

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 14 September 1983

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

ANIMALS: DOG ACT

Review: Petition

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [2.17 p.m.]: I present a petition containing 1 276 signatures. It reads as follows—

To the Honourable Members in Parliament Assembled, we, the undersigned, wish to draw your attention to the fact that the recommendations put to the Minister by the Dog Act review committee, May 1983, are a serious menace to our civil rights and accordingly hereby request that you reject, in its entirety, the reported recommendations of that committee, and as in duty bound, your petitioners shall ever pray.

I certify that the petition conforms to the Standing Orders of the House.

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

(See petition No. 22.)

ANIMALS: DOG ACT

Review: Petition

MR WILLIAMS (Clontarf) [2.18 p.m.]: I present a petition signed by 21 people, objecting to the recommendations of the Dog Act review committee. I certify that the petition conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

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

(See petition No. 23.)

ANIMALS: DOG ACT

Review: Petition

MR MacKINNON (Murdoch) [2.19 p.m.]: I present a petition from 16 people which is couched in the same terms as those presented by the members for Geraldton and Clontarf. The petition conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, and I have certified accordingly.

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

(See petition No. 24.)

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Referendums Bill.
2. Electoral Amendment Bill (No. 2).
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr Tonkin (Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform), and read a first time.
3. Tobacco (Promotion and Sale) Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Hodge (Minister for Health), and read a first time.
4. Daylight Saving Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Brian Burke (Premier), and read a first time.

ACTS AMENDMENT (CONSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 13 September.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform) [2.23 p.m.]: In replying to the debate, I would like to thank members for their contributions, although I regret that in my opinion the standard of debate was not very high.

Mr Clarko: You mean your speech?

Mr Old: Higher than that of the second reading speech!

Mr TONKIN: Obviously many of the speakers were not able to understand the Bill, and others were not able to address themselves to the basic political facts and philosophy.

I will not spend a great deal of time replying to the debate, but I would like to say one or two things. It has been said that this Bill, if enacted, will give advantage to the Australian Labor Party. That is a slanderous untruth.

Mr Old: Rot, absolute rot!

Mr TONKIN: It is untrue for this reason: The only way the ALP or any other party can benefit by this legislation is if a majority of people vote for that party. That is the only advantage. If the majority of the people want a particular political party, the number of seats for that party will reflect that vote. Of course, that is revolutionary from the Opposition's point of view—after 90 years of unbroken rule in the Legislative Council. Of course, it is untenable to Opposition members because they have been corrupted by power. They insist on hanging onto power and having laws to give them this unfair advantage. Of course, proportional representation is unpalatable to the Opposition because, although not a perfect system, it

will give a political party a number of seats proportionate to the number of votes it receives.

When the one-vote-one-value system was introduced in South Australia, Don Corcoran's party was defeated and a Liberal Government, under David Tonkin, was elected. Members opposite did not hear one complaint from us about that. The people of South Australia, as was their democratic right, chose a Liberal Party Government and we did not quarrel with that. We would try to persuade the people that they were wrong if they chose a Liberal Government, but we believe they have a right to choose one. However, we do not want any part of fraudulent arithmetic which predetermines the result.

So there is no advantage to the ALP in this proposition and the repetition of an untruth time and time again does not make it a truth. Under proportional representation, if a majority of people vote for a party, that party will obtain the majority of seats. We would not be able to have the present obscene situation under which one party received 51.3 per cent of the vote and got seven seats, and another party, which clearly lost with 45.7 per cent of the vote, got nine seats. The party which lost, obtained two seats extra. Those were the facts at the last February election and, of course, the Opposition would like the situation to continue. That is the way it has hung onto power in the Legislative Council for 90 years, irrespective of what the people want.

Mr Bertram: They are bad losers.

Mr TONKIN: So it is wrong to say this is a democratic State when a minority can obtain a majority of the seats in a House which has absolute power to reject any legislation. The fact is that 28.1 per cent of the people of this State—less than one-third—elect the majority of Legislative Councillors. The fact that some of these people may live in certain places has nothing to do with it. Are we not all citizens? Should we not all be equal before the law? Are we not all required to obey the law that this Parliament makes? If we are all required to obey the law this Parliament makes, why should we not have an equal say in what that law should be? This institution will never have the respect it should have while we have electoral laws such as those we have at present.

The people are aware that for 90 years the Liberal Party, under various names, has kept control of the Legislative Council by different laws at different times. That is the fact.

Mr Clarko: Why proportional representation for the Legislative Council and a different system for the lower House?

Mr TONKIN: That is a very good question, and I really do appreciate it.

Mr O'Connor: Because you are bringing in a Bill for that, too.

Mr TONKIN: Will the Leader of the Opposition let me finish with this question?

Mr O'Connor: You have already told us that.

Mr TONKIN: We have said that several times. The member for Murdoch suggested that we would not bring in such legislation. I do not know what kind of smart aleck knowledge or intuition he has.

Mr O'Connor: Your deputy leader told us last night in this House.

Mr TONKIN: I can tell members that a Bill is being drafted and it is intended to bring it here. There is no question about that.

Mr Old: You have told us before.

