

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 25 October 1984

THE SPEAKER (Mr Harman) took the Chair at 10.45 a.m., and read prayers.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 20 September.

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.48 a.m.]: The Opposition indicates to the Government that it will not oppose this legislation. However, we wish to put several questions to the Government in relation to its intentions. As I indicated yesterday evening, in the Committee stage we intend to move at least one amendment relating to the sunset clause which, as the member for Kalgoorlie who I understand is handling the legislation would know, is currently a review clause rather than a sunset clause.

I do not have a great deal of detailed knowledge of this area, but I have read a deal of the papers circulated in relation to it. I understand that, by and large, the Bill has tripartite support, albeit conditional in some areas. Also it is fair to say this is a rather unusual way for the Government to proceed with legislation—unusual to the extent that we have here a Bill which, in effect, really seeks to set up a commission and to give it some powers, but in fact which does not address any of the real issues of concern in relation to occupational health, safety, and welfare which were so openly canvassed in the public discussion document circulated in October 1983 and which invited public input and comment.

For example, I know the Confederation of Western Australian Industry (Inc.), the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention, and other bodies in the community put a great deal of work into responding to that document, the result of which is this legislation which seeks to set up a commission, a position quite different from that in other States namely, New South Wales and Victoria, where comprehensive pieces of legislation have been introduced.

I am not 100 per cent critical of this Government's approach because it is probably a sensible way to deal with the matter to some extent, as long as we do not then have a position which we fear and that is that a whole range of legislative decisions are made by the commission under some of the clauses of the Bill—decisions which do not

have to be brought back to the Parliament—as a result of which the impact on the community of this legislation is felt without proper parliamentary review of its intentions. Also we certainly do not want to see government or administration in this area by regulation, which could well happen.

Therefore, the first undertaking or comment I would like from the member for Kalgoorlie during the debate relates to a commitment sought or understood to have been given to the Confederation of WA Industry.

When legislation of this nature comes before the Parliament as you, Sir, would be aware, we consult with relevant interest groups and ask for their opinions. The Confederation of WA Industry, Labour Relations Division, responded to our approach on 2 October and, in its letter, it made the following comment—

The second reading speech of Mr Parker would seem to indicate that the detailed obligations will not be dealt with by Registration but by a further Act. This is a much more preferable course.

We would agree wholeheartedly with those comments of the confederation which seem to be in line with the comments of the Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Des Dans) in his foreword to the report on the proposed Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act in September 1984 where he had this to say—

There is broad agreement in the industrial community that reform is needed. The Government has decided to implement its policy in two stages. First we will establish a tripartite Commission of Occupational Health and Safety and start to rationalise administrative arrangements for existing statutes. Later, and after more consultation, enabling health and safety legislation is planned.

The commitment we are seeking from the Government will really form the linchpin of our approach to the legislation here and certainly in the Legislative Council, and it relates particularly to that last sentence—

Later, and after more consultation, enabling health and safety legislation is planned.

We believe it should be by legislation and not by regulation. As the member for Kalgoorlie well knows, legislation can be debated and amended in its course through the Parliament, whereas regulations can only be rejected by the Parliament. Despite the fact that any regulations might go through an exhaustive process of consultation and discussion between the three parties involved, it

could well be that one or more sections of the community could have major objections to those regulations; it could be that the union movement, the employers, or perhaps the Opposition had strong objections to it. The use of regulations does not seem to me to be a sensible approach, so I would like the member for Kalgoorlie, on behalf of the Government, to give us an undertaking that the further matters will be handled by way of legislation and not by way of regulations. We will place great importance on that undertaking because if it is not given it will seriously colour our attitude in another place to this legislation.

Mr I. F. Taylor: I can give you that undertaking now.

Mr MacKINNON: I thank the member, but I would appreciate his giving that undertaking when he replies to the debate.

A second undertaking we would like the member to give, if he can, relates to page 68 of the "Report on Proposed Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1984", which is dated September 1984. That page is a copy of a letter from Hon. Des Dans, the Minister for Industrial Relations, in response to a letter from Mr Bill Brown, the Director of Labour Relations of the Confederation of Western Australian Industry. Mr Dans's letter was dated 27 August and was in response to Mr Brown's letter of 20 August, and Mr Dans was referring to clause 5(d) of the legislation. I quote as follows—

At this stage the Act has not progressed to the stage where obligations are being placed on employers or employees. It is setting up the Commission and providing for the administration of existing laws.

That is a very important point because it seems to me that the legislation does just that. However it could well be that under certain clauses of the Bill new obligations could be imposed both on employers and employees in the process of just the consolidation of legislation and also in the way the commission and the administration of the legislation under the functions of the commission are outlined in the Bill.

I would like the member for Kalgoorlie to give consideration to that undertaking by the Minister that no new obligations will be imposed just because we are consolidating legislation, because clauses in this Bill could lead to that situation, as I will explain in a moment. This will become clearer to the member when I raise queries relating to clause 14(1) (e), (h), and (k).

The member might find it extremely difficult to give an undertaking in this next area, but again I would appreciate his making some comment on

this or making sure that my remarks are brought to the attention of the Minister on his return. On page 9 of the report we find this statement made in the minutes of the meeting of the tripartite council of 4 July—

The Minister also added that despite rumours to the contrary he could assure the meeting that the Commonwealth have no intention whatsoever of intruding into this area through use of their external power legislative capacity.

I would hope that that was the case. I am aware that the Commonwealth is now in the process of establishing a national occupational health and safety commission with what I see as a rather large budget of \$17 million. I ask the State Government to watch very closely the operations of this Commonwealth commission to make sure that its role is a proper one of trying to co-ordinate legislation and action in the occupational health and welfare field in a national sense and to make sure that this Commonwealth commission does not interfere in the proper role that the State has to play in this area. There is a danger and a tendency for the Commonwealth to interfere in State areas of responsibility, as the member would well know.

We would like the member to give an undertaking that the State Government will be vigilant in keeping an eye on the Commonwealth Government so that if it is seen that the Commonwealth is intruding on State responsibilities, we can take action quickly to make sure where we stand. It might be necessary for the State Government to make loud and long protests to the Commonwealth Government.

The final undertaking I would like from the member again relates to this report, and I refer on this occasion to page 15, which is an extract from the minutes of meeting of 12 July. I quote as follows—

It was also agreed that nominations for the "other persons" grouping should be mutually acceptable to the Confederation of W.A. Industry and the TLC.

All members agreed that both the Director of the Office of Industrial Relations and the Executive Director of the Division should be ex-officio members of the Commission.

I will comment on the latter part of that quotation in a moment, but the undertaking I would like from the member relates to the fact that the nomination of the three other persons should be mutually acceptable to the confederation and the TLC. Nowhere is that approval included in the

legislation. I would like an undertaking that that is exactly what will occur.

I will speak in a moment about the membership of that commission, but at this stage the undertaking I am seeking is that the agreement reached on 12 July will not be included in the legislation; perhaps the Minister could give us the reason for that. Secondly, if it is not included in the legislation, could he give us an undertaking that those appointees, whomever they will be, will be mutually acceptable to both the confederation and the TLC. Both parties have entered into that agreement during the course of these discussions, and they would be very aggrieved if we were the Government at the time and did not go through that process.

We are not opposing the legislation, but we are looking for these undertakings: That the Government will not legislate by regulation; that it will not as a consequence of the legislation impose a whole lot of new obligations on industry; that it will resist any Commonwealth intrusion into this area other than in its proper co-ordinating role; and, finally, that it agrees with the undertaking made at the tripartite meeting on 12 July with respect to the nominations for the three other positions on that commission.

I would like also briefly to run through the clauses on which I will be questioning the Government in greater detail in the Committee stage, but I will give the member a bit of forewarning so he can consider his response. Perhaps he might be able to talk about it with his adviser before doing so. I wish to discuss clause 5, in particular paragraphs (b) and (d). I will not read them out in detail, but I want him to address in due course the word "safety" in both paragraphs. I am no great English expert, but the meaning of that word within the context of the legislation is a little difficult to understand and I want him to elaborate on that.

I wish to raise some very serious questions in regard to clause 6. Firstly, on my reading of the legislation and the understanding of those people from the confederation with whom I have discussed the matter, the requirement for the commission to consist of three lots of three provides for the commissioner and his other Government officers, three from the confederation, three from the TLC, and three persons having knowledge and experience in the field. It was their clear understanding and, as I understand it, it is also the intention of clause 13(6), that only the appointed members or nominated members—that is, the confederation representatives, the TLC representatives, and the three persons who have knowledge or experience in occupational health or safety mat-

ters—will be entitled to a vote. I want an undertaking that that is the case, because on reading clause 13(6), I am not so sure that that is the intention.

I also want to ask the member for Kalgoorlie why it was necessary to include the words "officer of the department nominated in writing by the Minister". When we read the report on the proposed Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Bill we find it is agreed that the executive director should be an *ex officio* member. While the executive director may have a role in sitting in on deliberations of the commission, I am not so sure that he should be a member, because it would be my understanding that in practice one would find it very unusual for the views of the executive director to differ from the views held by the commissioner. I find it difficult to believe that the executive director will take a very outspoken role against the commissioner who, after all, is the head of his department. So, in effect, we will have two people for the price of one. I intend to query whether there is a voting intention in the legislation, and I seek clarification particularly in relation to clause 13(6). I want to raise the matter of the membership of that officer and of the three persons having knowledge and experience in occupational health and safety matters. I will be proposing the view that we believe that two of those persons should be able to have a special interest as it relates to small business within the community and a special interest in relation to rural matters.

The member may know that in Victoria, for example, legislation is currently in existence which includes a rural industry representative. As I understand it, it is virtually inevitable that this legislation will extend into the rural community. As the member would be well aware, having been chairman of the Rural Sector Hardship Select Committee, the Bill could well have serious impact on the operations of the farming community. We think representation from that section of the community should be included on the commission, and we will be making that point when dealing with this clause in Committee.

In regard to clause 14 I will specifically address paragraphs (e), (h), and (k). On reading through these paragraphs, it seems there could well be concern about new applications being imposed upon industry without regulation or legislation. I want the member to explain to me the intent of those paragraphs. Paragraph (e) reads as follows—

- (e) to formulate or recommend standards, specifications or other forms of guidance for the purpose of assisting employers,

self employed persons and employees to maintain appropriate standards of occupational health, safety and welfare;

As I understand it, in other countries those standards have been used as a basis for legal action to be taken against employers. If we are to formulate "standards", and "specifications or other forms of guidance", and those standards or specifications differ markedly from those applying today, in my view, it is quasi-legislation. The Government may impose new restrictions upon employers—or employees, for that matter—which could well be very restrictive in any sense. There could be major changes from the current situation, and I will move to amend paragraph (e) along those lines. I seek those explanations.

Clause 14(1)(h) is similar. It reads as follows—

The functions of the Commission are . . .

- (h) having regard to the criteria laid down by the National Commission for Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare, to advise persons on training in occupational health, safety and welfare and to formulate and accredit training courses in occupational health, safety and welfare;

The Government could make major changes to the training necessary without consultation with anybody, and that could have a serious impact on the professionals involved in the industry in both the union and the employer sense. Clause 14(1)(k) provides—

The functions of the Commission are . . .

- (k) to formulate reporting procedures and monitoring arrangements for identification of workplace hazards, and incidents in which injury or death is likely to occur in an occupational situation;

If the words "to formulate reporting procedures and monitoring arrangements" are read in their broadest sense, there could well be major changes to those currently in existence. That is another point we will question closely.

I am not sure about clause 18 and I would like the member, either directly or through his adviser, to tell me whether that clause is a normal part of this sort of legislation. It would seem to me that an occupational health, safety and welfare commission should, as far as possible, be quite independent of the Minister. However, then to say "the commission is subject to the control and direction of the Minister" may well open the way for abuse in this area, where a Minister could well give directions in one way or another which could place employees at risk unnecessarily or could

take away from employers controls which might otherwise be imposed thereon.

As I said, I am not familiar with the legislation that operates in other States of Australia. I understand that the newer type of legislation operates in New South Wales at the present. However, I would like an explanation as to whether this is a common clause, and the reasons for its inclusion.

As I said earlier, clause 22 is a review clause and we intend to move to amend it. I am having the amendment double checked at the moment to ensure that it is correct. We want to ensure that the clause is a sunset clause and abides by the undertaking given recently by the Premier.

I will comment generally on the Bill to give the Government a guide as to our future attitude towards legislation we hope will result from this commission.

We in Western Australia do not have such a bad record when it comes to occupational health and safety. The impression has been given that the opposite may be the case, but if we look at the submission made to the inquiry by the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention—which should be commended for the tremendous work it put into that submission, it is very comprehensive and covers just about everything one would want to know in relation to occupational health and safety—we find a chart which I will seek to incorporate in *Hansard* at the conclusion of my speech and which gives an indication of the Western Australian work accident rate from 1962 to 1982. I hasten to add that the figures for 1982 are an estimate only, due to the change in the measuring criteria.

On examination of the chart it is obvious there is a consistent improvement in the accident rate in this State. The chart measures over the years the number of compensable injuries per 1 000 of the work force and that shows a consistent decline from somewhere in excess of 120 per thousand to approximately a little over 60 per thousand. In that 20-year period the work accident rate in Western Australia has been halved. That is not to say that the rate is acceptable, but it does indicate that we in Western Australia have certainly been on the right track and heading in the right direction.

I will quote from the report of the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention because it has stated better than I can our performance over the years. It stated—

We do not wish to overstate or exaggerate. International statistics suggest that the state of safety and health at work in this state is not conspicuously bad, nor, is it one to be

proud of. It can be improved. But, as the Robens Report so clearly points out valid international comparisons are notoriously difficult to make because of differences in definitions, classifications and methods used in the collation of national statistics, not to mention the effect of underlying differences in industrial structures. It is with caution one can draw any reliable conclusions from such comparisons, and in any event they offer little comfort to those who get hurt. However, the comparisons made here, do offer some comfort to those organisations and individuals engaged in prevention in Western Australia over the past twenty years.

The reason I have made that point is that I would hope that the new commission and the Government will not adopt an over zealous approach to legislation or regulations in order to achieve the objectives of occupational health and welfare.

I, and I am sure other members of the Opposition parties, believe that by and large the best way to achieve results in any area such as this is by co-operation between the parties involved, rather than coming in with a sledge hammer in the form of legislation.

Over the years that approach has shown a significant improvement in the work accident rate in Western Australia. We would hope that the new commission does not see its role as being one to pass laws, willy-nilly, in an effort to improve the situation. It is an area which needs the approach of co-operation, supported by legislation, not led by it. If the Government is to proceed with legislation in due course—and I understand and appreciate the commitment given by the Minister in his second reading speech—I hope that should regulations be forthcoming there will be a wide-ranging process of consultation with the parties concerned. The Government would be foolish to do otherwise. If the Government were to do that it would take into account the wide-ranging number of submissions provided in response to the occupational health and safety public discussion document. As the Minister would know, many sections of that report were disagreed with by quite a few sections of the community, particularly employer groups.

I am not saying they are right in what they have said, but I would hope that before the Government goes ahead with legislation there will be consultation, as a real commitment, and that the work put in by bodies such as the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention is given some consideration before the Government proceeds.

I hope the legislation is not one sided. If I may be critical of that report, I would say that to some extent it is one sided. For example, it does not refer very much to employee responsibility. I am not saying that employers do have not any responsibility.

I hope I have indicated clearly in my speech to date that in this area there will be dual responsibility. The discussion document made reference to responsibility of employers and to the ILO document, but no reference was made to specific parts of those documents.

I will quote from these documents and hope the Government will bear in mind those points when bringing legislation to this House in future. It is an area we will watch closely to ensure that the intention of this Convention is expressed in the legislation clearly. Article 16 of Convention No. 155 from the international labor conference states—

1. Employers shall be required to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the workplaces, machinery, equipment and processes under their control are safe and without risk to health.

I understand the words "so far as is reasonably practicable" were not included in the discussion paper. We want to make sure that those provisos are included in the legislation. As I said earlier, if we try to legislate for everything we will end up with a restrictive system of occupational health and welfare. It will cost a lot of money, it will cost a lot of workers, and will not achieve the desired results. What is needed is agreement between the parties concerned, and reasonableness in the approach taken to employers and the employees.

Again, the ILO conference recommendation No. 164 warrants examination if we are to look at this area of legislation. We will be looking at that recommendation when any future legislation comes forward. A couple of the sections are of particular interest when they are read in association with the public discussion document.

I quote from section 14 of that recommendation which reads as follows—

14. Employers should, where the nature of the operations in their undertakings warrants it, be required to set out in writing their policy and arrangements in the field of occupational safety and health, and the various responsibilities exercised under these arrangements, and to bring this information to the notice of every worker, in a language or medium the worker readily understands.

That has been included in this legislation, and the Minister referred to it in his second reading speech. We agree with it. The last part which says

"in a language or medium the worker readily understands" is most important. As the member for Kalgoorlie would know, it is all too easy when one is dealing with legislation for lawyers to "muck it up". If people are to understand it, and I mean employers as well as employees because most employers find it as difficult to read the law as do employees, that commitment to the convention must be abided by. It must be in a medium the employer and employee readily understand. I hope the commission itself, when issuing instructions through its officers or department, will make a close note of that clause because it is an area which can easily be bogged down in verbosity.

Clause 16 of the same recommendation is another area we would be watching closely in relation to future legislation. It reads as follows—

16. The arrangements provided for in Article 19 of the Convention should aim at ensuring that workers—

- (a) take reasonable care for their own safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- (b) comply with instructions given for their own safety and health and those of other and with safety and health procedures;
- (c) use safety devices and protective equipment correctly and do not render them inoperative;
- (d) report forthwith to their immediate supervisor any situation which they have reason to believe could present a hazard and which they cannot themselves correct;
- (e) report any accident or injury to health which arises in the course of or in connection with work.

In today's society workers have a right to expect that they are protected by proper legislation in this area. "Rights" denote responsibilities as well, and they have a responsibility to ensure that they act in accordance with these principles. I hope in the future operations of the commission and the legislation all those principles are looked at so that both employers and employees who are given rights under this legislation will also understand their responsibilities.

I speak from some interest and concern, particularly as it relates to the noise control legislation which has recently been implemented. I have an interest in hearing because I have a son who is deaf. It distresses me when I go to noisy work places in Western Australia where earmuffs have been provided to find that employees are

refusing to wear them. It is the height of irresponsibility for employers not to insist that they be worn and for employees to place themselves at serious risk of possible damage to their hearing. I guess one could say the same about rock groups. How the young people put up with the noise for so long is beyond me.

Mr Pearce: They do not get away with it.

Mr MacKINNON: No. It costs them severely in the long run. It causes me concern because if workers and employers want rights in a controlled workplace they must meet their responsibilities.

Finally, I refer to an article in today's paper and to some comments from the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention in relation to implementation of the legislation. The foundation referred to "The implementation and the usage of the term 'feasible' in proposed WA legislation". The foundation was talking about the legislation not being good if it was not feasible to implement it or the regulations.

That matter was also referred to in today's paper by emeritus Professor Tom Singleton who spoke in Perth yesterday at an Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention seminar. The report stated—

Occupational safety and health duties must be clearly defined to avoid responsibility being shrugged off on to others, a Perth seminar was told yesterday.

The article goes on, but that aspect was dealt with at greater length by the foundation when it referred to the word "feasible". The foundation concluded by saying—

In the proposed W.A. legislation where will the burden of proof of "feasibility" rest? with the government inspectorate? with the employer? Finally, to avoid the obvious difficulties that will emerge when people substitute the word "possible" for "feasible", we strongly suggest that the drafters of the proposed legislation take great care to provide a clear and unambiguous definition of "feasibility".

My understanding from reading the document is that it will not be easy. The foundation itself indicated it is not an easy task, but it is an area which should be closely looked at. Legislation in this area must be capable of being put into operation. It must be feasible to carry out the provisions of the legislation at reasonable cost to the parties concerned. It is opportune that Professor Singleton referred to this matter and that it is in today's newspaper. The article quoted him as saying—

"There needs to be a suitable compromise between State legislation and individual needs within the workplace."

In other words, he is saying it must be feasible.

The Opposition supports the legislation. I have illustrated the concerns we have that methods could be used to impose controls on industry through the clauses of this Bill or by regulation. I would hope that any process or procedure undertaken by the commission in due course will be through a tripartite approach which looks at the rights and responsibilities of each of the parties to ensure that workable, feasible occupational health, safety, and welfare legislation is implemented for the benefit of all Western Australians, and that it is undertaken at a minimum cost to all involved.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [11.27 a.m.]: I want to raise a number of aspects in the debate and mention some of the areas of concern that this type of legislation—not this particular legislation, but its extension—could have on the business community.

Without doubt occupational health and safety is of great concern to the vast majority of employers and employees, particularly in the small business sector where one finds most employers are actually working on the shop floor or the factory floor alongside their employees. They have just as much reason as their employees to make sure conditions are safe and that good practices are carried out.

It is also the case in large companies that a strong incentive exists to have good practices and conditions in the workplace. I am referring to the concept of tying workers' compensation payments to the safety record one can achieve in one's business. It is interesting that some of the self-insured companies operating their own workers' compensation schemes tend to have very good safety records for quite obvious reasons. There may be examples where that is not the case, but it certainly applies in the two instances I have looked at.

I get a little annoyed when I continually hear certain people making more and more demands for improved health and safety levels without ever sitting back and perhaps complimenting some of the good work that is being done in that field. I attend many of the luncheons held by the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention, and it is interesting to sit down with both employees and employers, and in many cases, the officials responsible for looking after health and safety within a corporation.

It is very interesting to listen to stories about very good work which is taking place. All too often one tends to blame employers for not doing their

fair share. I am sure that their standards can always be improved. However, when good work is being done, I do not think it would hurt if they were complimented.

The previous speaker, the member for Murdoch, said that it is often difficult for an employer to make his employees comply with the safety practices in the workplace. When one walks into many local businesses, one sees posters and signs on walls telling workers how to lift goods properly and to wear the right sorts of clothes.

When I was in Korea recently, I saw, on US Marine's television, advertisements directed to members of the defence forces requesting them to try to improve their standards. One advertisement took the line of telling fighter pilots not to fly their fighters when they were high. It had a film of an F18 crashing. Obviously, many problems are experienced in that area. There were many advertisements trying to make people aware of complying with safety practices.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised the issue of noise. I think that the noise example is a good one, because an employer can do everything possible to decrease noise in his plant. He can do everything possible to make his plant quiet and to get his employees to wear the correct hearing equipment. Yet, that same employee may go home and be blasted by his hi-fi system or go to discos and be blasted by rock groups. That is typical of the difficult problems that arise when one starts delving into that area.

Mr Watt: A lot of those people have hearing problems because of their continual exposure to that sort of noise.

Mr COURT: That is right. The Minister for Education raised that point. Of course, the damage is already done. A member of the Rolling Stones might have a good financial incentive to put up with that type of noise, but a member of a dud group would come out the loser.

I urge the Government to be careful about how far it goes in introducing more regulations in relation to this matter. It has to be careful about how far it goes in introducing legislation to supposedly improve standards of health and safety. I think that the introduction of legislation to try to solve some of the problems should be used as the last resort because, as I mentioned earlier, when we start moving into the details of this type of legislation, we move into a minefield of problems.

I think that we would all agree that we cannot live in a risk-free environment, although many people would like to think they could. Life is all about taking a few risks. However, we can certainly eliminate as many risks as possible in the

workplace; but no matter how much legislation we introduce, we will never eliminate all of the risks. We have to emphasise that education and training are the answers to these problems and not the introduction of legislation.

As I said, a lot of good work is being done by a number of organisations. Many businesses have very good programmes to improve standards through education and training and the provision of the correct environment in the workplace. I am concerned, as are many business people, not so much about this legislation which has some very good features—the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has already said that we will support it—but about stage 2 of this legislation. This Bill is only stage 1.

We were told in the second reading speech that a commission will be established and we will start to rationalise existing administrative and legislative procedures. We were told also that when the structure is in place, the Government will address the issue of the comprehensive Acts and find the best means to ensure that all workers are protected. Some of those things have been outlined in the public discussion document circulated by this Government. The commission will be set up and some of the authorities will be amalgamated under this legislation. However, it is the second stage about which we are concerned.

The Government is well aware that industry is bitterly opposed to many of the concepts outlined in the discussion paper. The Confederation of Western Australian Industry (Inc.) has put out its own paper, commenting on the Government paper and has expressed many concerns in that paper.

The main areas of concern, I suppose, are that many of the things suggested in the paper would load enormous additional costs onto an employer in the running of his business, both in the workplace with the insurance liability he would incur and with workers' compensation premiums. The legislation would effectively hand over health and safety management control in the workplace to the union through the safety representative. The union-appointed safety representative will have power, for instance, to stop work for 24 hours, and so on.

The Opposition has highlighted those concerns. The confederation and other employer groups are also very concerned about those other areas.

This discussion paper is typical of the Government's tactic of going far overboard in its efforts to introduce change and then coming back to the position it had been trying to achieve. The matters raised in the discussion paper go far beyond the recommendations put down by Lord Robens, and

certainly go far beyond the International Labour Organisation conventions.

The two main areas of concern are the additional costs involved and the management's loss of power over what is happening in the workplace.

Industry is very concerned about this Government's proposals in this area. If the Government does intend to introduce restrictive legislation, I hope that it puts a lot of thought into the route it takes. Organisations such as the Small Business Development Corporation should have an input into the legislation and advise the Government about how small businesses would be affected by it.

Mr Gordon Hill: The Small Business Development Corporation has been consulted in respect of this legislation.

Mr COURT: I am not talking about this legislation; I am talking about stage 2.

Mr I. F. Taylor: We will certainly be appointing an advisory committee of small business.

Mr COURT: I hope it does not come up with the same results as the tripartite committee came up with in relation to the industrial relations legislation.

Mr Mensaros interjected.

Mr COURT: I am sure it would. I do not think that the Government would attempt to put these recommendations into practice in this State. It knows the sort of backlash that would result if it did.

In conclusion, it is very easy to arouse emotions and to use scare tactics when dealing with these sorts of matters. I think the Government has to be very responsible when it is discussing these issues and realise that responsibility rests with everyone and not with just a particular group. Everyone has to accept their responsibilities in relation to these matters.

I urge the Government to use a rational argument based on rational reasons before it implements what it calls stage 2 of its proposals because we do not want to see the community and the business sector, in particular, over-burdened with excessive, strangling regulations.

MRS HENDERSON (Gosnells) [11.41 a.m.]: I support the Bill and I am extremely pleased that the Opposition has indicated its support for the legislation. That does credit to the Opposition and I think it is a reflection of the hard work that has been undertaken by the Government throughout the last 12 months in getting tripartite support for this measure and in floating documents and encouraging discussion on industrial health and safety.

Industrial health and safety is one of the most neglected economic and social problems in this country. Every year death, injury, disease, and hardship are inflicted needlessly on thousands of Western Australian families as a result of accidents or injuries sustained at work. The national cost of these injuries and disease has been estimated at more than \$4 billion each year. The time which is lost is estimated at one million man-weeks per year.

However, the statistics are inadequate because it is not possible to provide the full picture due to the lack of statistical evidence. The statistics which are kept and which are available are frightening and depressing. The area is characterised by archaic registrations and codes and by penalties which are almost laughable by today's standards. All these are the hallmarks of the lack of concern by Governments in the past.

Currently we have 44 different Acts and 58 sets of different regulations or by-laws in Western Australia that affect the health and safety of people at work. Their administration is spread through 19 departments and 13 portfolios. No agency co-ordinates this area and it is my belief that there is no better way of ensuring that a problem is not adequately dealt with than by dividing it up on a very *ad hoc* basis and spreading responsibility for it over a large number of departments and people so that ultimately no-one takes the final responsibility for tackling the problems.

Currently there are six Ministers—the Minister for Health, the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Minister for Agriculture, the Minister for Local Government, the Minister for Water Resources and the Minister for Minerals and Energy—who are all concerned with areas of industrial health and safety. There is, undoubtedly, a need for a more coherent and co-ordinated approach to this problem. There is a need for a single agency, as provided for in this Bill, that will be charged with dealing with industrial health and safety in all its aspects.

The State Government employs about the same number of people, to inspect and supervise safety matters as it employs to protect the State's flora and fauna.

Safety considerations have not had the significance for employers that they should have had. Unions have concentrated their efforts on improvements in pay and conditions and indeed they have often accepted increased money to compensate for greater danger or risk. It is a blot on our history that there is any such thing as danger money or dirt money.

Industrial safety is a neglected area in community attitudes. People often become aware of the issue only when they are personally affected. However, by then it is too late and they are often appalled by what they find.

One area which is almost completely unregulated is the introduction of new chemicals into the workplace. New chemicals can be introduced with few or no controls. I do not intend to say very much about this area because I think it will be considered by another member in greater detail. It is interesting that many of those chemicals which are already in use have not been tested and often the results do not become available until many years later—when it is too late.

During times of high unemployment, as we have at the moment, when jobs are hard to find, many workers accept unsafe conditions as a price for having a job rather than seeking improvements in conditions.

If industrial accidents and industrial disease were considered as a single illness it should be seen as an epidemic, and decisive Government action should have occurred years ago. If work-related accidents received the publicity that surrounds the road toll, tough and effective legislation would have been enacted many years ago. The facts would outrage any reasonable person. Three hundred Australian workers are killed each year by work-related accidents or as a result of work-related disease, and 125 000 Australians are injured every year at work. Work-related accidents account for 2.5 million bed days in hospital each year.

The personal hurt and tragedy that this represents is enormous. The cost to the community from industrial accidents and disease is about three times the value of lost production through industrial disputes. Nearly twice as many days were lost in Western Australia last year as a result of industrial accidents as were lost through industrial disputes. An amount of \$30 million was claimed in compensation in insurance claims.

Over the last 100 years we have indeed seen the tragic side of industrial progress. We have seen liver cancer in the plastics industry, bladder cancer in the rubber and dyestuffs industry, leukemia associated with the manufacture of shoes and chemicals, sterility in workers in the pesticides industry, and respiratory diseases and cancer affecting those working in the asbestos industry.

Mr Justice Kirby, Chairman of the Law Reform Commission said recently that it was a pity that instead of granting compensation the court could not order changes in the work process so as to prevent injury. In the present system the

cause of that injury is often left uncorrected and attention is directed to the extent of compensation payable.

Australian men and women suffer three times more industrial accidents than their counterparts in Britain even though the British industry is often described as being outdated and antediluvian.

Women tend to hold the lowest status and the most repetitious jobs in our community and they often suffer a disproportionate amount of strain, tension, and fatigue as a result of these repetitious jobs. Many women workers carry the double burden of working at home and working in the paid work force and this adds to their very real fatigue and stress. Despite this there has been only one inquiry in Australian history into the occupational health of Australian women, and that was in 1928.

Tenosynovitis is a growing problem in Australia and in Western Australia. It is a problem in Government employment as well as in private employment.

I would briefly like to refer to a constituent of mine who came to see me recently. He has been a bricklayer for 32 years and had worked on a very dusty project in the Worsley area and as a result of this his salivary glands no longer function properly. He suffers constantly from a dry mouth and from pain in his neck. His neck injury is such that he is not able to return to work now. His doctor advised him to take regular exercises to try to improve his health. He came to see me because on two occasions he found an inquiry agent, hired by the insurance company responding to his claim for workers' compensation, filming him in his back garden as he tried to carry out the exercises recommended by his doctor. He told me that he was afraid to do the exercise the doctor advised him to do because he had seen this person filming him through the back fence for use later in the compensation case. He told me that he was proud that he had never taken a sick day off in his working life during his 32 years as a bricklayer, but now he felt like a criminal in his pursuit of workers' compensation.

This sort of example highlights the need for us to tackle the hazards on the job rather than to look to the compensation payable afterwards. In that way it is better to reduce noise levels in the workplace than for workers to have to wear earmuffs; it is better to have guards on machines than to instruct workers to take more care; it is better to reduce dust levels than to have workers wearing masks. The essential difference between the noise level at work and the noise level in a tavern or a disco is that anyone who goes to a tavern or a discotheque chooses to go there. Bands have reputations about the level of noise they generate and

people can leave any of these places at any time they choose. However, if people have a high level of noise in their workplace for eight hours a day, 44 weeks a year, they usually have no choice. They do not really have a choice of leaving the job if the noise level has affected their hearing.

I am extremely pleased that the Opposition supports this Bill. It deserves bipartisan support and I commend it to the House.

MRS BUCHANAN (Pilbara) [11.51 a.m.]: It has long been recognised that we need to look towards developing new strategies for the prevention of work-related injuries, diseases and deaths. Taking into account the roughly estimated cost of employment related injury and illness across Australia of \$6.5 billion a year, and the immeasurable human cost of suffering and disruption to life, there is no doubt that the existing system has many defects and that it is in need of careful attention. The Federal Government has started the ball rolling in this respect. As a result of the interim recommendations of the National Health and Safety Commission which were tabled in a report to the Federal Government in May this year, a permanent national commission is now to be established. According to the Federal Minister, Mr Willis, the primary role of this national commission will be to co-ordinate and facilitate action in conjunction with the State Governments.

It will develop national standards, increase training resources, and improve information collection and dissemination with the aim of rapidly reducing the level of occupational hazards causing death, injury and illness. State legislation is needed and it will complement the national strategy in working towards improved standards in occupational health, safety, and welfare.

Working people are exposed to many different hazards, usually on a daily basis, in the course of their employment. This includes the risk of accidents with machinery; the effects of noise on their hearing, as referred to by the member for Gosnells; repetitive strain injuries; exposure to substances such as asbestos and dust; and exposure to a wide range of dangerous chemicals. I will deal with the last category during this debate.

Virtually all chemical substances are manufactured, processed or used in a working environment and exposure to toxic substances occurs in manufacturing, storage, transport, retailing and a whole host of other industries. The Federal standing committee inquiring into hazardous chemicals in 1982 found that most workplaces today use some potentially hazardous chemicals. Many industries in which chemical exposure occurs are not commonly thought of as chemical

industries. Evidence given to the committee pointed to a range of hazardous substances to which workers in the clothing and dry cleaning industries are exposed. These include solvents such as benzene, toluene, tetrachloroethylene, trichlorethane and other chemicals such as carbon disulphide and benzidine dyes which are known human carcinogens. Formaldehyde, flame retardant and waterproofing sprays are also used in clothing trade processes. The committee's report referred to many cases and the following examples were given: Fumes in a degreasing tank in a paint factory caused the deaths of two young workers; asbestos filters are still used in some beer, wine and other food processing operations with consequent exposure to employees in that industry; many adhesives release solvents, propellants or other fumes which have toxic effects and these are used, often extensively, in a wide range of industries; and photocopiers and offset printers, often in confined office spaces, use solvent and other potentially hazardous chemicals. Therefore, even in work environments customarily thought to be safe working places, such as offices, many hazardous substances are in use.

Dr Ben Bartlett, a general practitioner in Sydney, in an article in the *Healthright* journal of August 1983 referred to no less than 18 sources of toxic hazards to be found in the office. Many processes in office work involve hazardous substances; a typical example is the correcting fluid widely used by typists which contains trichlorethane which is highly toxic. Under normal conditions of use only brief exposures are involved but if the fluid is spilled toxic levels can be reached. Some of the main concerns expressed by Dr Bartlett and others experienced in this field are: The complete lack of statistics on work-related illnesses and causes, and the lack of information about, and poor labelling of, toxic substances. It has been found that most chemical products have been, and continue to be, introduced in the workplace with minimal pre-testing because mainly there is no legal requirement to do so.

According to the National Health and Medical Research Council, limits for exposure of workers to existing chemicals are voluntary only and have not been adopted as statutory obligation in any State in Australia.

Another point which cropped up in the course of reading a number of publications while researching this issue is that very few workers or managers receive training on the risks to health posed by chemicals in the workplace. Some of the larger companies have recognised that sound occupational health and safety practices are essential to good management because they in turn

have a beneficial effect on efficiency and profitability. Unfortunately this has been slow to gain wider acceptance in many industries. Lack of information on toxic chemicals certainly compounds the problems. People cannot be properly protected from the effects of the toxic substances if they know very little about them. In that respect the labelling of chemical substances in many cases is considered to be inadequate. Labels with ambiguous instructions for handling a substance, and labels which fall off or quickly deteriorate with use of the container and become unreadable, should not be allowed in the workplace. Furthermore, employees working with chemicals which have the potential to threaten their lives and health have every right to be given accurate information on the toxicity of the substances and the safest way to handle them.

Between October 1983 and January 1984 many submissions were received by the Government in response to the discussion document, to which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred, on occupational health, safety, and welfare. Concern was expressed in many of those submissions about the lack of regulations on chemicals in the workplace. It was generally agreed that comprehensive controls and information systems were urgently needed.

The effects of toxic substances are varied. They range from common symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, conjunctivitis, respiratory tract irritations, vomiting and diarrhoea right through to the far more serious effects which can occur after long-term exposure to certain substances. It is now recognised that toxic chemicals used in many occupations and industries can cause reproductive disorders. Some attention has been focused on the exposure of pregnant women to toxic substances. However, the risks to the reproductive systems of both men and women have barely been considered in the past. It is just beginning to be realised that there are some very serious adverse consequences of exposure at work to toxic chemicals which can affect one's ability to produce normal, healthy children.

