) what is expected to be the value of wages resulting from wood production in the Manjimup region in each of the years 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989?

Mr LAURANCE replied:

- | | |
|----------|----------------------|
| (1) 1987 | 177 000 cubic metres |
| 1988 | 145 000 cubic metres |
| 1989 | 145 000 cubic metres |

These are approximations only as they are outside the current planning period.

- (2) The average number of employees has been approximately 1 400.

- (3) The estimated numbers of jobs for each of the following years is approximately—

1986	1 340
1987	1 310
1988	1 100
1989	1 100

- (4) (a) Approximately \$19.3 million;
 (b) 1986 \$17.6 million (1981 dollar values)
 1987 17.3 million (1981 dollar values)
 1988 14.5 million (1981 dollar values)
 1989 14.5 million (1981 dollar values)

"STATE REPORT"

Distribution

428. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

I preface my question by saying that last week, the Premier informed me that each week, 3 500 copies of *State Report* were distributed. Further, in answer to a question on notice today he said that 508 envelopes were forwarded to individual addresses, and that some of those envelopes contained more than one copy of *State Report*. So, if we are generous and assume each envelope contains two copies, I ask—

- what happens to the other 2 500 copies;
- how are they distributed and who gets them;
- what review is carried out to ensure no wastage occurs; and,
- would the Premier table a list of those persons on the mailing list?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I hope the member for Victoria Park received his copy last week.

Mr Davies: No, I did not.

Mr O'CONNOR: I must make sure it is delivered to him, because I gave him that undertaking.

Mr Davies: I am anxiously awaiting it; it is the bright spot of the week.

Mr Bertram: Is that the best you can do by way of a publication?

Mr O'CONNOR: As usual, the member for Mt. Hawthorn does not appear to know what he is talking about. The answer to the question is as follows—

- (a) to (d) It is correct that 508 envelopes are sent out; I know some organisations have requested a number of copies, but unfortunately I cannot provide the member with the precise figures. Obviously, the total number of copies of *State Report* contained in those 508 envelopes would equal the figure of 3 500 provided to the member. It is not my intention to provide the House with details of the individuals who have requested that they be placed on the mailing list. I do not believe it is reasonable that I should hand around their names.

HEALTH

Head Lice: Wickham

429. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- Is the Minister aware that there is a particular problem with head lice in Wickham?
- Other than the normal occurrence, is this an isolated problem?
- What steps can the Minister initiate in an endeavour to overcome the current problem?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- No, I am not aware of an abnormal problem with head lice in the town of Wickham, but I understand that this is a recurring problem in schools throughout Western Australia.
- Answered by (1).
- Other than the normal visit by the Health Department nurse to provide education in treatment to parents, if the feeling is that there is a greater problem in Wickham, I will ensure the nurse makes a special visit, particularly to try to educate parents in their responsibilities. If it is assessed that the outbreak is of sufficient magnitude to warrant additional staff in the short term, I would be prepared to ensure they were provided.

BANKS: CHEQUES

Federal Tax

430. Mr WILSON, to the Treasurer:

- Has he had investigations made into the possible or likely effect of the new tax on

cheques announced in last night's Federal Budget in what has been a traditional source of State revenue?

- (2) If "Yes" what has been the outcome of that investigation, and what is his attitude to this new Federal tax?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) No, I have not had inquiries made into the matter; however, I have discussed the new tax with Treasury officials. It was one aspect of the Budget with which we were not particularly happy. I do not know whether an investigation is likely to achieve a great deal in that there is nothing we can do to reverse the decision of the Commonwealth Government. However, it is a traditional source of State taxation revenue.

UNION: TEACHERS' UNION

Membership

431. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Education:

As membership fees for the State School Teachers' Union of WA (Inc.) are not now deducted by the Education Department, is it a fact that Teachers' Union membership has dropped from about 14 000 to 4 000 since August 1981?

Mr CLARKO replied:

As membership fees for the State School Teachers' Union of WA (Inc.) are not now deducted by the Education Department, it is not possible to supply details of union membership. A number as low as 4 000 has been rumoured; however, the most recent figure published by the Teachers' Union itself was in the president's report on page 4 of *The Western Teacher*, Volume 11, No. 5 on Friday, 9 June 1982. He stated that as at 30 April 1982 the membership was 6 800. What has happened since that date is not known.

"STATE REPORT"

Conflicting Statements

432. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) Can he remember giving this House an undertaking to explain how in one issue

of *State Report*, like and unlike were compared in the matter of wage increases versus increases in productivity, the former not being adjusted for inflation and the latter being adjusted for inflation?

- (2) Does the Premier also recall that assurance has not been forthcoming?
(3) Could he take this opportunity to explain how such an error could have crept into *State Report*?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) If the Leader of the Opposition wants a considered reply, I suggest he place his question on notice. If he is genuine in seeking a reply, he will have no objection to placing his question on notice, and enabling me to provide him with the correct answer.

WATER RESOURCES: COUNTRY AREAS

Conservation

433. Mr HERZFELD, to the Minister for Water Resources:

What action has been taken by the Public Works Department to educate country consumers on the need to conserve the State's water resources?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

Copies of a recently updated pamphlet titled *Save Water—Save Money*, are being forwarded to consumers with all rate and consumption accounts which fall due between 1 July and 31 October 1982. Also copies are displayed on the public counters of PWD district offices.

The pamphlet, of which 150 000 have been printed, explains the necessity to conserve water and the pricing structure for country water charges. Helpful suggestions are given on making the best use of the water consumed, both in the garden and in the home, and how to avoid costly water bills through wastage.

ROAD: WESTERN SUBURBS FREEWAY

MRPA Report

434. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

I refer to the Minister's answers today to my various questions on notice in which she indicates that she has before

her a recommendation by the MRPA concerning the western suburbs freeway. A week ago the Minister advised that she did not have the recommendation and could not give a timetable for its being dealt with by this House. Can she now give that timetable?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

No, I cannot give the timetable. I have the document before me, but no decision has been made by Cabinet, and I cannot pre-empt in any way what that decision might be. When a decision is made, a timetable will be adhered to.

RAILWAYS: PARCELS OFFICE

Guildford

435. Mr GORDON HILL, to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to a question I asked of the Minister for Transport on 22 April when he said in reply that the joint venture company would lease the Guildford parcels office from Westrail and carry out freight handling services at that location. Is this still the intention, and if not, what reasons, if any, are there for this change of policy?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The member would know by now that the joint venture, or Total West, is a body which makes its own decisions.

Mr Brian Burke: It is total disaster.

Mr Evans: Total loss!

Mr RUSHTON: Members opposite will all have egg on their faces in relation to the joint venture.

Mr Bryce: The eggs get broken. Everything gets smashed.

Mr RUSHTON: Members opposite should enjoy their fun; they will not enjoy it for long.

Mr Brian Burke: It is all around the traps that it is headed for bankruptcy.

Mr RUSHTON: The Leader of the Opposition does not recognise what would happen if it did go bankrupt. The new freight policy would still be very successful. Members opposite will learn that in time. To return to the question, the joint venture will make decisions from time to time, and it will make those decisions itself.

FUEL AND ENERGY: SEC

James Dominquez and Dominquez and Barry

436. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Resources Development:

In his answer to question 1133, the Minister indicates that the firm of Dominquez and Barry has underwritten loans to the SEC for the sum of \$43 million. Have tenders recently been called for a further SEC loan and are Dominquez and Barry tenderers to underwrite that loan?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Yes, the procedures are being gone through at the moment for the next loan in the cycle. I have no idea whether Dominquez and Barry are associated with it. If the member puts the question on notice I will give an answer.