Mr TONKIN: That is right. If members opposite will be polite, I can reply to the member for Karrinyup, who asked a question before they did. There are two kinds of questions asked in this House. There are dishonest questions when people try to twist things, and so on, and there are honest questions. I appreciate this question from the member for Karrinyup. It is an ordinary, honest, down-to-earth question. This House would have far more respect in the eyes of the people if this kind of attitude was more often part of its proceedings.

To answer the question, I say that it is true it would be consistent to have proportional representation for both Houses. However, as the Opposition has mentioned already, there is a problem with proportional representation. It is likely—yes, even more than possible—that no political party will have a majority in that House and as this is the House of Government, we could have an unstable situation where neither party had a majority and that would be cause for worry.

One might then ask: Why have it in the other place? Of course, Governments do not depend on the other place and it gives minorities a chance. Normally speaking, minorities have no chance under the single constituency situation. I know we have some members in this House who might indicate that is not true. The National Country Party and the National Party do not have a very big percentage, but because of the peculiar geographical situation and other historical factors in this State, their votes are concentrated in a particular area.

Mr Hassell: Preferential voting, which you are breaking down, gives minorities a real chance.

Mr TONKIN: I appreciate that.

Mr Hassell: And you are breaking that down.

Mr TONKIN: We are making that optional. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition cannot understand a situation in which we give people a choice. For 90 years, members opposite have not given people a choice. The Liberal Party has predominated in the Legislative Council, regardless of the people's choice. Optional preferential voting gives the people an option; they can vote full preferential if they wish, or they can choose not to do so.

Last night, members opposite were complaining because we said that, if someone wrote his name on a ballot paper which also had on it some other extraneous material, and if the intention were clear, it would be a valid vote. Is not that what voting is all about? Is it not about indicating one's intention?

If the intention was clear, why should not the vote be counted? Why should we be like school masters and say, "Tut, tut! You have made dirty marks on the paper"?

Mr Mensaros: You can have the biggest abuse of the system with that sort of situation.

Mr TONKIN: That is the answer to the question raised by the member for Karrinyup.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has alleged, as have other speakers, that, under this Bill, the President will have two votes. I state categorically that is not the Government's intention. Because comment was made in this regard, I looked again at the Bill. I also had careful discussions with the Parliamentary Draftsman both last night and this morning and he is of the very strong opinion that that will not be the case and the President will not have two votes.

However, to make the position absolutely clear and in order to show quite definitely that is not our intention, if necessary, I shall move an amendment to put that matter beyond doubt. In spite of the technical advice I have received, I can see that it would be possible to interpret the provision in that way. We shall discuss that matter more fully in Committee, but I just make that unqualified statement: It is not intended that any President should have two votes, and, if necessary, we shall move amendments to put that beyond doubt.

Mr Stephens: Would you explain why you were giving the President or Speaker, as the case may be, the opportunity to express his point of view?

Mr TONKIN: Certainly. Members have asked what is magical about the figure of 22. Of course, one of the factors is that it is necessary to have an odd number of members retiring at each election,

otherwise we will have a situation of 5:5 all the time, which would be rather pointless.

If we have an odd number such as 11, we have the possibility of a 6:5 split. If we took a hypothetical situation, we could find that, at two successive conjoint elections, a political party has six members elected in the Council, which gives it 12 members out of the total of 22—that is a majority—and it then provides the President, which would leave it with 11 members on the floor of the House. That political party's opponent would have 10 members and a constitutional majority is 12 members. Members should not forget that, if a political party has 12 members elected to the Council, it is very popular. It would really be a sweeping electoral success because it would have received 53 or 54 per cent of the vote—I do not know the exact figures.

In two successive elections, that party has clearly been given a good mandate. We will not say for what purpose that mandate has been given, but it has received a good measure of support from the people. However, it would not have a constitutional majority, because on the floor of the House, the members would be split 11:10. The President could not give a casting vote, because there would not be any equality of voting and, therefore, the Government's Bill majority would lapse. As a result, the party would not be able to get any legislation requiring a constitutional majority through the Council and this could happen to either of the major parties.

Mr Hassell: Under your Bill, what is a constitutional majority?

Mr TONKIN: That is not altered.

Mr Hassell: Haven't you deleted a definition?

Mr Jamieson: Look at the Interpretation Act. You are a lawyer.

Mr TONKIN: Certain provisions have been rearranged and measures have been moved around. Some things have been deleted, but they reappear elsewhere. I assure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition there is no intention to change the situation as it relates to a constitutional majority and as far as I know this does not happen.

Mr Hassell: My advice is you have deleted the definition of an absolute majority of votes. We have not been able to work out why you have done that.

Mr TONKIN: It is perhaps more appropriate to deal with that in the Committee stage. However, while speaking on the principles of the Bill, I indicate that is certainly not the intention. If an oversight occurred, it certainly was not intended, and the constitutional majority would still be 12.

One member said that the people must be able to see their representatives, and reference was made to very large electorates where it is difficult for people to see their members. It is very important that members can be approached and that people can reach them. However, a more fundamental principle exists. We do not just sit here as social workers or friends of our constituents. We are not here simply as people who must be accessible; we sit here as legislators and if a member sits in this House and represents 2 000 voters, he has the same value vote in the Parliament as a member who represents 18 000 voters. Therefore, voters in larger electorates are disadvantaged 9:1 in that situation. Members must keep in mind that, above all, their main job is not go around kissing babies and getting themselves re-elected—although I do not knock the concept of contact with people—but rather it is to legislate. Members cannot expect people to have respect for the law if the law is made by a minority of people.