This includes sterility by genetic damage to male or female cells which can be passed on to the children, causing disease or birth defects, miscarriage or stillbirth. Adverse effects can also occur at conception, for example, by causing difficulty in conceiving a child or during pregnancy by causing miscarriages, stillbirth, cancer, disease, or birth defects. All this is a result of toxic substances crossing the placenta and reaching the developing foetus.

Exposure to chemicals can also harm a newborn child by the transfer of toxic substances in

breast milk or inadvertent exposure, which could occur for instance, with a parent bringing home substances on skin or clothing.

Several years ago my attention was drawn by workers in the Pilbara to the use by some of the mining companies of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCB. PCB came to notice following an accident in Japan, where the chemical inadvertently got into rice during the manufacturing process and was ingested by people. It caused serious illness to several thousand people and 16 died as a result of ingesting PCB.

A rather horrendous accident also occurred in the State of Michigan in the United States, where a chemical firm producing a fire retarder containing PCB was at the same time producing a cattle feed additive. As a result of a mix-up in the packaging, the wrong product was sent to the feed mill, and as a consequence this highly toxic substance was introduced into the food chain. The State of Michigan became the scene of one of the worst man-made ecological tragedies in American history. I believe even today problems caused by that incident still remain.

Despite the risks associated with PCB, and the fact that it has now been banned in the United States, it is still fairly widely employed as an electrical insulation and coolant fluid in electrical transformers and capacitors.

It is exceptionally non-flammable, hence its popularity. It is also used in equipment inside buildings for fire prevention reasons.

Following the discovery of the use of PCB in the Pilbara, steps have been taken to replace the substance with a suitable mineral oil or silicone to get rid of the hazard involved with the chemical.

The remaining problem, however, is the actual disposal of the PCB. The chemical is non-biodegradable; it is non-soluble in any aqueous media. The only way to destroy the substance is by incineration at very high temperatures—1 100 degrees centigrade is recommended.

Disposal of PCB continues to be an international problem. As far as I am aware it is one which is still being worked on very carefully. In the meantime it has been necessary for stringent measures to be exercised by the Health Department and it has a specially constructed storage depot in Wattleup, where failed equipment containing PCB is kept pending a safe method of disposal becoming available.

Nobody would deny that some benefits are to be obtained from modern chemistry. At the same time we must ensure that the benefits are not outweighed by the health risks to the workers in the many industries where they have to work with

a wide range of different chemicals. The Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Bill before us is an important first step towards achieving the required safeguards.

I am therefore very pleased to support this Bill.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [12.05 p.m.]: Before this Bill completes its second reading debate I would like to add a few words to those which have already been spoken in support of it. We would all be foolish if we did not support it. Naturally, the Opposition is no doubt aware of the many problems in industry which require attention in regard to health and safety. Over the years I have become very much aware of them.

When I first came into this Parliament I raised the danger associated with building construction workers on asbestos roofs. Thereafter, with time, a young chap named Buchanan stepped back and fell through a roof he was repairing at the metropolitan markets to the floor, fracturing his skull. As a result he died.

That was the beginning of the end of putting on asbestos roofs without a wire mesh protection underneath. To me, that seemed something which was very obvious, having been in the trade and having seen some very nasty accidents as a result of people losing their balance and having to put their feet on fragile roofs. There was nothing to stop them plummeting down, slicing arms or legs as they fell.

That is one example of many which had an effect. The Australian Labor Party, both State and Federal, has given a lot of attention to this aspect. The present Australian Labor Party platform clearly indicates a commitment to a national occupational health and safety commission.

In case some members on the other side of the House go around saying this was another example of centralism, some comments must be dealt with. I mention particularly the matter of licensing new chemicals.

For instance, if one wants to import chemicals such as pesticides or pharmaceuticals for food additives, one must have the permission of the Government. To introduce a new chemical into the workplace no test is required. Because most of those chemicals come from outside Australia, it is important for this to be done on a national basis. This is only one of the many features associated with making sure that the workplace is safe.

We have seen all those things which have happened in the mining industry. Most industries have their own safety regulations. The miners' regulations dealing with mining, and other regulations dealing with matters arising as a result of new implements such as the introduction

of explosives and guns for various purposes, have become necessary because a number of nasty accidents occurred before they were covered by regulations to ensure prevention rather than cure.

In various types of mining over the years, because we did not understand the circumstances under which people were mining, asbestos had a dire effect on workers. It resulted in such diseases as silicosis and pneumoconiosis. Fortunately that has been stamped out in the goldmining industry as a result of regular attention by X-ray examination of workers.

All those things showed that if we had instituted a little more observation a little sooner we could have avoided the tragedy of the breadwinner in many families becoming ill, or in many cases dying, leaving the family lamenting.

Those are some of the things that have gone before us and have caused us to legislate like this. I am sure that with the implementation of this Bill and a complementary Act in the national Parliament, the work force and, indeed, all people in the community, will be much better off. Nobody wishes a disease or failing health on a person owing to his work environment.

We have read in recent times in respect of the chemical laboratories of the Commonwealth Government, claims that dealing with certain chemicals has left people in a very bad state of health. Nobody is in a position to prove this, but the circumstances seem to be remarkably strange that so many people from those laboratories all seem to be ending up with the same type of complaint. If we can get above that and overcome the problems that these people are facing in the workplace, then as a legislative body we are achieving something above the arguments that we enter into here for apparently no other reason than to throw mud at one another across the Chamber.

We all agree on this issue and I think it is one that deserves to be promulgated as an Act of Parliament in this State as soon as it is possible to do so.

MR I. F. TAYLOR (Kalgoorlie) [12.12 p.m.]: I would like to commence my speech by thanking the Opposition for its indication of support for this legislation. I think that is indicative of the way the legislation has been put together, and the tripartite agreement that has been reached between the parties involved shows that this legislation is something that this State has been wanting for some time.

I think the Speaker, perhaps more than any other member in this Chamber, will be well aware of some of the traumatic occasions experienced by this Parliament in trying to bring down legislation

relating to the occupational health, safety and welfare of workers, because for some time he was involved as a Minister in trying to get that legislation through. At that time I was working with him in what was then called the Department of Labour and Industry, trying to ensure that the legislation was passed. There were always difficulties as far as the Parliament was concerned.

It is pleasing for me to see that there are some people here today with whom I used to work in the Department of Labour and Industry. I know full well that they would be quite pleased to see this legislation go through. I hope it meets with the same response in the Legislative Council as it has met in the Legislative Assembly today.

I think the member for Nedlands summed things up when he said that the responsibility lies with us all in terms of legislation and occupational health, safety, and welfare. The responsibility certainly does lie with everyone to ensure that workers in the workplace are subject to the minimal possible risk—in fact, if possible, no risk whatsoever. I certainly believe that there should be no risk involved in making one's living. It is quite different from recreation where one can make a choice as to whether or not one takes risks, such as mountain climbing or riding trail bikes. However, one should not have to take risks in the workplace.

The Government is committed to improving the standards of health and safety for workers and we believe all workers have a right to have a safe and healthy working environment. The Government is also committed to a very large degree of consultation as far as this process is concerned. Wherever possible, and I emphasise "wherever possible", from the Government point of view we will ensure that a bipartisan political approach is taken to these matters. We will also ensure that the consultation process is as detailed as possible and involves as many different parties as possible to ensure that we get the best result. It is important that everyone involved should realise that they can work together on these sorts of issues and can make our society a far better society as far as occupational health, safety, and welfare is concerned.

As the member for Kalgoorlie, I have a personal involvement in these matters, because coming from a mining industry and a mining town, workers' compensation matters and occupational health and safety matters have always been very important in the role of the member of Parliament in that community. Never a week goes by that I am not involved in some workers' compensation matter or taking up a case for a worker through

the State Government Insurance Office with the assistance of the mining division of the Australian Workers' Union. It is notable that the SGIO really had its base in Kalgoorlie and the workers' compensation role of the SGIO in the mining industry developed from a need that arose in the eastern goldfields.

It is also important that the workers I represent in the mining industry also take an active interest in safety and welfare matters, and I regularly attend executive meetings of the mining division of the Australian Workers' Union. Matters of safety are always on the agenda, and I have always noted that more often than not industrial disputation, which arises on an irregular basis in the eastern goldfields, concerns safety issues rather than any other issue.

The cost to the community as a whole for industrial accidents and matters arising out of industrial safety has been outlined by the Minister responsible for this Bill in his second reading speech. It is not my intention to go over those costs because I am sure members are well aware of exactly what is involved.

One of the important aspects of this legislation is that we have been able to point out the sort of "dog's dinner" we had with respect to industrial legislation in this State. In this State, let alone all other States, we have had 44 separate Acts, 58 sets of regulations and by-laws, 19 departments and 13 ministerial portfolios, all involved in the administration of matters associated with this legislation. If members have any doubt about that they should refer to the question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition some weeks ago, when he received a detailed reply outlining the entire range of legislation associated with industrial areas. This was mentioned by the Minister in his second reading speech.

There has been a co-ordinating agency for this legislation. The nature of this Bill is to bring about a large degree of co-ordination as far as occupational health, safety, and welfare is concerned. I have no doubt—and it is pleasing—that members of this Chamber see that there is a need for this legislation. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Nedlands mentioned, legislation does not always resolve or cure all things. It was only yesterday that I mentioned to a group of people in discussions on the inquiry the Public Accounts Committee is undertaking at present, that legislation is not always the way to go in terms of resolving problems. Those problems are quite often better resolved by the parties themselves sitting down and coming to grips with the matter rather than turning to the Government and asking it to legis-

late. I think it is a matter of commitment by the parties involved in most cases to ensure that problems are resolved and, in this case, we have seen through the tripartite council that there is, in fact, a commitment of employers, trade union organisations, and certainly this Government to ensure that we have legislation which will bring these matters together.

The Bill on this occasion has the support of all those parties. As mentioned by the member for Nedlands, the Government issued a public discussion paper some time ago. It received very wide distribution and, resulting from that public discussion paper, some 180 formal submissions were received by the Government. As the member for Nedlands said, some people were not particularly happy with a number of matters in the discussion paper.

I assure the member for Nedlands that the second step in this procedure is one of great consultation to try to resolve some of the difficulties. The first stage is the establishment of the commission and the rationalisation of existing administrative and legislative procedures. We will see that stage beginning in the next few weeks and by April next year the commission should be in place.

Of course, the second stage is to establish a structure to allow the passing of a comprehensive Act relating to occupational health, safety, and welfare. The Government has given a commitment that the Act will not be passed during this term of office. In fact, if we are re-elected in 1986, it would be only after the election that we would look at the second stage of this process. That commitment was given by the Premier and also the responsible Minister.

Next Saturday we will start advertising for the position of commissioner. The advertisements will be lodged throughout Australia and in Britain and Canada. The position of executive director will also be advertised. The advertisements will make it quite clear that the positions are subject to the passage of this legislation through the Parliament.

The Government is also moving to ensure that by December it will have the opportunity to bring together the organisations mentioned in the second reading speech, and by April we will have the commission operating.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned a number of matters on which he required assurances. He also mentioned a number of clauses he will speak to in the Committee stage. I thank him for bringing them to my attention. I know it is not always the case that that is done; it has given me the opportunity to talk to people who are more involved in this legislation so I can obtain

answers. I will endeavour to provide answers clause by clause in the Committee stage.

Mr MacKinnon: Thank you.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition sought assurances from the Government on other matters. One of those was in relation to the Confederation of Western Australian Industry (Inc.), and a commitment that we would work by way of the Act rather than regulations, and that all the decisions made should be made on a tripartite basis. I have also mentioned that, in fact, we will be working on a consensus basis. Of course, it is not always possible; but we will ensure that to the greatest degree possible decisions will be made on that basis. The Bill brought to the Parliament in a couple of years will be based on tripartite agreement between the parties and the council established by authority some time ago.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also mentioned clause 5(d) in relation to new obligations arising out of the operations of the commission. This Bill makes it quite clear that we will, at all stages, consult with all necessary parties. All interested parties will be involved in the consultative process. As a Government, we are committed to that.

In setting up the commission this legislation will also mean that new obligations will come forth in the next couple of years. There will be no standing still in the process of movement towards a proper working environment. Of course, that will mean changes in codes of practice, and there will probably be changes in regulations where necessary. However, I emphasise that any changes will be made after the proper consultative process, and also after obtaining a response from the advisory committee mentioned in the legislation. For example, if there are to be changes relating to the use of pesticides and herbicides in agriculture, the advisory committee dealing with agricultural matters will have a very important role in ensuring that any changes are made with the full knowledge, understanding, and co-operation of the industry, wherever possible.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned, I have only just completed an inquiry into the rural industry, so I am well aware of some of the problems facing that industry. Certainly it is not our intention to impose additional costs, but to ensure, wherever possible, that the working environment will be as safe as possible.

The matter of Commonwealth powers is one that I expected would be raised in the debate. The best way of answering the questions is to refer to the ministerial statement made by the Federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations

as recently as 11 October. In that statement to the Federal Parliament, the Minister said—

The Government endorses the interim Commission's view that the role of the Commonwealth should be primarily one of co-ordination and facilitation. The major jurisdiction over occupational health and safety lies with the States, some of which have recently taken significant initiatives in this field.

State and Commonwealth governments have clear and distinctive roles and responsibilities in this area. The establishment of the National Commission will see no transfer of these responsibilities, but the undertaking of additional, beneficial activities. The significant Commonwealth input will be in standards development, research, training and information collection and dissemination, all more efficiently and effectively done at a national level. The proposals thus represent a positive initiative in co-operative Federalism.

I also refer to the interim report on the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, which is part of the report on the proposed Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act in September 1984. A number of points in that report relate to the relationship between the Commonwealth and the States. I will mention briefly some of those points, as follows—

As the legislative responsibility for occupational health and safety lies predominantly with State Governments, it is critical that the States are involved in the decision-making process for this strategy.

In the objectives, it says that the commission will—

... provide a forum for State Government, employer and employee participation in the development and formulation of the occupational health and safety policies of the Commonwealth government.

In relation to functions, it goes on to say—

... facilitate consultation and co-operation between Commonwealth and State jurisdictions.

In relation to the composition of the commission, in fact a representative of this State has been appointed to the commission. She is Dr Judyth Watson, who is the ministerial adviser to the Minister on occupational health, safety, and welfare. The first meeting of the commission, which has been established without legislative backing at this stage, will take place next Tuesday, and Dr

Watson will attend that meeting. However, it is the intention of the Government that the commissioner appointed under this proposed Act will in fact be the State Government's representative to the national commission.

Mr MacKinnon: How many people will be on the national commission?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: There will be 17.

Mr MacKinnon: And we will have one representative?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: All of the States will have a representative, yes. The point is that the commission will not impose anything on the States. No doubt the States have a responsibility. In fact, the only way the commission will succeed is by ensuring that it receives the co-operation of all the States. The States will make life particularly difficult for the commission if they choose not to co-operate with it.

In relation to the composition of the commission, the interim report contains the following—

3.12 Similarly, State Governments have a fundamental role to play in implementation and should be properly represented. It is therefore recommended that all State Governments and the Northern Territory Government be represented on the National Commission; and in accordance with normal practice, their nomination should come from the Premier of each State and the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, respectively.

I hope that answers the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's question in relation to the relationship between the national commission, the Commonwealth Government, and this State in this matter.

Another matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition related to the three experts of the nine people appointed to the State commission. The Deputy Leader wanted to know whether decisions would be made on the basis of the mutual acceptability of the Trades and Labor Council and the Confederation of Western Australian Industry. Under the terms of the legislation, in fact the Minister is obliged to consult with both of those bodies, but he is under no obligation to accept a submission—in some cases, it could be a mutual submission—on the part of both of them.

I am quite sure that, as there are really so few experts in this area in Western Australia, both the Trades and Labor Council and the Confederation of Western Australian Industry will produce names which the Minister would find quite acceptable.

During the course of the tripartite discussions it was suggested the Minister could have a greater responsibility to accept the recommendations of the TLC and the Confederation of WA Industry, but it was felt that in fact that would be usurping the power of the Minister and that the Minister, being the elected officer, should have that responsibility.

Of course, the whole nature of this legislation revolves around the consultative processes which will be gone through and we, as a Government, realise it is necessary that, if we are to ensure the future of this commission and the future health, safety, and welfare of workers in this State, at all times we should try to get the greatest degree of co-operation.

The member for Nedlands and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised the issue, more as a matter of interest than anything else, of noise control. It has been pointed out to me that, as far as rock bands, etc., are concerned, it is not only the people in the bands who are at risk in respect of their hearing, but also the people who work in hotels and night clubs. I understand that the Artists Guild has appointed an officer to look at this problem and it may be able to produce some solutions to it.

Another point—a good one—raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, was that of just how feasible or practicable various restrictions, regulations, or Acts can or should be. I refer the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to the report on the contents of the submissions to the public discussion document, page 128, where reference is made to feasibility and practicability and things being reasonably or technically feasible. Work has been done in that area, particularly in Canada, and basically it says this—

The question of statutory standards has to be addressed by the State in the Act and the differences between an absolutist and a utilitarian approach to controls addressed. This is both an economic as well as an ethical question. How much weight is given to the absolutist approach of what "ought" to be done, has to be balanced against weighting accorded to the utilitarian approach of what "can" be done.

I suppose there is a difference between what ought to be done and what can be done. One should always work towards what ought to be done, but at the same time one should recognise that must be balanced against the view of what is possible under present circumstances.

The member for Nedlands also mentioned education and training. A vital part of the operation

of this legislation will be the responsibility for education and training. The Government sees education and training as being one of the keys to the future as far as the occupational health, safety, and welfare of workers is concerned.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Barnett) in the Chair; Mr I. F. Taylor in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 put and passed.

Clause 5: Objects—

Mr MacKINNON: I ask the member to explain the meaning of paragraph (b). A constituent raised a point with me as to what was meant by the words "or safety". How does one protect a person at work against risks to health or safety? How does one protect a worker against risks to his safety? The paragraph does not seem to make sense. I will not divide on it, but I ask the member to look at it. If he cannot answer my question now, perhaps he could consult with his adviser and the Minister to see whether, for the sake of the tidiness of the legislation, those words need to be removed.

The same could be said in respect of paragraph (d) which says—

... to reduce, eliminate and control risks to the health, safety and welfare of persons at work;

It seems to me that one could control the risks to a worker's health, but how can one control the risks to his safety? I do not know that that makes sense either.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: The objects of this Bill in relation to clause 5 have in many respects been taken from the International Labour Organisation Convention No. 155 and recommendation No. 164. I am not sure what the member is getting at. Is he concerned about the English in respect of the words "to protect... safety"?

Mr MacKinnon: I am concerned about both the English and the intention. The English does not seem to read correctly, and what is the implication?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: From the point of view of the English in relation to paragraph (b), it can be taken in two parts which are firstly, "to protect persons at work" and, secondly, "against risks to health or safety". In my understanding the word "safety" means to protect workers from injury or perhaps some sort of exposure to dangerous chemicals, gases, or the like.

Were we to take "safety" out of the legislation we would remove that element, because not only are we concerned with the health of a worker—that could apply to a worker at a keyboard or at a minesite—but we are also concerned as to whether the worker performing that task is doing something which is safe or unsafe; so we are concerned with the workplace as far as safety is concerned.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6: The Commission—

Mr MacKINNON: My question relates to subclause (2). During the second reading debate I said I wanted an explanation as to why it was necessary that an officer of the department, nominated in writing by the Minister, be appointed as well as the commissioner who, in this case, the member would be well aware is the head of the department. As I understand it, in the report it was indicated that the person to be appointed was more than likely to be the executive director of the division, and that all members of the tripartite council agreed on that. In other words, the executive director of the division will be a member of the commission working under the commissioner. It seems to me to be strange that we would have both the departmental head as well as the chief officer of that department or the next person in line in the department as members of the commission, particularly if that is read in line with clause 13(6), which says—

At a meeting of the Commission—

(a) only appointed members are entitled to vote;

Does that include the three other people? I understand that the intention of the tripartite council was that they be not entitled to a vote and that only the three from the confederation, the three from the TLC and the three having knowledge of or experience in occupational health and safety would be entitled to vote.

So, I would like the member to indicate why it is felt necessary to have an officer of the department as well as the head of the department on the commission? This would make a big difference if these people have a vote. Secondly, are they to have a vote?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: The answer to the second question is that they will not have a vote. They are nominated members of the commission as opposed to appointed members; only the nine appointed members will be entitled to vote. Probably the principal reason for this is that it is felt that as they would be Government appointed members of the commission, they might feel that they would be under pressure to vote in the way the Govern-

ment would like to see them vote; so rather than have that happen it was decided that they should not be given the right to vote.

The reason the executive officer also is to be a nominated officer to the commission is that the commissioner's role is really one of overseeing policy development for the secretariat to be established to work with the commission; he will not be involved in the day-to-day running, decision making and enforcement work of the organisation. That day-to-day running, decision making and enforcement will be overseen by the executive director rather than the commissioner. It was felt that the executive director would be able to do his or her job much better if he or she was actually involved in the decision-making process of the commission and could see what was going on. From the point of view of the operation of the commission it would be more acceptable to have this arrangement rather than to have memos delivered to the executive director asking him or her to do this or that. It was thought preferable for the executive director to be able to provide a direct input into the decision-making process.

Mr MacKINNON: I thank the member for Kalgoorlie for his explanation, because it does allay my fears on one question. If these other three persons are not to have a vote, the idea of having the executive director present is probably a logical move if he or she is not to have a vote.

The only other point I will raise is one which I raised during the second reading debate and to which the member did refer in his reply, but I will pursue it a little further. My query relates to the three other persons having knowledge of and experience in occupational health and safety who shall be nominated for appointment after consultation between the Minister and the bodies referred to in clause 6(2)(i) and (ii).

As I said in the second reading debate, the "Report on Proposed Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1984" is unambiguous and perfectly clear about the need for an agreement between the confederation and the TLC on the appointment of these people. I quote from page 15 of that report, which page is a copy of the minutes of the tripartite council of Thursday, 12 July—

It was also agreed that nominations for the "other persons" grouping should be mutually acceptable to the Confederation of W.A. Industry and the TLC.

This point is crucial to the successful operation of the commission. Now that we have established that these three Government appointees are not to have a vote, this agreement really forms the linchpin to the successful working of the commission.

Obviously differences of opinion will occur within the commission between the confederation and the TLC representatives, and this agreement on the appointments is critical if we have a position where these three people are to hold the balance of power. Both the confederation representatives and the TLC representatives will be aware of this balance of power. I do not want to take from the Minister his right to have the ultimate authority to appoint these people, because that is only right and proper; but the tripartite council, when discussing this matter, agreed that the appointments should be mutually acceptable. I point out that parties present at that meeting included the ministerial adviser, and representatives of the Office of Industrial Relations, Department of Industrial Affairs, Trades and Labor Council, Confederation of Western Australian Industry, Australian Mines and Metals Association, Chamber of Mines and Perth Chamber of Commerce, and observers from the Minister's office.

It will be of grave concern to us if the Government moves away from this agreement. I have spoken with officers of the confederation and they have indicated that they will be equally concerned.

I indicated earlier that I felt that we should have, as two of the three, a representative of small business and a representative of the farming community. It might not be possible to have those representatives because of their possible lack of expertise in the occupational and health areas or perhaps because the TLC and the confederation could not agree to their appointment under the terms of the agreement outlined in the report, and that would be reasonable because the two parties have agreed that the appointments should be mutually acceptable and that they would abide by the arrangement.

The member for Kalgoorlie, on behalf of the Minister, should give serious consideration to reviewing his earlier comments about this agreement. I have read the relevant part of the report and I have been unable to find anywhere subsequently, after that minute of 12 July, where the agreement might have been reversed. The confederation has a clear understanding that this agreement was accepted. I was told by the confederation yesterday that it had raised the matter directly with the Minister and asked why it was not included in the legislation, and the response was that the Minister should have the ultimate responsibility to appoint people to the commission. I agree with that, but on such an important point involving the balance of power revolving around the appointment of these three people, if we are to have consultation, with the commission operating with the spirit of the tripartite council, it should be

easy for the Government to accept the agreement which was agreed to by the confederation and the TLC at that 12 July meeting.

Bearing in mind the great importance we place in this agreement, I hope the member can ensure that the commission will operate in a truly tripartite manner.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: To take up the last point raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition I can say that, yes, we think the commission should operate to the greatest possible degree in a tripartite manner where people can agree on what is about to take place. I noted that he also mentioned his acceptance of the Minister's having the ultimate responsibility and authority to appoint persons to the commission. Certainly I am aware of the agreement mentioned in the report. It was only last night that I spoke about this legislation with Mr Brown, the Director of Labour Relations at the Confederation of WA Industry, and I asked if the confederation was happy with the legislation. He replied that it was and that it did not want to see any changes.

There is an understanding that these people should be mutually acceptable to the TLC and the confederation, bearing in mind that they will hold the balance of power; but while it would be preferable for there to be a mutually acceptable group of appointments, the legislation also makes it clear that the ultimate responsibility and authority for these appointments lies with the Minister. That is something which is accepted by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. In the final analysis the Minister will retain the discretionary power to make these appointments.

If the TLC and the confederation cannot agree on the three experts to be appointed, it will be up to the Minister to ensure that three people are appointed, because if they are not, the proceedings of the commission will grind to a halt.

I can only give the assurance in the strongest possible terms that we hope that the appointment will be mutually acceptable to both the TLC and the Confederation of Western Australian Industry. Certainly no appointments will be made without seeking their advice on who should be appointed. I have no doubt that they will be able to reach agreement because, as I said earlier, very few people in this State have the expertise to take up the role of any one of those three people.

Mr MacKINNON: I seriously hope the Government will agree to the undertaking given by the member for Kalgoorlie and follow the agreement that was nulled out on 12 July. If the Government fails to do that it will be placing at great risk the whole concept of occupational

health and welfare legislation in this State. It is a very serious issue and, as I said earlier, I agree and will always do so, that the Minister must ultimately be responsible for the appointment. He must ensure as far as is practically possible that the 12 July agreement is agreed to. We have had a good debate to date and I do not want to be overcritical. However, I seriously hope that the motion passed at the ALP State Conference does not apply in this instance where appointments to boards have to be cleared with the ALP before they are made. I totally oppose that sort of concept in any legislation.

The Premier agreed to this clause publicly in the newspaper, and indicated that the motion passed at the ALP Conference should be complied with. I do not necessarily want the member to comment on that matter unless he wants to. All I am saying is that I hope in this instance the motion passed at the ALP State Conference does not apply to this legislation because if that is the case, and if a bipartisan approach is not present, I assure the Government it will have grave problems and difficulties in implementing the legislation. Of course, if that occurs it places a red rag before the next Government to play exactly the same game and I hope that never occurs in this instance because this is far too important a subject for that to happen.

I urge the Government, particularly when the Minister in another place is dealing with this legislation, to take note of the comments that have been made and of the agreement that was nulled out on 12 July and perhaps give us as tight an undertaking that he can that the true spirit of the legislation will be applied in appointing those three members.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 13 put and passed.

Clause 14: Functions of the Commission—

Mr MacKINNON: Again I am aware that the member for Kalgoorlie has provided me with some explanations. One matter causes me concern and, if possible, I want the member to give me a more detailed explanation. I indicated that I was concerned about paragraphs (e), (h), and (k). He indicated that obviously some changes must be made to codes of practice etc., in due course on an ongoing basis. I understand that this will be the case. To this extent, the last point we debated is crucial.

The member indicated also that while he would try to arrive at agreement between all parties before any of the changes made as a consequence of these formulations or changes in training courses, etc., were implemented, it would nonetheless still

get on with the job. Again that underlines the importance of the point we just debated. I ask the member to elaborate, if he is able to do so, exactly what is intended to be done by the commission or the Government, under those three paragraphs (e), (h), and (k).

For example, paragraph (h) talks about advising persons on training and occupational health, safety, and welfare and formulating an accredited training course in occupational health, safety, and welfare. Is it likely that we will see pretty normal changes in that area or not and, if so, to what extent and who will be undertaking those courses? Will the commission undertake them, or are they likely to be left where they are now? I am not an expert in this area by any stretch of the imagination. The legislation deals with formulating reporting procedures and monitoring arrangements for identification of workplace hazards. Does the Government have anything in mind? Is it to be left totally up to the commission to formulate and recommend? I am really seeking guidance or an explanation of what is being discussed in these three paragraphs and what is likely to occur in due course.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: In relation to each paragraph, certainly at this stage they stand as functions of the commission and it will be the responsibility of the commission when it is appointed to address each of those functions. Paragraph (e) is really a matter of guidance. We will not establish standards. We will not say, "This is what will happen" in every case; but no doubt, we will do so in some cases. We will also be looking to the national commission for assistance in these areas to help develop criteria and set up standards. The paragraph is really concerned with matters of guidance wherever possible to ensure that the appropriate standards are raised throughout the community. The commission will have to address aspects of health, safety, and welfare as far as accredited training courses are concerned and it is our intention to liaise with educational and training bodies such as the Western Australian Institute of Technology, the directorate of Technical and Further Education, the trade union training authority, the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention and other private bodies in the occupational health, safety, and welfare area, to come up with accredited courses to set certain standards. Apparently there are a number of courses throughout the community in this area and the standards of all the courses are not always as high as they possibly could be. Some, of course, are excellent courses, so the Government will really try to develop a reasonable level of competence as far as these standards are concerned.

Mr MacKinnon: Will the commission itself carry out courses or is it envisaged that it will only be the accredited agent?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: I think the commission will be involved in the accreditation of courses, but at this stage it is not envisaged that it will actually undertake courses. It always seems to me that rather than establishing another authority or body that will run every course, wherever possible we should use existing authorities which can usually be very competent and efficient in undertaking the courses desired. It probably really is in some cases a misuse of public money if we double up on existing facilities.

Mr MacKinnon: If that happens we will get the Public Accounts Committee to look at it.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: Yes, I will mention that committee later today.

Paragraph (k), dealing with formulating reporting and monitoring procedures, has come about because of great concern felt by people involved in occupational health, safety, and welfare that no good quality statistics and no well established reporting procedures are available and there is a great need to know exactly what is going on in the community. It is only on this basis of being able to find out what is going on that the proper procedures can be established and we can see the real problem areas, which areas should be addressed as a matter of urgency, etc. That is a very important function as far as the future operations of the commission are concerned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr MacKINNON: Before the luncheon suspension we were discussing this clause and the implications of subclauses (e), (h), and (k). I wish to again voice my concern in relation to this part of the clause, and the implications of what may occur in these areas.

It would seem to me that if the clause reads as I understand it, major changes could be made to the regulations and legislation currently applied to industry in Western Australia, and to the workers covered under that legislation. The member for Narrogin indicated to me his concern about this clause, and he will raise that concern with the member for Kalgoorlie in a moment.

The Government needs to be careful about the membership of the board, otherwise we could run into difficulties with the implementation of the legislation. I would like the member for Kalgoorlie to explain to me that part of the clause which states that the functions of the commission are to make recommendations to the Minister with respect to a whole range of matters.

In subclause (1)(b) and (c) we note that the functions of the commission are to make recommendations to the Minister with respect to certain matters and to formulate or recommend standards, specifications or other forms of guidance for the purpose of assisting employers, self-employed persons, and employees to maintain appropriate standards of occupational health, safety and welfare.

It would seem to me that the functions of the commission are quite clear and that it has a role under this legislation to set standards for occupational health and welfare in the community. That could involve major changes in the way in which those standards are implemented at present.

I hope the Government will ensure that the commission will not take unilateral or arbitrary action, particularly if the membership of that committee is not truly bipartisan, and that it will make sure that any major changes referred to in the public discussion document are brought back to the Parliament so that they may be discussed.

If that is not done the Government will have a problem with respect to the implementation and carrying out of this legislation. I believe if the clause is interpreted in the widest sense possible, it could mean that if major changes are to be made those changes—as they are outlined in the public document and of course many were objected to—will be the subject of a tripartite discussion and, in due course, legislation, rather than just coming forward as recommendations to the commission which will carry out those actions.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: I suppose I will have to repeat myself. Certainly matters will not come to a standstill as far as the improvement of regulations and codes of practice in this area of occupational health, safety, and welfare is concerned. What I am saying is that everything will not stop until the next Act is implemented—which may be in 1986-87. This commission will have a role in relation to these functions, but what I emphasise is that this role will be of a tripartite nature. There will be discussion and consultation with all interested and involved parties.

Even at this time the Government is undertaking a review of a wide range of regulations. All of those reviews are being made on the basis of tripartite consultations. Only recently there was an amendment in relation to asbestos exposure in this State which substantially improved that situation.

That review will be undertaken on a tripartite basis and this will continue to be the case, because this Government has a commitment in that area.

We will ensure that commitment is followed through.

Mr PETER JONES: I had a commitment earlier in the day and was unable to comment on this clause. I express the opinion that a lot of this is simply like motherhood.

From what the member has just said we do not really need to have a Statute in order to talk to people. As I understood the member for Kalgoorlie, clause 14 provides for a body established by Statute to talk to people on a joint basis about formulating matters. The operative words if we go past clause 14(1)(b) are "to make recommendations to the Minister". It does not tell us what the Minister will do with them. The operative words after that are "examine, provide, formulate, have regard for, recommend, collect" and so on. We do not need a Statute to do all those things. A group of people can talk about such matters in an ongoing way.

As I understand the member for Kalgoorlie, nothing will cease—the regulation making processes will not cease pending the introduction of the next Statute to this Parliament. If my impression is wrong I hope he will correct me by way of interjection.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Can you say that again?

Mr PETER JONES: The member said nothing would cease and the regulation making process would continue. Perhaps he can tell us who will implement the regulations and administer them pending the advent of the next Statute, which he said would be in 1986 or whenever. It is not tomorrow or next year, it is downstream sometime. I come back to my original question: Why do we need this Statute? It provides an umbrella—

Mr I. F. Taylor: The regulations will be implemented and administered by the new department. That is the nature of the department; it will bring these matters together. If the member reads the second reading speech he will see that a wide range of 44 Acts, 58 regulations, 19 separate bodies, and 13 different Ministers are involved in this area. The nature of the department and the commission is such that they will try to bring these things together.

Mr PETER JONES: That will happen from the time this Bill is proclaimed.

Mr I. F. Taylor: It could be on a gradual basis. I refer the member to clause 2 of the Bill—

Mr PETER JONES: What is the next Statute the member has foreshadowed for 1986?

Mr I. F. Taylor: The next Statute is an overall occupational health and safety statute for workers

which will bring everyone together as far as the operation is concerned.

Mr PETER JONES: So this one is as horrendous as was foreshadowed?

Mr I. F. Taylor: Far from it.

Mr PETER JONES: Let us clarify this point: The member has said the commission will draft, formulate, recommend, promote, and all the other aspects to which he referred, and the appropriate Minister will table the regulations which will be administered by the new department, to use his own words, pending the Statute which will come forth whenever. It will be a new giant to administer this particular field.

Mr Brian Burke: I do not know if you are being deliberately obtuse—

Mr PETER JONES: I am trying to clarify the matter because I was not here this morning.

Mr Brian Burke: A series of Acts and Statutes are already in existence which permit regulations to be made, and power to make those regulations is not changed by this Bill.

Mr PETER JONES: I understand that.

Mr Brian Burke: Then you cannot be talking about, to use your own words, something more horrendous than presently exists because the regulation making power is not changed.

Mr PETER JONES: I did not use the words "more horrendous".

Mr Brian Burke: You said "as horrendous as what is to come next".

Mr PETER JONES: As is anticipated.

Mr Brian Burke: It cannot be more horrendous than that which you did in Government because the power to make regulations is not being changed.

Mr Mensaros: I thought the member for Narrogin's argument was based on what the Premier has just said, that the Bill is superfluous.

Mr Brian Burke: Of course, but he was going on to say—

Mr PETER JONES: Do not tell me what I was going on to say.

Mr Brian Burke: I will tell you what you went on to say. You suddenly had this umbrella piece of legislation having the ability to make regulations and do all sorts of things in areas where existing Statutes provide these regulations to certain Ministers.

Mr PETER JONES: That is referred to here, but also—

Mr Brian Burke: Not also. Do not gloss over what you do not understand. Do not lurch from ignorance to ignorance.

Mr PETER JONES: It has the power to make regulations in relation to proposed section 14 which refers to the functions of the commission and all the things to which reference has been made by various speakers. The point I come back to is that which the Premier has just made: This Bill cannot do that which does not exist.

Mr Brian Burke: That is right.

Mr PETER JONES: Then why have it?

Mr Brian Burke: Because we are preparing for a situation which will come about.

Mr PETER JONES: The second coming in 1986.

Mr Brian Burke: We are preparing for a situation which will come about when the occupational health and safety Bill is introduced, not the commission Bill. We have in the commission a vehicle which will be able to gain consensus within the community about any proposed changes. You know that and I object to the line you are taking. All you want to do is spellbind and steamwind.

Mr PETER JONES: No, I said I was not here earlier and I wanted to clarify on this clause why we have a Statute which does only two things—it provides a statutory backing for a group of people to talk—

Mr Brian Burke: An umbrella.