Mr Clarko: But in your proposed Legislative Council, where you give the President a casting vote, his vote is equivalent to that of 10 or 11 other members. If a measure is defeated evenly 10 all, and the President has a casting vote, it gives him a vote equal to the votes of 10 members. It is 10:1.

Mr TONKIN: That interjection really leaves me speechless.

Mr Clarko: I hope that occurs and I think other members hope so, too.

Mr TONKIN: The President has one vote the same as does everyone else.

Mr Clarko: If you give a man a casting vote when the position is 10 all, his vote then becomes equivalent to the votes of 10 members of the House.

Mr TONKIN: If the member really thinks that, I do not have the words to refute such nonsense.

Mr Clarko: No, because it is absolutely correct. The President decides.

Mr TONKIN: If the member for Karrinyup believes that is right, he can run around with his little dream.

Mr Clarko: You are trying to put that into the Act.

Mr TONKIN: It is suggested this Bill seeks to abolish the secret ballot, because, if a name appears on the ballot paper, the vote will not be disqualified on that count. I put it to members that the secret ballot is for people. If I want to vote and do not want to tell anyone what my vote is, that is the purpose of the secret ballot. However,

it does not prevent me from going out and saying, "I have voted for Ian Laurance". Do members wish to make that illegal?

Mr Laurance: That is the best thing you have said.

Mr TONKIN: Of course, we do not wish to make that illegal and the same situation applies when one writes one's name on the ballot paper and reveals the name of the person for whom one has voted. One could do that also by writing a letter or shouting it out in Hay Street. This argument is nonsense.

It is suggested this Bill gets rid of the secret ballot because a ballot paper which has a name on it will not be invalid, but that is absolute nonsense, because it has always been possible to tell people the name of the person for whom one has voted.

Mr Laurance: You don't understand the point made by the member for Floreat. The member for Floreat was saying that, if you appointed a scrutineer, I could say, "I want to see a ballot paper in there with Arthur Tonkin's name on it showing that he has voted for me, otherwise you will lose your job". That is the point the member for Floreat was making.

Mr TONKIN: I did not realise that. I can see far more validity in that suggestion and, if that occurred, it would be an offence. We could spend all our time talking about offences; however, I would hope that such a person would be prosecuted. The chances of a scrutineer's doing that, given the number of ballot papers involved, would be negligible. I hope anyone involved in such a situation would quickly go to the authorities.

I have spoken about minority rule, and majorities in the Legislative Council which have been elected by approximately 28.2 per cent of the population. I remind members that minority rule is abhorred by the Australian Labor Party. It is the system used in the eastern bloc countries. Time and time again, people opposite quite rightly have condemned the Soviet Union for its undemocratic attitudes and practices. A couple of years ago, I went to Poland and East Germany to determine for myself how their systems worked. I abhor those systems of minority rule, under which one party is permanently entrenched in power, but that is precisely what has occurred in the upper House of this State; one party has been permanently entrenched for 90 years.

Members opposite have said that we should not rush into changing the present system. Do they want to extend their rule to 190 years? I see members opposite smiling. Of course, they believe they are in a comfortable position, and it is a

comfortable position. It would be nice to get away with such things, but the time of getting away with them will go.

Mr Hassell: I am glad the people can see you in action. They would be thankful that we have a majority up there.

Mr TONKIN: I make it clear that I believe country people are disadvantaged in various ways compared with people in the city. This point was raised by the member for Gascoyne and other members. However, we must not use our electoral system to try to compensate country people for those disadvantages. If we do so, a Government can make special rules, which would be inviting the Government to cheat.

As I said in my second reading speech, what is there to stop a party saying, "All right, yes, we will have special votes for disadvantaged people, and who is more disadvantaged in our society than the unemployed? Let us give them two votes or three votes each". What about a suburban housewife who has six kids at home, who cannot get out to work, who does not have very many friends, and who lives on Disprin? Is she not a disadvantaged person? What about factory workers? They do monotonous and repetitious work and are not paid very much. Should not those people be regarded as disadvantaged compared with people like ourselves who are well paid and have job satisfaction?

Mr Laurance: Those people are disadvantaged, but what about comparing them with the same sorts of people in, say, Halls Creek? Those disadvantaged in Halls Creek would be more disadvantaged than are similar people in, say, East Perth.

Mr TONKIN: That is a fair comment.

Mr Laurance: Your Federal counterparts have acknowledged this.

Mr TONKIN: My point is that we cannot use the electoral system to make up for those disadvantages. The member's point is fair enough, but what about the wealthy person in Halls Creek compared with a disadvantaged person in East Perth?

Mr Laurance: Yes, but what about the wealthy person in Halls Creek compared with the wealthy person in East Perth.

Mr TONKIN: A wealthy person in Halls Creek cannot be regarded as disadvantaged compared with a pauper in East Perth, and such a pauper could be given three votes because of his disadvantages. However, the pauper in Halls Creek might have to be given four votes and the wealthy person in Halls Creek might have two votes. Obviously a situation like that would be rid-

iculous. The point I make is that, if we depart from the one-vote-one-value system, we are giving each political party an opportunity to put on its thinking cap to determine how it can work out a system that will give in an advantage.

Although country people are isolated, they are not given a weighted vote purely because of that isolation. If they were, why do people who live in Kalamunda and Mundaring have a weighted vote? That situation alone shows that this weighting does not relate to isolation or other disadvantages; it is related directly to maintaining power.

Mr Old: No matter where you draw the line, you must have a cut-off point.

Mr TONKIN: That is the whole point.

Mr Old: How will you help the disadvantaged?

Mr TONKIN: The disadvantaged can be helped in various ways. Certainly the Labor Party has a much better record than have conservative parties in helping the disadvantaged. Certainly we will not help them by mucking around with electoral arithmetic.

Mr Old: But that's what you are doing.

Mr TONKIN: We are talking about one-vote-one-value. We say people should be equal to one another. The Americans said 200 years ago that all men are equal. I hope they would now say that all men and women are equal, but the original point is valid.

Mr Clarko: They don't have a proportional system.

Mr TONKIN: The Americans made the philosophical commitment to equality, but conservative parties in this State have abused that principle.

Mr Clarko: They don't always have it.

Mr TONKIN: They are much closer to it than we are. They do not have the gross malapportionment that we have.

Mr Laurance: In regard to those disadvantaged people, particularly in the north of the State, you have indicated consistently that the way you will overcome their disenfranchisement is to give their members of Parliament extra facilities such as two electorate offices or more telephone allowances, and so on. I make the point that it is not a good argument to put to the people in the north. If you want to change the Legislative Council like this—

The SPEAKER: Order! It would be better for the member to pursue that argument during the Committee stage.

Mr TONKIN: The provision of increased telephone allowances, etc., would not make up totally

for the isolation of certain people in the north, but neither does our present electoral system. Does the member think that people walk around their electorates and say that the isolation is fine because their vote is worth 10 times more than the vote of people in the city?

Mr Pearce: In the Kimberley that's not even so because the vote of people there is worth the same as the vote of people in the metropolitan area.

Mr TONKIN: That point indicates also that our present system has nothing to do with isolation; it is about power. The member for Gascoyne said that it is nonsense to say the present system sets up a seat for Liberal control, and he used the example of Lower North Province. He referred to Mr Dellar senior and Mr Dellar junior, whose periods of office were interspersed by George Brand and others belonging to the Liberal Party. If we consider individual seats, we will know that they have been won by people from different parties, but the Legislative Council as a whole should be considered. When someone says that a certain electorate went to the Australian Labor Party on a certain number of occasions, that person should remember that there would have been four, five, or six other electorates firmly in the grasp of the Liberal Party. At any Council election considered, the Liberal Party has gained the majority with a minority of the vote, and that situation has existed for the last 90 years. If the Liberal Party had had 90 years of unbroken rule in the Council as a result of its popularity, I would not quarrel with that rule, but that has not been the case.

Mr Laurance: The biggest discrepancy can be seen in the Lower North Province, and the figure of 15:1 was mentioned, but that is only one province. It is a grotesque distortion. In regard to that province, you have been quite wrong because it has gone to different parties.

Mr TONKIN: The reason that province has been used is that it is an extreme example. Perhaps we should use an average figure, but Lower North Province has been the example we have used. We must consider the dozens of seats in this State to determine the overall pattern.

The member for Karrinyup said that we want Federal intervention in this matter. I do not want Federal intervention; I want this matter resolved by this Parliament. If we wanted Federal intervention, we would sit back and do whatever we had to do outside the Parliament to obtain that intervention. This State must put its affairs into order, otherwise there will be strong moves for Federal intervention. That would be a shame because it would show that we cannot clean up our

own stables. I believe we can, and that we can do so by devising a system that will not cause us the shame and ignominy of Federal intervention. As a result of the untenable situation which has existed in this State, there is a real risk of intervention. I do not say that as a threat, because I do not believe we should have that intervention. I want this Bill to be passed by this Parliament. If we do not pass it or do something to rectify the system, there will be some kind of other move.

The member for Moore—it is a pity he is not here now because I do not like to speak about people behind their backs—said that country people make a far greater contribution to the wealth of the State than do city people. The member for Katanning-Roe made the same point. The comments of those members show how deplorably low the level of the debate reached. The member for Moore said that the wealth of this State is created by agriculture and mining; therefore, the areas where agriculture and mining take place produce the wealth of the State. Apparently, if he uses a hoe, it is one he has manufactured himself. I would fail a former 13-year-old second year high school student of mine who said that sort of thing in economics, because the fact is we are interdependent and this nonsense of setting city against country has to end. I have many friends who are farmers and who depend on the city in the same way as the city depends on the farmers. The farmers use modern technology, communications, fuels, tractors, and appliances in their homes and on their farms. Agricultural people go to farming communities for field days and farmers use the Department of Agriculture to an enormous extent, and I applaud that.

Are members opposite trying to tell me that a person who makes tractors, sells petrol, or works out a better method of growing wheat, is not producing agricultural goods?