Mr PETER JONES: —and, secondly, it makes regulations relative to the functions outlined in clause 14. If, as the Premier says, it does nothing more than already exists, why have it?

Mr Brian Burke: Because it is in piecemeal form scattered throughout so many departments that you do not know whether it exists, and we are taking the first step to rationalise in a comprehensive fashion beneath the umbrella you referred to.

Mr PETER JONES: This is not—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I feel some sympathy for the member because he indicated he was unable to be here for the second reading debate but this is not the second reading and the extent of my sympathy has expired. The member will address himself to the clause in question.

Mr PETER JONES: With respect, Mr Chairman, the clause in question relates to what I am talking about—the powers and functions of the commission.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out that on several occasions up to now the member has strayed considerably from clause 14 and I have

allowed that, but I will not allow it to continue. The member may continue his remarks but they must be addressed to clause 14.

Mr PETER JONES: Would the member for Kalgoorlie like to organise some remarks in relation to what the machinery aspect will be when the Minister deals with the recommendations he receives under clause 14(1)(b)?

Similarly, the way in which—

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: Have you looked at clause 14(2) and (4)?

Mr PETER JONES: That refers to the function of the commission. If the commission recommends to the Minister that certain things be put in practice in order to achieve certain things, what is the machinery available under this Bill for the Minister to do that?

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: I refer members to the Minister's second reading speech in which he said—

First, the commission will be established and we will start to rationalise existing administrative and legislative procedures. Then, when the structure is in place, the Government will address the issue of the comprehensive Act and find the best means to ensure that all workers are protected.

That is the procedure; to move from this commission to an Act in 1986 or 1987.

I can only emphasise to the member for Narrogin, who was not present earlier today, that it will be done on a tripartite consultative basis. Even at this stage considerations are taking place on a tripartite basis. That is the way the Government intends to work in this area. It will not work away from that. As long as that continues to happen over the next few years there will be a dramatic change to see that employees are protected in this State. Employers will be involved—they have been involved and will continue to be involved.

It was pleasing to hear that the Opposition intends to support the legislation because it can obviously see the reason for bringing these departments under the one department.

Mr Peter Jones: This Bill does not do that.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: It establishes a means for it to happen. It will not happen straightaway. I refer members to clause 19 of the Bill which states that the Governor may by order transfer the administration of that law or provision to that Minister. That establishes how this may, in fact, happen. It can happen on a regular or irregular basis over the next few years. I suggest that if

members were to read clause 19 they would have a better understanding of the procedure.

Mr PETER JONES: We have a situation where the ability to keep hammering the word "tripartite" means nothing. It is one of those fashionable words like "consensus". If we refer to the industrial tripartite committee we can see that certain things, such as penalty clauses, were protected.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: Nothing was excluded from discussion by this tripartite committee.

Mr PETER JONES: I accept that, but it means nothing except that groups of people will come together for discussion. It provides the umbrella, and no-one is disputing that. It is beneficial. However, it cannot be a justification to have a Bill by saying that it is a tripartite thing.

Similarly, the points which these various functions identify are included in clause 14. The point remains that the Government is now saying that, as distinct from having a statutory umbrella—tripartite or whatever—under which discussions will occur, the body will make regulations.

Clause 19, which we are not addressing at the moment, but which was referred to by the member for Kalgoorlie, provides for the transfer of other laws in regard to that regulation making power. In fact, this commission, rather than just discussing those laws, will be implementing them and the subsequent Statute that is foreshadowed will really only formalise, in a statutory sense, the bringing together of the various Statutes containing occupational health provisions. That is what it means.

The reality of the position is that the actual practical application of this body will start from the day it is proclaimed. That is the way I see it and that is what the member for Kalgoorlie agreed with. It goes beyond the impression that was originally given.

The second Bill will simply bring into statutory form the amalgamation and the combination under the one roof of the various other Statutes and sections of Statutes that address this matter. This Bill provides for the transfer of the regulation making process from other Statutes to this one. It gives the commission significant power to intrude into the workplace, albeit under the same tripartite umbrella. That has certainly not been readily understood by those who have supported the legislation in the way they should have done had they thought about it earlier.

Mr MacKINNON: I want to pursue the point I have made consistently in relation to the legislation. The Opposition wants to repeat that the

member for Kalgoorlie has indicated that this legislation will proceed with the clauses to which I have referred. The one that we have the most concern about is the clause dealing with the implementation of the commission and we understand that this will be done only after proper tripartite consultation has taken place.

I want the member to be aware of what the Opposition understands him and the Government to mean by "tripartite consultation". The Opposition understands it to mean proper employer and employee consultation—as outlined by the commission which is the third party—with an independent person who has knowledge of and the experience in occupational health and safety matters. We will not accept it if members of the consultation committee are party political, party partisan, or Government dominated.

If the Government calls a tripartite discussion—I am not saying it will, but it could happen—we could have an ALP dominated Government which nominates three ALP members to team up with representatives from the TLC, which consists mainly of ALP supporters, and that would not be tripartite consultation.

I agree with the member for Narrogin that if that was to occur and if wholesale changes were made we would have grave concerns, as would the people in the community whom we represent.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: The Government does have a genuine commitment to ensuring that this legislation works and it accepts that if it is to work it must be on a basis whereby people have to work with each other.

My understanding in terms of the appointment of three representatives from the TLC and the Confederation of Western Australian Industry is that the Government will be looking for the best people it can find to work on the committee. It will ensure that the representatives are experts on matters that come before them.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 17 put and passed.

Clause 18: The Commissioner and the Department—

Mr MacKINNON: During the second reading debate I raised a question in relation to clause 18. The fact is that under this clause the commissioner is subject to the control and direction of the Minister.

When this Bill becomes an Act, obviously there will be many regulations to administer. It could well be, for example, that a case that contravenes a regulation is drawn to the attention of the commissioner who decides to take some action. How-

ever, the person concerned, be it the employee or the employer, may take the matter up with the Minister who, in turn, may order the commissioner not to take such action. I would have thought that this sort of thing would be very much guarded against in the administration of this type of legislation.

I would appreciate the Minister's views on why that clause is included. Secondly, I would like to know whether he can give an indication where else a similar clause is included in legislation around Australia. This concerns me, and it could well open the Act to abuse.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: This clause is not unusual. In fact a similar clause appears in the Factories and Shops Act, the Construction Safety Act, and the Machinery Safety Act.

The Factories and Shops Act provides—

This Act shall be administered by the Minister and, subject to any direction of the Minister, by the Secretary for Labour.

The recently enacted tourism legislation goes a little further in that it says that the commission itself is subject to the direction of the Minister. I do not think it is unusual that the elected Minister or the elected Government should have the responsibility established in clause 18 of this Bill. It fits in with other legislation in this area, and even in areas outside occupational health and safety. In the area of occupational health, safety, and welfare, there are those three pieces of legislation, all of which ensure that the responsibility is to the Minister.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 19 to 21 put and passed.

Clause 22: Review of Act—

Mr MacKINNON: It is my intention to move the following amendment—

Page 14—Delete clause 22 and substitute the following—

22. (1) This Act shall, subject to this section, continue in operation until 31 December 1989 and no longer.

(2) On the expiry of this Act by virtue of subsection (1)—

(a) all real and personal property and every right or interest therein that immediately before that expiry was vested in the Commission shall without any transfer or assignment pass to and become vested in the Minister;

(b) all rights, liabilities and obligations of the Commission that were in

existence immediately before that expiry shall devolve on the Minister;

- (c) all contracts, agreements and undertakings made by and with the Commission and having effect immediately before that expiry shall have effect as contracts, agreements and undertakings made by and with the Minister and may be enforced by or against the Minister accordingly; and
- (d) any legal or other proceedings or any remedies that might, but for this section, have been commenced or continued or available by or against or to the Commission may be commenced or continued, or shall be available by or against or to the Minister, as the case requires,

for the purpose of the winding up of the affairs of the Commission and the Minister shall as soon as is practicable after that expiry wind up the affairs of the Commission.

(3) For the purposes of this section a reference to the Commission—

- (a) a law of the State in force; or
- (b) a document in existence,

immediately before the expiry of this Act by virtue of subsection (1) shall after that expiry be construed as a reference to the Minister.

That is a sunset clause giving the commission a period of five years in which to operate before the sunset clause comes into effect. In other words, if it were not reviewed before that time the commission would be wiped out.

We in the Opposition parties, and I in particular, have a firm belief in the effectiveness of sunset clauses. While I would be prepared in debate with the member to consider a longer life than five years, that is the time set for the review. Five years may be rather a short time; between seven and 10 would probably be more appropriate.

In my view the review clause does very little, if anything. All it does is to provide that every five years there is a review and a report. One could do that in the last week of the five years. It does not do anything to establish whether the body is doing its job.

Clause 22 states—

The Minister shall prepare a report based on his review of this Act and shall, as soon as is practicable after its preparation, cause the

report to be laid before each House of Parliament.

All that does is to have the report tabled in Parliament, whether or not there is sufficient time for Parliament to look at it. That review may come out when the Parliament is not in session. That is not an effective way to review the operations of a statutory authority.

An effective way to implement this type of provision was included by the Opposition parties in the Western Australian Tourism Act, where a clause was implemented in very similar terms to the one I have tabled. The commission was subject to not continuing in operation after a certain date.

This provision ensures that well before that term of 12 months or thereabouts that commission must begin seriously to examine its activities and actions and it must bring before the Parliament a report to justify its continued existence. The Government of the day then has to bring before the Parliament legislation confirming the continuing existence of that body. That gives the whole Parliament a proper time to review and to debate the commission. We must then decide as a Parliament, and the Government of the day in particular, whether the commission has been carrying out its functions effectively.

I am a believer in sunset clauses; I do not have great faith in review clauses.

Secondly, I draw the attention of Parliament and the member particularly to the news release of the Premier which I referred to last night. This was dated 15 October, 14 days ago, when the Premier said that new statutory bodies established by the State Government would have a fixed life. He did not say that they may have a fixed life, or they will be reviewed at the end of that time, but that they will have a fixed life. Very little argument, if any, can be mounted against such a proposition if one believes in sunset clauses.

One can always say there will be an occupational health, safety, and welfare commission. Perhaps there will be, perhaps there will not be. If we had had a proper sunset clause in 1957 or 1958, this legislation could have been brought about much earlier when we reviewed the operations.

I return to the point I began with: If one really believes in sunset clauses, one does not pussyfoot around with a review clause, which effectively does nothing. The clause I seek to substitute will effectively—not “may” but “will” effectively—mean that this statutory body is reviewed promptly at the end of the five-year period, and then the Parliament of the day, or the Government of the day, can confirm whether it should continue

in that form or in some other way. That is in line with the Premier's first statement in his Press release. I am just trying to make sure that the Government lives up to its rhetoric.

The CHAIRMAN: It is incorrect to move for the deletion of the clause. If the member wishes to insert a new clause it is necessary for him to convince the rest of the Committee to vote against the current clause.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: I accept the points made by the member in relation to sunset clauses. I know that in speaking very sincerely in favour of sunset clauses the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has made it quite clear where he stands on this matter. There is no doubt that the clause before us today is not a sunset clause; it is, in fact, a review clause.

As a member of this Chamber I am very concerned to see that Parliament itself plays a full and proper role in ensuring that Government instrumentalities and authorities which we establish as a result of our role as legislators do the right thing. We must make certain they do not just go on and on without ever accomplishing the aims and objectives required of them when this Parliament dealt with the particular legislation.

It seems to me, in this situation, the logic behind a review clause rather than a sunset clause is that we are in fact dealing with a matter of human safety. To say this instrumentality or authority must disappear at the end of five years, as suggested, could endanger human life. The object is to have a review clause such as this. It is a substantial review clause. It requires the Minister to consider and have regard to the commission established by this legislation, taking into account all the laws relating to health, safety, and welfare, including the operations of the commission and any advisory committees, and the need for the continuation of the committee established under this legislation.

Having done that, and a report having been prepared, the next step is that it comes before this Parliament. As Chairman of the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee, I would ensure that, if a negative report or a report which left in question the efficiency and functioning of this authority came before this Parliament, that matter was examined by the committee. Indeed, Standing Orders to change some aspects of the role of the Public Accounts Committee are now before the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr Peter Jones: But its coming before the Parliament in the way you have said does not mean that it comes before the Parliament in a legislative or debating sense. Rather, the report is tabled and

that does not mean anything except that it is made public.

Mr I. F. TAYLOR: It does mean something apart from making a report public, if we consider our role as parliamentarians and legislators and also the fact that we have available to us in this Chamber the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee which has the responsibility to take these matters further should it be necessary. As chairman of that committee I see that as being part of the role of the Public Accounts Committee and, if the Standing Orders are amended, there is no doubt whatsoever that that should be the role of the committee if it is necessary in this case.

This is a strong review clause. Similar clauses are contained in the South West Development Authority legislation as well as in the WA Development Corporation legislation.

The commission is also required to report to the Parliament on an annual basis, and that is absolutely essential. I would strongly support the continuation of clause 22 in this Bill as a review clause, rather than as a sunset clause, because the logic, in terms of dealing with life and safety, is that it is absolutely essential that this commission be able to continue its role as an ongoing body; but at the same time it will be well aware that every five years its role will be subject to the review and scrutiny of the Parliament. That will not just occur on an annual basis, but every five years this Parliament must review specifically the work of the commission.

Mr COURT: I have trouble understanding the logic of the member when he does not support inserting a sunset clause in the legislation, bearing in mind that only last week we were told by the Government that it supported the whole concept of sunset clauses.

Mr Peter Jones: It was a Cabinet decision.

Mr COURT: Not only was it a Cabinet decision, but also it was a bit of a public relations exercise. However, when we put the Government to the test with a piece of legislation such as we are debating here, it says, "No; it is too important for that. We shall just have a review clause". I would have thought that the whole idea of a sunset clause was to make this Parliament look seriously at the legislation to examine how it has been working and to decide whether it should be continued.

Mr Jamieson: Parliament will be in permanent session in about 10 years' time just dealing with reviews.

Mr COURT: We are talking about human safety and, of course, the Parliament can look at the issue before the five years are up if it is desired

that the activities of this body should be continued.

Mr Gordon Hill: In that case what is the point of a sunset clause?

Mr COURT: The Government has been promoting sunset clauses and the reason for having them is that it forces the Parliament to look at statutory authorities to see how they are operating.

Mr Gordon Hill: That is what this clause does. It forces us to look at the legislation.

Mr COURT: That is just a review clause. Under a sunset clause, the commission would be discontinued after five years, and if it is desirable that it should continue to operate, legislation must be brought to the Parliament. We do not intend to sit in this Parliament and have the Government tell us one week what it will do, making a big song and dance about it, with the private sector getting all excited because the Government is saying it will do all sorts of things it wants the private sector to hear, then the next week tell us it will not live up to its commitments.

I would have thought the Government would accept the amendment. If members opposite say that a review clause meets the requirements they advocated last week in respect of sunset clauses, they are wrong.

The whole idea of a sunset clause is that it is definite and it forces the Parliament to look closely at the authority and to decide whether or not it is working well.

Mr MacKINNON: I cannot believe that the member for Kalgoorlie, in particular, really believes what he is saying today.

Mr Peter Jones: He doesn't. He was blushing.

Mr MacKINNON: Perhaps that is his party's line and the instruction he has been given; but knowing the member as I do and recalling the comments he made when in Opposition about these types of issues, I am sure he agrees with our point of view, which is that there is no chance whatsoever, as the member tried to indicate, that life will be put at risk by a sunset clause. That will certainly not be the case if a responsible Government is in power at the time.

The commission will be only too well aware of the sunset clause in its own legislation. One would be naive to think otherwise. The commission will be talking to its Minister well before the sunset clause comes into operation to ensure legislation is brought into the Parliament to maintain its position.

Mr Gordon Hill: What is the purpose of the sunset clause?

Mr MacKINNON: It means that this legislation must come back to the Parliament and be debated. The review clause says—

The Minister shall carry out a review of the operations of this Act on every fifth anniversary of the commencement of this Act and in the course of such review the Minister shall consider and have regard to—

The Minister does not have to give any weight to these matters; he just has to consider them. He may then say, "I shall consider these matters". The Minister must prepare a report and perhaps he will prepare a one-page report, and table it in the Parliament, and that will be the end of it. His report may say, "I have reviewed the activities of the commission and everything is fine". He will then table it and what will the community have to go on? It will have nothing at all to go on.

However, if after five years the Bill comes back to the Parliament to be renewed, the Government will have a damned good look at what is involved, because the legislation should not come into Parliament without the Government's having done its homework. At the same time, the Opposition, as all good Oppositions do, will ensure it reviews that legislation and the operations of the commission, and all the interest groups in the community which are affected will do likewise.

I return to the first point I made which related to the Premier's words on 15 October which were, "New statutory bodies established by the State Government will have a fixed life".

All we are trying to do is ensure that the Premier is a man of his word. Last night I showed quite clearly how, on 22 June last year, the Premier made many statements and has indicated by his subsequent actions that he is not a man of his word. Now is the time for the Premier and his Government to accept this amendment in line with the commitment that he gave—not that the Opposition gave, but that the Premier gave—which was that, "New statutory bodies established by the State Government will have a fixed life". We only seek to comply with the Government's wishes.

If the Government chooses to reject this amendment, the sincerity and content of that Press statement must be very seriously questioned, not only by the Opposition parties, but also by the broader community.

Mr PETER JONES: What the member for Kalgoorlie said in defence of the present situation is ridiculous. It is accepted that this Bill was drafted prior to the Cabinet decision; therefore, had it not been in accordance with the Premier's statement, presumably if the Cabinet decision was to mean anything, when this Bill came to the Par-

liament a sunset clause would have been inserted in it.

The Premier did not equivocate in his statement. He made the position quite clear when he said—

New statutory bodies established by the State Government will have a fixed life. Cabinet decided today that sunset or review clauses will be included in the legislation establishing new statutory bodies and that the clauses should be put into the legislation governing existing bodies when amendments are made to it.

Mr Brian Burke: Isn't this a review clause?

Mr PETER JONES: It does not refer to a review by Parliament.

Mr Brian Burke: Read what you read again.

Mr PETER JONES: It says—

Existing bodies will also be given a fixed life when the legislation governing them is amended by Parliament. New statutory bodies established by the State Government—

Mr Brian Burke: Keep reading.

Mr PETER JONES: To continue—

—will have a fixed life.

What does "fixed life" mean?

Mr Brian Burke: You forgot not to read the bit you just read by mistake.

Mr PETER JONES: Cabinet decided that sunset or review clauses—

Mr I. F. Taylor: Sunset or review clauses!

Mr PETER JONES: —should be put into the legislation covering existing bodies when amendments are made to it.

Mr Brian Burke: It is not a review clause; that is what you are saying.

Mr PETER JONES: So in other words the other part of the Government's statement means nothing.

Mr Brian Burke: Sunset clauses or review clauses?

Mr PETER JONES: The Press release says, "New statutory bodies established by the State Government will have a fixed life".

Mr Old: You don't really mean it? Of course he didn't really mean it.

Mr Brian Burke: Prior to the operation of the sunset clauses or review clauses. You have just read it out yourself.

Mr PETER JONES: The first time this is tested—

Mr Old: It caves in.

Mr PETER JONES: —we find the Premier did not mean it.

Mr Brian Burke: You just read it out yourself. The other member was so careful not to read it.

Mr PETER JONES: The drafting of it means nothing. So far as review of the Parliament is concerned, that means nothing. All the commissioner needs to do is to sit in his office and review in the terms that are set out. For the Premier's information, it happens to be No. 196 on the file. He just sits there and carries out a review of the operations on every fifth anniversary. He has to consider certain provisions when doing so, and he must do something. All he must then do is, "prepare a report based on his review and shall as soon as practicable after its operation cause the report to be laid before each House of Parliament".

All that the clause means as it exists now is that a review will be made which encompasses this Statute. It does not require Parliament to review. It requires the Minister to consider the operations of the commission in the terms of clause 22(1)(a) to (e) and, having done that, to cause a report to be prepared and tabled. It does not even give Parliament—

Mr Brian Burke: Will you send me over a copy of that statement?

Mr MacKinnon: The Press statement? I will get a copy for you.

Mr PETER JONES: No problems. We will provide the Premier with everything he wants.

Mr Brian Burke: Except a decent argument! That is okay; carry on. I was only joking.

Mr PETER JONES: The whole Bill is a joke. I can understand that.

Mr I. F. Taylor: That is absolutely outrageous.

Mrs Watkins: What a ridiculous thing to say.

Mr PETER JONES: Surely any sunset or review clause worth its salt would require Parliament to review the matter.

Mr Brian Burke: You will not read the report after it is tabled.

Mr PETER JONES: That is not to be a review by Parliament; it is simply using the established body, Parliament, as a vehicle to table a report, to make it public, just as papers and reports are tabled in the Chamber on most days on which we sit. It does not require Parliament—

Mr Brian Burke: You have been here long enough to know that the reason those things are tabled is to allow members of the Opposition, among other people, to have a look at them.

Mr PETER JONES: Hallelujah!

Mr Brian Burke: Thank you.

Mr PETER JONES: All this clause intends to do is to simply make something public. It does not even mean that there has to be any justification. The Minister has to consider certain points when making his review. He has to consider the attainment of the objectives of the Act, and the need for it to continue. As if any Minister is going to say, "We don't want it to continue"—

Mr Brian Burke: We abolished some and you never did.

Mr PETER JONES: The Premier is absolutely right when he says he abolished some that we did not abolish. If we had done so they would not have been left for him to abolish.

Mr I. F. Taylor: What?

Mr Brian Burke: You are an intellectual colossus.

Mr PETER JONES: A review clause of any substance would require some form of parliamentary debate to consider or pass a motion or at least consider the situation regarding this body or whatever body it might happen to be at the time. So if in fact the Premier's statement put out after Cabinet met meant that a sunset clause or even a review clause of any substance was to be inserted, surely we are entitled to have one presented to the Parliament and not to have something which is really meaningless.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I really do not believe that the Opposition can be serious in its selective quoting of news releases and in its incomprehensible application of its selective quoting of the Bill before the Parliament. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, to give him credit, was at least nimble enough not to quote those parts of the news release which did not support his case, but he was not too keen upon the help he received from the member for Narrogin who leaped onto the scene, picked up the news release and then read out enough from that release to effectively destroy the foundation that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had tried to build beneath his case. If one reads the news release—

Mr Peter Jones: I did.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —one will see it says the following—

Cabinet decided today that sunset or review clauses will be included in the legislation establishing new statutory bodies and that the clauses should be put into the legislation governing existing bodies when amendments are made to it.

That is the first thing. The news release then went on to talk about sunset clauses and what they achieve. It then says—

An alternative form of sunset clause made it necessary for an organisation to be reviewed after a specified period.

It is as clear as the nose on the member's face that this clause requires the Minister to do certain things. The Opposition lacks the confidence to be able to say that when the Minister has done those things required of him by this clause the Parliament has the ability to make a public issue of a particular organisation if it is failing to operate, and to make an issue of the failure or the performance of the body subject to the review clause.

That is what review clauses are all about. If the Opposition does not realise the report that the Minister will table in the Parliament will justify the persistence or otherwise of the organisation that he is reporting on, at that stage it will be incumbent on the Opposition, perhaps not this Opposition, but for an Opposition, to take exception to the continuance of the performance of a particular entity, and that is what this is all about. This review clause provides a public scrutiny of the performance of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Commission.

It is as simple or as difficult as that. As far as the Government is concerned, it would be perfectly competent for the Opposition, upon the tabling of the report, to move any sort of motion it wanted to and to say in that motion that it believed the commission should not continue to operate, if that is what it believed. The review clause presently being debated provides the opportunity for the Opposition to do just that. It is pure humbug for the Opposition to say that the review clause does not give the commission a fixed life. Of course it does.

Mr MacKinnon: It does nothing of the sort. Explain to me how it gives it a fixed life.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It gives a fixed life to the commission between the reviews that clause 22 requires the Minister to carry out.

Mr MacKinnon: How does that clause expire the commission or lead to its winding up at the end of that five-year period?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The clause may well lead to a decision of the Minister that the commission should not continue.

Mr MacKinnon: "May"!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Yes, of course.

Mr MacKinnon: So it has not got a fixed life.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It may lead to a broadening of the role of the commission. The

commission has a fixed life between the periodic reviews required by this legislation.

Mr MacKinnon: It has got an infinite life under this legislation, and you know it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The problem with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

Mr MacKinnon: He has not got a problem.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —is essentially a grammatical one. He does not understand "a fixed life" to mean anything except a life that ends at some time or other. That is the problem.

Mr MacKinnon: That is what I thought "fixed" means.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Of course. I know that is what the member thought "fixed" means.

Mr Old: What do you think "fixed" means?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: One can fix something to a wall and it gives it another meaning.

Mr Clarko: You fix things other ways.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Of course. Some people fix races.

Mr Trethowan: What about a fixed term loan?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: A fixed term loan is certainly an application of the word "fixed".

Mr MacKinnon: What did you mean in that sentence?

Mr Old: You are losing ground.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Is this a competition to determine how many applications there can be of the word "fixed"?

Mr Old: No wonder the member for Kalgoorlie is blushing.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The important point—from the way in which members opposite have all volunteered their ideas on the word "fixed"—is that the meaning of the word "fixed" is not fixed according to the views of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is as simple as that. Simply because the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wants to grasp a particular meaning to the word "fixed" and say about the meaning that it shall convey some concept of a term that ends, a body whose life is extinguished, or in some other way mean something which will support his argument, does not render the argument valid or the conclusion drawn from it to be a true conclusion.

As far as the Government is concerned there are times when sunset clauses are appropriate in the strictest interpretation of sunset clauses that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wishes to apply, and only to apply, and there are times when review clauses—

Mr Old: It is two bob each way.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It may be a case of two bob each way—

Mr Old: You always reckoned you were the great proponent of sunset clauses and now you are moving out of it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not sure whether the member for Katanning-Roe—

Mr Blaikie: Yes, he is the member for Katanning-Roe.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not sure what he is leader of these days. The member for Katanning-Roe and former leader of the National Country Party says the argument—

Mr Old interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I was not trying to be rude to the member.

Mr Old: You do not have to try.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is true, it is not very difficult.

There are times when an argument can be made to support the proposition the member for Katanning-Roe is putting forward; that is, a blinkered, rigid, inflexible Government will make mistakes. We saw that with the Court Government.

Mr Old: I remember your fighting here one day for a sunset clause in one of my Bills. You had an entirely different argument from the one you are putting today. You are having two bob each way. You are an absolute fraud.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I can remember using a cricket bat, but it was not on a golf course, and that is the point, subtle and sophisticated though it is that I am trying to convey to the member for Katanning-Roe.

Mr Old: No, you are trying to convey it to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I butted in and told you what a fraud you were. The Premier is "fixed" for words; he knows that is correct.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member for Katanning-Roe is a mean man. I mean, gosh!

Mr Old: That is a compliment coming from a fraud like you.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: If I were to take things personally I would get quite flustered at some of the things the member says.

Mr Old: You are like Bob Hawke: You have done your cool.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have done my cool?

Mr Old: Bob is done and so are you.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Is he?

With considerable fortitude I will soldier on in the face of this vicious attack. I will find the reservoirs within me.

Mr Old: You had better find a decent argument.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: We have found a couple so far. I was trying to answer the point the member raised and he butted in, and I was answering his butting in.

Mr Old: You did not answer it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I was trying to, but the member continued to butt in even more. I was trying to say there are times when a strictly interpreted sunset clause is appropriate and times when a review clause, which is a type of sunset clause, is the appropriate mechanism to cause performance to be measured—

Mr Blaikie: You want sunset clauses when you want them and you don't want them when you don't want them.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The member has hit the nail on the head. We are the Government and what we do not want is to implement the Opposition's policies.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is a funny thing that happens after elections are held.

Mr Old: You have only seven minutes to go.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am quite enjoying the seven minutes.

Mr Blaikie: You have six minutes to go, so do not sit down yet.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am explaining to the member for Katanning-Roe and the Opposition that sunset clauses—and I suppose a review clause might be included by some in the definition of sunset clauses—are appropriate in their strictest interpretation on occasions. Review clauses are sometimes the appropriate measure of the performance or persistence of a certain commission, authority or statutory body.

The argument raised by the Opposition is that there is only one meaning to be attached to the word "fixed" in the phrase "a fixed term". The Government argues that the word "fixed", as was demonstrated by the Opposition in proffering five or six different interpretations, is like beauty—it is in the eye of the beholder. On this occasion we believe a review clause is the most appropriate mechanism to ensure that the public has confidence that efficiency is being supervised and the Opposition has a chance to object by way of any parliamentary strategy which may be implemented to the persistence in an unchanged

form of this commission or in some other way to object to its operation. It is as simple as that, and I think the member for Kalgoorlie has done a fine job in explaining at great length and with great patience and tolerance—

Mr Blaikie: That is why you bailed him out.

Mr Old: He was doing better before you stepped in.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: There is dissension in the Opposition ranks on almost every occasion. The member for Vasse has me bailing out the member for Kalgoorlie, and the member for Katanning-Roe has the member for Kalgoorlie being better off without my assistance. I can hardly bail him out and hurt him at the same time.

Mr Court: He is blushing either way.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The former Prime Minister of New Zealand said, when commenting on the number of New Zealanders leaving to go to Australia, that the average IQ of both places was being raised. I am not sure whether that is applicable—

Several members interjected.

Mr Old: If you went to New Zealand the position would be reversed.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is not bad, either.

Mr Old: The IQ would be lower.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am sure the Premier of Western Australia can relate this to the clause.

Mr Old: I am sure he cannot; he hasn't yet done so.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: It is rude to answer the Chairman in that way.

Mr Old: I was giving him some advice.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Chairman.

The most appropriate, intelligent, and efficient way in which this commission can be reviewed is by the mechanism proposed in this clause, and we feel absolutely comfortable about the clause in the context of the news release which was read selectively by some members of the Opposition, and we urge all members not to be silly and to support the Government in this matter.

Mr MacKINNON: The Premier made a point when he said the member for Kalgoorlie had been handling the legislation well. I agree. He will make a good Minister when the Premier promotes him in the near future with one other member to the Cabinet. Unfortunately the Premier did not hit any points with his verbal gymnastics. All he said was that a difference exists between sunset and review clauses, as if we did not know that. He then

tried to roll around the meaning of the word "fixed". We have an understanding of what the word means in this context. I do not think the Premier had any misunderstanding of the words when he was looking to approve the Press release on 15 October. I shall read the opening paragraph which states—

New statutory bodies established by the State Government will have a fixed life.

It means they will have a life that expires at some time. The Press release goes on as follows—

Existing bodies will also be given a fixed life when the legislation governing them is amended by Parliament.

That is the case right now. That is what is meant by a fixed life. A review clause is that which is involved in the Western Australian Development Corporation Bill which has been before this Parliament, and which was referred to by the Premier. That is the sort of clause referred to in the Press statement.

We quite clearly understand the difference. When the Western Australian Development Corporation Bill was before the House we did not move to implement a sunset clause because we understood the validity of the argument and why one should differentiate in a certain clause between a review and a sunset clause. Our argument is that this Bill is not one such case.

Let me read again from the Premier's Press statement. On the second page, which he chose not to quote, the Premier had this to say—

When agencies are established, there is usually some good reason for them, but the needs which led to their formation can change or disappear over the years.

Mr Brian Burke: Hear hear!

Mr MacKINNON: To continue—

However, under present practices, there is no formal means of Parliament finding out when the bodies it set up have outlived their usefulness.

Mr Brian Burke: Hear hear!

Mr MacKINNON: Tabling an annual report or a five yearly report in the case of most of these agencies certainly does not give us that ability.

He then went on—

With sunset legislation, Parliament has to investigate the usefulness of statutory organisations because it must re-enact their legislation from time to time if they are to continue to exist.

He was talking about sunset legislation, not review legislation. He went on to make, what is in my view, a most interesting point. He said—

Sunset legislation is one of the most powerful tools available to prune bureaucratic deadwood.

Sunset legislation is one of the most powerful tools available! We want to do what the Premier indicated on 15 October. We want to impose sunset legislation. It is passing strange to me that the Premier has indicated, since he has been in Government, that he is trying to implement his policies and we are still trying to implement ours. It is the Premier's policy to introduce sunset clauses. How many have been inserted into legislation since the Premier came to office? Precisely none has been inserted. All insertions of sunset clauses have been made by the Opposition. This side in another place inserted the sunset clause into the Tourism Commission legislation. This Government has not implemented one sunset clause since it came to Government. The validity of the Premier's arguments is highlighted by that fact.

That Press statement went on to state—

Mr Burke said State business undertakings, such as the State Energy Commission, had to be excluded from the legislation because the inclusion in their charters of sunset clauses could create legal difficulties in entering into long-term contracts, especially for loan-raising.

I have already indicated that we clearly understand the difference. We understand that the State Energy Commission, the Western Australian Development Corporation and other groups, for commercial reasons, must have some surety of their continuation so that they can negotiate loans and the like. This commission is not one of those agencies that the Premier was referring to in the statement of 15 October. He now has the gall to come into this Parliament and try, in a very light-hearted way, as is his wont, to laugh it off. We are not going to laugh it off. We know exactly what the word "fixed" means in relation to sunset clauses. We know exactly what the Premier meant when he said that statutory bodies, negotiated by the Government, would have a fixed life. That is why we oppose this lightweight review clause which the member for Kalgoorlie unfortunately had the pleasure of defending. I will remind him about that when we come to debate other legislation before this Parliament.

He and the Premier can be assured that at every opportunity we will ensure that sunset clauses are inserted into legislation and ensure that the words

of the Premier are brought into effect so that we will have sunset legislation. It is one of the most powerful tools available to prune bureaucratic deadwood. The Opposition parties are parties of their word; the Government is not.

Clause put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 21	
Mr Bateman	Mr Pearce
Mrs Beggs	Mr Read
Mrs Buchanan	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Brian Burke	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Carr	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Evans	Mr Tonkin
Mr Grill	Mr Troy
Mrs Henderson	Mrs Watkins
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Jamieson	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr McIver	

(Teller)

Noes 15	
Mr Blaikie	Mr McNee
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Mr Court	Mr Rushton
Mr Coyne	Mr Trethowan
Mr Crane	Mr Watt
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	

(Teller)

Pairs	
Ayes	Noes
Mr Bertram	Mr Grayden
Mr Bridge	Mr Thompson
Mr Burkett	Mr Hassell
Mr Davies	Mr Tubby
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Laurance
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Spriggs
Mr Bryce	Dr Dadour

Clause thus 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.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr I. F. Taylor, and transmitted to the Council.

ACTS AMENDMENT (CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT) BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [3.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [3.32 p.m.]: At the third reading of this Bill, my comment is that this legislation is wrongly based. It will lead to the deterioration of land management in this State. The Opposition is totally opposed to the Government's concept of land management and believes that the situation in Western Australia will deteriorate.

We oppose the legislation.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [3.33 p.m.]: Naturally the Government rejects those things said by the member for Vasse on behalf of the Opposition. We believe that the legislation is a sound base for proper and appropriate land management policies to be applied throughout Western Australia. It rationalises policies to be applied throughout Western Australia. It rationalises and removes duplication that is presently expensive and inefficient.

Mr Rushton: You have not proved it to be so. You just believe that. You have not given facts and figures that show that the new system is more efficient.

MR BRIAN BURKE: I urge members to accept the Government's proposition that this is a piece of good legislation that is likely to serve this State well in a very important area of the State's management.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 23	
Mr Barnett	Mr McIver
Mr Bateman	Mr Pearce
Mrs Beggs	Mr Read
Mr Bryce	Mr D. L. Smith
Mrs Buchanan	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Brian Burke	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Evans	Mr Troy
Mr Grill	Mrs Watkins
Mrs Henderson	Mr Wilson
Mr Hodge	Mr Gordon Hill
Mr Jamieson	

(Teller)

Noes 15	
Mr Blaikie	Mr McNee
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Mr Court	Mr Rushton
Mr Coyne	Mr Trethowan
Mr Crane	Mr Watt
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Williams
Mr MacKinnon	

(Teller)

Pairs	
Ayes	Noes
Mr Bertram	Mr Grayden
Mr Bridge	Mr Thompson
Mr Burkett	Mr Hassell
Mr Davies	Mr Tubby
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Laurance
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Spriggs

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ACTS AMENDMENT (LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL PROVISIONS) BILL

Second Reading

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Local Government) [3.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to amend both the Local Government Act and the Local Government Amendment Act (No. 2) 1984.

Members will recall that part II of the latter Act, which was enacted earlier this year, includes provisions which introduce the adult franchise concept into municipal elections commencing from the annual elections to be held in May 1985.

At the time that legislation was before the Parliament I gave an undertaking that the Government would introduce further amendments in this session to provide for the automatic enrolment of owners of rateable property on the municipal electoral roll. This Bill principally fulfils that undertaking.

The electoral rolls will be prepared generally in accordance with the existing provisions with the residents' roll being derived from the State electoral roll and the owners and occupiers' roll being derived from the records of the local authority.

The existing provisions provide for owners and occupiers to apply for enrolment. With the automatic enrolment of owners this procedure will not apply and will result in many names being duplicated on the residents' roll and the owners and occupiers' roll.