Mr Old: Is that general knowledge?

Mr TONKIN: Of course he is. That is why this debate is so sterile. I want to get away from the situation of country versus city. It is like grade one students saying, "My father is better than your father".

I would like us all to realise that we are Western Australians and that we all have a part to play. No-one denies the great importance of the agricultural and mining industries, but for a person to say that all the wealth is produced in the country while the city people apparently sit around and do nothing, illustrates his abysmal ignorance of elementary economics. Worse than that is the fact that if we stay with that kind of attitude—

Mr Old: You will not be there for long, boy.

Mr TONKIN: —we hark back to the nineteenth century. If members opposite believe in wealth, why do they not give the people the facts?

Mr Old: That was clearly defined last night when I said the matter of the Legislative Council vote by ownership of property was quite rightly dispensed with. Some advantages are richly deserved in areas outside the metropolitan area. You play it a little bit along the line, boy. You are going on with a lot of absolute rot as you did in your second reading speech. Give us some reason for a change.

Mr TONKIN: The fact of the matter is that if we believe votes should be based on wealth—

Mr Old: We do not.

Mr TONKIN: That is why members opposite enhance votes in the country. Let us be honest and say that that is what it is about.

Mr Old: I am sure you are appealing to the members who are.

Mr TONKIN: I am proud to be a child of the twentieth century and I am proud we do not believe people should get votes according to their wealth. The idea is abhorrent. Votes are exercised by individuals. Not all the people in the country are interested in wealth—some are unemployed. Do members opposite have a special rule for them? It is nonsense to say that wealth is in the country. After all, if the Australian Labor Party got high votes in the country, the Opposition would be the first to change the Act to give enhanced votes to the city. It has nothing to do with wealth, disadvantage, or isolation—it has everything to do with power.

As far as the country versus the city is concerned, it is time to end the division and to say that we are all Western Australians. The laws apply to everyone equally and I believe that we should get away from pitting the city dweller against the country dweller.

Finally, I emphasise that never before in the history of Western Australia have the people been consulted as to the kind of political system under which they would like to live. People have been consulted in Western Australia to the same extent as the people of the Soviet Union. Never before have the people been asked what kind of system is best, and this Bill provides for a referendum.

Mr Old: Why?

Mr TONKIN: Because it is in the Constitution—

Mr Old: Because the Constitution provides for it.

Mr TONKIN: —and the member for Katanning-Roe did not know that last night. He sat in Government and did not know why a referendum was necessary.

Mr Old: You are trying to make out now that it is through the goodness of your heart.

Mr TONKIN: I am not saying that at all. What I am saying is that, no matter how it came about, there will be a referendum before this Bill can become law.

Let the people decide and let the people make the decision, or are Opposition members afraid of the people's decision?

Mr Hodge: Of course they are.

As to Constitutional Majority: Speaker's Ruling

THE SPEAKER (Mr Harman): As members are aware, section 73 of the Constitution Act 1889, as amended, requires that, to be valid, an absolute majority of members in both Houses must support any amendment which effects "any change in the Constitution of the Legislative Council or of the Legislative Assembly".

Over many years, the meaning of this phrase has been something of a vexed question in this Parliament, and in our courts. There have now been three cases which I regard as landmarks in respect of determining what this expression does not mean, and, to some degree, what it does mean.

I refer to *Clydesdale v. Hughes* (1934), *The State of Western Australia v. Wilmshire* (1982)—both of which cases were before the High Court of Australia on appeal from the Supreme Court of Western Australia—and the Attorney General for Western Australia and Others v. *The State of Western Australia* (1982), which case was before the Full Court of the Western Australian Supreme Court.

The *Wilmshire* case in effect upheld the decision in *Clydesdale v. Hughes* that alterations to the qualifications for membership of either House did not alter the "constitution" of either House. This case also established that alterations to the franchise for either House did not require the concurrence of absolute majorities.

The third case to which I referred was instigated over the matter of increasing the Ministry from 13 to 15. The decision in this case clearly established that an absolute majority was not needed to carry out such an amendment.

However, in their reasons for judgment, Mr Chief Justice Burt and Mr Justice Wallace have actually gone further and provided some definition of the expression "Constitution of the

Legislative Council or of the Legislative Assembly". These words, in the opinion of these learned judges, restrict the absolute majority requirement to amendments which alter the number of members in either House.

As reducing the number of members in the Legislative Council is an integral part of this Bill, and in view of these court decisions, I rule that the Acts Amendment (Constitution and Electoral) Bill requires the concurrence of an absolute majority to pass at the second and third reading stages.

I make passing reference to an earlier Bill which left this House on 24 August; that is, the Electoral Amendment Bill. On the basis of the decision given in the Wilsmore case, such a Bill did not require the concurrence of an absolute majority. Such a view is more than adequately supported by the later decision concerning the increase to the number of Ministers. My ruling was not sought in respect of that Bill, but I offer this explanation in case members are puzzled as to the different treatment required in the case of the Bill now before the House.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 28

Mr Barnett	Mr Hodge
Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mrs Beggs	Mr Tom Jones
Mr Bertram	Mr McIver
Mr Bridge	Mr Pearce
Mr Bryce	Mr Read
Mrs Buchanan	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Brian Burke	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Terry Burke	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Burkett	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Mrs Watkins
Mr Evans	Mr Wilson
Mrs Henderson	Mr Gordon Hill

Noes 19

Mr Bradshaw	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Mr Court	Mr Spriggs
Dr Dadour	Mr Stephens
Mr Grayden	Mr Thompson
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr Mensaros	

(Teller)

(Teller)

The SPEAKER: I announce that the Bill did not receive a constitutional majority.

Mr Old: Hear, hear!

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Ministerial Statement

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [3.05 p.m.]: Under Standing Order No. 118, I seek leave of the House to make a ministerial statement on Government agencies.

The SPEAKER: Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted, on the understanding that a member may wish to speak to the ministerial statement either now, or at a later stage.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Mr Speaker, I should like to clarify the position regarding the right of reply to the statement. My understanding is that a member of the Opposition may reply to this ministerial statement, but that he must do so immediately.

The SPEAKER: No, not necessarily immediately; the Opposition can reply at a later stage.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I simply make it clear to the House that the understanding reached with members of the Opposition is that the reply will be made immediately and that it will not be our intention to grant leave to make a reply at a later stage. The Leader of the Opposition has had the statement for about two hours.

When the Labor Party was in Opposition, it pursued the then Government vigorously for data on Government agencies. There were no ready answers to the number of agencies, their purposes, membership, achievements, or cost to the taxpayers. No records were available for public purposes. The former Government regularly and persistently added to the number of Government agencies for a variety of reasons, without consideration for the size of Government or for the accountability and responsibility of Government agencies. The previous Government contributed to big government and never sought to manage it better. We do.

This Government ordered the publication of a list of Government agencies, their memberships, and their fees. The list appeared on 21 July 1983, in a special issue of the *Government Gazette*. It was the first time such a list had been published and it was indicative of this Government's intentions, spelt out in the election campaign, during which we promised the introduction of sunset legislation and the pursuit of more efficient government.

The measures I am about to announce are directed at—

reducing the number of Government agencies, through abolition, amalgamation, or the application of sunset procedures;

making Government agencies more accountable;

responding to the recent second report of the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

However, the Government intends to approach the matter in a steady and constructive fashion. A ministerial review of Government agencies is nearly concluded and we expect this to lead to the abolition of some agencies and the amalgamation of others in areas where there is duplication and overlap.

The Standing Committee on Government Agencies proposed, as one of its four recommendations, the amendment of legislation to remove the provisions made to establish agencies which have never met, are in disuse, or have disbanded. The Government is considering this.

Over 3 000 positions are occupied by Western Australians on Government agencies. Many citizens give freely of their time and advice, as members of the boards of agencies, to assist the Government in its task. Their generosity and advice is valuable and their efforts are greatly appreciated. Others donate their sitting fees, where they are paid, to charitable or community causes, and would prefer that this fact passes unpublished.

However, the Government is ultimately responsible for the decisions and actions of agencies.

Non-Government appointees hold 241 positions for indefinite periods. A further 545 positions are occupied by Government employees, who are not paid. These figures exclude appointments to 37 industrial training advisory boards.

The picture is that nearly one-third of the appointments to the boards of Government agencies are held for indefinite terms, and the office holders and their respective organisations are subject to insufficient scrutiny and accountability.

Accordingly, Ministers responsible for agencies to which people have been appointed for indefinite periods will examine those agencies, and, if satisfied as to their purposes, set lengths for appointments. If they are not satisfied, they will recommend alterations or further abolitions and amalgamations.

Ministers are in a position to assess the need for other organisations to continue, because nominations to fill vacancies occur regularly on boards with definite limits to terms. This opportunity to review organisations will be taken.

Future nominations for positions on Government agencies will need to be accompanied by statements about the agencies' objectives, terms

of reference, performance and achievements, frequency of meetings, and accountability and reporting provisions. Cabinet will then consider whether the functions of the agencies still need to be carried out.

The unchecked growth of Government agencies has contributed to duplication and overlap of functions. The Government's intention is to reduce duplication and overlap. Ministers are to consider, and report to Cabinet on, the amalgamation of Government agencies in their areas of responsibility where the functions are broadly similar, or where the agencies cover similar areas.

Ministers will require annual reports to be provided by all agencies under their control. Proposals about the necessary contents of annual reports will be circulated to the agencies.

All these proposals rely on Executive action, but legislative action is necessary, as well.

The Standing Committee on Government Agencies has included in its terms of reference the power to recommend the application of the "sunset" principle to any Government agency. The "sunset" principle is defined, in the terms of reference, as a process whereby a Government agency's existence is automatically terminated after a certain period unless specific reauthorising legislation is enacted. The application of the "sunset" principle is more difficult than its utterance.

Experience in several American States illustrates the problems. The State of Alabama introduced sunset legislation to terminate existing agencies through a vote of the Legislature. Everything happened with a rush and the legislators had to make "Yes" or "No" decisions on 279 boards and agencies. In the event, the Alabamans faced a two-hour debate limit and "Yes" and "No" decisions. They terminated 15 to 20 agencies which were not in use anyway.