To ensure that a person's name appears only once on each relevant ward roll, it will be mandatory for the residents' roll and the owners and occupiers' roll to be consolidated as from the annual elections to be held in May 1986.

The Bill provides an option to the clerk to conduct the 1985 annual elections and any other elections held during the ensuing 12 months using both rolls, or alternatively consolidating them into one roll prior to polling day. This option was found necessary because it became evident that some councils would be unable to achieve the consolidation of rolls by 1985.

Where the clerk uses the two rolls for the purposes of an election, the Bill sets out an administrative procedure to be followed which requires the use of the residents' roll as the principal roll and the owners and occupiers' roll as a secondary roll. This procedure is designed to assist electoral officers during the course of polling.

Because of the procedures required, the residents' roll and the owners and occupiers' roll will still be used for the purposes of the election—that is, for preliminaries before the election day, such as postal, absent and early voting—prior to those rolls being superseded by a consolidated roll. Any marks made on the first mentioned two rolls to indicate a vote has been cast, must be transferred to that consolidated roll prior to the polling day. This will also help in the conduct of the election and remove concern that the new roll system will facilitate multiple voting.

The compilation of the owners and occupiers' roll under the proposed provisions will also provide for this roll to be used for the purposes of a loan poll.

The amendments passed earlier this year allowed for regulations to be made to permit the preparation of a suitable roll for the purposes of conducting a loan poll. However, as the clerk will now be required to prepare a full roll of owners for election purposes, the Bill proposes that that roll be used for the purposes of conducting a loan poll. In effect, the Bill returns the situation to that which previously existed.

In addition, the Bill corrects two anomalies brought to my attention in respect of the electoral provisions of the Local Government Act.

First, the nomination form prescribed under regulations requires the signature of a candidate, or his agent, to be witnessed and I believe that is an appropriate requirement. However, the Act presently does not require such witnessing and the Bill seeks to rectify that situation.

Secondly, the right of an elector to cast an absent vote—that is one which may be cast at the office of any council other than that for which the election is being held—is restricted to an annual election. As has been rightly pointed out, it is an anomalous situation where an elector can cast a vote for an annual election for a particular council, but cannot do so in respect of an extraordinary election being conducted in the same municipality on the same day. The Bill proposes the removal of that anomaly.

I would draw members' attention to the fact that part II of the Local Government Amendment Act (No. 2) is due to come into operation on 15 November 1984, and it is, therefore, necessary to amend that Act to provide for automatic enrolment for owners and bring such amendments into operation prior to that date.

In fact, the Bill proposes that the relevant amendments will come into operation from the date of assent and I bring this point to the attention of members to highlight the urgency of the

legislation and to ensure that the automatic enrolment of owners is suitably accommodated.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Trethowan.

ELECTORAL AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 9 October.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [3.41 p.m.]: This small Bill allows anyone who is enrolled on the electoral roll—of course, we now have a joint roll with the Commonwealth—to make a statutory declaration spelling out that he might be in danger if his address appears on the roll, and then the Commonwealth Electoral Officer can, at his discretion, arbitrarily decide that the address should be struck off the roll. Alternatively, if the man is to be enrolled, the officer can decide that his address should not appear on the roll. There will be no appeal against the decision of the Commonwealth Electoral Officer.

The significance of this measure, although it was anticipated, is that in no matter how small a way, it gives an inch of State's administration to the Commonwealth. That was the reason we opposed and resisted repeated calls to join our rolls with the Commonwealth because of arguments that it could be cheaper and that administration could be simpler. Those arguments might have had some value, but they have the same validity in the administration of different rules, regulations, and Statutes between the Commonwealth and the State.

Within the Federation, of course, the principle of the independent administration of the States was agreed upon. That applies whether it is a very small matter or one which is very important. Such a very important matter was the subject of a debate yesterday. It appears to me—and I am really sad about it—that the Government has decided that the State's independence is irrelevant, and it denies that we are giving away our sovereignty inch by inch. If it suits the State Government for political and public relations purposes, it is happy for the Commonwealth to prevail.

That is the main significance of the Bill, although there are some details on which I will raise questions. I understand the Minister's argument that the Commonwealth has accepted this move, therefore we ought to do it. If one does not go any further than that, it is a sound argument; but I cannot understand why the Government joined the Commonwealth and State rolls in the first place. If someone is really inclined to hurt a person to the extent that it causes that person's death—the example of Family Court judges was

given—he would not be restrained in any way from doing that by not finding the judge's address on the electoral roll. No-one could suggest seriously that this would be the case, because there are millions of other ways of finding the address of a person. If somebody goes to the extent of being prepared to commit premeditated murder on another person, he will find out that person's address by simply following him, if by no other way.

That is despite the fact that one of the murders implied in the second reading speech was committed at the court building, and not at the home of the judge. Admittedly, the last such crime was committed at a judge's home.

Perhaps the Minister for Local Government will interject and answer my next question. Because the rolls are joint, and because they include the local government rolls, will the publishing of these details be restricted in the local government rolls as well by this provision? A local government roll is a public roll. Indeed, local government bodies provide a better service to their ratepayers than do the State or the Commonwealth in relation to their electors, because local authorities supply a habitat roll, and a local councillor is able to have the details of all the people in a street, at the odd and even numbers. Will this sort of provision apply to local government rolls as well?

Maybe the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform could consult with his colleague, who is now in the Chamber, and respond to my question.

I have already raised another matter in a question, but I did not receive a proper response to it. Will there be any exemption from this provision? The Bill does not allow for any exemptions; but we know, for instance, that police officers and Royal Commissions have access to information which we consider to be fairly untouchable. That information includes banking information. I think I have mentioned already that the officers of the Costigan Royal Commission were very polite to me and showed me their full computer system. I spent about four hours there. They can evoke information on anyone from the computer. Mr Speaker, they can gain access to your bank account and find out, say, which garage is attended by your wife if they so wish. That is a frightening thing, and I often wonder whether it is worse than organised crime itself.

Will there be any exemptions from this provision? Will the police have access to this information? It will not be of much use to the police, because they have other sources.

More importantly, will we, as members of Parliament, have access to the addresses of electors in

our electorates, or will we only be supplied with the roll showing that Joe Bloggs is enrolled, and we will not know where he lives or what is his occupation?

These are fairly important questions. Of course, the principle could be argued that this preserves the privacy of the individual. If it intends to do that, it should be extended to the public generally, because I cannot see that someone should be able to safeguard his own privacy just because he has written a statutory declaration and says, "I am in danger". The Bill does not provide for any other proof.

I suppose the Commonwealth Electoral Officer will develop a practice of relying on precedents. There again, we will have to take into consideration the way he adjudges us. That is precisely what I said yesterday. It will be the Commonwealth Electoral Officer who adjudges us, and not the State Chief Electoral Officer. The word of the Commonwealth Electoral Officer will be final and sacrosanct. There will be no appeal, no nothing, against the verdict that he brings down.

I do not think we can argue that this is a right to privacy. On the contrary, I think it introduces an anonymity into public documents.

These rolls have been seen as public documents just as land titles and company papers have been seen as public documents. Using the Government's intention as a principle would mean that the next thing could be that a Minister could legislate to say that a judge with a property or properties could withdraw his land title from the Titles Office to protect his privacy. No-one would then have access to the title simply because the title contained his name and also his address.

Further, a company director who might consider his life in danger could ask that the records of his company showing addresses should be removed from the Corporate Affairs Commission offices because at the moment anyone has the right to go there and check those records. How far will this be taken?

The logic behind this move has not been proved. It seems it is being done simply because the Commonwealth has done it. The Government believes that because the electoral rolls have been married we will do whatever the Commonwealth does in order to safeguard the marriage. I believe we ought to divorce ourselves from the Commonwealth and go our own way just as we happily went on our own way from the turn of the century without any person feeling unhappy about it. I would much prefer that than to consummate this marriage with the Commonwealth.

This is a small, technical Bill and there is no practical purpose for us to oppose it, but it has been necessary to record that the Opposition is unhappy with it and the fact that its origin is the marriage of the electoral rolls.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform) [3.52 p.m.]: I was disappointed by the carping comments of the member for Floreat and thought that for once he could have realised that this was something on which the Government and Opposition could adopt a bipartisan approach. People often say to me, "Why is it that Oppositions oppose most things?" I say that that is not true and that 70 per cent—a figure I plucked from the air without any research at all—of legislation goes through the Parliament with the agreement of both sides.

Mr Mensaros: I didn't oppose it. I said I wanted to record our ill feeling for it and its origin.

Mr TONKIN: Its origin is what?

Mr Mensaros: The marriage of the rolls.

Mr TONKIN: Absolute rubbish! The member is suggesting that the Government should not be concerned for the safety of judges.

Mr Clarko: This doesn't give them any safety.

Mr TONKIN: It may be only a partial attempt, but it is a genuine attempt throughout Australia by all States and the Commonwealth to give judges some protection, and surely recent events have shown that judges in particular are in some danger. That is how we have approached this matter. It is not a question of marrying the electoral rolls at all.

Mr Clarko: You didn't spell it out in the Bill.

Mr TONKIN: We decided it would not be fair to specify judges only and have a situation where someone else who felt in danger might go to the registrar, only to be told that he was not a judge and could not be helped, so if he was murdered, it would be stiff luck for him. It has been decided to make it wider because there might be other cases, and it would not be right to discriminate and say that the only people in danger we might be concerned for are judges.

Mr Mensaros: But someone involved in organised crime might want protection.

Mr TONKIN: Is the member saying that criminals will also get this protection?

Mr Mensaros: They might say they were part of an organised criminal group and they were in danger from the other mob. This could happen under the provisions of the Bill.

Mr TONKIN: The member knows that we must frame legislation so that it will be workable.

I might have more respect for his argument were he to move an amendment during the Committee stage to exclude criminals from applying. I am not saying that we would accept the amendment, but at least it would be an attempt by the member to be constructive.

Mr Clarko: Why are you so bellicose?

Mr TONKIN: Why does the member not mind his own business?

Mr Clarko: I am. You have interjected from this seat yourself.

Mr TONKIN: The member for Floreat has been quite carping in his criticism. It seems he does not realise that there is a concern for the safety of judges throughout Australia. We take the matter seriously, while we know that there is no guarantee and that there can be no guarantee of protection for anyone. There are no guarantees in this life that none of us will be struck down by some criminal activity.

This is the genesis of the legislation; we are not kowtowing to the Commonwealth Government.

The member for Floreat asks if this would apply to local government rolls. I discussed that point briefly in the Chamber with the Minister for Local Government, and as the member might expect, we do not have a definitive answer at present.

Mr Clarko: You should have.

Mr TONKIN: The intention is to decide whether that will be so and if necessary an amendment will be brought to the Parliament, because it would be absurd for the provision to apply to the State rolls but not to the local government rolls.

Mr Clarko: It shows that the legislation is poorly prepared.

Mr TONKIN: The member for Floreat has obviously not read the Bill because he referred to the Chief Electoral Officer, but the Bill does not refer to him. Rather, it refers to the registrar. It is not just the Commonwealth. The member said that it applied to the Commonwealth. The application can be made to the State. This is not a matter of the Commonwealth only having the power to take an address off the roll; either the Commonwealth or the State can do it. If a person makes an application to the Commonwealth, his address can be taken off the Commonwealth roll and, because of the co-operative rolls agreement, his address will also be taken off the State roll. If a person applies to the State registrar, and the registrar agrees, his address will come off the State roll and, again because of the co-operative rolls agreement, his address will automatically come off the Commonwealth roll. There is no subordination of the State to the Commonwealth.

Mr Clarko: But it is done for the Commonwealth reason. Is there a State reason for this legislation?

Mr TONKIN: I will ignore the member for Karrinyup and I hope I will get the protection of the Chair, because the member is obviously in the kind of mood where he just wants to be stupid.

Mr Clarko: You brought the annoyance and irritation into the debate.

Mr TONKIN: I will ignore those interjections.

The fact of the matter is that we are very concerned about the position in the State, and obviously the safety of judges is as much a State concern as a Commonwealth concern.

I will go on now to something that is not provided for in the Bill but which the member for Floreat chose to introduce into the debate, and that is the question of co-operation with the Commonwealth. The member for Floreat decided to attack that co-operation because of some fear he has that the State might lose some powers. I am tired of this beating of the State rights drum; it really is childish. Under the member's Government, 100 000 people were not on the electoral rolls, and that was in the name of State rights. But what kind of rights do we give to 100 000 Western Australians by keeping them off the State electoral rolls? This happened because there was no co-operation with the Commonwealth.

The situation now is that if people get onto the Commonwealth roll they are automatically placed on the State roll, and if they get onto the State roll they are automatically placed on the Commonwealth roll.

The number of sectional votes for the daylight saving referendum was minute compared with the number of sectional votes at the last State election. The rolls were in a shocking state under the member's Government because that Government wanted to stand on its dignity and talk about State rights. There are such things as State rights, but this can be carried to a paranoid extent.

We have no shame about co-operating with the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Government is not a Government of a foreign power. I was born in this country; I am an Australian and very pleased to be an Australian. I do not feel that the Government in Canberra, comprising representatives from all over Australia, is a foreign power. We have no reason to be paranoid or fearful about the Commonwealth.

I am very happy that we as fellow Australians—and I emphasise that—should continue our co-operation with the Commonwealth. It is cheaper. It does not cause any deleterious ef-

fects whatsoever. We do not have joint rolls because they do have deleterious effects, as has been shown in other States. We have deliberately not had joint rolls, but we have had a joint co-operative enrolment procedure. The rolls in this State are in a better state than they have ever been in the history of Western Australia.

Mr Clarko: You force them on.

Mr TONKIN: Somehow the Opposition thinks this is a selling out of State rolls. That is a nonsense, and we would not be a part of that at all.

Mr Mensaros: You don't remember what I said.

Mr TONKIN: We are happy to have this co-operative agreement which applies equally to the Commonwealth and to the State. If a State registrar takes an address off the roll the Commonwealth has to remove it from its roll, so there is no subordination of one to the other. This is called co-operation and the word "co-operation" seems to be very annoying to the Opposition.

Mr Clarko: You should take a valium tablet.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Barnett) in the Chair; Mr Tonkin (Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8 put and passed.

Clause 9: Section 51B inserted—

Mr MENSAROS: I did not have any intention to speak to this clause, but considering the Minister's comments when in answer to my second question, "Who is going to decide", he said quite clearly "I decide"—he repeated this. If we look at clause 9—

Mr Tonkin: Who said it?

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister said "I decide"

Mr Tonkin: Meaning me? I decide? No, I don't. I said the registrar does. You said the Chief Electoral Officer and I corrected you and said the registrar.

Mr MENSAROS: The Minister said, "I decide".

Mr Tonkin: Rubbish! Read *Hansard*.

Mr MENSAROS: I will check it.

Mr Tonkin: I might have a speech impediment, but I certainly—

Mr Burkett: I think you are an outstanding leader.

Mr MENSAROS: I simply want to point out that under clause 9 the relevant section being amended clearly says that the registrar—

Mr Tonkin: That is right. You said "Chief Electoral Officer" and I corrected you.

Mr MENSAROS: I said "Chief Electoral Officer", and then I corrected it to "Registrar" and the Minister said, "Yes". The Minister then said, "I decide". However, we will check *Hansard* about this. I simply wanted to say the registrar could be the Registrar of the Commonwealth Electoral Office, and therefore it is my contention that the Commonwealth would arbitrarily have decisions over matters which rightly should and constitutionally do belong to the State of Western Australia. That is one of the reasons that our party opposes the referendum on 1 December.

Mr TONKIN: I am really amazed at the member for Floreat. I can understand he thought I said "I decide". Maybe I did not speak clearly but, if I said it, I certainly did not intend to. That is ridiculous because I know very well it is the registrar. In fact, I got up specifically to correct the member and to say it was the registrar, because we were considering whether it should be the Chief Electoral Officer. However, that is not what amazes me. What amazes me is that the member for Floreat said that the registrar could be the Commonwealth registrar.

Mr Mensaros: In our electoral law there is an electoral district for the Legislative Assembly. I have not yet seen a roll where there is a subdistrict. The "subdistrict" is in clause 9 which amends section 51B and the proposed subsection (7) mentions a "Registrar for a District or Subdistrict". There is no subdistrict in the State roll, but there are subdistricts in federal electorates, and therefore I assume that it means—

Mr TONKIN: No, it does not. The Commonwealth Act does not apply. It is a Bill to amend the State Electoral Act.

Mr Jamieson: A subdistrict refers to an assistant registrar and you can appoint as many as you like.

Mr TONKIN: I think there must be some technical reasons for including the reference to "Subdistrict" in the Bill. I must confess it does surprise me. There must be a technical reason and I would be delighted to find it out and let the member for Floreat know.

Mr Mensaros: Put it this way, all I want is an assurance or undertaking that—despite the fact that I do not like these applications—none of these applications will be decided by the Commonwealth officer.

Mr TONKIN: Not under this Act, but under the Commonwealth Act people can apply to the Commonwealth. If the Commonwealth registrar

removes the address it flows through to the State because of the co-operative rolls agreement.

Mr Mensaros: Therefore no-one would apply to the State.

Mr TONKIN: Why?

Mr Mensaros: Because of the joint rolls.

Mr TONKIN: They might decide to apply to the State and not to the Commonwealth. How would the member know they would prefer to apply to the Commonwealth and not to the State? I do not know. It is amazing how the member can see into the minds of all these people who have not yet applied. This Bill amends the State Act and therefore any reference to the registrar is a reference to the registrar under the State and not the Commonwealth Act. We cannot amend Commonwealth legislation, so the reference to "Registrar" is to a State registrar—there are several of them and each registrar has control of the rolls of several different districts. I am mystified by the reference to "Subdistrict" and I will find out about it and let the member know. To make it quite clear, I did say in my reply to the second reading debate that the application can be to the State and if the State registrar agrees, it automatically flows through to the Commonwealth, or it may be the other way round. Both officers have the right to take names off the roll. The reference in this Bill to "Registrar" is of course to a registrar under the State Act because we cannot enact amendments to a Commonwealth Act.

Clause 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.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Tonkin (Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform), and transmitted to the Council.

ELECTION OF SENATORS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 9 October.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [4.09 p.m.]: This is a very small measure which amends a very old Act of 1903. It simply does away with the seven days' notice, but the end result is really the opposite because although one does not need seven days' notice to issue a writ, if a senator from Western

Australia is elected at the same time the Bill changes and extends the other times relating to the closing of the rolls or closing of nominations and the polling day, so the aggregate time span for all of these movements will be longer than it is today.

Apparently all this has been done because of the change in the Commonwealth laws. I think it is quite acceptable, albeit it must be stated again that we are just following the Commonwealth.

It is interesting to note that there is another provision in the legislation which brings the time for voting on polling day back to 6.00 p.m. instead of 8.00 p.m., in order to make it uniform throughout Australia. That undoubtedly was of the Government's choosing, and consequently is being enacted.

We do not have any opposition to that, as long as it is the decision of the State Government. I admit it would be not only interesting but also embarrassing if polling for the House of Representatives—in which the State has no say—finished two hours earlier than polling for a Senate election on the same day. I am simply pointing out that we do not like following the Commonwealth blindly. This is State legislation and it is the choice of the State Government. We do not oppose it.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [4.12 p.m.]: I would like to make a few comments about this matter, because I have taken up this point with the Speaker and I think this matter should be on record, because we have to know where we are going.

As members will be aware, the Election of Senators Act basically allows the election of senators by the Governor issuing the necessary writ within each State. However, I would like to point out that when we come to the replacement of senators, in this day and age the Australian Constitution is far different from what it used to be, and our Standing Orders are wanting.

Mr Mensaros: You mean the nomination of a candidate?

Mr JAMIESON: It appears that if a person is nominated for a position, and the majority of members at a joint sitting of the Houses sends that person to Canberra, it would be *ultra vires* the Constitution if that person was not of the party of the originally elected member. That is the decision of the people of Australia, but our Joint Standing Orders have not been altered in accordance with that change.

I have brought this matter to the attention of the Speaker and I understand sooner or later we will get together with the Legislative Council; although, there seems to be some difficulty in get-

ting Legislative Councillors to a meeting of the Joint Standing Orders Committee.

We need that provision, because if a senator from Western Australia dies we will be stuck with the old Standing Orders which do not give the necessary guide to the members. They certainly gave clear guidance before the Constitution was changed, but they have not kept up with the times.

This matter needs attention fairly soon. We have managed other matters such as the election of senators in the ordinary form, but this amendment must be made so that we will be well placed if the time comes for a joint sitting of the Parliament of this State to elect a replacement senator.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform) [4.15 p.m.]: I am grateful for the contributions of the members for Floreat and Welshpool. I do believe that we should not have a State Act for the election of senators. I know that the original idea was that the Senate was a State's House. It has not of course operated in that way and I am not suggesting that we should not continue to have this kind of representation or that it should not be in its present form.

The Senate acting properly has a very useful function as does the State upper House, but I am saying we could get into a rather ridiculous situation where one House of the national Parliament has an Act relating to only a part of its functions in each of the States. For example, what if this Parliament decides not to co-operate with other Parliaments? I do not know of any other country in the world where the national Parliament or part of it is regulated by one of the States.

Mr Mensaros: West Germany is one example.

Mr TONKIN: What does the member mean by that?

Mr Mensaros: The membership is elected by the State Parliament.

Mr TONKIN: That is right, but a State does not have a right to change the Constitution of the Bundesrat. The Bundesrat consists of representatives of the various Governments of the Lander.

Mr Mensaros: According to their own rules.

Mr TONKIN: Yes, but the particular Lander cannot alter the rules, and say it is going to have some laws of a certain kind. That is laid down in the basic law of the Federal German Republic. I have spent quite a bit of time in Bonn recently looking at this.

Mr Mensaros: With the 14 senators which replaced the 10 we did not legislate for?

Mr TONKIN: No.

Mr Mensaros: So we cannot influence that either.

Mr TONKIN: That is right. I am saying it seems strange to me that we have to bring to the State Parliament a Bill which says that anyone in the polling booth from 7.00 p.m. onwards has a right to vote which is at variance with the actual voting in polling booths under Commonwealth law.

I think certain aspects of the national Parliament should be in the Constitution and only be alterable by referendum, but other machinery matters, less fundamental, should be in a Commonwealth Act. We can get into a lot of bother when particular States are able to make laws which affect the Senate which, after all, is a national House.

I think this Act is anomalous. It is not used. It is not my words that make it anomalous; it is practically a dead letter. Most members have not even heard of the Election of Senators Act which was enacted in 1903 and which now has, I believe, its first amendment since that time. It has been hardly used and is only of nuisance value.

We are bringing this amendment forward because it could mean a muck-up if there were no co-operation. If we recognise that Australia is a nation with a national Parliament and with representatives elected to Parliament from both Houses from all over Australia, and as long as that kind of thing is safeguarded in the Constitution, then I doubt the wisdom of having a special Act which enables us to be different from other States and to affect a part of the Senate which could cause a really absurd situation.

As I said when debating the previous Bill, we are a nation, and I am proud to have been born in this country. I am an Australian citizen and although we have a right to make our decisions in Western Australia, Australia is a Federation, and I accept that it always will be. Nevertheless I think one could carry State rights issues to absurd lengths and that has been done mainly by the conservative parties for their own gain when in Opposition, at the national level.

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 Tonkin (Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform), and transmitted to the Council.

BEE INDUSTRY COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 11 October.

MR OLD (Katanning-Roe) [4.22 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, with your permission, I intend to deal with this Bill and the Beekeepers Amendment Bill cognately because they are closely allied.

The amendment to the Bee Industry Compensation Amendment Act is designed to ensure that all beekeepers contribute to the compensation fund. It is a very simple amendment, and I believe it is one which will be welcomed by the majority of beekeepers in Western Australia.

The beekeeping industry is like most political parties—in the past it has been divided. It was not divided only two ways, but at one stage it was divided into three factions. It is not a large industry as far as total income is concerned, but it is a very important industry and it is one which has contributors on a professional basis, a semi-professional basis, and an amateur basis. In other words, there are some full-time beekeepers, some who indulge in the apiculture industry as a part-time job and who take on other work to help sustain them, and others who take up apiculture as a hobby. Most of the latter have something like five to 10 hives and they think differently about how the industry should be run. However, they have one thing in common, and that is their interest in a reasonably good compensation fund because the beekeeping industry is subject to diseases which can wipe out a colony of bees in no time flat.

One of the worst diseases that can be experienced is the European foul brood, which has been detected on several occasions. When it is detected it is normal for an inspector from the department to order the destruction of hives by fire, because that is the only way to ensure that the foul brood does not spread throughout other hives in the area.

Some form of compensation should be paid to the person who has been unfortunate enough to own hives that have contracted that disease. This is where the problem arises, because in the past the guidelines laid down for compensation have been fairly loose and fairly loosely applied. Some people have been compensated to a large degree from the compensation fund for something which may have been caused by their own negligence and which resulted in their colony of bees contracting certain diseases. It is with this in mind that this

amendment to the compensation fund has been brought forward.

It is pleasing to note that the beekeeping industry has now closed ranks to a large degree and is virtually speaking with one voice. However, there is still some dissension and certainly concern about the fact that the beekeepers compensation fund is very much in the red.

In the Minister's second reading speech he talked about a debt to the Treasury of some \$80 000. While the Treasury is prepared to advance money to the compensation fund it is naturally obliged to retrieve that money because it belongs to the taxpayers of Western Australia. My understanding is that the Treasury is prepared for that money to be repaid over a period of between two to four years. To build up the fund there must be a considerable amount of contribution from the various beekeepers and that is something the committee will have to determine. I do not know whether any recommendations have been made yet or whether they have been put before the Minister. I understand that moves have been made, and I do know that there is dissension within the various groups as to what the payment should be.

Naturally, an apiarist with two or three hives would get out of it on a fairly reasonable basis compared with the apiarist who has 200 or 300 hives. The guy with two or three hives might say, "I am a hobby apiarist and I should not be obliged to pay too much to the compensation fund". However, he will still be compensated at the same rate per hive as the guy with 200 to 300 hives. It is a sticky situation, and perhaps the Minister could advise whether a rate has been struck or whether he is considering a rate.

We really should have a base rate for a minimum contribution, and on top of that an apiarist should pay so much per hive. In that case, the fellow with 10 or less hives would be making a contribution comparable with the compensation he might receive from the fund.

The Opposition is not opposed to this Bill in any way, shape or form, but I would suggest to the Minister that to apply a term of repayment which is too rigid may be an added burden on an industry which is already plagued with problems regarding the oversupply of honey and the return to producers. Perhaps he may be able to persuade Cabinet to have that term extended.

While the debt is acknowledged by the beekeeping industry, I feel it would be far more comfortable for beekeepers if they could look forward to a fairly reasonable length of time in which to make their contribution to the fund, and at the

same time pay off some of the money they owe to Treasury.

I am sure the Government would look fairly benignly upon this, because it is a small industry, a struggling industry, but at the same time a very important industry.

I understand there is some thought of an inquiry into certain sections of the industry. I do not know terribly much about it, but if there is such a thought the Minister may enlighten the House as to what is in the mind of the Government if there is to be some inquiry and what the guidelines and terms of reference may be.

I suggest that the Minister give consideration to trying to persuade Treasury to apply some sort of moratorium on the repayment of the money, even if it is only on an extended term. It may be better to give a complete moratorium for a period of years to enable the fund to build up to the stage where it can compensate beekeepers in the event of some sort of disaster.

I know the beekeeping industry generally would like to see some changes to the compensation committee. Although no firm proposal has been put to me, it has been suggested by some members of the industry that it may be time to look at changes to the position of that industry. The Minister would be far better versed in the current situation than I am as he has complete access to the industry's thinking on the matter.

With those suggestions to the Minister, which I hope he will look at seriously, I would like to indicate the support of the Opposition to both the Bills.

The SPEAKER: The member for Katanning-Roe has sought to have a cognate debate on this Bill and the complementary Bill. The procedure in these cases is that if leave of the House is granted, a cognate debate can take place, and the subsequent Bill, the complementary Bill, will merely have the question put that the Bill be read a second time. If that is agreed, leave will be granted.

Leave granted.

MR RUSHTON (Dale) [4.35 p.m.]: I would like to put forward a few points relative to the references I have made to people in my electorate who are involved in this industry. They have examined the legislation, and while they do not wish to oppose it, they are apprehensive about how it might be applied, so it will be necessary to observe what takes place and how individuals are treated, and there may be another response in due course.

The point made to me is that a seminar of the parties interested in beekeeping will be held in

December. It was my suggestion to those who spoke to me about their problems that they should do their homework and present the best case they could to support their own point of view and see what could be accepted at that time. There will be an opportunity for all beekeepers to be present.

I would like the Minister to indicate whether he will take seriously the results of that seminar. There may be an opportunity to amend the Bill in the next session following that seminar to include some or all of the recommendations of the industry, if he finds them acceptable.

The concern of the beekeepers is that they have trouble from feral bees which could spread disease. To some of them the total destruction of the hive is not a very practical thing in the long term. For example, the cost of replacing those hives is so extreme the beekeepers believe there should be another way of eradicating disease.

I would like to stress the point made in my question yesterday asking about alternative methods. The response was that the only acceptable solution at the present time was the destruction of the hive. I have a run-down of the costs entailed, and how they relate to the compensation to be paid. It results in a tremendous burden. Obviously the beekeeper finds it almost beyond his means to carry on.

Some of the points made to me were that there is a method of eradicating disease which has proved to be something like 99.9 per cent acceptable. It is an irradiation type of treatment. I believe the facility exists in Melbourne. The hives could be put in a container and shipped to Melbourne for treatment and then returned. That is one way of achieving relief from total destruction of hives.

Mr Old: You would have to pay individual fares for the tenants in the hives.

Mr RUSHTON: The tenants would no doubt be destroyed. The object is not to cut across State boundaries and drop a few diseased bees but to take them out to sea. The beekeeper would have his box returned in a clean, disease-free condition. This sort of thing is practicable and achievable.

The other point was whether support would be given to having this facility in Western Australia. I think the Minister said he was prepared to investigate that. I asked if the Government would encourage a feasibility study for an ionising energy plant in Western Australia to effectively destroy beehives with American brood disease. I think his answer was acceptable. It was this—

It is in the interests of bee disease control to have a facility for irradiation treatment of infected beehives in Western Australia. I will

make inquiries regarding any proposals to establish such a facility in this State.

I hope the Minister will take that up aggressively. It would be a big advantage to the beekeeper.

There is provision in the Act, of course, for alternatives other than destruction. Of course the beekeepers ask why this is not approved; why other forms of eradication of the disease are not allowed. We come back to the cost of total destruction.

I asked whether beekeepers were to be allowed to use chemotherapy on diseased hives as an alternative to burning, and the answer was, "No". Could the Minister elaborate on that point? Why cannot chemotherapy be used when I understand it is used elsewhere?

The other point which has been answered satisfactorily related to the quarantining of hives.

I have made those points on behalf of beekeepers in my area. Those beekeepers should become fully involved in the seminar which is to be held in December. This is an important industry and it is vital that people with good ideas and practical commonsense should be able to participate and have their points of view recognised.

I would like the Minister to confirm that he will take on board the recommendations which come out of the seminar and do everything necessary to meet the practical suggestions so that some advantages and reductions in costs can be achieved.

Another point which was raised related to insurance of beehives. This is very costly and something needs to be done collectively to resolve the insurance problem. This legislation is a continuation of what we have had in the past with an amendment which deals with compensation. The success of that amendment will be judged by the people involved. However, the big hope for the industry will come later on from the industry's attempting to help itself by participating fully and coming forward with recommendations to the Minister.

MR EVANS (Warren—Minister for Agriculture) [4.42 p.m.]: I thank members opposite for their contributions. I also thank the member for Katanning-Roe for suggesting that this be a cognate debate. The two Bills are not completely in tandem, but they are closely inter-related and, if the Opposition does not object, in the interests of expediting the business of the House, I am happy to accept that suggestion.

The member for Katanning-Roe referred to the difficulties facing beekeepers in Western Australia. The last year has been particularly bad because of the extensive fires which occurred in a

vital section of bushland on the coast north of Perth on which the beekeepers depend, particularly in the winter months. Without the use of this area, they have great difficulty wintering their hives so that they are up to strength and able to take advantage of the spring flow. For that reason apiarists, particularly professional apiarists, have experienced a considerable amount of financial hardship. Professional apiarists travel extensively and they move their hives from site to site throughout the State.

Endeavours have been made to assist apiarists by making other sites available, but we are limited as to what we can do in this regard and it will probably take about four years for the area which was burnt so extensively on the coast to the north of Perth to recover fully and become a valuable source of feed to beekeepers—a source which they need to ensure they are viable on an ongoing basis.

The member for Katanning-Roe raised several points. One related to the level of funding which was suggested as being necessary, firstly, in the form of compensation of the fund and, secondly, for repayment to Treasury.

I do not have a firm proposition before me at the moment. This is a matter I would expect to discuss with beekeepers and, indeed, discussions have been ongoing. Beekeepers have been a very closely knit group and I suspect their difficulties have drawn them into closer co-operation.

It is possible the apiarists in the member for Dale's area are not completely commercialised or perhaps they operate on a slightly different tack from that of the mainstream of beekeepers. I am not familiar with the individuals who were the source of his questions.

I take the point made by the member for Katanning-Roe that there could well be a need for negotiation with Treasury to ensure that the prospect of a moratorium is, firstly, evaluated to assess whether it is necessary and, secondly, is examined to see whether it would work.

I assure the member that the proposition will be examined and it is probably a matter which the beekeepers themselves would have raised.

The point was made as to whether a formal inquiry into the beekeeping industry was to be undertaken. At this stage there is no intention to have such an inquiry, but if a need is demonstrated by beekeepers, every consideration will be given to it.

The member for Dale referred to a seminar to be held in December. Certainly anything that comes out of that or any other seminar that is considered to be worth while must be regarded seriously.

Reference was made to feral bees. There are a considerable number of hives, even in the metropolitan area, and there are many feral bees throughout the State. Feral bees, foxes, and rabbits have done more to damage wildlife in Western Australia than any other species. However, it is beyond the realms of possibility to suggest that feral European bees could be exterminated at this stage. It would not be practical from the point of view of eradication to seriously treat disease in the feral hives.

The member for Dale raised several points and suggested chemotherapy on diseased hives as an alternative to burning. We must be guided by technical experts in that regard. We have a number of ongoing problems and the eradication of disease does not come down only to the appropriate treatment, because it must be considered also that any antibiotic used in the treatment of disease will be detected especially in export packs of pollen, honey or wax and that could create a problem.

The efficacy of the eradication of disease is probably the prime consideration and it involves a number of purely technical matters. I suggest everybody in this House would have to be guided by the experts in those fields.

I noted the point made by the member for Dale in relation to insurance and I appreciate the difficulty he raised.

I thank members opposite for their support of this measure and I appreciate the understanding they have displayed of the industry and the problems which it is endeavouring to deal with at this time. The suggestions put forward will be noted for further examination at the appropriate time.

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 Evans (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

BEEKEEPERS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Order of the day read for the resumption of the debate from 11 October.

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 Evans (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from 24 October.

MR McNEE (Mt. Marshall) [4.54 p.m.]: It was interesting to note the Treasurer's remarks a couple of weeks ago when he spoke about the things he had inherited from his predecessors. He spoke about financial insecurity and a shaky budgetary situation. I do not know about the financial uncertainty except to say that there is a great deal of it today, and that following the massive 22 per cent tax hike across the board and the introduction of an unnecessary new tax in the form of the financial institutions duty, we can now refer to this Government's budgetary manipulations as shifty, to say the least. The Treasurer then had the temerity to say that we had witnessed a remarkable turnaround in the economy. That might be his view, but when we look at the one-in-four young people unemployed, and the highest unemployment rate in the Commonwealth, this is something for which perhaps only he is thankful. I doubt that we have seen a real turnaround in the economy.

And just to make a comment on reading, I must mention that I believe the Government should be congratulated for its conducted question time with all its dorothea questions. I have noticed a great improvement in the reading of questions and answers by Government members; they are coming on quite well. With a little more practice I am sure they will improve further and earn themselves two elephant stamps at the end of the session. They are doing well, so I congratulate them.

But let us now consider the question of what the Government sees as "improved profitability". Really, not in the Government's wildest dreams could it reasonably claim that the business com-

munity is receiving improved profits. Out there in the cruel world of business, business people are petrified; I have never seen them so concerned. Of course there is no profit—that is their problem. They are petrified of the future.

This Government represents the unions and it will most certainly ensure that they have the power and the authority they want; the Government will ensure that their requests are carried out regardless of the costs to business people.

One of the real problems facing country business people with unions being so powerful is that the Government really does not understand what business is all about. If it did it would understand that these business people are facing the problem of a customer resistance to the amount that can be charged for any given service. In the past I have always argued that these people were in a cost-plus industry, and they have recognised this. However, we now have to agree that they have reached the limit in the amount they can charge for goods and services. Out of this charge and this profit they have to try to meet the unreasonable demands made on them through taxes such as FID, the introduction of higher Government taxes and charges, as well as unreasonable requests from unions.

I must mention the redundancy test case; what a classic it is.

Mrs Watkins: A landmark.