The sunset procedure which the Government intends to follow is that which allows for a review period to precede questions on the application of sunset. It needs to be recognised that the number of agencies or programmes which can be reviewed or evaluated each year is small compared with the total number of agencies. It also needs to be recognised that the costs of reviewing and evaluating are high and judgments need to be made about the costs and benefits of review.

I now turn to the second report of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. This new Legislative Council committee has produced a useful and comprehensive reference which indicates the size and scale of government which the previous Ministry allowed to prosper without in-

spection or culling. The committee, in its anxiety to hunt down every QANGO, has turned up some harmless but necessary specimens, such as the Yalgoo Nursing Post.

The committee has also counted some agencies several times. Local boards of health, sanitary boards, and bushfire advisory committees are usually synonymous with local government authorities. Though their legal basis is different, the physical boundaries of their jurisdictions are broadly the same.

The committee is concerned, as is the Government, with the proper accountability of Government agencies. Government agencies in a democracy must be accountable to a democratically elected body. The conditions for accountability are met, in part, by the fulfilment of any necessary legislative requirements, or by the questioning of the Minister within whose portfolio the agency falls. In either case, the Houses of Parliament should be able to subject to scrutiny the work of Government agencies.

The difficulty in Western Australia is that the Legislative Council is incompletely accountable itself for actions it takes or recommends because it is an undemocratic Chamber. The Government is not prepared to introduce sunset legislation so that the Legislative Council can apply sunset provisions to Government agencies while the Legislative Council remains above the fair judgments of the people of Western Australia. Consideration will be given, instead, to another location for the task of evaluating and reviewing the agencies of Government.

Two of the four recommendations in the report of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies deal with accountability, and two deal with the provision of information. The committee's first and third recommendations deal with the gathering and provision of information. A list of Government agencies and their membership has been published by this Government. Machinery had been established for this purpose before the Standing Committee on Government Agencies reported, and publication will be continued annually.

The committee pointed to the need for a directory of Government agencies. All other Australian States and even the Northern Territory publish one. This Government will see that we join the rest of the country and will soon publish a directory of Government agencies which will undoubtedly be of considerable help to individuals and organisations.

The committee recommendation with which the Government disagrees is the second which seeks

to make all agencies the subject of an Act of Parliament. The report does not elaborate to make clear its view of how this recommendation is to be implemented. The committee's report observes that agencies should not be established by regulation or Order-in-Council and that "the creation of a body which may have considerable Executive or quasi-judicial powers" should warrant more public attention than an obscure reference in the *Government Gazette*.

Surprisingly, after drawing attention to bodies which may have considerable power, the committee seeks to make all agencies the subject of an Act of Parliament. The Government does not accept the need for all agencies to be the subject of an Act of Parliament. There are adequate processes for the scrutiny and accountability of agencies, created otherwise, through the responsible Minister. Publication of information about the agencies is an aid to the process of accountability.

Most of the important business, commercial, and trading agencies, regulatory agencies, and quasi-judicial bodies are already subject to legislation. The Legislative Council committee should address itself to those agencies which need to be subject to improved mechanisms of accountability.

The measures announced in this statement are important steps in the Government's attempts to increase the accountability of Government agencies and to wind back unnecessary big government.

Our aim is to be rid of costly duplication and deadwood. Our efforts should not be misconstrued. Where we see a need for initiatives by the Government, we will take them. When we think the creation of new Government agencies is called for, we will establish them. However, we will not tolerate a situation in which expensive, unnecessary Government bodies continue to exist, simply because they already exist and no-one thought to question whether they were still needed.

If there is to be Government intrusion into particular areas of business, agriculture, the community, or anywhere else, we must be presented with a compelling case justifying involvement before we will permit it. The time is long overdue for the range of Government agencies to justify their continued existence. This Government will be calling on them to do just that; and if they cannot, they will cease to exist.

MR O'CONNOR: I seek leave to reply at a later stage of this sitting.

Leave granted.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: NINTH DAY*Motion*

Debate resumed from 25 August.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat) [3.18 p.m.]: In the past, the Address-in-Reply debate had considerable importance because it was an occasion when private members—Opposition members or backbenchers behind the Government—were able to air observations on the needs of their electorates—comments and criticisms perhaps—before the general legislative work of the Government proceeded. We have experienced so many changes that the Address-in-Reply debate has degenerated, really, to a non-event. It appears to be almost a burden on the Government. It goes unnoticed except, perhaps, for the customary courtesy of the printing of new members' maiden speeches by the media.

The Leader of the House has said on many occasions that because the ALP received just over 50 per cent—I think he mentioned 54 per cent—of the aggregate vote in the State at the last general election, the Government can do anything, make any changes, or introduce virtually any revolutionary measure in a legal way, if it wishes. It can ignore the representations of the 46 per cent of the voters. Of course, this is the beginning of the end of parliamentary representation as we have known it for such a long time.

It does stifle the Opposition; it does stifle its motions; it does stifle its grievances—we are in the fifth week of parliamentary sittings, and grievances have yet to be called on; and it does stifle private members' Bills—none have yet been introduced. It disregards entirely the aims of the Address-in-Reply except perhaps the formal aspects, and it can quite justly be construed as a discourtesy to the Governor of the State.