Mr McNEE: Indeed, a landmark for unemployment! I hope members opposite are proud of it, because it is they who will have to wear the responsibility. They should make no mistake about that. It is they who will have to explain this to their electors, not I. I hope they will go out into the electorate and explain the real situation. I am thankful I do not have to fight their case in my electorate.

Several members interjected.

Mr McNEE: Let us not talk about termination of employment, which is an absolute disaster and which has business people absolutely petrified. They are looking at who should and should not be employed and whether they should expand their businesses. The redundancy proposals are a recipe for greater unemployment. They reduce the employment prospects of a 45-year-old—absolutely annihilate them. That is occurring in a nation which does not need added burdens on the cost of production. Does anybody think it is reasonable to make us less competitive on the international scene? I would not have thought so. We are trying to sell our goods on the international market despite our disadvantages, yet the Government is encouraging costs to rise. It seems to be proud of its efforts.

Mr Davies: Record low inflation.

Mr McNEE: Government members probably are proud of their efforts. I will not have to answer to their electors, they can do that themselves. The redundancy proposals are adding to our domestic costs.

Several members interjected.

Mr McNEE: Let members opposite tell Mrs Housewife in Balga she will have to pay more for meat and cornflakes and whatever else. Her vote will be equal anyway.

Several members interjected.

Mr McNEE: Members opposite may not like it and they may not have known about it, but that is what they are doing and that is why they are shouting and yelling. They know they are wrong. They can go and shout to their electors.

Mr Bateman interjected.

Mr McNEE: I have just been passed a newspaper article and the headline on the article says that the inflation rate is the lowest for 14 years.

Mr Clarko: Read the bit about the last quarter in Western Australia.

Mrs Buchanan: Read us the lot.

Mr McNEE: The article says the quarterly increase in Perth was the highest of any capital city and was almost entirely related to higher charges for petrol, motor vehicle registrations, public transport, and food, particularly fruit and vegetables. I am very grateful to whoever passed the note to me because that is precisely the point I was making. If it was a Government member he or she will not get an elephant stamp. That person might get a caning instead.

Members opposite talk about inflation being the lowest for 14 years but they do not understand why that is so. The reason is that people who wish they had put their money under the bed are putting it there now because they are frightened of the future. The inflation rate is low because nobody is spending any money. Let us not dwell on inflation or the rest of it because we know what is happening.

Several members interjected.

Mr McNEE: I certainly will give the person who passed that article to me two elephant stamps, even if the Premier will not.

Members opposite must tell their own people—who they think should be equal, as they keep reminding us—so they can tell Mrs Balga, Mrs Ascot, and Mrs Welshpool that they have added to their housekeeping bills.

I can remember some Government members coming to this House 12 months ago and saying they would reduce costs. They have not done so.

Another aspect of this redundancy proposal is that it will make business people look at other ways of employing people. They will not be able to take the risk of employing people under the terms and conditions of the past. If I were in the business of employing large numbers of people I would be looking at my situation very carefully. Business can no longer afford the frustrations this Government is placing upon it.

I must give the Government some credit for reducing payroll tax. I am not arguing against that, nor am I arguing against the reduction in FID. That duty was introduced last year in a tremendous rush, and imposed at the highest level in the nation. At that time the Opposition told the Government it was an unnecessary, unjust, and unwanted tax. But the Government hurried in and did it and now it says it can drop the rate to 3c in \$100. That confirms what the Opposition said at this time last year.

The Government has also assisted in relation to workers' compensation payments for apprentices, and that is okay. One would have thought on reading the Budget that we lived in a highly industrialised economy. The Government forgets that is not true. It also forgets that because of its actions, ours will not be a highly industrialised economy because the Government is making such a thing impossible: it is working against it.

We really have a rural based economy, but the Government totally ignores that. It does so by choice, and I do not mind. It is the Government and it must explain to the people why it is doing that. The allocation to agriculture has been increased by \$4.6 million, and an extra 38 staff are to be provided.

Mrs Henderson interjected.

Mr McNEE: I am giving the Government credit. Perhaps when I sit down the member for Gosnells can tell us about what the Opposition is doing.

So there is extra money and extra staff for conservation programmes, salinity, and land clearing and land use capability. This Government seems to have a negative policy in relation to land clearing. It seems to be saying the problem is difficult and that a lot of problems exist in the industry. Everyone recognises that, but the Government then runs away from it and decides not to clear any more land. It is as though the Government has agreed everything will always be bad and it cannot handle the situation.

The Government cannot handle the situation, and we could have told it that years ago. It tries to resolve the problem by acting in the negative. The Government shows an absolute lack of knowledge

of the industry because it allocated no money at all to research, for example, into improved yields. The Government did not do anything about that. In the last 30 years the increase in our yield has been less than one bushel. In other words, the increase in yield has stagnated.

That has not been the case in Europe and in many other countries. We, in Australia, have not improved the situation at all.

I believe that there is a great need for money to be channelled towards research programmes. Research programmes in this State are almost non-existent. We have no new varieties of grain and, in fact, one of our varieties has been withdrawn because it has been found to have rust problems.

We need to carry out extra research into new varieties because the main point about agriculture is that it is ever-changing. New methods are being adopted continually and we need new varieties of grain to match the new forms of modern agriculture.

Of course, the \$4.6 million is most welcome. However, is it not incredible that, when one looks at the Budget papers, one sees that the Department of Premier and Cabinet has received an increase of \$1.6 million, and I am supposed to think that a \$4.6 million increase for the State's major industry is significant. It is an insult. I wonder how many new advisers will be given new shiny motor cars.

Let us not forget also that the Government overspent its Budget last year. The point I make is that it is not a benevolent Government. It just does not understand the problems. It does not understand how to handle the State's only industry that can pull this State out of its troubles. That is obvious because the Government would rather spend money on new advisers. Perhaps the treasurer of the ALP will be the next person appointed to a position of adviser. I do not know whether there are too many more who can be appointed.

The rural industries and rural hardship report which was tabled in the House the other day held no surprises for us. Anyone associated with the industry knows that there is a massive and growing debt. We all know that the Government's current policies are assisting that debt. The easing of that debt is not being assisted by Government throw-aways to the wrong sections of industry.

We all know that there are things that we could do for the rural industries. One thing that we could do is not hold a Federal election which will cost this country something like \$35 million. It is an unnecessary election, and I believe that the people believe it is unnecessary. The reason for the

election is that the Prime Minister would like to try out his popularity on the public.

I notice, by today's news, that the Prime Minister has already blown up in an interview. He has shown himself for what he really is. He has never been in the position before of back-peddalling the way he is now. He cannot handle it. He blew up in an interview with a junior journalist in Queensland. Heaven knows what will happen when he is interviewed by the tough journalists; he may fall apart completely.

However, that has taken me away from the point. We are talking about assistance to agriculture. Yet, we are about to spend \$35 million on an unnecessary Federal election.

Leave to Continue Speech

I seek leave to continue my speech at a later stage of the sitting.

Leave granted.

Debate thus adjourned.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.17 p.m.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR McNEE (Mt. Marshall) [7.17 p.m.]: Prior to question time and the tea suspension I suggested we were being involved in the reckless expenditure of \$35 million of the people's money on an election, merely to test the popularity of the Prime Minister and his colleagues. I guess it is primarily the Prime Minister's popularity that he wishes to check.

Mr Burkett: How would you explain the four Malcolm Fraser had?

Mr McNEE: No doubt when he blows up again in the next few days—because there is a long way for him to go—the Prime Minister will learn how popular he is. Can you imagine the benefit, Mr Speaker, if that \$35 million had been used responsibly and not to test the Prime Minister's popularity or for any other obscure reason such as some referendums which only the Prime Minister wants to have and which will not prove anything?

Mr Gordon Hill: Stop yelling.

Mr McNEE: The member for Helena can hop into the argument if he wants to.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Bryce: You haven't been to Ireland yet, have you?

Mr McNEE: The point is that the financial management of this State and Australia is bad. Let us look at what is happening in the rural industry. Research has been ignored where it is needed in the rural industries, and I point out that in addition to that this State Government promised to equalise fuel costs.

Mr Burkett: More research is being done.

Mr McNEE: The member will have the chance to make a speech later.

The Government promised to equalise fuel costs and did not. In fact, in my electorate, fuel costs have escalated out of all proportion to record heights. That escalation has been assisted by this State Government. The Government reduced payroll tax. The fact is that it is collecting more than it collected last year. Nonetheless, it calls it a reduction. In the same way, it defends itself against the suburban housewives who, through redundancy tests, will be paying more for their daily bread than they are paying now. The Government can argue about that; I am merely stating the facts. I do not worry about how it will squirm and worm its way out of that. It is only a pity that the Public Gallery is not full so that people can hear the real truth, because they do not often get the opportunity.

The Government announced a reduction in freight costs in, of all places, my electorate. What a joke! The Government is incompetent. It could not manage Paddy's Market let alone the State's financial affairs.

In the last week superphosphate costs have gone up in the order of \$5 a tonne for straight superphosphate and more for mixtures. The increase will probably level out at around \$9 a tonne for nitrogenous fertilisers. At its very cheapest rate, those increases add another \$1 000 to the bill for average farms. While all this is going on, the Federal Government is spending taxpayers' money irresponsibly by dragging them to an unnecessary election.

The State Government places emphasis on the wrong issues. Meanwhile the main industry in this State is left languishing, waiting for some assistance. It is the agricultural industry which will create employment in this State, but it has been overlooked completely. The Government could not care less.

It is interesting to look at grain freight costs. This afternoon, some questions were asked of the Minister for Transport about grain freight costs.

The answers were interesting because the grain freight issue is the greatest indicator of this Government's inability to make decisions. I often ask myself: Who is governing this State? Is it the retinue of advisers employed by the Government at great expense who drive cars at our expense and who have them washed and polished at our expense? I would not mind if they were worth anything. However, the Government hides behind them.

The grain freight issue is an example of how this Government avoids its responsibilities. The Government came into office threatening to do great things about freight. It has achieved absolutely nothing. It is a pity that the Minister for Transport is not here because he could tell us what the grain freight rate will be. From the answer he gave to the member for Narrogin, I would say that he has no idea of what that rate will be because he said in answer to that question that he could not recall it precisely. The harvest has been taken off in the northern parts of the State. It is a great time for the Government to be deciding what level of freight the farmers will pay!

Mr Watt: The Government has a monopoly; it does not worry.

Mr McNEE: The Government says that it cares about this country. It uses terms such as: "We should all be equal". How it works it out, does not really matter. It continues to go on making irrelevant noises.

The grain freight issue was one of those package deals which was to be set up by the Government. If the grain from the Lakes area was not brought into the system, that, in broad terms, would cost the growers in the rest of the State and increase their freight costs by four per cent. That is a little like the package deal that the Minister for Local Government made to local government because this is, what one might call, a "package-deal-Government". It always has the thick end of the pick handle.

The Government talks so knowingly and readily about consensus. It would have to be joking. I wonder whether members of the Government can spell the word "consensus" let alone tell me what it means. If it means beating people around the head with a pick handle, then that is what it is. Anyway, the Government found out that its proposals in relation to the grain freight rate were not a very good idea.

Mr Coyne: You have invented a new terminology—"pick-handle consensus".

Mr McNEE: It is probably right. Anyway, the Government found that it was not such a good idea because there was great resistance to it. The

Taplin report was a joke because the very area that needed assistance with grain freight rates was not mentioned in the Taplin report. Yet, this Government says that it understands the situation. The eastern areas were brought into that report as an addendum. I thought that was a bit odd because the owner of a wheat bin in my electorate pays the dearest freight costs in this State. I do not believe this Government ought to be proud of that record. It left that area of the State out in the cold. That is incredible, to say the least.

During that procedure, of course, the Government came up with another deal and said, "Well, unless you accept this, we will slip your freight rate up by two per cent". That proved to be equally unpopular. While all the negotiations were going on, the State Government was ignoring its responsibilities to Westrail and allowing Westrail, which should have had representatives at the conference table, to adopt a confrontist attitude and advertise widely in the Press about which farmer ought to accept or not accept the rate.

Mr Bryce: The word is "confrontationist".

Mr Court: He is a country man.

Mr Bryce: The word is in the country version of *The Macquarie Dictionary*.

Mr McNEE: The Minister will keep. I will get him for that!

Westrail was in that situation and it advertised its case in an endeavour to bring pressure to bear on the growers. I do not believe that that was a very good way to negotiate a deal.

I understand this evening from the Minister that the Burke Government is undertaking a five-year plan which is in draft form. I do not know who will comprise the work force because if we want to do anything in this country one thing we will have to find is a work force.

No mention has been made of the people who use Westrail. The fact is that while Westrail threatens to increase the freight rates for growers, farmers are faced with a one-tonne or 1.5 tonne crop. Westrail will haul record tonnages if the season finishes in the way in which it is expected to finish. The cost of shifting the extra grain will not be very great at all, but Westrail is arguing that it needs to increase freight rates. That is not necessarily the way we see the situation.

Mr Watt: There are economies of scale.

Mr McNEE: Of course, there should be economies of scale. I have no time to read what has just been handed to me but I can assure Government members that when the numbers go on the board on election night they might be looking for a job. They might find that their popularity will not

last very long. Unless their leaders slip themselves into gear they will go down quickly. However, the Opposition is not worried about that.

The Government shows no interest in or understanding of the main industry in this State. It ignores it, it has always ignored it, and it will continue to ignore it; but that is its decision.

We are placed in a ridiculous situation which, from my recollection, has not occurred before; that is, the farmers will have a harvest coming off, but Westrail has not determined the freight rate. It is a ridiculous situation to be in.

Should I dare to mention again the Agaton water supply that was promised by this Government?

Mr Bryce: No, not again.

Mr McNEE: The Agaton water supply does not rate a mention in the Budget. The cost of the scheme would be approximately \$60 million and I remind the Government that it is about to spend \$35 million to test the popularity of the Prime Minister. We know that the Government is going down the gurgler faster than the Prime Minister would like to think about it. However, that exercise will cost half the amount that is required to provide the Agaton water supply. Those are the facts.

Several members interjected.

Mr McNEE: Never mind about the young women in my electorate with pre-school children who cart water! Never mind about the employment it creates—real good gutsy jobs. Never mind about the painting of museums or what the Government is doing with chain saws, etc. The Government comes out with fallacious figures and says, "Look what we have done for employment". The Government has squandered \$4 million of the taxpayers' money in an irresponsible way and if it believes that it is doing something about unemployment, it had better think again.

A Government member: Have you seen the figures?

Mr McNEE: Have I seen them! I say that they are fallacious because the Government is doing nothing for employment. If members of the Government believe that they are doing something for employment it shows their lack of understanding of the situation.

The Agaton water supply has been completely ignored in the Budget, and it is a great shame.

Let me dwell on some of the children in my electorate who need speech therapy. I wrote to the Minister for Health asking him if he could provide a speech therapist to work in my electorate, but he replied saying that no money was available. How-

ever, I can remember the Minister saying in this House that we need to give children a chance. I remember that and I also remember that the Government made available an amount of \$6 million for a programme to stop people from smoking. Can you remember that Mr Speaker? We both remember it. But, there is not enough money to provide a speech therapist for children in my area.

As I mentioned I wrote to the Minister and received the usual reply which said, "No money". I thought that was pretty good! I then wrote to the Premier and asked if he would make provision in the Budget for a speech therapist to operate in my electorate.

Mr Gordon Hill: Can I ask you a question?

Mr McNEE: The member for Helena cannot ask me a question because I only have five minutes of my time left. If he is able to get me an extension of time he can ask me as many questions as he likes but at the moment I want to talk about the children in my electorate.

As I said, I wrote to the Premier, and he did not have the grace to answer my letter, but he sent me a copy of the letter I received from the Minister for Health. The point which my electors want to remind the Government is that if it wants to give kids a chance the Government must get its priorities right and decide that if it is going to spend \$6 million on a quit smoking programme, which probably has had some benefits, it must give children the basic right to express themselves. This Government cares little about children in that situation.

People in my electorate are transporting their children 600 or more kilometres per week to visit speech therapists. If anyone in Perth is travelling that distance for the same reason, I would like to meet him. However, I know that no-one would be doing that.

Government members do not care, and some of them claim to represent remote areas. I wonder what they say in the Caucus room about people with learning difficulties. They probably do not say much at all, but nonetheless I remind the House that the Government continues to appoint adviser upon adviser. The Government which said some months ago that it had the best new leader in Australia and was making decisions which were all good has now decided it is not able to make those decisions and it cannot provide funds to give children a basic opportunity. Yet it continues to employ adviser after adviser.

Mr Watt: Did you say the best new leader?

Mr McNEE: It was probably that.

It surprises me that the Government leaves children in that situation.

We have a chaotic situation with regard to the medical situation in this country and the total blame does not rest with the State Government.

The people in my electorate are denied access to hospitals. Also they pay twice for their medical care. In addition to paying the Medicare levy, they have to join a hospital benefit fund because there is no free treatment in local hospitals. The Government does not provide doctors in those areas. The people in my electorate are aware of this situation and they will record their dissatisfaction with it when they vote in the next Federal election.

It is absolutely essential for the people in my electorate to pay twice for medical benefits. The member for Rockingham does not seem to care because he is laughing about it. Voters who may have considered supporting the member's party will now run a mile before doing so. The Labor Party has destroyed its supporters. It has not provided any services, yet the people pay twice for their medical care. People in the metropolitan area are not required to do that. That is a statement of how we see the situation in the country. It is time that this Government tried to encourage the Federal Government to rectify this crazy situation.

MR WATT (Albany) [7.42 p.m.]: In contributing to this Budget debate, I wish to canvas some of the elements of the Budget, particularly those which affect Albany most.

It would be quite wrong if I fail to acknowledge those elements of the Budget which are worthwhile. As many other members have said, we welcome the reduction by 40 per cent of the financial institutions duty from 5c to 3c in \$100. We on this side of the House have been critical of the financial institutions duty since it was first introduced. Most of the claims made about the duty by Opposition members have proved to be correct; for example, the tax raised considerably more than the Government claimed it would and also the business community was disadvantaged by it. We welcome the fact that this duty has been reduced. However, the Opposition remains committed to removing it completely when it returns to office.

I express my approval and appreciation for the reduction in payroll tax. No-one on either side of this House likes payroll tax. It is all the things that people say about it; in particular, it is an anti-employment tax. Most people with an ounce of political acumen realise, however, that while it continues to provide \$284.6 million to the State's revenue as it does this year, obviously it must be

replaced by some other taxing measure of considerable proportion before it can be removed completely. The reduction of the rate of payroll tax from five per cent to 4.75 per cent and the raising of the exemption levels is welcomed by us and will be welcomed by the business community. There was a progressive raising of the exemption levels during the years of the Court Government and that trend which has been established has been continued in this Budget.

Again, it should be noted that payroll tax collections amounted to something like \$267 million last year and, despite the cut in the rate and the raising of the exemption levels, the tax this year will produce an additional \$17 million. That indicates that the gesture is not quite as magnanimous as it might appear, because it still represents an increase of 6.33 per cent, which is above the inflation rate, as was discussed earlier today.

Other items in the Budget which try to improve apprentice employment and youth employment are also most welcome. I am sure that every member of the House wishes those schemes every success.

The increases in spending on tourism and housing are also most welcome.

Mr Bryce: What about technology?

Mr WATT: What about my being allowed to make this speech?

Mr Bryce: I thought perhaps you had forgotten it.

Mr WATT: My electorate of Albany and the surrounding areas are concentrating their efforts very much in the area of tourism. They are promoting it heavily and are doing so to a large degree at their own expense by public subscription. However, it is expensive to carry out promotions properly. Therefore, any additional commitment from the Government is welcome.

It was not my intention to say much about the additional spending on technology. I know the Minister for Technology has a strong commitment in that area and the seminar held in Albany recently on this subject was well attended and appreciated. None of us can be too well informed about this subject. Obviously the future lies in increasing use of technology and we all need a better knowledge of it.

I return now to the tourist allocation: I have a degree of reservation about how and where the extra tourist dollars will be spent. We all have a sneaking feeling that the preparations for the defence of the America's Cup will require a heavy expenditure commitment. It is possible that the

best and most attractive areas of the State will not get as much money as I would like.

The Commonwealth community employment programme, which followed the wage pause programme introduced by the previous Commonwealth and State Governments, has benefited my electorate from a tourism point of view. I am not a fan of that type of employment programme, but I think the simple political realities are that if the money is available it would be foolish for each community not to take advantage of it. Grants have enabled important work to be carried out in and around my electorate. For example, the Cheynes Beach whaling station, now known as Whaleworld Museum, has received a grant. That project is run by the Jaycees foundation. Its potential as an important and popular tourist attraction is extremely good, not only for the Albany region but for the whole of Western Australia. Other CEP grants will refurbish the old post office, which is an important historical building. A recent announcement concerning the approval for a grant to build a heated indoor swimming pool in Albany has also been welcomed by most residents of the town. Those who read the local newspapers will be aware from letters to the editor that not all ratepayers welcome the pool.

Returning to my observations about the Budget, it is interesting to note that despite the lowering of the inflation rate to its present level and the Consumer Price Index to 4.1 per cent for the period ended 30 June 1984, Budget revenue and expenditure are to increase by 6.8 per cent. That should be compared with the escalated increase in State taxation this financial year of 13.2 per cent. Territorial and departmental income represents an increase of 11.3 per cent, and public utilities will raise an additional 15.5 per cent.

It was interesting to read in the book entitled *The Western Australian Economy 1983-84*, which was presented to the Parliament by the Treasurer on the day he presented the Budget, that he acknowledged that this Government had nothing to do with the lowering of the inflation rate. The Treasurer said the following—

The decrease in the rate of inflation primarily reflects the impact on price increases of the wages pause and the Prices and Incomes Accord and the introduction of Medicare on 1 February 1984. The funding of Medicare through a one percent levy on gross income and the associated changes in health insurance arrangements and hospital charges have resulted in the removal of a large component of the cost of hospital and medical services from the coverage of the Consumer Price Index.

The wages pause set the pace, followed by the prices and income accord, and then, of course, the great Australian hoodwink, Medicare.

Two other areas of the Budget upon which I should like to comment before I move on are, firstly, the additional spending on housing. This, of course, is always welcome, although it is not something which is included in the new Budget items to show exactly where each electorate will benefit. It is certainly welcome for those who find it difficult to obtain rental accommodation in the private sector at a price they can afford.

Secondly, I welcome a recent announcement from the State Government, not included in the Budget, that the Government is to write off the debts of the Albany Port Authority. I have made representations to both the previous Government and the present Government requesting that to be done.

Several members interjected.

Mr WATT: The member for Mitchell says that it took a change of Government to do that. That is not so. The decision to write off those debts was made by the previous Government. It was resisted strongly by Treasury. I have spoken with an officer of the Co-ordinator General of Transport's office, who confirmed that the decision had been made by the previous Government before it left office, and the negotiations were then under way for that to happen. So rather than requiring a change of Government for that to happen, in fact it has taken an extra 18 months for those negotiations to be concluded.

I am grateful that it has happened, because if the Port of Albany is to have any future, it must have removed from its cost structure the impost which those debts imposed.

I turn now to some other matters of considerable importance to my electorate. An issue which caused a lot of ill-feeling recently was the issue of water and sewerage rate notices in Albany. They were issued approximately three months earlier than has been the case for the past several years. Rate notices have normally been issued around October or November, but this year they were issued in July. When I questioned the Minister for Water Resources in Parliament he said that rate notices were sent between one and 2½ months earlier this year. That was not the case, because most people were sent notices about three months earlier.

Most people anticipate bills arriving at certain times. As some are for several hundred dollars, it is necessary for low income or even middle income families to budget for an account of that size. It is

a matter of considerable embarrassment to have accounts of this size which cannot be met on time.

The Minister did say that if anyone had difficulty paying the accounts in time he should contact the Public Works Department and make arrangements for an extension of time to pay. That was good but it should not have been necessary.

The Minister also told me, in reply to a parliamentary question, that as from 1 July 1985 the metropolitan and country water authorities would be combined in one authority, therefore as rates were despatched in July in the metropolitan area, that should happen in the country as well, despite the fact that the merger was not due to come into effect until that time.

This has demonstrated to me, and to many of the people in my electorate, the way in which this Government is prepared to ride roughshod over the people. Had the accounts been sent out at the normal time with a letter advising people that next year's accounts would be sent out three months earlier than usual, the people might then have been in a position to meet those accounts without embarrassment.

Mr MacKinnon: It is strange the Premier could not afford to send out a letter, as he did with the SEC accounts, extolling how well things were going. He could not see his way clear to do that.

Mr WATT: There was a letter, but not giving that sort of advice. In these matters the Government should consult some of its enormously expensive public relations experts and give some thought to the people affected by the cavalier action taken on this occasion. It seems to me that if the income was received three months earlier than usual—for each \$100—which can be invested at 13 per cent, that is the equivalent of an increase of $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. I suspect that was the real motive behind the Government's sending out its accounts early.

I would like now to make a few comments about a matter of serious concern on the south coast, and that is the southern bluefin tuna industry. The Minister for Fisheries has been kept aware of the problem; I have raised it in the Parliament on several occasions. The present position is that scientists recently decided that the species was under threat of extinction, and so the Federal Government commissioned the Industries Assistance Commission to carry out an inquiry and bring out a report on the industry. The result of that, to cut the story short, is that the 70-odd fishermen who have been participating in the industry have now received a quota officially described as an individual transferable quota, commonly referred to as an ITQ. These quotas have

been determined by a formula based on 75 per cent of their catch record over the past three years and 25 per cent of the value of their investment in the industry. Unfortunately, for most, their quotas have left them unviable.

In 1982 the fishermen had their best year and produced a catch of some 5 600 tonnes of tuna. Under the new quota arrangements the proportion of the total national quota which had come to Western Australia was just over 2 700 tonnes—less than half the 1982 catch.

On that basis the fishermen, quite reasonably, had expected to get something like 50 per cent, or just under the 1982 figure, but instead they averaged around 40 to 41 per cent. That immediately put the future of the industry and the individual fishermen under a cloud. Most have heavy commitments on their boats, or they have mortgaged their homes or other property to buy their boats and they have heavy commitments in other areas. The loss of viability has caused many to decide that to continue in the industry is a lost cause, and almost immediately several of them began to negotiate the sale of their quotas.

That in itself would not necessarily matter, but the best prices were being offered from South Australia. This in turn has imposed a severe strain on the viability of the canneries, which obviously have no chance of maintaining their former levels. Indeed if the trend continues there must be a point not too far down the track when one or both of the canneries may decide to cease buying and canning tuna altogether. When that happens, the tuna industry will be finished in Western Australia, which is just what the Eastern States interests set out to achieve.

In August a group of concerned people met in Albany, including members of the WA Tuna Boat Association, the Albany Chamber of Commerce, the member for Stirling and myself to work out a package of proposals for presentation to the Government.

I rang the Minister's office the next day to try to arrange a meeting with him. After a number of phone calls back and forth—I do not mean that as a criticism—we were able to arrange a meeting on 12 September. On that day, the Minister was travelling to Esperance and he was kind enough to make available to us some time to meet with him in Albany. As a result, he took a proposal to Cabinet which resulted in a package of measures designed, among other things, to purchase quotas on behalf of the Government, to prevent their sale to South Australia. The idea was that the quotas should either be sold or leased back to other fishermen who still held quotas.

Welcome though that decision was, and given the speed, by Government standards, with which the decision was made, the reality is that it may well be too late. What is worse, a new dimension has been added as South Australian fishermen have offered to lease Western Australian quotas at a price of \$250 to \$300 per tonne. It may even be more. The sale price of tuna quotas is currently about \$1 200 per tonne and it is expected that the price of tuna next year will be about \$600 per tonne. After operating costs are deducted, it simply would not be possible for a local fisherman to pay anything like \$250 or \$300 and remain viable.

The difference is that in South Australia the tuna fishermen are able to catch the larger fish, which they are able to sell at a price many times higher to the *shushimi* market in Japan. Of course, tuna is a delicacy there, and a highly sought after commodity.

The problem is complicated by the possibility that the sale of quotas, which have not been held for a period of 12 months or more, may be subject to tax. The fishermen who are holding off, hoping to retain their quotas and remain in the industry, now contemplate leasing their quotas; but for them to do so the Government will need to provide financial assistance. If that is not done, quotas will almost certainly be leased out of the State. Already the lease of approximately 300 tonnes has been negotiated and that may well be the straw that will break the camel's back. The negotiations are still pending, and much depends on whether the Government is prepared to assist with the leasing arrangements.

I regret that only today I asked the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife whether the Government would be prepared to assist by subsidising the leasing of quotas to Western Australian tuna fishermen. The Minister said the Government would not. I ask the Minister to reconsider that as a matter of urgency. I realise he is not in the House tonight, so I hope the Deputy Premier or one of the other Ministers will bring that to his attention as a matter of urgency. The point is rapidly being reached when there will be insufficient quotas left in Western Australia for either the fishermen or the canneries to remain in the industry. I do not need to tell the effects of that most serious situation on Albany.

I also asked the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife if, in buying quotas, the Government was prepared to consider attempting to buy quotas from South Australia to bring them back to Western Australia. Again, the Minister said the Government was not contemplating that. I ask the Government to consider that option as well. If the

Government is buying at a competitive price, it should not matter whether the quota is bought in South Australia or Western Australia. As we stand to lose something of the order of 1 000 tonnes, it is only sensible that the Government should operate in the marketplace in South Australia, to try to bring back some of the quota which has already gone there.

I turn now to the Budget, and particularly the Loan Budget. When last year's Budget was brought down, it seemed to me that Albany had not done as well as it might—not in straight dollar terms, but as a percentage on the previous year. I extracted some quite extensive figures from the Loan Fund Budget and endeavoured to make an assessment on how Albany had fared. I compared, as far as possible, like with like. I listed the items of expenditure to be spent in and around the towns of Albany and Bunbury in the previous year and the current year. I did not include items in the districts surrounding Albany and Bunbury.

Items included the construction of such buildings as schools, technical and further education colleges, courthouses, hospitals, prisons, and other departmental buildings. They also included marine and harbours, water supply, sewerage, Westrail, and those sorts of items. They did not include major State Energy Commission spending on things like power houses and transmission lines, nor did they include State Housing Commission spending, which, of course, is part of a global allocation. The individual details of that allocation are not reflected in the Budget papers. Last year, of course, that would not have helped the Albany situation very much, anyway. I did not include port authority matters, because those funds are self-generating.

Mr D. L. Smith interjected.

Mr WATT: I explained that, but the member could not have been listening. I said the items related to in and around the Town of Albany and the City of Bunbury—more or less the towns themselves.

Mr D. L. Smith: Did you include expenditure at Australind?

Mr WATT: If the member would like to meet with me later, I will show him the figures I took out. I tried to be as accurate as I possibly could by comparing like with like. Obviously the details would never be precisely the same; but for the purposes of the argument they give a reasonable indication of the situation.

It was not surprising to discover that, in last year's Budget, expenditure in Albany was down by about 43 per cent, while in Bunbury it was up by about 19 per cent.

I also complained last year that no State Housing Commission homes were to be built at Albany, and I am pleased that this year, in response to a question a few weeks ago, the Minister for Housing advised that 19 homes would be built in Albany this year. I am grateful for that.

Mr Wilson: You would not want us to build houses where there was no need?

Mr WATT: The Minister and I agree to disagree on that matter. In Albany, one cannot obtain private rental accommodation at anything like the rental which people on low or middle incomes can afford to pay. That is the reality. It is not just a matter of how many people are on the waiting list.

Mr Wilson: How would you suggest that the determination of how many houses should be built ought to be made?

Mr WATT: It should be based on need.

Mr Wilson: How do you assess the need? You can give me some suggestions; I may take them up.

Mr WATT: I have already given the Minister the basis on which I assess the need, and that is the fact that people cannot obtain private rental accommodation. The system of rent support is very good; but if private rental accommodation was available, I would be quite happy if fewer houses were built.

I believe the SHC has recognised the need in Albany. Last year, it built no houses; this year, it is building 19. I have already said I am grateful for that. The Government has done the right thing.

The Minister for Regional Development and the North West challenged my remarks about the expenditure of last year's Budget, and he said that last year's Budget really only reflected the Budget of the previous O'Connor Government. He said that perhaps when the present Government had brought down its own Budget, there would be a different response. This year, I assume the Government has had a bit more time to bring down its own Budget, so I decided I would do the exercise again. While again comparing like with like as far as possible, I decided that I would include a few extra centres. This year, I extracted comparative figures for Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, and Mandurah. That produced some fairly interesting and telling results.

It is no secret that I have not been the greatest admirer of the Government's "Bunbury 2000" policy. Let me hasten to add that I am not opposed to the basic aims of "Bunbury 2000" in so far as it

seeks to decentralise certain Government functions and activities out of the metropolitan area of Perth.

Mr Jamieson: Bunbury is not far enough away.

Mr WATT: I agree with the member for Welshpool and in fact that may well be the Achilles heel of the "Bunbury 2000" plan, because even when public servants are transferred to centres as far away as Albany, Kalgoorlie, and the like, they often leave their families in Perth and commute to those centres during the week, returning to the metropolitan area at the weekend. That is not a matter over which the Government can have any control. However, the point about Bunbury being too close may well turn out to be a serious problem, but time will tell.

I am opposed to the fact that the "Bunbury 2000" plan should be achieved at the expense of other regions of the State or, more particularly, my own electorate. There has been a reasonably steady flow of opinion from Bunbury suggesting to me that the "Bunbury 2000" plan would struggle to achieve the potential claimed for it during and since the last election campaign. It was not surprising therefore in the *South Western Times* of 16 October to see the front page story carrying the banner headline "Bunbury 2000 Losing Momentum", and a similar article in *The West Australian* headed "Bunbury 2000 hits hiatus". The report suggested that the programme might be stalling in the face of increased opposition from State and Federal public servants.

Mr D. L. Smith interjected.

Mr WATT: The stories were essentially the same; the headlines differed. The article went on to identify a number of areas where it was unlikely that the Government would be able to meet its key deadlines. The report quoted the Director of the South West Development Corporation, Dr Ernie Manea, as saying that the "Bunbury 2000" programme would not work if the projects did not get top ranking from departmental heads and that the south-west developments must be given priority in advance of the normal departmental programmes.

That newspaper report appeared a week after the Budget was presented to Parliament, so it would appear not to have been idle speculation.

Mr Wilson: Did you read the headline in the following week's paper?

Mr WATT: I have heard reference made to it and I have tried to check it in the library.

Several members interjected.

Mr WATT: Some bottlenecks have been broken, but not all of them.

It is natural that the Government should try to defend its "Bunbury 2000" plan, and I accept that as being perfectly reasonable. However, there must be some concern about the 11-storey Austmark office tower which the Government has guaranteed it will lease for 25 years with a couple of five-year options. It has not said it will lease some of the accommodation, but it has indicated it will lease all of it, without any real likelihood of being able to fill it.

Mr Jamieson: There is a restaurant there also.

Mr WATT: It has said it will lease all the office space that is available. I do not know about the restaurant.

Not only has the Government given a commitment to lease all the office space in the Austmark building, but it has indicated also that it will lease it at a price which I understand is more than double the going rate at Bunbury, and roughly double the rate of some of the first-class office accommodation in central Perth.

I would like to know how the Government arrived at the decision to construct that building using that contractor. As I understand it no tenders were called and no assessment was made as to who might be able to do a better job, and unless we have a competitive situation, it seems to me that some deal must have been done somewhere along the line. Whether it was done behind closed doors or just what were the criteria, I guess we will never know. However, it seemed a trifle odd to me.

I would like to know when the Government is going to stop ripping off the State's taxpayers by entering into such extravagant schemes when it has no chance of utilising all the space without moving existing Government departments out of their current premises—

Mr D. L. Smith: How would you compare that with what your Government did in respect of Bunbury Foods?

Mr WATT: —which in turn will result in losses for owners of those premises.

If the member for Mitchell is serious about that Bunbury Foods business, I am absolutely amazed, because most members of Parliament in country areas are generally seeking to have industries established in their electorates.

Mr Jamieson: With taxpayers' money?

Mr WATT: The whole basis on which industries are assisted by Government puts them at less than 100 per cent certainties for starters, because, if that were not the case, those businesses would never have to go to the Government for guarantees in the first place; they would go to bankers and other lending institutions.

Mr Jamieson: They go to those as well.

Mr WATT: The point is that Bunbury Foods could not get finance and the Government stepped in. I do not back away from that in the same way as I do not back away from the fact that previous Labor and Liberal Governments have supported the Manjimup cannery for the same sorts of reasons, and I do not think that members opposite would suggest that should not have been supported.

Several members interjected.

Mr WATT: I am fast running out of time and I want to finish my speech. There is considerable concern in Bunbury that there will be a glut of office accommodation and some people will be financially disadvantaged.

I return to the Budget allocations and the comparisons for the regional centres to which I have referred already. The figures I am about to quote are documented and if any member wishes to challenge them, I am perfectly happy to show him the basis on which I have made my calculations.

Last year in Mandurah \$3 571 677 was spent and the Budget allocation for next year is \$4.489 million, an increase of \$917 323 or 25.7 per cent.

Several members interjected.

Mr WATT: I have explained the basis of these figures and, if members want to see them later, I shall be happy to show them to members.

In Kalgoorlie last year \$2 731 530 was spent, while this year's allocation is \$7.040 million, an increase of \$4 308 470 or 157.7 per cent. The main reason for the big increase in expenditure in Kalgoorlie is an allocation of \$3.6 million for the regional hospital. The figures do not include \$69.3 million spent last year on the SEC transmission line to Kalgoorlie, and a further \$13.5 million this year for an initiative which was provided by the previous Government.

In Geraldton a total of \$1 738 807 was spent last year, while this year the town will receive \$2.608 million, an increase of \$869 193 or 50 per cent.

The sum of \$6 206 012 was spent in Bunbury last year and the Budget allocation this year is \$10.647 million, an increase of \$4 600 988 or 74 per cent.

So we see Mandurah is up by 25.7 per cent, Kalgoorlie is up by 157.7 per cent, Geraldton is up by 50 per cent, and Bunbury is up by 74 per cent. If members are very observant, they will notice all those seats are held by ALP members—they are all represented by Government members.

Last year a total of \$1 826 391 was spent in Albany, down 43 per cent from the previous year

and this year it has a Budget allocation of \$1.577 million, a reduction of \$249 391 or 13.7 per cent.

I repeat my earlier comment that I do not begrudge any of these centres anything that they need or any money that is being spent on them; it is the percentage difference that matters to me and, if it is good enough to increase the spending—

Several members interjected.

Mr WATT: I wish members opposite would keep quiet.

Mr Jamieson: You are getting nasty.

Mr WATT: I am not getting nasty; I am just running out of time.

This is the second successive year that Albany has had a reduction in real terms, so it is just not funny and it is pretty obvious that at Budget time next year, after having knocked us down by about 60 per cent in two successive years, the Government will turn around and increase our allocation and tell us what good fellows they are. It will try to buy the seat of Albany just as it bought the seats of Mitchell and Bunbury.

I will now comment on the yapping that has come from members opposite about the \$4 million spent on the Albany Port Authority. Earlier in my speech I commented on that when I said that agreement had been reached by the previous Government to write off that debt.

Mr D. L. Smith: But it never did.

Mr WATT: I challenge the member for Mitchell to inquire at the Co-ordinator General of Transport's office, as I did, to ascertain whether the decision had been made to remove that debt. That might quieten him. I do not think he has been terribly fair.

In concluding my comments I want to cover one other area that relates to this so-called redundancy case recently presented before the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. It has become known as the job security decision although probably it should have been called the "job insecurity decision".

Most members will be aware of its impact on employers should it become necessary for them to terminate the employment of one of their workers. I have had a number of letters from business people expressing complete opposition to the decision. I understand that this Labor Government supported the application to the Commonwealth commission. On the assumption that another case will be brought before the State Industrial Commission for a similar provision for workers under State awards, I appeal to the Government to listen

to the voice of small business and to oppose the application vigorously.

I will relate to the House some comments I have picked at random from letters written to me about this job security decision. Here is one paragraph from a letter from an engineering works—

Most small businesses ride out bad economic periods and tend to retain staff levels where possible. If however this Redundancy business looks like going through a lot of employees will be put on a casual basis of employment.

This paragraph is from a letter from a service station owner—

I always have kept an apprentice in training over the past 18 years and have found it less and less attractive to keep training them, now with the redundancy payments looming on us, I find that to be the end of the line.

I will have to put more time in myself and cut back the staff.

This paragraph is from a letter from a retailer with a corner shop—

The Governments policies have forced small business to lay off staff and this current situation spells the end of full time jobs; employers will now employ on a part time or casual basis and this will not increase employment.

This is from a letter from an estate agent—

What little incentive already exists for small business to increase their workforce will be totally lost and such an event will almost certainly increase unemployment.

I will quote now from a letter from a motor vehicle dealer—

As an employer of some thirty seven people in Albany and with an annual wages bill of over \$500 000, I consider the implications of this Legislation would have a disastrous effect on the future progress of my company and its people.

To have to consult unions if I choose to make changes in production, organisation, structure or technology likely to have "significant effect" on employees, would rock the very basis of free enterprise as we know it.

This is from an automotive retailer—

We will not now consider taking on any new employees unless it is really essential.

Mr Jamieson: You canvassed the people, didn't you?

Mr WATT: They have written letters to me. I did not canvass.

Mrs Watkins interjected.

Mr WATT: Members opposite did not bother to tell them about it. I sent everyone a letter.

Mr Jamieson: So you did canvass them!

Mr WATT: That is not canvassing.

Mr Jamieson: Not much.

Mr WATT: If I take my duties seriously and inform my electorate of matters of concern, I do not regard that as canvassing. This is from another letter I received from a motor vehicle dealership—

Our company is already staggered at the Annual cost to us of "rates" and "charges". When comparing 82/83 to 83/84, the increases are as follows:

Bad Tax has added—\$1 000.00 to our Annual Costs

FID Tax has added—\$4 800.00 to our Annual Costs

Payroll Tax has added—\$7 000.00 to our Annual Costs

(ie \$12 420 82/83, \$19 970 83/84 Wage Increase only 20 per cent on Previous Year)

Council & PWD Rates—\$4 000.00 to our Annual Costs

SEC—\$4 300.00 to our Annual Costs
(Yard Lights used much less due to Day-light Saving)

Telephone—\$7 000.00 to our Annual Costs

(Harsh restrictions were placed on Staff to cut this cost)

Mr P. J. Smith: It is certainly not a small business.

Mr WATT: It had to meet an additional \$28 100.

Finally I will quote from a letter from a small manufacturer who has a shop which is going very well at present—

In reference to our own Business, if the redundancy payments and notice had been enforceable in 1980 when we were forced to sack three shop staff because of poor trading we simply would not be in business today to employ a total of 10 people.

Those people are terribly concerned about the Commonwealth commission's decision. I implore the Government to vigorously oppose any attempt to introduce a similar redundancy system in Western Australia.

MR D. L. SMITH (Mitchell) [8.26 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to speak in this Budget debate and perhaps also to follow the member for Albany. If we look at the country seats the mem-

ber for Albany analysed, we find that each of them shows a much greater percentage increase in capital expenditure than the average percentage increase in the total expenditure of the Budget and also a percentage increase considerably higher than the inflation rate. Further, he could only arrive at a figure that was less for Albany by waving a magic wand and taking, firstly, \$4 million from the Albany Port Authority's debts.

Mr Watt: That was not in the Budget.

Mr D. L. SMITH: What he did to overcome that problem was to say that his Government had decided to do that when it was in office. When he started to explain what he meant by "We had already decided", he really meant that an officer in the Transport Commission or the Albany Port Authority had made a recommendation which the Minister apparently supported, but that the recommendation had got stuck in Treasury. I have not been in Parliament for as long as the member for Albany or the member for Dale, but I would have thought that Treasury and the Treasurer were just as much a part of the Government as is the Minister for Transport. We cannot have it being said that because one Minister made a bid in the Budget for something and Treasury knocked it back, the Government—the previous Government—had decided to go ahead with that waiver of \$4 million.

He also sought to exclude the State Housing Commission expenditure for the building of 19 homes, and he did this well knowing that the major capital expenditure increase in this Budget is in the area of housing. He neglected to mention that because he knew that the increased allocation was a recognition by this Government that the housing industry could both revitalise the economy and provide for people's needs at the same time.

He did not go on to mention other Liberal-held seats such as Murray-Wellington. It is noteworthy that last night when speaking in this debate the member for Murray-Wellington did not try to draw that analogy, and nor did the member for Dale, the member for Vasse, or the member for Gascoyne. The reason is that every one of those country members knows that this Government has been better for country people than any of its predecessors, because it is a Government that believes in country people and the development of country areas.

The only thing the member for Albany has done is to set a stage on which I can happily speak about new expenditures in the seats of Bunbury and Mitchell, because those expenditures reflect what the Government is doing throughout country areas and do not necessarily reflect any favouritism to the seats of Bunbury and Mitchell.

The other thing that one needs to bear in mind when appraising the figures that the member used is that he did not in any way attempt to identify the geographic areas that he compared or the populations that reside in those geographic areas to see whether the actual capital amounts mean anything at all.

Mr Wilson: He did not go back to the equivalent Liberal years either.

Mr D. L. SMITH: He cannot do that because he would know they were a disaster for the country areas and that is why there are more Labor members representing country people now.

Mr Rushton: There are certainly more country people representing country areas.

Mr Bridge: Come on!

Mr Burkett: You are not a country member, are you, Cyril?

Mr Wilson: By two votes!

Mr D. L. SMITH: The member for Dale would know, that one of the members of the Legislative Council for the South-West Province actually resides in Perth and always has done during the period he has been in office. That is the kind of country representation we get from Liberal members. They live in Perth and they come down and see us occasionally!

Mr Bradshaw: The Labor guys live in Perth.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Did I hear the member for Murray-Wellington interject from his current position in the House?

Mr Bradshaw: Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is disgraceful behaviour. I would hope that sort of behaviour does not continue this evening or at any time when Parliament is in session.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Let us go back to the broad parameters and compare last year and the year before that. Page 2 of tonight's *Daily News* indicates that the inflation rate in Australia is currently the lowest it has been for 14 years. It also says that inflation in WA this year has been the lowest since 1969. On the inflation count we are doing better than any State except New South Wales. The worst-off State is that castle of conservatism, Joh Bjelke-Petersen's State, which has an inflation rate of 4.6 per cent as compared with our 2.9 per cent. People in the electorates should look at that rate and wonder why it is that those people who talk about big government have the largest inflation rates and those who practice good government have the lowest.

If we look at the employment position and the number of jobs created we see that WA is better off now than it has been for a long while and is improving all the time. It has improved so at a time when the construction stage of Worsley, for instance, has finished and many of those construction workers have had to find other positions. Notwithstanding the winding down of that project, we have been able to maintain employment at an increasing rate. We have also set in train the necessary steps for the establishment of the smelter and the export phase of natural gas.

The Premier was in Bunbury on Monday morning and was welcomed to the planned urea formaldehyde factory site by the proponents of free enterprise. As soon as they signed the agreement for the new urea formaldehyde factory we went across the road and looked at the new pine sawmill. That is the story throughout my electorate. Do not think about the smelters and power stations; look at the activity in those small industries which employ people in much greater numbers than do the big operations. They are out doing things, creating positions, growing, and employing people. They are doing it despite the constant negative criticisms that we get from the so-called shadow Minister for the south-west.

Mr Blaikie: You are being very uncharitable. It is not like you.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Almost every newspaper one picks up contains negative criticism and negative statements from a negative person who was a member of a negative Government which gave negative growth rates to many parts of the south-west, including Albany.

Mr Blaikie: You are making a negative speech.

Mr D. L. SMITH: I am only trying to address my remarks to negative people like the member for Vasse and to compare the previous Government's period in office with the new activity that is being created in a growing economy.

Mr Blaikie: Tell us about the dairy industry.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Look at how good this Budget is. It provides for a 40 per cent reduction in FID and a five per cent reduction in payroll tax.

Mr Bradshaw: FID should not have been brought in in the first place. Don't pat yourself on the back now that it is being reduced.

Mr Blaikie: What about the new Commonwealth legal service in Bunbury?

Mr D. L. SMITH: That shows how much the member knows about legal aid in WA. It is actually the State Legal Aid Commission, which happens to be funded in part by the Commonwealth Government.

Mr Blaikie: It is acting against the lawyers in Bunbury.

Mr D. L. SMITH: I will come back to the Legal Aid Commission later.

Mr Blaikie: They are not very happy down in Bunbury, you know.

Mr Wilson: You are opposed to it, are you? You are opposed to everything.

Mr Blaikie: Yes, I am opposed to it.

Mr Carr: You knock everything this Government does.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Look at the SEC gas consumers in Bunbury. Those consumers have been greeted with the news that they will get a reduction in their gas bills next year of the order of \$120.

Mr Carr: Knock that!

Mr Blaikie: What about the Bunbury drainage scheme?

Mr D. L. SMITH: We will be going to parity with the metropolitan area in terms of reduced SEC gas charges. That means \$120 a year in terms of reduced electricity charges.

I now mention irrigation rates. The most heated subject one could discuss with an irrigation farmer when talking about Government charges would be irrigation rates and the escalation of those rates and charges under successive Liberal Governments which they have supported time after time in elections, but what did they get for their support?

Mr Bradshaw: The Minister for Water Resources sent a letter to me saying he wanted to get it up to 100 per cent, exactly what the previous Government wanted to do.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Under successive Liberal Governments they saw increases in those charges of 33 and 45 per cent.

Mr Bradshaw: Never 45 per cent.

Mr D. L. SMITH: This year, under a Labor Government which is looking after their interests, and supported by members who, they are told, do not look after their interests—

Mr Blaikie: I do not think the House should sit on Thursday nights because everyone is getting a bit moody.

Mr D. L. SMITH: —those same farmers will tell us about the escalation in drainage rates. What is the truth this year?

Mr Bradshaw: People who never had drainage rates have now got them.

Mr D. L. SMITH: There is no increase at all.

Mr Bradshaw: No increase at all? You are joking.

Mr D. L. SMITH: The member for Murray-Wellington is talking about a change in the rating system brought in last year which was endorsed at meetings of people involved in it.

Several members interjected.

Mr Bradshaw: Absolute rubbish!

Mr D. L. SMITH: All that happened was a redistribution of the rate burden, but in terms of the total rate being raised this year, we see a zero increase compared with the previous Government's term in office.

Sewerage rates in Bunbury under the previous Government became the greatest rate burden to every home in Bunbury that was serviced by sewerage.

Mr Blaikie interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: This was because of the "user pays" system that the previous Government wanted to bring in.

Mr Blaikie: He is not telling the truth.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D. L. SMITH: This year there will be a four per cent increase in sewerage rates, as against an average increase of 20 per cent in previous Liberal Government years. Those are the sorts of revenue decisions that are being made to advantage country people and to promote business and employment, and that is reflected in both inflation rates and economic activity.

Mr Bradshaw: Those who have not had drainage rates before now have them, so they have gone up by 1 400 per cent.

Mr D. L. SMITH: I will come to drainage rates. What happened is, firstly, there was a change in the rating system and a redistribution of the rate burden among the drainage districts. Some of those people who had previously been exempted because they received no direct or indirect benefit under the old definition are now presumed to receive an indirect benefit so they are being rated. That is the reason some of those people who were exempted previously are now paying rates. That was not a factor of this Budget; it was a factor of last year's Budget; so the member is 12 months' behind in terms of appreciating the reasons for it. In terms of this Budget it is a zero increase and no change in the system. There is also planned for irrigation and dairy farmers a different approach to the payment for water. They will welcome this move.

In terms of other expenditure, one hears much about "Bunbury 2000" and some of the bigger projects. One might think that is really the only sort of development that is going on in country areas. I am glad the member for Vasse mentioned the Legal Aid office, because for the first time in

Western Australia the Legal Aid Commission of Western Australia will be opening two country Legal Aid offices this year and one will be operating in Bunbury, staffed by two practitioners. That office was originally to be staffed by three practitioners, but because of some resistance by the local legal profession, the number was reduced to two.

Mr Court: Did you lead the opposition?

Mr D. L. SMITH: I happily led the opposition to that resistance. On looking at the figures it was easy to find the reason the Opposition was ill founded, because if we look at the total Legal Aid budget for last year, and ask the local practitioners to give us their figures as to how much of that Legal Aid expenditure had gone into the south-west, it would be clear that in terms of the percentage of the population being covered in our area, we were getting less than one third of the Legal Aid expenditure that we should have been getting.

That does not mean that people in Bunbury have less legal aid needs than those in the metropolitan area. It simply means that because there is no Legal Aid office in Bunbury no attention is paid to the needs of social security recipients who have had their payments cut off unfairly or to people with consumer problems on whose behalf the private legal profession is not interested in conducting cases; there are also difficulties in legal education involved in getting out and talking to people about the way in which legal aid is available, and encouraging those people to go to a solicitor of their own choice or go to the commission and apply for aid in the normal way.

That is a facility which will be available for country people in country areas for the first time in the history of Western Australia, and done by a Government represented by country members who care about country people and are prepared to get their Government to commit itself to country areas.

While I am on the question of the Attorney General I would like to refer to the courthouse and the fact that that will be completed this year. It is a very good project. I am quite happy to concede that as a last minute attempt to prevent the seats going the way they should have gone years ago, the State Government that preceded us committed itself to the construction of the courthouse.

Unfortunately it is something that I, as a practitioner, had been asking the Government to do for something like 14 years before it made a decision to go ahead and the only reason it did was that the Government could see the seats of Bunbury and Mitchell were going the way that they ultimately did. The people in those areas know

that they have been neglected and have had no reward at all from years of neglectful representation by people who called themselves country people but came to the city and voted with their city based parties, for the interests of city people, and did not care too much about people in country areas.

Mr Bradshaw interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: If the member weighs up the figures for Murray-Wellington and Australind he will note that for years the people of Australind have been complaining about the quality of their water supply and the high salt content. Which Government committed itself to the expenditure of money for that water system? Which area in the south-west has most benefited by the expenditure on water this year? It is Australind.

For the first time State Housing Commission homes can be purchased at Australind this year, and the member for Murray-Wellington says that somehow or other we are giving special preference to the Bunbury and Mitchell areas, when his own electorate knows that he is getting more money out of this Government than he would have ever got out of its predecessors.

Mr Bradshaw interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Another "gonna". He said "We were gonna do it anyway". Let us look at health to see whether I can be pleased with the health budget this year. The Bunbury community health centre will be constructed as a result of this Budget. The sum of \$800 000 in total will be spent on this centre, and \$400 000 is committed this Budget. It will be built at Withers, right at the corner of my electorate where it is most required.

The member for Vasse would know how much benefit people will get out of community health centres. He would know what a great benefit that will be to the Bunbury and Mitchell communities. It has not stopped there. The senior citizens centre—

Mr Blaikie interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Is the member saying that the Busselton community centre is not of great benefit to Busselton as are the people who work there? No reply!

The other aspect of the health budget I welcome is the commitment to the senior citizens centre at Bunbury. There is no section of the community which pulls at the strings of my heart more than the older people who contribute so much to the welfare of our communities and who continue to contribute by being nice even to people like me and tell one he is a good bloke when he is down,

and to provide those supportive and advisory roles that elderly people like to do for me.

It was with great pleasure that I was able this year to get approximately a \$300 000 addition to the senior citizens centre as a result of this Budget.

Mr Blaikie interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: I probably know as much about the drainage problems of the farmers in the drainage districts of Busselton as does the member for Vasse. He would know that they have been dissatisfied with the treatment they have received from Governments for years; that is, successive Liberal Governments, and he has been representing them, but has been unable to do much about their problems.

I assure the member for Vasse that while I remain a member here I will be looking to the interests of those drainage ratepayers in the Busselton area, because I do believe in many cases they have been overdrained by works conducted under a Liberal Government, and they have not been consulted, because successive Liberal Governments have chosen not to seek local advice and this has resulted in drains which are overdraining, and to that extent they have not been doing their job properly.

Several members interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Let us turn to housing and look at the package for that. Firstly, we had more State Housing Commission units constructed in Bunbury last year than we had under the previous three years of a Liberal Government. If we take the total this year and add it to last year's total, we have more units in Bunbury than in the previous nine years under a Liberal Government. In those nine years a decision was made to construct the Worsley and Wagerup refineries which increased the demand for housing. It was the previous slack Liberal Government which was doing nothing about forecasting the problems those developments would create for State Housing Commission areas in the south-west. It took a Labor Government to come in and start the work on the irreparable damage that the Liberal Government had done to many people's lives, by making them go out into private accommodation and pay, during that construction period, rentals of \$130-140 a week with no assistance towards that rental payment.

It was not just the increase in the expenditure; it was also the way in which this money was allocated and spent. Firstly, we have got away from the idea that there has to be a single design, mass constructed, uniform State Housing Commission area. We have got away from the Radburne scheme of the previous Government. We have gone to a select and construct pro-

gramme, and a spot purchase programme, both of which will give diversity to people in commission areas, and will spread the commission areas out in a manner in which it makes it a much more enjoyable situation for the tenants to be in.

Mr Rushton interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: What does the member mean by that? Is he suggesting that by moving State Housing Commission people around the community that ruins the rest of the community?

Mr Rushton: I am saying that what you did is antisocial and you did it deliberately to destroy community of interest.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D. L. SMITH: Let us look at the first homeowners scheme and the success it has had through the work of the Federal Government. It helps people who could not afford housing previously to enter the housing market. Added to that is the impetus this Government has given to expenditure on low-interest loans for people of few means. We have substantially increased the allocation to those people who want to purchase new and old homes. More importantly a special allocation of \$3 million has been made for new homes only. That was done for two reasons: Firstly, to take the pressure off the demand for lower priced existing homes, and secondly to stimulate the housing industry.

That is a balanced housing programme put forward by a balanced Government which has proper regard for community needs. That is why I am proud to be a member of the Government and to support this Budget. More importantly in relation to that kind of expenditure, the Minister has given a direction that a fixed percentage of the money is to be allocated to country areas. The commission people and representatives from the terminating building societies and FHOS were in Bunbury last week talking to the estate agents to drum up business. They know more money is available in Bunbury and other country towns than ever before and they have to get out and market the product.

Let us look at the other aspect of that Minister's portfolio—community welfare. For the first time a comprehensive review of welfare needs has been undertaken. That has resulted in a decision to regionalise the Community Welfare Department. That regionalisation will bring enormous benefits to country people. There is also the notion of community houses and child-care centres. Although an allocation has not been made to the Bunbury area in this Budget I hope one will be made in the near future.

There has also been the secondment of a member of the Community Welfare Department to the

Bunbury voluntary community group to work full-time in promoting the interests of that group and community needs in Bunbury. Finally, a community needs survey has been carried out to ascertain what other needs in Bunbury should be attended to. I give great credit to the Minister for Housing and Youth and Community Services in terms of what he is doing for country people and country needs and the welfare of those who most need assistance from Government. He has contributed more to their welfare and future than any other Minister who has held that portfolio in any previous administration.

Let us look now at education. For the first time in Bunbury, \$4 million has been allocated to the Institute of Advanced Education. We did not do quite as well—

Mr Bradshaw: In this Budget?

Mr D. L. SMITH: In this Budget. We did not do as well as we expected from the Commonwealth allocation, but did this State Government shy away from its commitment? Did it use the excuse that the Federal Government had not done the right thing by not allocating the money we wanted it to?

Mr Bradshaw: Your Minister said that.

Mr D. L. SMITH: We decided to go ahead and do it out of State funds, and we allocated \$4 million.

Mr McNee: A lot of other projects could have been assisted which were just as good as that.

Several members interjected.

Mr Wilson: Don't whinge.

Mr Bradshaw interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D. L. SMITH: For the first time in Bunbury there will be available to people opportunities for tertiary education. Does that mean less expenditure on technical school needs? No, \$1.8 million has been allocated to the technical school arts centre to promote the arts in Bunbury. Newton Moore High School is to get a new hall and gymnasium as is Bunbury Senior High School. They are two matters which the new headmaster on arriving said, "For God's sake, what has been wrong with previous Governments and the Education Department?"

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D. L. SMITH: This old former agricultural building—a hall—had been shifted to Bunbury High School 30 or 40 years ago and left by previous Liberal Governments as a monument to their care about the needs of education in

Bunbury. As soon as we came to office and the matter was brought to our attention the Government gave a commitment because it cares about education in country areas.

Mr McNee: You have walked away from more policies than any other Government.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D. L. SMITH: One has to know how to talk to them.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! We are beginning to witness some very unstatesmanlike behaviour. I do not think it does the Parliament any good for members of the Opposition to perform in that manner. I do not object if members must interject, but I ask them to do it in a singular manner and not to carry on like farmyard animals.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr BRADSHAW: I think you should withdraw that remark that we are acting like farmyard animals.

Mr Carr: That is a reflection on the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I take the point of order made by the member for Murray-Wellington. I recall one previous occasion when a Speaker rose to his feet and withdrew comments that he made. I feel on reflection that the term "farmyard animals" may well not be parliamentary, and that in saying that I may well have been making the same mistake as that made by members of the Opposition prior to my making that statement. I thank the member and I withdraw the statement. Nonetheless I would like to qualify that withdrawal by saying that I was driven to that statement over a fair length of time by virtue of the behaviour of members of the Opposition and I hope that their behaviour does not drive me to that position again.

Mr MacKinnon: Well said.

Point of Order

Mr CRANE: On a point of order, you referred specifically, Mr Deputy Speaker, to members of the Opposition. I have been in this place a long time and have occupied that Chair on many occasions, and have had to bring you to order on occasions. I have been very tolerant and I do not believe such remarks are fair and reflect on one side of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr CRANE: My point of order is that you are sectional in your decisions and dealing with one side of the House.

Mr Pearce: Show some respect for the Chair.

Withdrawal of Remark

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe the remarks I have just made were particularly parliamentary. I am not bound, nor is the Speaker, to withdraw any comments I made. However, I take extreme exception to the comments the member for Moore has just made. I expect him to rise to his feet, withdraw the remark he made, and apologise for it.

Mr CRANE: To which remark are you referring? I merely pointed out that I thought the members of the House were being unparliamentary. I would like to know which remark should be withdrawn?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume his seat. The member made very specific remarks which reflected on the integrity of the Chair. He knows, as well as I know, what those remarks were. I want him to withdraw now. This is the second time I have asked for a withdrawal. I do not only want him to withdraw; I also want him to apologise.

Mr CRANE: I will certainly withdraw my remarks if they were a reflection on the Chair or on this House.

Mr Pearce: And apologise.

Mr CRANE: I was asked to withdraw the remark and in so doing I ask the Deputy Speaker to take note of my behaviour in the Chair and in this place. I apologise for any remarks or for any concerns that I may have caused him.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat.

Debate Resumed

Mr D. L. SMITH: I was addressing the House.

Mr Pearce: Did you apologise?

Mr Clarko: You be quiet. Who appointed you prefect of this House?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Karrinyup that while he has been outside the Chamber a number of things have occurred. No matter what occurred in that time, he has been here long enough to know that, on my ruling on a point of order and then calling the speaker to resume his speech, he should not interject. I warn him not to do it again.

Mr D. L. SMITH: I was speaking about the education section of the Budget. I have not let this opportunity pass without making reference to tertiary education, technical education, and high school education.

The South Bunbury Primary School, the Carey Park Primary School, and the Picton Primary School have received improvements as a result of this Budget.

Finally, on this education issue, I turn to pre-school education, and places for the four year-olds in my electorate. I am hopeful that at least the same number of places allocated last year for four-year-olds at pre-school in my electorate will again be allocated this year. I value those places very highly because all children but especially those in disadvantaged areas need to start school at an early age. They benefit greatly from this funding. This increase in funding has benefited the pre-schools at Dardanup, Capel, Withers, and Coorinda. They have probably fared better in terms of pre-school education than any other areas of the State. I am extremely grateful to the Minister for Education for that.

I now turn to the sorts of things that might interest the member for Mt. Marshall. He expressed great concern about agricultural industries and the need for agriculture to be looked after in this State Budget. I am pleased to see that the new south-west administration headquarters and laboratories will be commenced at Bunbury later this year. The herd recording service and its amalgamation with what was formerly the AIB will also go ahead. The feed analysis programme hopefully will also be upgraded. All of those things greatly enhance the future of agriculture in the south-west and certainly enhance the future of the dairy and beef industries.

The Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and Local Government, as everybody knows, has brought great benefits to country areas with the changes to the Local Government Act. It is also pleasing to see that he is continuing to look after my electorate. A new fire station will be constructed at Eaton.

Mr MacKinnon: Departmental heads have been told to toe the line.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Does the member mean that they have been told to place the fire station at Eaton?

Mr MacKinnon: No, I do not know what they have been told except that they have certainly been told to toe the line in respect to "Bunbury 2000" because apparently the polls are not looking too good. Either that, or there is an election in the air.

Mr D. L. SMITH: I will be pleased to go to Eaton and say that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition resents the placing of the fire station at Eaton.

Mr MacKinnon: If you say that publicly, I will take you to court.

Mr D. L. SMITH: The member should not make asides which he does not expect to be repeated. The Minister also allowed for significant increases to the grants to the sea search and rescue group in Bunbury and is now looking at the requirements for the State Emergency Service headquarters to be placed there. That is another matter which the previous Government was going to look at, but did not.

Mr Bradshaw: All you have spoken about is how much Bunbury is getting.

Mr D. L. SMITH: Most of the things I have been talking about are going into the electorate of Mitchell and not Bunbury.

I now turn to the question of regional development, railways, and transport. The previous Government was always a great "gunna" about the railway at Bunbury. I remember, about 12 years ago as a young man, going to meet the then Minister for Transport.

Mr Blaikie: Who was it?

Mr D. L. SMITH: Mr Ray O'Connor. He said, "We are 'gunna' move the railways". Successive Liberal transport Ministers thereafter went to Bunbury and said, "We are 'gunna' remove the railways". That has finally been achieved by a Labor Minister for Transport. I have heard it said by the Liberals that the expenditure on the new marshalling yards at Picton will be very high. I have even seen a Press release in a Mandurah newspaper. That opinion does not take into account that most of the expenditure will be recouped when the railway land at Bunbury is sold. There will be almost no costs to the Government at all.

That is not where matters relating to railways end. The decision to go ahead with upgrading the line from Mundijong to Picton and to acquire a replacement train for the Australind line will substantially reduce the travelling time between Bunbury and Perth as will the improvements to the highway between Bunbury and Perth. The Baldivis to Rockingham line was opened yesterday and construction has started on the Australind-Mandurah by-pass and bridge. I am hopeful that an announcement will be made in relation to the Australind-Bunbury section soon.

Apart from those improvements, I would like to refer also to the improvements to the Bussell and the coalfields highways. The member for Vasse had the temerity to go to the *South Western Times* and say that the people in the Shire of Capel had been let down by this Government. I ask him: How have they been let down? Everyone who travels between Bunbury and Capel can see Main Roads Department gangs working on that road. They are widening the highway. The

Government is providing funds for an extra 1.4 kilometres of four-lane highway from the Bunbury end. What did those people get when they were represented by the member for Vasse? They got nothing. That road was the worst in terms of traffic density in my area. The whole time that the member for Vasse had control of that area, he could not get a cent spent on it. At least the Minister for Transport today listens and tries to spend money where it is needed. The entrance to Burekup and the Pratt Road entrance to Eaton have been overlooked by previous Governments. They are suddenly being attended to by a Government which cares about the area.

Of course, the Minister for Transport is also the Minister with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000" and the Minister for Regional Development and the North West, and one only has to look at the increased expenditure on the South West Development Authority and the sort of work that it is doing to learn that it is true the Government has appointed to the authority some of the keenest minds and some of the most energetic people in the south-west. We are not like previous Governments which paid lip service to regionalisation and who paid lip service to decentralisation. We appointed the right people to the authority and we are giving it the budget it needs in terms of its own administration to make the proper research into regional needs. It will be a blueprint for other areas. This Government has simply not left it at "Bunbury 2000", it has looked at Albany and the Great Southern—

Mr Blaikie: It hasn't looked at the Margaret River Hospital.

Mr D. L. SMITH: It has looked at the Margaret River Primary School and all the other things the member for Vasse's area received this year in the Budget.

Mr Blaikie: The Minister for Works did the right thing at Augusta, and he is well regarded.

Mr D. L. SMITH: All those kinds of developments and those kinds of extensions do not go to the heart of this Budget. They do not go to the framework of this Budget. The reason I am proud of this Government in presenting this Budget and the Treasury team that has achieved it is that the Budget addresses the most critical problem in our community.

Despite the improvement in the economy and despite anything we might say about how good things are in comparison with the situation three years ago, it is true that every day that I sit in my electorate office people come in who are unemployed, who cannot meet their mortgage payments, and whose marriages are breaking up because of the long-term unemployment problems.

Some of those people who come in are parents who are concerned about their children. Those problems go to the heart of what is necessary in this Budget and what it sets out to do; that is to address itself to employment creation. It has done that in a number of ways—by reducing FID, by reducing payroll tax—

Mr D. L. SMITH: —and by looking at the Minister for Employment and Training's programme and giving him a Budget which is a substantial increase on previous Budgets so that finally, on a rational basis, the Government can address itself to the creation of employment opportunities, the retraining of those people who are unemployed, and especially the needs of the young.

If the Liberal members opposite and the Country Party members—or whatever they are called—want to understand this Budget, I hope they will look in detail at what the Government has provided to the Minister for Employment and Training for the needs of those people. They are really people who are crying out for assistance and who should not, as things pick up, be ignored and forgotten among the statistics. As a Government and as an Opposition we need to look after their needs as much as we can.

While I am referring to the Minister for Employment and Training, I would like to advert to the great benefits that have flown to Western Australia from the community employment programme, and to country areas in particular. It is noteworthy that when he was talking about expenditure in Albany and using those percentage figures, the member for Albany chose to ignore all the community programme money that has gone into Albany.

Mr Watt: I did not, I quoted it.

Mr D. L. SMITH: The member for Albany did not include it in the percentages referred to.

Mr Watt: Of course not; if I was going to do that I would also have to include all the CEP money.

Mr MacKinnon: Where does the CEP money come from? Is it the State or the Commonwealth?

Mr D. L. SMITH: It is allocated by a committee which is appointed by State and Federal Governments.

Mr MacKinnon: Where does it come from?

Mr D. L. SMITH: It is allocated after the approval of the State and Federal Ministers.

Mr MacKinnon: Where does it come from?

Mr D. L. SMITH: It comes from Federal sources, and the reason for that is that Government happens to have income taxing power and the other taxing powers that this State does not have.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: The combined work of the State and Federal Governments has resulted in many projects which have been of great benefit in terms of creating employment opportunities. The people in Withers have complained to me for years about the lack of footpaths. With a single stroke of getting a substantial CEP grant for footpaths, a lot of those problems have been resolved and I hope they will continue to be resolved. All those things are making us reach the stage where we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. It is a great pity that members opposite choose to be so negative—as I said, the “Minister for the south-west” wants to decry every development in the south-west. He appears to want to knock “Bunbury 2000” and the South West Development Authority, and he seeks to try to persuade country people that things were better when his party was in office. I am pleased to know that the people I have spoken to in my electorate know that in this Government they have a Government which can both balance the Budget, stimulate the economy, and give due and proper regard to the needs of the disadvantaged.

Mr Bradshaw: Tell us about the shonky Argyle diamond deal!

Mr D. L. SMITH: The shonky Argyle diamond deal! That is typical of what I was saying about the Opposition. It does not matter what one says, it is negative, critical, and destructive. When the members opposite start to be positive, constructive, care about people, look to the real needs of country people, and develop policies and programmes for fulfilling those needs and aspirations then—

Several members interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: —in about the year 2050 maybe some of the country people will start to think about electing the people who will succeed whatever party follows when the Opposition collapses into disarray.

All I can say in conclusion is that this is a Budget to be proud of, and all members should be proud of it as Western Australians. I certainly am proud to be a member of the Government which introduced it.

MR RUSHTON (Dale) [9.17 p.m.]: We have just listened to the member for Mitchell who continued with the usual Burke Government propaganda spiel. He made so many inaccuracies that it is not worth answering the points he raised. Members from country areas will note that there was no real concern for rural people, the farmer, the fishing industry, and the other industries that make up a rural setting. So much for the member for Mitchell.

Mr Blaikie: Not one word about his rural electorate.

Mr D. L. Smith interjected.

Mr RUSHTON: It is my intention to direct my remarks to the leadership of the Government and the example, or lack of it, that has come forward from the Treasurer and the Government. If time permits, I will give attention to the unemployment factor which exists and which is most serious. If there is not time, I will have an opportunity to speak on this subject in legislation that will come forward.

Of course, there is serious concern about the hospital in my area which is being socialised by this Government. There will be an opportunity in the Budget to deal in detail with the various items to which we want to direct attention.

By now most observant people will have realised that the Burke Government's highest priority is to make sure that people perceive it to be something other than it actually is. I can say without equivocation that if the Burke Government wins the next election it will not be because of what it has done, but because of its ability to manipulate the media, and what the people perceive it to be because of false representation.

I am most concerned with the actions of the Government. It is selling off the farm for short-term advantage. The diamond venture was an example of that policy. The technical school proposal is another attempt to generate funds so that it can buy votes at the next election. Of course, the amalgamation of the Transport Commission and the Co-ordinator General of Transport is a squandering of the reserves in that area. I shall refer to this point at a later stage.

After 20 months in office it is difficult to find anything of moment that this Government has done. In fact, if one thinks about it, we have seen only a facade of things taking place and nothing of real substance has occurred during this Government's period in office.

On the other hand, its publicity machine has been successful in making some people believe that it has been a good manager and decision-maker. Let us look at the reality. Some members in this Assembly may remember the actions of Goebbels during the last war and the progress he made in brainwashing the people of Germany—people who most of us would credit with pragmatism and a high level of education. Many of us will remember how successful that gentleman was in making people believe untruths. The same situation applies in Western Australia.

I record one incident which takes place regularly and which started as a tactic of the

Premier's. It has succeeded to a certain degree, and it demonstrates the lengths to which this Government will go to persuade people to believe something that is not true. The Premier has said that Liberals say he is more like a Liberal Premier than a Premier Liberal. Following that statement, it was repeated on a talkback programme and before long the programme manager repeated the statement once more. That tactic continues. The statement is completely untrue, but the constant repetition is part of the propaganda process and it gets through to some of the people.

I now refer to the Budget speech and will prove, without any great problem, how that propaganda proceeds in this speech. Towards the beginning of his speech the Premier said—

It reflected our inheritance from our predecessors: financial uncertainty and a shaky budgetary situation.

He continued—

The major factors in this changed budgetary climate have been the strong upturn in the State and national economies and the substantial time and effort we have devoted since taking office to restoring stability to the State's finances.

In a short time I shall be showing how inaccurate that statement is. Another interesting comment is—

The small business sector is gaining momentum.

I suggest that doctors, who could be classed as small businessmen, will not be delighted with that remark. They know how this Government has attacked them and they will react accordingly.

I wish to give some attention to the following statement made by the Premier—

A measure of our success in restoring the State's financial fortunes has been the surplus of almost \$1 million recorded in 1983-84 after the deficit of more than \$14 million in the previous year.

We have heard that recital so many times that I thought it worthy of mention. I hope the media will give some attention in due course to putting the record straight. That is a falsehood that has been repeated in the Budget papers, and it does not reflect with credit on the Premier that he is prepared to go to such lengths in an attempt to mislead the people.

Members will remember that at the time of the changeover of Government, the Treasury gave the previous Premier the usual indications that if there was no change in budgeting, there would be an overrun of \$21 million. Of course, when the

present Premier took office he expanded that statement to indicate that a real deficit had occurred. Such warnings have been given on previous occasions and the necessary adjustments have been made from February onwards.

I suggest that if the previous Government had still been in office at the time of the Labor Government's first Budget, the Budget would have very nearly balanced. I will give reasons for that. Not long after the misuse of that statement by Premier Burke, he had increased the supposed deficit to \$32 million. Finally, he reduced that figure to \$14.2 million. I indicate to members what that figure of \$14.2 million relates to. The new expenditure initiatives taken by the Burke Government between February and the end of the year amounted to \$8.62 million made up as follows: wage pause \$4.33 million; advisers and ministerial contract staff \$500 000; cost of these advisers and staff \$250 000; refurbishing the Perth-Fremantle railway \$1.36 million; Superannuation Building ministerial suites \$750 000; Premier's department expansion \$330 000; new Department of Employment and Training \$100 000; expanded Department of Consumer Affairs \$100 000; studies and inquiries \$300 000. In addition the unforeseen factors which amount to \$8 million included natural disasters relief \$3 million and the uncollected revenue increase of \$5 million. This last figure represented a manipulation at the end of the year by the Premier to achieve the result he wanted.

I mention those points to indicate to members that it was a contrived figure, and it has been very pleasing to note that the Leader of the Opposition has taken the Government to task on the question of the reserve it has generated this year. I was interested to note that during the time when there was an indication of the overrun, one of the senior Treasury officers told me that it was a question of tactics and that the Government had decided that it would have an overrun and would thus be able to blame the previous Government and could create a greater fund for itself. That represents the current position. The Government has presented a totally artificial figure.

I also point out to members that this year the same manipulation has been carried out. The Government has obviously had its sticky fingers ready to take the reserves created by the amalgamation of the Co-ordinator General's office and the Transport Commission. The reserves from the Transport Commission include \$5 million created by the trucking fraternity in this State; a superannuation reserve created in the normal business way has a value of \$4 million; and property from the Transport Commission is worth \$2

million. It will be interesting to see how the Government deals with that situation.

I am very anxious that we should clearly understand—and the graph used by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will assist—how false are the claims by Government members and Ministers regarding its economic management of this State and its claim that efficiencies have taken place.

Mr MacKinnon: They don't even believe in sunset clauses.

Mr RUSHTON: I am talking about example. When we have a Premier and a Government attempting to falsify reports, such as the Budget report, we are in for a bad time unless we can achieve a change fairly quickly.

Mr Pearce: Not much chance of that.

Mr RUSHTON: The *per capita* taxation, based on a constant dollar value in 1980-81, shows the story very clearly. Going back to the Tonkin Government, three years of Labor at that time showed a increase of 33 per cent in the State's taxation each year. In the nine years of the Court-O'Connor Governments there was an increase of nine per cent, with an average of one per cent per year. With the Burke Government, in two years there has been a 19 per cent increase, which is an annual average of 9.5 per cent. If anybody has any doubts about economic management, he now knows which Government has been successful in that area.

When one builds up a new plateau of costs, which the Tonkin Government did, it is very hard to pull back from that position.

The Burke Government has done the same in two years. It has created a new plateau of costs which is burdening the people of this State tremendously, and it is attacking the ability of people to employ, certainly young people, but people generally. Any observant person can easily see from the graph I am holding just what has been the management of this irresponsible Government.

For example, last year taxes were so excessive that they created reserves. Taxes like FID were introduced when they were not needed. That in itself illustrates very clearly what an irresponsible Government we have.

Talking on the issue of the personal leadership of the Treasurer and the example he has set, last year we saw a gimmick of the Treasurer's putting on these excessive charges as a camouflage. This camouflage was to divert attention from massive taxes by cutting the salaries of public servants and others. His own cut was 15 per cent. As it turned out his own percentage cut, because of the income

tax applicable, was less than the cut which a member of Parliament experienced.

In recent times—I think this is the serious issue—in the last adjustment recently published in the *Government Gazette* the Premier's allowance moved up by I think \$8 000. At worst it would appear that he was in touch with the chairman of the commission and said, "I want an increase in my allowance", and the chairman would have given it. At best the chairman would have paid him the courtesy of advising the granting of what was proposed. If the Premier wanted to give an example of leadership he would have said, "Cut it out, I do not wish to receive that, I already receive a greater daily allowance than anybody else. I have other privileges".

Several members interjected.

Mr RUSHTON: He has taken everything he can get. History will show this Government as the highest cost Government and the Premier as the highest cost Premier ever. The Premier has even indicated that he can see five years as his limit, and this appears to be agreed.

Mr MacKinnon: If we have an early election it may be different.

Mr RUSHTON: He is projecting, I have heard, that he may be leaving sooner than that. Let us contemplate what the result will be if the Premier retires in a fairly short time. He will take so much out of the superannuation fund it will go pale. My prediction is that he will go out on medical grounds with such a take that he will be the highest taker of superannuation funds there has ever been.

Several members interjected.

Mr Clarko: The big cut was in the Civil Service.

Mr RUSHTON: He took a 15 per cent cut. Then he imposed a 10 per cent cut on the rest. It was only a camouflage to get the increased charges through. He had a final deduction of less than other members. That is how generous he was. He has just imposed things on other people for the purpose of getting his taxes through. It was so blatant one wonders why the media did not expose it. We will come to that in due course.

I would just like to indicate to the Press that I do not blame them for fitting in with the programme. The Premier is an ex-journalist; that is where his main experience has been. His experience is not in management or in any other area, but he has been able to capture the headlines. That is the main thrust of his endeavours. That is why, doing things in a certain way, he has captured the headlines, and he has been successful.

Referring briefly to Rottneest, I will run through four or five items on how he has managed to secure the headlines, and how he has acted irresponsibly without anybody challenging him. When one goes to Rottneest one finds the Premier's smiling face on every bit of literature proclaiming what he will do. Recently, because what he was going to do was not so popular, one has not seen the face of the Premier as the chairman of the board. In fact I heard the deputy chairman being called the chairman the other day.

As soon as the Premier runs into trouble after getting the headline, he then turns to an ERMP. That was done by the Premier. As a result, when the development the Premier was trying to promote was considered to be unpopular, he had already got the headline, and then declares an ERMP. People have been involved in making submissions, and things like that. This is just one event which took place.

Take another: The casino on Burswood Island. We all know the fiasco there has been with that. People have spent large sums of money making submissions. The Treasurer made a bold announcement, and then we were told we would have an ERMP. It is all back to front again.

Another example is Sorrento. We are told the nodes will be bought.

Mr Clarko: No, just one of them.

Mr RUSHTON: That is propaganda from the last election. The nodes are so sensitive, they had to be bought. The Government got in and wasted taxpayers' money. The nodes are so sensitive they must not be touched, according to the Government. The next thing is that a marina is to be built on one of them. When people react, we are told we will have an ERMP. It is the same strategy—headlines, and so it goes on.

It was the same with Mandurah. There was to be an open cut. There were headlines; we will have a cut, it will cost \$27 million. When the people say, "What about the fishing? What about this and that?", then we hear, "We will have an ERMP". It is a let-out again. The Government will be able to back out. It has been bold. We are not being told the Government is there to secure the seat of the member for Mandurah. It does not matter what the Government does with the taxpayers' money. It has the headlines, and is seen to be looking after the seat of Mandurah".

Mr Bryce: We are.

Mr RUSHTON: That is so false and, the Government is putting the tax money at risk. The Government should have worried about the environmental review and management programme, and then made a bold statement. That is purely a

tactic for winning headlines, which is more important than doing the job properly.

The pornography issue is a matter the Premier really got away with, up till now, anyway. His Government brought in a regulation which allowed a flood of "X"-rated videos; and when the people became hostile about that, the next moment the Premier said, "Well, goodness gracious, I'd better knock those off. It's getting too hot". He did that, and suddenly he turned himself into a statesman. That is also artificial.

The Premier has been busy in misleading the public over his good management scheme based on replacement of only 50 per cent of public servants who retire or resign. It has been a difficult task obtaining figures from the Premier by which to make a comparison, so I will not dwell on this matter. The interesting fact is that, ignoring Westrail which is a case on its own, there has been a gain of about 1 500 employees in the period of a year. That shows the hypocrisy of the Government.

Another matter I will mention relates to a question I asked yesterday. It shows how inaccurate the Government is in its desire to win headlines and publicity at all costs. Recently, the Government issued a story about the Fremantle-Perth railway line and its success. When I examined the figures given in the House, they showed a reduction of 700 people using public transport in the space of a year. They also showed an extra cost.

Between March 1983 and March 1984, there was a reduction in patronage of 768 people compared with the total public transport usage in the Fremantle-Perth corridor. The figures also showed a subsidy for each train passenger of 218c. For bus passengers, there is a subsidy per passenger of 79.73c. When one does the sums, one finds that by running trains instead of buses in that corridor, it has cost the Government \$3 544 500. The Government made a political decision to reintroduce that transport mode—prematurely I would say. It should have pushed hard to follow what we were doing in obtaining a light rail vehicle. Then the service could have been reintroduced with the advantage of having saved the money at the right time.

Mr Pearce: Will you give an undertaking to close the Fremantle line again if you are re-elected?

Mr RUSHTON: I am saying what should have been done. There should have been a light rail vehicle.

Mr Pearce: Rubbish! You were aiming at closing down the Armadale line as well. It was looking pretty shaky when you were the Minister.

Mr RUSHTON: Is it not typical that the Minister for Education should have made my point? Members of the Government do not speak about anything without telling lies. The Government presents total untruths to the public, and it is about time the media got onto that. All one needs to do is to ask the Government to present the facts.

We have been monitoring the Premier's position in relation to the Mt. Lawley by-election. The figures produced by the Labor Party concerning the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition were challenged, and they were found to be totally false. When a Federal election is held, at about 6.45 in the evening one finds put on lampposts around the place billboards indicating, "Labor wins." That is the sort of thing that points out the ethics of the Labor Party.

Mr Pearce: That is because we do win.

Mr RUSHTON: That is not true. The Labor Party has no credit whatsoever.

Mr Pearce: You do not have much credit. You told my father at 7.00 p.m. on the day of the election that I would lose my seat—one hour before the close of the polls. I won the seat by 64 per cent, and you won by only two votes.

Mr RUSHTON: The people in the area are quite knowledgeable. They know what dirty tactics the Government stoops to; but unfortunately it has stooped to that sort of thing in the Budget papers. It presents a false position in a presentation to this Parliament. The inaccurate and false presentation of the figures is an insult to this establishment. It is about time for a change.

I will now touch on the question of unemployment, the most serious issue. I believe that the Federal and State Governments have taken the wrong position on the problem. They should try to solve it.

The prices and incomes accord has led to the expenditure of something like \$800 000 of taxpayers' money recently, in an endeavour to convince the people that the Government knows what is going on. That is typical of the fact that the Government does things in the wrong way.

The accord is the creation of the Prime Minister and the Australian Council of Trade Unions. It is an attempt to manage the work force. Any observant person would realise that the Prime Minister actually created the inflationary spiral experienced in the previous Government's time. That Government took measures that brought inflation down, but then the wage pressures, which were contributed to largely by the present Prime Minister, moved the inflation figure upwards.

Many knowledgeable people have recognised in recent years that the accord will not work, and that we should move towards a voluntary work agreement. We need to move away from the Arbitration Commission, because it is just manipulated. It has no regard for productivity. Most people who think about the question will realise that the commission has contributed greatly to the destruction of our economic stability. The steps being taken today are directed more towards the people who are working; very little attention is given to the people who are out of work.

The remedy must be in natural things; and the natural course, I suggest after a considerable amount of thought, is that we should go back to negotiations between employees and employers in relation to work contracts. On that point, I will quote from the announcements of the Australian Small Business Association.

In these quotations the association refers to comments made by the Prime Minister when he was in Peking to the effect that this was something which could take place. Reference is made to the fact that small business has been concerned for some time at its effective exclusion from the wage determination process where it has no representation.

Several members interjected.

Mr RUSHTON: I am quoting from a paper circulated by the Australian Small Business Association. It is very pertinent and it is time that we took some of these comments on board and implemented them. Nothing could be more serious than the dilemma we have at present in respect of the level of unemployment among young people particularly. Indeed, when the change of leadership occurred in my party and I became Deputy Premier I would have liked to apply myself to the industrial area, but, on reflection, I know that, had I done so, the deregulation of transport probably would not have taken place. The association stated—

The arbitration system is designed for large companies and Governments, because in big organisations employees are remote from management. In small businesses owner-managers and employees work and talk together constantly.

Several members interjected.

Mr RUSHTON: The conduct of the person who represented you, Sir, a little while ago is deplorable.

Mr Pearce: That is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr RUSHTON: I am not reflecting on the Chair.

Mr Pearce: But you are reflecting on a person who held the Chair as soon as he left it and that is deplorable.

Mr RUSHTON: If the member for Rockingham cannot behave himself when he is in his seat, he should not be in the Chair. To continue—

Employees in small businesses do not need anyone to speak for them. They can do it better themselves. A better system of settling wages and conditions in small business would be for employers and employees to reach their own agreements.

I refer back to the points the Opposition has made in relation to taking some positive steps towards solving this vexed issue of unemployment among our young people. I shall have more to say about that when we are debating the industrial arbitration Bill.

I turn now to the other issues which need attention in my electorate. Firstly, I refer to the steps this Government is taking towards the socialisation of medicine and hospitals. Comments have been made by the Minister for Health and he is unwavering in his resolve to introduce resident doctors and sessional services into hospitals. He has not made known any facts—indeed, he would not have them—to prove that that system would be more economical than the one we have enjoyed in the past where people have had the maximum freedom of choice of their own medicos.

Under this other system which is being imposed on people, freedom of choice is being limited. We have seen what has taken place at Bentley hospital and we know a great deal about it because of the good work done by the member for Clontarf. The people of the Bentley and Armadale regions will resist this proposition strongly when the Government seeks to impose it.

The people of Armadale seem to be next on this Government's hit list as far as the imposition of this system is concerned, and it will be opposed with every facility available to us.

Mr Pearce: It will not be by the people of Armadale. I have been promising them full-time doctors for years and I am embarrassed that it has taken so long to achieve.

Mr RUSHTON: This socialist Government is claiming, "This is the Government's hospital. This is not where people should work freely. This is where we should have total control". That is the situation which will occur and this Government will be seen for what it is; that is, a Government

which wants to totally control and regulate people's lives.

Mr Read: Who do you think should control the hospitals?

Mr RUSHTON: In many cases they are controlled by groups of people in country areas, but in my area the Health Department controls them.

If a system works efficiently and not as costly as that proposed, we should continue with it. That is the case in respect of the current system. If a change is to take place, it should not occur based on political dogma, but rather because it has been proved that the alternative system will be more efficient. No-one has made out that sort of case, nor has anyone proved that the Government's proposition in respect of hospitals will be more efficient than the current system.

Indeed, people at Bentley are going without medical services and in the Armadale area people are getting quite frantic, because if this new system comes into operation, they will not be able to choose their own doctors and, as a result of Medicare and other impositions, there will be queues to obtain the necessary services.

I cannot see any advantage in taking steps which will not benefit patients; that is what medical service is all about. As far as I can see, that is not the direction in which we are going.

Mr Pearce: What about all the people who cannot get after-hours casualty treatment at the Armadale hospital because there are no doctors?

Mr RUSHTON: That indicates how much the member for Armadale knows. The Armadale hospital has a full-time emergency service and the doctors in the Armadale area are the only ones outside the teaching hospitals who give a full-time 24-hour service. A total of 50 local doctors operate the service at the Armadale hospital, on a roster basis. It is an insult to the doctors for the member for Armadale to say that, because it indicates he does not know what goes on in his community and he is offending professional people who have given that service at great inconvenience to themselves.

As far as I am concerned, the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital is renowned for its conduct, administration, and the service it provides to the people in the district. It attracts a great deal of community interest and it is supported very strongly by the community. The women's auxiliary is first-class and it is very supportive to the hospital. All the citizens in that community, other than the member for Armadale, think the hospital is pretty good.

The sad aspect of the Government's proposal is that the people will be isolated from the hospital.

They will not be able to choose their own doctors unless a doctor signs up on a sessional basis.

Mr Read: You have not answered my question.

Mr RUSHTON: I did not hear the member's question.

Mr Read: Originally you said that the Government was taking over control of private hospitals—

Mr RUSHTON: The Government is seeking to control public hospitals by regulation. It is trying to adopt a system which has not been proved to be more efficient or less costly than the present system and it is seeking to impose that on a system which is working well. If the Government wants to change the system, surely it owes it to the public to prove that what it proposes is more efficient than what we have. The Government has been asked to do that, but it has not done so.

I shall place a question on the Notice Paper next week which will give the Minister for Health the opportunity to trot out some figures. He will not be able to do that, but I will give him the opportunity.

I shall touch on another issue which is causing the people of Kelmscott tremendous concern; that is the proposal of the Metropolitan Water Authority to extend deep sewerage to system 6A in Kelmscott. Unknown to me, people prepared a petition—

Mr Pearce: Almost everything out there happens unknown to you.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister for Education is such a loud-mouthed lout that he should not be allowed in this place. He is a Minister who does not even know what goes on.

The petition went to the Minister who disregarded it. He instructed the authority to send out letters to all those involved seeking their responses. He has now received that information and is deliberating on what should happen.

Surely to goodness, if this Government can claim any credit, as it tries to, in the areas of conciliation and consensus, it must have regard for what the people say. The Minister has not given an indication that he is prepared to do this. In fact he came to the electorate recently one Saturday afternoon without any reference to the local member, who had presented all this to him previously. That is an example of his rudeness.

The sewerage problem should be resolved before too long, but the problem with the hospital is of prime importance. This problem is not just happening in Armadale but also in Bentley, Osborne Park, and Wanneroo. It is the result of this creeping cancer of socialised medicine.

To return to my initial theme, this Government is not interested in ethics or in producing results; it is interested only in winning votes by misleading people with its propaganda, and it has had some success in that area. Fortunately the media is waking up to the Government's tactics and is beginning to ask it to prove its point. Thank goodness we have finally arrived at this position. The Government will no longer be all that successful in telling untruths to the public.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Williams.

**ACTS AMENDMENT AND REPEAL
(DISQUALIFICATION FOR PARLIAMENT)
BILL**

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Local Government), read a first time.

RESTRAINT OF DEBTORS BILL

Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Assembly.

House adjourned at 10.03 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Groundwater: Carnarvon

1324. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Will he detail likely work to be carried out in the Carnarvon district on the Carnarvon groundwater supply scheme and the extension and improvement of headworks and the office extensions with the respective amounts of \$253 000, \$199 000 and \$68 000 which form part of the General Loan Fund allocation for 1984-85?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The details of work likely to be carried out in the Carnarvon district as part of the 1984-85 General Loan Fund allocation are as follows:

Carnarvon groundwater supply scheme—

Improvements to the brickhouse pumping station, including automatic controls for pumping equipment	\$33 000
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Drilling and equipping additional bores to cater for expansion of the Carnarvon Town water supply	\$220 000
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Total	\$253 000
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Extension and improvement of headworks for irrigation—

Equipping of deep aquifer bores	\$75 000
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Provide standby generator for bores	\$21 000
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Automate borefield	\$103 000
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Total	\$199 000
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Office extension—

Provide additional facilities, including office space for computer equipment	\$68 000
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WATER RESOURCES: UNDERGROUND

Bores: Salt Intrusion

1338. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) (a) Has the Metropolitan Water Authority new data about salt water intrusion into groundwater reserves at riverside and seaside locations

where ground water is drawn heavily from private bores;

- (b) if so, which locations do such data encompass and what is the difference between the latest and previous monitoring, giving the times of these monitorings?

- (2) What are the predictions in such areas given average rain conditions—is the amount of salt water intrusion increasing, decreasing, or stationary?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) (a) The MWA has been progressively collecting data about salt water intrusion as part of the Perth urban water balance study it is currently undertaking;

- (b) a series of monitoring wells has been established recently on both sides of the river between Fremantle and the Causeway as well as at Cottesloe and City Beach. The wells have not been established long enough to provide comparable data.

- (2) The study has not advanced sufficiently for any worthwhile predictions to be made.

WATER RESOURCES: MWA

Licences: Wells

1339. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) How many wells were licensed by the Metropolitan Water Authority in gazetted areas during the first half of 1984?

- (2) How does this compare with the number of licences issued during the full year of—

(a) 1976;

(b) 1980; and

(c) 1982?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) 1 January to 30 June 1984—214

- (2) (a) 85;

(b) 275;

(c) 625.

The above figures include licences issued for new wells and reviews of existing licences to provide for change of conditions and change of ownership in the four public water supply areas and the

Wanneroo groundwater area which are administered by the Metropolitan Water Authority.

Artesian licences are not included. They are issued by the PWD.

WATER RESOURCES: MWA

Licences: Groundwater

1340. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Would he please describe just broadly the geographical locations or common names of the gazetted areas—

- (a) in the metropolitan area;
- (b) outside the metropolitan area, where licences are required for sinking wells and mark those where the quota of yearly extractable water is also specified?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (a) Public Water Supply Areas (Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage, and Drainage Act)—

Wanneroo
Mirrabooka
Gwelup
Jandakot

Groundwater areas (Rights in Water and Irrigation Act)—

Wanneroo
Swan

- (b) Groundwater areas (Rights in Water and Irrigation Act)—

Carnarvon
Pilbara
Derby
East Murchison
Northampton
Bolgart
Yenart
Moora
Donnybrook
Mullewa
Albany
Esperance
Camballin
Hopetoun
Broome
North Coastal
Bunbury
Gingin
Wicherina
Murray

South West Coastal
Collie
Happy Valley
Eastern goldfields
Bindoon
Bolgart East
Dwellingup
Halls Creek
Bremer Bay

Plans showing the location of the above areas are hereby tabled.

All artesian wells in the State are required to be licensed.

All recent licences for shallow groundwater in gazetted areas and for artesian bores give a specific quota. Some older licences do not have a quota.

The plans were tabled (see paper No. 246).

WATER RESOURCES: MWA

Wells: Monitoring

1341. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

To what extent—expressed in the number of wells and approximate value of work—is the work on investigatory and monitoring wells drilled by the Metropolitan Water Authority undertaken by—

- (a) employed work force;
- (b) outside contracts?

Mr TONKIN replied:

For the 1983-84 financial year—

- (a) Nil;
- (b) contracts were awarded for 87 investigation and monitoring wells at an approximate cost of \$578 000.

WATER RESOURCES: RESEARCH

Commonwealth Funds

1342. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Adverting to his reply to question 3141 of 1984, has the Commonwealth's policy on funding water research been formulated yet, and if so, would he please give information about the policy, in particular, to what extent it is going to affect Western Australia?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The Commonwealth Government has provided \$500 000 for water research in the 1984-85 financial year. Three research projects have been approved for Western Australia with a time schedule of between six months and two years and an allocation of some \$130 000.

The long-term role of the Commonwealth in water research has not yet been determined. The interim council which was established to investigate the need for an institute for freshwater studies has published its report and the recommendations are being considered by the Commonwealth.

WASTE DISPOSAL: WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Point Peron

1343. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What percentage of the metropolitan area provides catchment for the Point Peron ocean outlet and the treatment plants serving the outlet?
- (2) To what percentage of total capacity is the outlet and treatment plants engaged excepting sewage from this present catchment area?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The Cape Peron ocean outlet system will ultimately serve all sewered areas south of the Swan River except for the Maida Vale area and the area served by the small Kwinana waste water treatment plant. Approximately 27 per cent of the total flow from the metropolitan area is currently discharged through the Cape Peron outfall.
- (2) About 40 per cent.

WATER RESOURCES

Sirotherm Plant

1344. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Has the sirotherm plant in Leederville been commissioned yet, and if so, what is the internal assessment of its working?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Commissioning is in progress now. No assessment has been made.

WATER RESOURCES

Claremont Showground

1345. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

What are the plans regarding continuing/permanent exhibition facilities for the yearly Royal Show at the Claremont Showgrounds?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The board of the Water Authority of Western Australia will consider this matter in due course.

WATER RESOURCES: TREATMENT PLANT

Australind

1350. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Water Resources:

When does he anticipate the water treatment plant at Australind to be operating?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Commissioning trials will commence towards the end of November and the plant will be opened on 14 December.

WASTE DISPOSAL: KELMSCOTT

6A Sewerage Scheme

1354. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Referring to the proposed 6A sewerage scheme for Kelmscott, what is the total number of responses to the authority's letter seeking owners' opinions?
- (2) How many responses are—
 - (a) for deep sewerage;
 - (b) against deep sewerage?
- (3) When does he expect to make a decision on this issue?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) 250 to 19 October 1984.
- (2) (a) 107;
- (b) 143.

I regret that my answer to question 1092 was in error because a batch of responses was added twice to the progressive tally that was being maintained at that time.

- (3) As the results of the survey and the comments made by the residents are still under review by the MWA and the

Health Department, the earliest that I expect to receive a recommendation from the board of the authority is after its meeting on 22 November 1984.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS: LAND RIGHTS

Government Advertising

1375. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister with special responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) What advertising agency was engaged by the Government for its television advertisements on land rights?
- (2) What were production costs?
- (3) Will he table the detailed schedule of the television advertisements?
- (4) What is the screening cost of each advertisement?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) The agency.
- (2) TV production cost, \$1 935.
- (3) and (4) Final schedules are still under consideration.

WATER RESOURCES: MWA

Complaints

1379. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Has the Metropolitan Water Authority received any complaints from ratepayers as to reduced pressure of water supply, supplied by the Bold Park surface reservoir?
- (2) If so, how many and to what date did such complaints relate?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The Metropolitan Water Authority has no record of complaints regarding reduced pressure in the area supplied directly from the Bold Park service reservoir.
- (2) A total of four complaints were received between 24 September and 3 October from residents north of The Boulevard who were supplied from the high level tank. This problem was rectified.

WATER RESOURCES: MWA

Country Depot

1380. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

How much additional country related staff and business is going to be located and handled in Metropolitan Water Authority depots?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The staff and work related to country water that is currently at East Perth will be transferred to other metropolitan workshops.

WATER RESOURCES: MWA

Computer Surveying

1381. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Does the Metropolitan Water Authority use computer surveying expert advisers to contract out the acquisition of data by computer and/or microchip necessary in sewerage maintenance operations or are such surveys in-house originated?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The acquisition of data related to daily work activities for computer storage and analysis of sewerage maintenance operations is being developed and maintained by the authority's resources in the sewerage and drainage branch.

WATER RESOURCES

Water Authority of W.A.

1382. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Is it intended to proclaim the Rights in Water and Irrigation Amendment Bill after it has passed Parliament, before the Water Authority of Western Australia becomes operative?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Yes.

WORKS: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Reorganisation

1383. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Will all the functions of what used to be the engineering division, Public Works

Department, be maintained after changes to the Public Works Department are implemented?

(2) Can he please detail—

- (a) which functions will be discontinued altogether;
- (b) which functions will be maintained as a Government service;
- (c) to which department, and under which name, will the sections continuing to perform these functions belong?

Mr McIVER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) Answered by (1);

(b) not applicable;

(c) operation of the Lake Argyle power station is being taken over by the State Energy Commission.

Arrangements are being made for the administration and finance of the Kununurra Airport, which is operated by the local authority, to be transferred to the Minister for Transport.

All financial matters pertaining to agricultural experiments, the peanut and rice mills at the Ord, have been transferred to the Department of Agriculture.

Policy control and finance of the disposal of the Laporte factory effluent has been transferred to the Department of Resources Development.

All functions currently carried out by the Harbours and Rivers Branch will be transferred to the new Marine Authority.

WORKS: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Architectural Division

1387. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

(1) When is it planned to retrench staff from the Public Works Department architectural division?

(2) How many—

- (a) salaried employees;
- (b) wages staff, will be involved?

(3) How many of the categories (2) (a) and (b) will be from offices and depots in the metropolitan area, and how many from the country, respectively?

Mr McIVER replied:

(1) Effective from 15 October 1984, the activities of the Public Works Department architectural division were taken over by the Building Management Authority of Western Australia. A restructuring process is taking place and it is anticipated that the necessary redeployments will not take place before 31 March 1985.

(2) and (3) The restructuring process requires a detailed examination of all areas and activities of the former architectural division. Because of the in-depth nature of the examination, it will not be finalised before January 1985. Any redeployments resulting from the restructure will be notified to the Public Service Board or Office of Industrial Relations for appropriate action regarding redeployment. However, it is expected that the restructure will have minimal impact on staffing levels at country offices and depots.

DEFENCE: NAVIES

US Personnel

1393. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

(1) How many United States of America service personnel visited Western Australia during the year ended—

- (a) 30 June 1980;
- (b) 30 June 1981;
- (c) 30 June 1982;
- (d) 30 June 1983;
- (e) 30 June 1984?

(2) How many United States of America service personnel are expected to visit Western Australia during the year ending 30 June 1985?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

(1) US Navy visitors—

Year ended 30 June
1980—11 100
1981—25 700
1982—38 700
1983—38 700
1984—37 205

(2) Precise estimates are not available due to the security associated with these visits.

1397 and 1398. *Postponed.*

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Hospitality Industry

1399. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Employment and Training:

- (1) How do each of the three studies the Minister refers to in question 607 of 23 August 1984, concerning the hospitality industry, differ in their intent?
- (2) When will each be completed?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) I did not refer to three studies in my answer to question 607 but rather drew attention to two studies currently under way and briefly mentioned the activities of the technical education division in the field of hospitality and tourism.

The two studies are:

My department is sponsoring an examination of hospitality and tourism in the north-west, which will have a particular focus on Aboriginal employment in this sector through the development of appropriate employment and training policies; and,

the 'Human Resource Planning in the Western Australian Tourism Industry', which is being conducted jointly by the WA Tourism Industry Training Committee and the Tourism Commission. This study is much broader in that it aims to establish an accurate description of current employment in the industry and to interpret likely future human resource requirements in terms of both employee numbers and skill levels for the next three years.

- (2) The study sponsored by my department will be completed by the end of the year. I understand that the joint WA Tourism Industry Training Committee/Tourism Commission study is expected to be completed during 1985.

FISHERIES: TUNA

Quotas: Sales

1408. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Was he correctly quoted in the media as saying that tuna fishermen who lease their quota to the Eastern States would be treated the same as those who sold quotas to the Eastern States and would be cut off from any State Government financial assistance on the reverse transfer of the lease?
- (2) Is he aware that offers to lease are being made by South Australian fishermen in the vicinity of \$250 to \$300 per tonne?
- (3) Is he further aware that applications for transfer of approximately 800 tonnes of quota through sale have already been lodged and negotiations for the lease of approximately a further 300 tonnes have also been negotiated?
- (4) To maintain the highest possible quota allocation in Western Australia, will the Government consider matching the lease offers from South Australia and re-leasing the quota to other Western Australian quota holders who wish to remain in the industry at a subsidised rate?
- (5) What is to be the selection method used to lease the quotas purchased by the Government back to Western Australian fishermen?
- (6) What criteria will be used to ensure an equitable distribution to all those wishing to remain in the southern bluefin tuna industry rather than all the quota going to those who can pay the highest price?
- (7) As the State Government has indicated it will purchase quota at the market rate, has any effort been made by the Government to purchase quota in South Australia to return to Western Australia?
- (8) What is the current position in respect of southern bluefin tuna for Japanese entry into the Australian fishing zone given the conflicting statements last week by the Prime Minister who said trade relationships with Japan could be damaged if they were excluded, and the Minister for Primary Industry who said they had been excluded from south of the 34th parallel?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes, however higher lease prices have been quoted.
- (3) Yes, however I do not have precise figures on quantities leased or being negotiated for other purposes. These arrangements are difficult to check until they become final.
- (4) No, the Government has offered to purchase quotas for leasing to those remaining in the WA tuna industry.
- (5) Selection will be by tender.
- (6) Although selection will be by tender, a committee which will include the Executive Officer of AFIC (WA Branch) has been established to consider all applications. The viability of individual fishermen will also be a criteria.
- (7) No.
- (8) This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government. However, my understanding is that Japanese fishing vessels will not be allowed within the Australian fishing zone south of 34°S latitude.

1409. *Postponed.*

PARLIAMENT: PARLIAMENT WEEK

Survey

1410. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform:

- (1) Further to question 1299 of 1984, when will the survey of public opinion on Parliament Week be completed?
- (2) On completion of the survey, will he make available to me a copy of all questions asked in the survey and other details of the survey?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) It is anticipated that the study shall be completed by late November 1984.
- (2) Details of the survey shall be made available.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: RATES

Discrepancies

1411. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) In view of the claimed discrepancy in rates charged by various local authorities, will he please advise if a study has been made of the various metropolitan councils and municipalities

into a comparison of services to rate-payers provided and rates charged relative to each other?

- (2) If such an inquiry has been made, would he please list the names of councils and the types of services which are supplied?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) No study has been made of the comparison of rates charged to services provided. Recent Government rating reform initiatives, however, provide councils with a great deal of flexibility in determining rating levels.
- (2) Refer to (1) above.

ROADS

George Street-Albany Highway Intersection

1412. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) (a) Is he aware that the intersection of George Street and Albany Highway, Cannington, is extensively used by pedestrians attending senior citizen meetings at the Council Hall, and also the Cannington Bowling Club, which is in the same area;
- (b) if "Yes", is he also aware that there have been many pedestrian accidents at this locality, brought about by the fact that there is no cross-walk or pedestrian warning?
- (2) (a) In view of the seriousness of this situation, will he provide a cross-walk or some other warning sign to motorists to beware of pedestrians;
- (b) if not, why not?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) There have been representations for the provision of a pedestrian crossing at this location to assist in pedestrian movement. As a result the department investigated the situation and a median refuge island was provided in mid-1980.

Since the provision of this median island, there have been no reported pedestrian accidents.

Improvement in the pedestrian safety is consistent with the department's experience at other similar locations.

The median island enables pedestrians to concentrate on traffic coming from one direction at a time. In addition it provides a point where they can pause if

necessary before completing their crossing.

1413. *Postponed.*

WATER RESOURCES: IRRIGATION

South West Districts: Return

1414. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What percentage return from consumers was received for the irrigation scheme in the south-west in 1983-84?
- (2) What is the estimated return to the State from irrigation scheme consumers in the south-west in 1984-85?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) 48.4 per cent on total costs.
- (2) \$1 878 200 or 43.5 per cent on total costs.

1415. *Postponed.*

HEALTH

Mandurah-Murray Area

1416. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (a) Has the investigation into the health needs in the Mandurah/Murray area been completed;
- (b) if so, when will the report be released;
- (c) if not, when is the investigation expected to be completed and the report released?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (a) Yes;
- (b) the report has been considered by the Health Department which has made recommendations to me. These recommendations will be discussed by Cabinet shortly. Cabinet will make a decision regarding the report's release;
- (c) not applicable.

AGRICULTURE: SOIL

Acid Levels

1417. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) (a) Is a large area of agricultural land in Western Australia acid in nature;

(b) if so, have any trials been carried out with lime to see if the low pH level can be changed;

(c) if so, when and what were the results?

(2) (a) Are more lime trials necessary to determine the benefit of placing lime on acid soil;

(b) if so, does the Department of Agriculture intend to do so;

(c) if not, why not?

Mr EVANS replied:

(1) (a) Yes;

(b) Yes. Many trials have been carried out over the past 50 years, with a great increase in activity in the past six years. Major experimental projects are based in the Great Southern, high rainfall coastal areas, and at Merredin.

(c) Results are given in detail in the proceedings of the national soil acidity workshop, held in Western Australia, September 2-7, 1984. In summary—

Lime has had little beneficial effect on crop production in the eastern wheatbelt where the problem is one of acid subsoils.

In the high rainfall coastal areas, positive responses were obtained on 28 of 53 sites where experiments were conducted. In most of these 28 situations, responses were small, although large responses were obtained on acid, peaty sands.

In the lower Great Southern, 26 trials at 19 different sites representing 5 broad soil type categories showed positive responses to lime on three sites, with probable small responses on five others.

(2) (a) to (c) Yes. Trials are continuing.

TRANSPORT: RAILWAYS

Katanning-Boyup Brook Line

1418. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Have any culverts been taken from the Katanning-Boyup Brook line to improve the Katanning-Nyabing line?

(2) If "Yes", does this indicate that it is unlikely that the Katanning-Boyup Brook line will be re-opened?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. Should it be decided to recommence rail services on this line the culverts can easily be replaced.

EDUCATION

Participation and Equity Programme

1419. Mr McNEE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What are the criteria for schools to be selected in the participation and equity programme?
- (2) Are these indices used in isolation or is there a formula?
- (3) How many schools have received assistance under the programme and which are they?
- (4) What programmes have they put in place?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Following consultation with the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the criteria used to select Education Department target schools were—

a modified form of school retention rates from year 10 to year 11;

school absentee rates;

the proportions of Aboriginal enrolments within the schools; and,

a form of socioeconomic index for each school.

- (2) All Education Department secondary schools were ranked according to each of the criteria listed above and a summative ranking used to determine the list of target schools. Commonwealth Schools Commission guidelines limited the number of target schools to 40 per cent of the total population of schools to be considered.
- (3) A list of the 65 targeted schools is tabled.
- (4) As at 24 October 1984, 389 separate applications for funding of projects had been received from target schools.

The projects intend to support the eight areas of action outlined by the Schools Commission in its guidelines for the participation and equity programme. These eight areas are—

curriculum review
assessment, accreditation, and
credentialling
teacher-student-parent interaction
to support shared decision making
teacher renewal and support
school structure and organisation
post-school links
groups with specific needs
public support for education

The paper was tabled (see paper No. 247)

HEALTH: CHILDREN

Speech Disabilities

1420. Mr McNEE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have any surveys been held recently in the Midlands area with regard to children affected with speech disabilities?
- (2) When was the most recent survey conducted?
- (3) What were the results of that survey?
- (4) Is any action required as a result of the survey?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes, departmental officers have visited the area and have held discussions with relevant referral sources, e.g. Education Department, health sisters and administrators of health department facilities.
- (2) Departmental staff have visited the area a number of times during the past few months, the most recent visit occurring within the past fortnight.
- (3) Results of discussions combined with available statistics from the speech pathology service offered during the last financial year support the need for a continued speech pathology service.
- (4) The position which services the Midlands is at this time vacant having been unsuccessfully advertised. It will be readvertised in the near future.

HEALTH: HOSPITALS

Osborne Park: Geriatric Care

1421. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that patients from the extended care department at the Perth Medical Centre are being treated as in-patients at Osborne Park Hospital?

- (2) Is it fact that all resident and registrar extended care staff and two consultants have been relocated to work at Osborne Park Hospital?
- (3) Is it intended that a section of Osborne Park Hospital is to become a geriatric centre?
- (4) Is it the Government's intention to allow Bentley Hospital to become an extended care outpost of Royal Perth Hospital, as it appears a part of Osborne Park Hospital has become an extended care outpost of the Perth Medical Centre?
- (5) With respect to Osborne Park Hospital—
 - (a) how many of the geriatric patients now occupying community beds come from the community served by Osborne Park Hospital;
 - (b) can he guarantee that there has not been an increase of the waiting list of surgical patients as a result of the loss of beds to the geriatric service?
- (6) Is he aware that at Bentley Hospital, under the current scheme, specialists services are provided as follows—
 - (a) general surgeons—18;
 - (b) urologists—3;
 - (c) general medicine—4;
 - (d) orthopaedic surgeons—5;
 - (e) gastro-enterologists—2;
 - (f) gynaecologists—8;
 - (g) obstetricians—8;
 - (h) plastic surgeons—2?
- (7) (a) Was he correctly reported in the Press, when quoted as saying, "Under the new scheme there will be a greater range of specialities available to the community than there are at present";
- (b) if he was correctly quoted, is it his intention to provide such specialists from the staff at Royal Perth Hospital and King Edward Memorial Hospital?
- (8) What specialities that were available in September 1983 at Osborne Park Hospital are not available in September 1984?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.

Due to the building of the new oncology department at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, 30 extended care patients have been transferred to Osborne Park Hospital temporarily. These patients are expected to return to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital on 7 December 1984.

- (2) No.

The resident, registrar, and consultants are still located at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, but provide a visiting service as required to the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital patients currently in Osborne Park Hospital.

- (3) There are no immediate plans for any increase in the existing six geriatric beds at Osborne Park and 24 beds at Mt. Hawthorn Hospitals.

- (4) No.

The location of extended care patients from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital to Osborne Park Hospital is purely a temporary arrangement to permit a much needed extension of the oncology service at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. It is envisaged that when the new permanent care beds at Bentley Hospital are commissioned that Bentley Hospital will offer an increased service to the elderly of the Bentley area. This increase of service will not be at the expense of acute beds.

- (5) (a) Currently 6 beds at Osborne Park Hospital and 24 beds at Mt. Hawthorn Hospital are designated as geriatric beds. These are occupied by patients from the community served by Osborne Park Hospital;

- (b) there is no surgical waiting list at Osborne Park Hospital.

- (6) (a) to (h) Yes.

- (7) (a) Yes;

- (b) some specialists who work at Bentley Hospital already have appointments at Royal Perth Hospital. When specialist appointments to Bentley Hospital are again advertised, over-arching arrangements with Royal Perth Hospital will be made where appropriate. A working party will be formed to discuss such arrangements.

- (8) Ophthalmic surgery and plastic surgery posts will be advertised again.

1422 to 1425. *Postponed.*

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Bunbury: Number

1426. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

Referring to question 1002 of 27 September, concerning State Government officers working in the City of Bunbury—

- (a) does the Government keep any statistics as to the number of Government officers working permanently outside the metropolitan area;
- (b) if so, would he give me a breakdown of those numbers on the basis that they are compiled?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (a) and (b) No.

1427 and 1428. *Postponed.*

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Engineering Students

1429. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

In view of the reports that the Public Works Department will not employ, for practical training, engineering students during the 1984-85 academic holidays, what action has he taken to remedy this situation in the interests of tertiary students of engineering?

Mr PEARCE replied:

This matter has not been brought to my attention as it is the responsibility of individual institutions and their students to secure suitable practical training positions.

WATER RESOURCES: WATER AUTHORITY OF W.A.

Country Offices

1430. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Are there any plans to phase out the operation of any country water undertaking's local offices and/or depots after the new Water Authority of Western Australia starts to operate?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The transfer of country water workshop activities at East Perth to other workshops in the metropolitan area is planned.

There are no plans to phase out country offices or depots as a result of the creation of the Water Authority of Western Australia.

WASTE DISPOSAL: WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Swanbourne

1431. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

What is the currently estimated time for phasing out the operation of the Swanbourne waste water treatment plant?

Mr TONKIN replied:

January 1985.

ENVIRONMENT: PEEL INLET

Algae

1432. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for the Environment:

In view of the often emphasised importance the Government appears to place on trying to eradicate, or at least drastically reduce, the algae plight in the Peel Inlet/Harvey Estuary and their feeding rivers, are plans still alive for yet further reducing the flow and flushing effect of the Murray River by constructing new dams on it or its tributaries?

Mr DAVIES replied:

The Murray River is a recognised water resource, but there are not immediate plans for damming it or its tributaries. In any event, such a proposal would most likely be subject to a comprehensive environmental assessment which would embrace both the Peel-Harvey Estuary and its catchment.

GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES

Accommodation: Dumas House

1433. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

Is he now in a position to tell the details and estimated costs of changes to be made in Dumas House to receive other arms of Government after the amalgamation of water authorities?

Mr McIVER replied:

No. This information is not yet available.

TRANSPORT: RAILWAYS

Westrail: Vegetation Survey

1434. Dr DADOUR, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) With regard to the comprehensive report on railway reserve vegetation, compiled for Westrail in 1983, did the project involve—

- (a) a vegetation survey of Westrail mainlines in rural areas;
- (b) the identification of the vegetation communities along the railway system;
- (c) the assessment of the "healthiness" or degradation of the vegetation; and
- (d) the recording of the above information on maps of the railway system?

(2) What length of railway reserve was involved in the survey?

(3) Over what period was the survey conducted?

(4) What was the approximate cost of—

- (a) the survey; and
- (b) the total project?

(5) Is Westrail finding the data a valuable aid to railway reserve management?

(6) What is the name of the consulting ecologist engaged to carry out the survey and compile the report?

(7) To what extent were the following consulted by Westrail when the project was being planned—

- (a) Department of Conservation and Environment;
- (b) Department of Fisheries and Wildlife;
- (c) Main Roads Department;
- (d) road verge conservation committee; and
- (e) other Government agencies?

(8) To what extent has Westrail informed the following concerning the availability of the vegetation data that has now been recorded along its railway system—

- (a) Department of Conservation and Environment;

(b) Department of Fisheries and Wildlife;

(c) Western Australian Herbarium; and

(d) Western Australian Museum?

(9) Since public funds were used to gather the vegetation data, to what extent is the State Government prepared to make it available for public use, as is the case of biological data compiled by other Government agencies?

Mr GRILL replied:

(1) (a) Yes;

(b) yes;

(c) yes;

(d) no.

(2) 3 500 kilometres.

(3) Over a period of some months during spring and summer 1982-83.

(4) (a) and (b) The total project cost was \$20 000.

(5) Yes.

(6) E. M. Mattiske and Associates.

(7) (a) to (e) This was a Westrail initiative concerning management of its reserve and, therefore, no other Government departments or agencies were involved before the survey was conducted.

(8) (a) to (d) A copy of the report has been made available to the Main Roads Department and will be made available to other Government departments or agencies on request.

(9) Westrail would consider any request for public use of the information contained in the report.

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Governing Bodies

1435. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

Considering the views against the heads of the University of Western Australia and Murdoch University, expressed in a speech in Parliament during the debate on the Equal Opportunities Bill by the Hon. Robert Hetherington, will he now withdraw the commission from the Hon. Robert Hetherington to chair a committee to inquire into the governing bodies of tertiary institutions?

Mr PEARCE replied:

No.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bunbury 2000: Departmental Heads

420. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000":

Which State departmental heads did the Minister order to step into line on the "Bunbury 2000" plan, as was reported in the *South Western Times* of 23 October?

Mr GRILL replied:

A general request was made to heads of departments to expedite proceedings in respect of the whole plan.

Mr MacKinnon: All departmental heads?

Mr GRILL: It was a general request.

TOURISM

Atlantis Marine Park

421. Mrs WATKINS, to the Deputy Premier:

Is the Premier aware of misleading reports that a Federal Government action could threaten the successful tourist attraction at Atlantis Marine Park?

Mr BRYCE replied:

I can assure the House that suggestions of reports of the imminent closure of Atlantis Marine Park as a result of any Federal Government action are totally wrong. As a result of representations, the Federal Minister for the Environment, Mr Cohen, today has issued a media statement rejecting completely the suggestion that marine parks would be affected by any of his actions.

Members will be aware that Mr Cohen yesterday banned the capture of dolphins and whales in Bass Strait for a \$80 million marine park in Victoria.

Mr Blaikie: But if they catch them in the Gulf of Carpentaria, that would be all right?

Mr BRYCE: If the member lets me finish, I am sure that he will feel thoroughly comfortable and, in fact, full of warm fuzzies by the answer.

Mr Cohen denies that it is intended to close down or prevent the operations of marine parks in general, and I can tell the House that Mr Cohen has made special reference to Atlantis Marine Park. The Federal Government will in no

way presume to halt such an excellent entertainment and educational facility.

Members may know that Atlantis holds a licence under the Wildlife Conservation Act, which provides comprehensive conditions directed at the welfare of the animals. The company has always acted in a responsible manner in its dealings with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

I am advised that the collection of animals from State waters has presented no problems and no implications are seen as a result of the Victorian decision.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bunbury 2000: Departmental Heads

422. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000":

- (1) Can the Minister advise us what instructions he gave to departmental heads relating to "Bunbury 2000"?
- (2) Why was it considered necessary that the instructions had to be issued?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) The relevant heads were asked, simply—

Mr MacKinnon: Which ones?

Mr GRILL: The ones that were considered to have relevance to the proceedings at Bunbury. I cannot give the member a list. All relevant departmental heads were asked to expedite any matter which they had under their control.

HEALTH: PESTICIDES

Education

423. Mrs HENDERSON, to the Minister for Health:

Some time ago the Minister announced measures which provided for improved skills for licensed pesticide operators and for improved educational measures for general users to improve usage of toxic pesticides. I ask—

Can the Minister advise whether any further action is contemplated to ensure greater restriction or better control over pesticides used by householders or members of the public?

Mr HODGE replied:

I am pleased to advise the member that from today only licensed pesticide operators and primary producers will be able to buy and use the more toxic pesticides.

In the interests of public health and to promote the safe use of pesticides in the community we have amended the Poisons Act schedules. Previously the weaker strengths of the very toxic pesticides were available to the general public but their purchase and use, at any concentration, will now be restricted.

A total of 115 pesticides are included in the amendments gazetted today, among them the more commonly-known ethion and parathion-methyl.

These amendments will bring Western Australia into line with the recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

EDUCATION: COMPUTERS

Beazley Report

424. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

Recommendation 7 of the Beazley report proposes—

That all schools and school systems develop and implement policies of computer usage in schools so that all students benefit from the use and experience of computers and are educated in relation to this form of technology.

I ask the following question in relation to that recommendation—

- (a) Is this recommendation different in any fundamental way from the existing school computing policy?
- (b) If it is different, does the Government support such change and when will it introduce such changes to our schools?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (a) and (b) I commend the member on his initiative in asking a question which is not taken from an article in the *Daily News*. To avoid a lengthy series of questions about the many hundreds of recommendations in the Beazley report coming one or two at a time, for the benefit of the member and the House, I will advise what is happening with re-

gard to implementation of the Beazley report.

Mr Clarko: Surely you do not regard every question I ask as hostile?

Mr PEARCE: I have given a fair indication to the rest of the people of Western Australia about the Government's attitude to the Beazley report and how it will be implemented. The Government has indicated that it is firmly behind the recommendations of the Beazley report but nevertheless feels that in the detail of how individual recommendations are to be implemented it will work on the following basis.

Mr Clarko: You are not suggesting this is an unreasonable question, are you?

Mr PEARCE: I am not saying that it is unreasonable. I am explaining the situation with regard to the Beazley report for the member's edification and possibly that of other members. Most of the recommendations of the Beazley report are of a general nature. Because it is a whole package the Government intends to implement it as a whole package, but that does not mean that the precise wording of each recommendation will be put into effect. I have established a group of committees and working parties which are going through the process of converting the Beazley recommendations to specific, detailed plans as to how these recommendations will work in the school and in the community. We have given a higher priority to some areas—those which will impact on structure and curriculum in the 1985 school year, firstly the year 11 and 12 arrangements and secondly, the year 8 arrangements. They have been given the highest priority. Other matters of a more general educational nature, including the matter of computer education, to which the member referred, and matters which deal with industrial conditions and promotions, are being given slightly less priority. If the member intends to continue asking day after day what is happening with regard to this or that recommendation, that is the general answer for all those questions.

Mr Clarko: I will still ask them.

Mr PEARCE: With regard to the computing policy, I believe the recommendation made by the Beazley committee refers to

a fair difference between the generalised policies on computer education that had been issued from head office and the way in which they are applied at an individual school level. There is a need for a much greater level of co-ordination of effort and activity, not only with regard to the acquisition and use of computers in the school situation but also with regard to the curriculum under which computer education is taught. This is being addressed by one of the working parties, although I understand it has not progressed very far.

I make the following offer to the member, which I have previously made and which he has accepted on one or two occasions: If the member wishes to have a comprehensive briefing on precisely what stage has been reached in the implementation of the Beazley report, I am happy to arrange for officers of the Education Department to provide him with that briefing. If the member will ring my office I will arrange a time for him. I extend that invitation to any other member of the House who is interested. The member for Karrinyup will concede that I have on two occasions organised those briefings for him. I agreed to one at his request and I made an offer with regard to year 11/12 problems, and I understand the member was briefed. There is no intention on the part of the Government not to keep members of Parliament and the shadow Minister fully informed on the process of implementation of the Beazley report.

Mr Clarko: You regard each question I ask as though I am about to punch you on the ear.

Mr PEARCE: I do not.

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: I am making an offer to the member which was never made to me in the six years that I sat on that side of the House.

Mr Clarko: It suited you to make the offer you made to me.

Mr PEARCE: If the member is sincere about wanting to know precisely what is happening, what is better than a comprehensive briefing, which he and any other member can have? That will also have the benefit of saving the patience of the House at question time.

DEFENCE: ARMY

Army Base

425. Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Defence Liaison:

On the front page of The West Australian this morning, was a story about a violent protest by farmers in New South Wales against the possible acquisition of land for a new Army base. I ask—

What opportunities are there for Western Australia, given that the farmers of New South Wales apparently do not want a new Army base?

Mr BRYCE replied:

There is no need for New South Wales farmers to get upset about the possible acquisition of their land for a new Army base if the Defence Department is prepared to take up a suggestion I made to the Minister for Defence.

I told him that Western Australia was prepared to co-operate in finding a suitable site for it in this State which would not impinge on the State's farmers. Such a base would also meet an urgent need for increased military presence in Western Australia.

New South Wales farmers would, therefore, be saved much distress and Western Australia would get an upgrading of Army facilities long overdue in any serious consideration of the balanced deployment of Australia's defence resources.

I have suggested that the Minister for Defence consider a site in the eastern goldfields. This would be close to air, rail and road links with other States and there is plenty of unoccupied land for exercises and weapons testing. There would also be minimum disruption to present activities and the response of communities there has been favourable and enthusiastic.

I draw the attention of members to the bottom line of this issue. It seems that the farmers of New South Wales have enjoyed the luxury of living in a State with the heaviest concentration of the nation's defence equipment, personnel and infrastructure. It would seem that they have taken it for granted. They do not know what it is like to live in the shadow of the Brisbane line as have we

on this side of the continent for the last 40 years.

As we have asked the national Government to deploy an Army base of that nature here, and offered the land; and as we put to the Commonwealth Government the basic, logical case for establishing the next submarine fleet on this side of the nation, let me remind members of this House to pass on to their friends amongst the farmers of New South Wales that we do not have a "Geraldton line" in mind for the people who live on the other side of the continent. We are perfectly happy to share the deployment of the nation's defence facilities. All we are asking for is our fair share. We have 10 per cent of the nation's population; we have nearly one third of the nation's coastline; and yet, over the last 30 years, successive national Governments have consistently given us something between 1 per cent and 3 per cent of the money expended on defence.

FISHERIES: MARINE PARKS

Atlantis: Cetacea Licence

426. Mr CRANE, to the Premier:

I gave the Premier notice this morning of the question, being the gentleman that I am. No doubt that prompted the question by the member for Joondalup on this matter, which is of great concern to the Atlantis Marine Park.

The SPEAKER: Order! You cannot ask the question of the Premier as he is not here.

Mr CRANE: I am asking the Deputy Premier to answer on his behalf. The question is as follows—

- (1) Has the Premier been made aware of the decision of the Federal Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment (Mr Cohen) refusing to allow a licence for the taking of cetacea by the Manager of Marine World, Victoria (Mr Rod Abel) as reported in today's *The West Australian*?
- (2) Do the Premier and his Government support this refusal by the Federal Minister which is contrary to Federal law which does, in fact, permit the taking of cetacea for marine parks?

(3) In view of this fact and the fact that this move, if not reversed, will mean the eventual closing of all marine parks in Australia including Atlantis Marine Park, which is of tremendous tourist value to Western Australia, will the Premier make representations to the Federal Minister to have this decision reversed?

(4) Will the Premier, on behalf of Western Australia, bring this matter to the attention of the Federal member for Moore (Mr Blanchard) who represents in Federal Parliament the area of Atlantis Marine Park, in view of the potential loss of employment of people and entertainment and revenue to the State, and solicit Mr Blanchard's support to have the decision reversed?

(5) In support of these arguments is the Premier aware—

- (a) that in one fishing trawl by Taiwanese fishing boats off the Western Australian coastline more dolphins are killed than are kept in captivity in the whole of Australia;
- (b) that in the whole of the fishing season by Taiwanese fishing boats operating off the Western Australian coastline, more than 8 000 dolphins are killed annually—

The SPEAKER: Order! You cannot ask questions like that. The Deputy Premier is not the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife.

Mr CRANE: I am asking him to make representations, and I am pointing out these irregularities.

The SPEAKER: You can ask him whether he is aware.

Mr CRANE: I have asked that.

The SPEAKER: Is that all of the question?

Mr CRANE: Mr Speaker, am I allowed to ask the Deputy Premier whether he is aware of these matters which are of great concern to a very important industry in my electorate? Am I permitted to ask him whether he is aware of these things, which I regard very seriously?

The SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr CRANE: To continue—

- (c) is he aware that in the United States in the tuna fishing industry, the US Marine Department allows 21 000 dolphins to be killed annually, when they are unable to be released from the nets and unavoidably are slaughtered?

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier can answer the parts of the question of which he has knowledge.

Mr Bryce (for Mr BRIAN BURKE) replied:

- (1) to (5) Mr Speaker, I am sure that you will appreciate that when the Premier left the Chamber and asked me to respond to this question on his behalf, he pointed out to me that he was painfully aware of many of these matters.

In respect of the serious issues in the four major portions of the member's question as a follow up to the issues he raised in the House last night, the material I supplied to the member for Joondalup in answer to her question a few moments ago indicated in a fairly unequivocal fashion that there has been a great deal of misrepresentation of the factual position, and that the industry about which the member expressed his concern is not under threat.

I believe that the information I presented to the House in response to the question by the member for Joondalup will answer in some detail the questions by the member for Moore, when he has had the opportunity to study that response.

HEALTH: HOSPITALS

Wooroloo: Closure

427. Mr TROY, to the Minister for Health:

Following the Government's decision to close Wooroloo Hospital and substitute a nursing post, naturally some existing staff are concerned about the future of their jobs. I ask—

Is the Minister in a position to give an assurance about their future?

Mr HODGE replied:

I thank the member for Mundaring for the question and for his continuing interest in this matter. I can advise that in the near future full discussions will be held with the staff about their future at Wooroloo Hospital. We will do our best to offer all staff alternative positions.

Negotiations are still proceeding with the Prisons Department to try to determine its need and whether that department will be able to employ any of the staff at the Wooroloo Hospital.

I can assure the member for Mundaring, however, that definitely none of the staff at the hospital will be sacked.

FISHERIES: SCALLOPS

Geographe Bay

428. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Following the report that eight scallop trawlers are to operate in Geographe Bay, what action does the Government propose to alleviate local concern?
- (2) Will he have a ban imposed similar to that in the Mandurah area?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) Without the benefit of adequate notice of this question, I am unable to give the detail which I know the member desires. However, my understanding of the situation is that *one* trawler is fishing in Geographe Bay for scallops and taking payable quantities. I have not been able to ascertain whether other fishermen propose to enter that fishery. That would require a review of the grounds and the fishing in the area. That would be necessary to give a full appreciation of the effects and what is involved.

I am given to understand that the area being fished is in Commonwealth waters, and therefore the State Government is necessarily constrained in the action that it can take. It is not valid to make a comparison with the situation at Mandurah, because at Mandurah we are talking about an area 800 yards from the beach, whereas in Geographe Bay the fishery is outside State waters and in Commonwealth waters.

I appreciate the concern of the local residents at seeing trawlers out on the horizon, but that is the position as I understand it. I will ask for a further investigation and examination of the position, and when the result of that is to hand, the Government will be in a position to determine what should be done.

ROADS: MRD

Road Bridges: North West

429. Mrs BUCHANAN, to the Minister for Transport:

Can he give details of the recent contract awarded by the Main Roads Department to Humes Limited for the construction of three road bridges in the north-west?

Mr GRILL replied:

Humes Limited has been awarded a \$276 000 Main Roads Department contract to manufacture and deliver precast prestressed concrete deck planks for three bridges. Two of the bridges are on the North-West Coastal Highway between Roebourne and Whim Creek, and they will be over Little George and Bookingarra Creeks which cross the highway at floodways. The third bridge will be on Billabong Creek, which is above Newman on the Newman-Hedland link.

The deck planks will be manufactured and placed on site so that an early start can be made when the contract is let next year. The total expenditure on the work is expected to be \$1.2 million.

TRANSPORT: RAILWAYS

Westrail: Grain Contract

430. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When is it expected that Westrail's grain freight contract will be completed?
- (2) In view of the late stage now reached, what has been the cause of the delay in finalising the contract?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) An announcement will be made, probably next week. I have not received anything definite from the chairman of the committee, but I have heard noises from that direction indicating that it is fairly imminent.

Mr Peter Jones: What was the delay?

Mr GRILL: The member is probably aware of some of the factors causing the delay. Primarily it has been the initial request by Westrail to be included in the cartage of grain in the Ongerup and the lakes areas, and the subsequent inquiry which I ordered.

Mr Peter Jones: But since the completion of that; one would have thought it could be quickly put to bed.

Mr GRILL: The member may not be aware of one aspect of the Taplin report which required further consideration. The farmers in the eastern wheatbelt also requested further consideration of freight rates in their area. I think Westrail is probably waiting until that study is finalised.

HEALTH: HOSPITAL

Halls Creek

431. Mr BRIDGE, to the Minister for Health:

In the recently announced Budget allocations, can the Minister advise whether it was possible to set aside any money for upgrading or improvements to Halls Creek Hospital?

Mr HODGE replied:

An amount of \$160 000 has been allocated in the 1984-85 revenue programme to enable some internal refurbishing of the hospital to rationalise the location of existing inpatient and outpatient services which, over many years, have become intermixed and are therefore operationally inefficient. The project will also involve general repairs and repainting.

The project is planned to go to tender early in May 1985.

FEDERAL BILL OF RIGHTS

State Common Law

432. Mr MENSAROS, to the Deputy Premier:

Considering the debate yesterday, I ask—

- (1) Has he now familiarised himself with the Commonwealth Government's draft Bill of Rights?
- (2) Even if not, would he give credence to the description of the draft Bill by *The Australian Financial Review*—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier is not in a position to give an opinion.

Mr MENSAROS: I did not ask for an opinion; I asked whether he could give credence—

The SPEAKER: Order! That is an opinion. The member can rephrase his question.

Mr MENSAROS: In that case, is he aware that *The Australian Financial Review* has indicated that the Federal Government's secret draft Australian Bill of Rights explicitly gives power to override any State common law?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member has got onto an area about which he is not allowed to ask questions, because he asks for a legal opinion. If he would like to sit down and rephrase his question, I will give the call to someone else and then I will give the call to the member later.

Mr MENSAROS: I asked whether he was aware of an article—

The SPEAKER: The member knows very well what the situation is.

Mr MENSAROS: This was an article in *The Australian Financial Review* and I quoted from it.

The SPEAKER: Order! You are asking the Minister to agree with an opinion expressed in that article. I ask the member to sit down and rephrase the question to meet the terms of our Standing Orders and the practices of the House. I will give the member the call at a later time.

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Residential Colleges

433. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Education:

I refer him to the Commonwealth Government's assistance by way of subsidies to tertiary residential colleges and ask—

- (1) Has he yet been able to obtain information about funding for 1984, in particular the criteria to be used by the tertiary education institutions for the disbursement of the funds?
- (2) If not, and as it could have an impact on the decisions country people will soon have to make about these matters, will he endeavour to obtain the information as a matter of urgency and make it available to me?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) and (2) I thank the member for his question. He has taken up this matter with me personally on a number of occasions and I appreciate his sincerity in seeking the information. I have sought from the

Commonwealth more detailed and specific information than the information I have been able to give the member to date, but as yet the Commonwealth has not supplied the information. As soon as I have it I will send it directly to him.

MINERALS: IRON ORE

International Investment

434. Mrs BUCHANAN, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Is the Deputy Premier aware of media reports of a new international link for Western Australia's iron ore industry?
- (2) Can he provide the House with an assessment of the significance of the move?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) Members may be aware that CRA Ltd. has confirmed that it is negotiating to take up to 35 per cent in a planned West German steel conglomerate.

I believe this is very exciting news which has immense significance for the iron ore industry. The move will allow CRA to break into steel making internationally in a large way, while locking European buyers into iron ore from Hamersley through long-term contracts.

My colleague the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr David Parker), who is travelling to China, says that the arrangement provides the potential for the semi-processing of iron ore.

This is in line with CRA's stated aim of upgrading iron ore within Australia if at all economically feasible.

I understand that the new group would become the second largest steel maker in West Germany, with an output of about eight million tonnes a year. This is bigger than BHP's steel making activities in Australia.

The announcement comes at a time when there is every indication that Japanese steel mills are confirming their interest in long-term iron ore supplies from Australia.

While negotiations on these contracts are a matter for individual companies, it is pleasing to see that there is a recognition in Japan that there is a mutual interest in ensuring that iron ore supply

arrangements are the most suitable possible.

DEFENCE: NAVY

Australian Submarines

435. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Defence Liaison:

- (1) On his recent overseas visit to contact possible suppliers of submarines to the Royal Australian Navy, did he also visit any firms interested in supplying helicopters to the RAN?
- (2) If "Yes", did any of those companies express the possibility of manufacturing these helicopters in WA?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) During the course of my trip to Europe I did not visit companies involved in the manufacture of helicopters.

TRANSPORT: RAILWAYS

Westrail: "Privatisation"

436. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Transport:

Westrail has stated in its annual report that it has put forward a package of proposals for a competitive Westrail. I ask—

- (1) Why has the Government not given Westrail a firm policy approval after 20 months in office?
- (2) When will the Government make a decision about Westrail's future strategy to enable Westrail to proceed with certainty?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) It would be easy to say that the previous Government in all its years in office never came down with an overall strategy for Westrail.

Mr Rushton: Don't tell untruths.

Mr GRILL: With the advent of the Burke Government—

Mr Rushton: You know that is nonsense.

Mr GRILL: —firstly, we have—

Mr Rushton: Don't answer the question if you are going to tell untruths.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GRILL: Firstly, we have a five-year plan in draft form, and that plan, as is the policy of the Labor Government, is now

being discussed in detail with the work force.

Mr Rushton: The annual report shows you are telling lies.

Mr GRILL: Hopefully, when that participative planning committee made up of union representatives and members of Westrail decide on the complete policy, we will have a document which for the next five years will set out a positive direction with positive planning proposals for Westrail. As I said before, it will be a document that will be unique because there has not been such a plan before.

Secondly, on its own behalf, and without urging from the Government—but at the same time at insistent requests from me that it operate in a more commercial manner—Westrail has brought forward, within the last two to four months, a document under the heading "A Competitive Westrail". That is a quite separate document from the five-year plan.

Mr Blaikie: You are like the Indian Pacific—not going too well.

Mr GRILL: We are going very well. Indeed, if the member cares to look at the figures—

Mr Peter Jones: The member for Vasse just derailed your train of thought.

Mr GRILL: Well, he has the mass to do that—"the mass from Vasse" they call him.

Mr Burkett: He is going to go on television and he will be the "incredible bulk".

Mr GRILL: The facts are that the "A Competitive Westrail" document is attractive to Government in many of its aspects, but in some of its aspects it is not so attractive. At present the matter is being evaluated which will be completed within a short time. We will not take nine or 10 years; it will be done within a few months. At the end of that period we will have a positive programme for the future of Westrail.

LEGISLATION: BILL OF RIGHTS

State Common Law

437. Mr MENSAROS, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Is the Deputy Premier aware of the article in today's *The Australian Financial Review* which says *inter alia*—

The Federal Government's secret draft Australian Bill of Rights explicitly gives the power to override any State common law rule.

The draft says—

...it overrides any inconsistent State law.

- (2) Accordingly, is the Deputy Premier prepared now to make representation to the Commonwealth Government to withdraw the draft Bill?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) I should explain to the member for Floreat that I have not had a chance to read today's edition of *The Australian Financial Review* and one of those reasons was that I was up at 4.30 a.m. today in order to get down to HMAS Luccuin to drop in on the Navy.

Mr Clarko: Are you going to place those subs at Kalgoorlie?

Mr BRYCE: As a matter of fact I can tell the member for Karrinyup, based on the very best of advice I have had in Germany, Britain, and Sweden, that they could be built in Kalgoorlie, if someone really wanted to. I was advised by one of the engineering experts in Sweden that they could be built at Ayres Rock if someone was determined enough to do that, because it is not a ship building exercise.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRYCE: It is an engineering exercise, involving the construction of high pressure vessels, not ships.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRYCE: Maybe the member for Mt. Marshall might be interested to know that those submarines are built in five different sections and we could possibly arrange for one of those sections to be fabricated in his electorate. It is in fact possible.

Several members interjected.

Mr BRYCE: In answer to the question raised by the member for Floreat, I have to indicate that I do not share his sense of trauma and anxiety based upon the sources he has quoted. The Premier and I indicated to him yesterday that what has happened with regard to this piece of proposed Commonwealth initiative is perfectly normal Government procedure.

Mr MacKinnon: It is probably one of the most important pieces of legislation for a long time and you have not read it.

Mr BRYCE: It may turn out to be one of the most important pieces of legislation of the century, but the point is this: It is going to come back to the Government and it will be published so that everyone in the entire country who is interested has the opportunity to comment on it.

Mr Mensaros: That is what I asked yesterday.

Mr BRYCE: We indicated that people will have ample opportunity to do this and there is no need to get into a frenzy and ask that the matter be withdrawn, before it has even been considered. The Premier has given that assurance.

Mr Mensaros: After the election when you take up the work—have a look at the article which I gave you. Even Labor State Governments complain.

Mr BRYCE: The matter has been under consideration for approximately 18 months.

Mr MacKinnon: You have not even read it.

Mr BRYCE: I am not going to be the slightest bit abashed by some suggestion that I should have read everything of significance that has crossed the desk of the Minister for Budget Management, the Minister for Transport, or the Attorney General. I spend a considerable number of hours concentrating on the reports and documents that come across my desk.

I can assure the member for Floreat that I will study this document with a great deal of interest, at the appropriate time, as will all the members of the parliamentary Labor Party Caucus and presumably members of the Opposition. I suggest that the member should not make a mountain out of a molehill.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bunbury 2000: Austmark

438. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000":

How does the Minister justify the decision of the Government to pay \$150 per square metre per annum for office space the Government will occupy in the Bunbury Austmark building when the highest current rental being paid in

Bunbury for similar office space is \$95 per square metre per annum?

Mr GRILL replied:

It is interesting to see the way the success of the "Bunbury 2000" project is making the Opposition squirm. Let me tell them this: The more they knock it the less votes they are likely to pick up in that area, because the Bunbury people have taken this project to heart. The Opposition's knocking of the project in every snide way possible is basically out of jealousy and is doing the Opposition absolutely no good at all.

Several members interjected.

Mr GRILL: If the member wishes to know the answer to the question, it is this: The ability to be able to construct buildings of this size, especially buildings of this height, or anything like it, in a country area, by any Government or by any private corporation, involves the expenditure of funds over and above what would have to be expended for a much smaller building.

There is only one area in all of Western Australia where private enterprise, or Government for that matter, without paying some slight penalty can construct such buildings; that is, in the very centre of Perth, the central business district. In fact, it is really confined to St. George's Terrace, and not all of the terrace.

If we are to foster Bunbury in the way it should be fostered, not just for the benefit of the people in Bunbury, but also for the benefit of the people in the south-west and for the benefit of this country generally, some slight penalty will be paid by this Government. I would indicate that in spite of that fact, a rental of that nature in two or three years' time will be seen as about commercial.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SW Development Authority

439. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Regional Development and the North-West:

- (1) Has the Minister or the Government issued any directive to the Western Australian Tourism Commission

following a report in the *South Western Times* that the General Manager of the Tourism Commission (Mr Whatley) said in part—

The South West Tourist Commission is the idea of the South West Development Authority, we have never put the idea forward in our submission.

- (2) Is the Tourism Commission one of the agencies referred to by the Minister where the Government is proposing action, and if so, what is the action the Minister proposes?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) There is no secret at all that the South West Development Authority would like very much to have a branch of the Tourism Commission in Bunbury. I strongly support its view on that matter.

Mr Blaikie: You did not put any funding up for it?

Mr GRILL: Just listen to me, the "mass from Vasse": It is not up to me to give directions to the Tourism Commission, and I will not be giving it directions. I will be urging it, and no doubt the Premier will urge it—

Mr Blaikie: Why didn't you fund it?

Mr GRILL: —to expand an office into that area. I remind the member we already have a representative of the Tourism Commission in Bunbury and the south-west, and a consultant in tourism who has put together a fine report on the future direction of tourism in that area.

Mr Blaikie: Caught out. Clean bowled!

Mr GRILL: I have no doubt that in future there will be more than a representative of the Tourism Commission in Bunbury—

Mr MacKinnon: Whether they like it or not.

Mr GRILL: —and I have no doubt the recommendations of the report which is shortly to be released will be implemented in many details.