In my experience, we have never before witnessed this sort of use of the suspension of Standing Orders in order to deal with matters other than perhaps the Supply Bill, yet this has now become the order of the day and any Bill the Government likes to call urgent or any ministerial statement now precedes the Address-in-Reply. This is a radical change. We have seen a change in the application of the guillotine and the gag motions, which were last resorts during previous Governments of either colour.

We have seen a change in the Government's not replying to parliamentary questions by deliberately bypassing them, or sometimes using expressions which are cynical instead of giving the information sought in the questions. Another radical change is that the Government is not replying to debates on occasions.

They are all important procedures, because, while adopting this attitude, the Government denies the true working of our parliamentary system, our democratic system. It must be understood that in our parliamentary system we have no other checks and balances, such as those which are found in presidential Governments where the Executive or Administration is separated from the Legislature. Our system has no check or balance other than the Opposition in the Parliament. Owing to a lack of separation of power, it is essential in the Westminster system that an Opposition should have its say and be heard both inside and outside the Parliament.

With the Administration itself, this is not so important, because we accept that we have a two-party system; we accept that decisions are made by Cabinet, in the case of Governments, and by the respective party rooms. However, from the point of view of any other criticism and of checking administrative decisions by the majority, the role of the Opposition within the normally used Standing Orders of this Parliament is extremely important.

The roles or duties of the Opposition are to criticise, to question, to ask for detailed information under the protection of privilege, and to point out matters the Opposition feels ought to be brought to the attention of the public. This is precisely what the Government, when in Opposition, always advocated; in fact, it was able to exercise these functions when in Opposition and was not curtailed by the then Government. However, by changing course 180 degrees since it has become the Government, the ALP has denied these democratic checks and balances provided for in our parliamentary system; but, more grievously and more importantly, it has also discredited the system. Who knows, perhaps that is what the Government wants to do in order to achieve complete power.

No-one will believe political parties or politicians; no-one will believe anything they say if the Government is so insensitive to what it advocated and was allowed to follow during the time it was in Opposition, yet now does not follow when it is in Government.

I do not have time to prove all the ignored promises and how the Government has not answered numerous questions, because I wish to deal with other matters, two in particular, during the time I have left. I raise these topics in the vain hope that they might become public knowledge and so that people might think about them.

My next topic is a proper one for me to mention at this time because it is connected with my electorate.

Members might be aware that there has been discontent in the coastal part of my electorate, the area that might be called the coastal ward of the City of Perth, but which is more precisely described as the land covered by the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act. This discontent started in 1979 when disproportionately high rates were struck for that ward by the Perth City Council. That ward, because of the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act, has an unimproved capital value rating system, unlike that of the rest of the city. At that time, the values went up and the rate in the dollar also rose. The ratepayers there—my electors—were confronted with enormous rate rises.

Discontent arose also because of the implementation of the provisions of the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act by the Perth City Council, because the interest rates of the funds went back to general revenue and were not used for the purposes for which they were originally intended. The people of the area felt deceived and cheated, because they had bought the properties—the serviced land—with the knowledge of the possible advantage the Act provided. They paid a higher price for those blocks in full knowledge of what was involved.

In order to overcome these difficulties, the previous Government decided that the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act needed legislative attention, and it made a statement indicating that the Government was prepared to put amendments before Parliament to carry out the original spirit and intention of the Act in regard to the trust affecting this land.

The statement went on to point out that such amendment would involve the establishment of an independent board of management that would include representatives of the coast ward residents and the Perth City Council. The board would administer the unsold endowment land and manage the existing endowment land funds and the interest earned. These funds would be used for the benefit of the community generally through the establishment and maintenance, if necessary, of new regional facilities and the maintenance of existing facilities. That statement was well received by residents in the area.

The general objective of the policy was to put into effect amendments to the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act to end the controversy which had arisen. The amendments would place under the care, custody, and control of an inde-

pendent board of management, all liabilities and assets created by the endowment which were intended all along would be used for the benefit of the people of Western Australia as a whole.

I would like to briefly mention some historical facts about the City of Perth's endowment land scheme. When this legislation was first introduced in 1920 by the then Mitchell Government, it was described by the Labor Opposition, led by the Hon. Philip Collier, as an extremely socialistic document. In fact, it was members of the Labor Opposition who introduced amendments to the legislation designed to ensure that its future benefit would not pass from the public of the State as a whole. Unfortunately, this was not quite achieved because no explicit provision was written into the Act for the interest earnings to remain with the Endowment Land Trust Fund. This trust fund is in the joint names of the City of Perth and the State Treasurer and consists of surplus moneys available from the proceeds of the sale of endowment land after those proceeds have been used for the development of the endowment land. This area has now been developed to the point where the substantial part of the land is inhabited, of course, and the proceeds from land sales are the surplus, as the Act calls it, and are placed to the credit of the Endowment Lands Trust Fund.

We have the strange position, however, where, on the opinion of a QC, the capital of the rapidly increasing trust fund cannot be touched, but the interest is being transferred to, I suppose, the Perth City Council's general revenue fund for the purpose of sweetening—perhaps that is the right expression—the rate burden. This, of course, is in direct conflict with the intention of the Parliament in 1920 when it established the trust fund for the purpose of ensuring that the proceeds from the sale of the land would benefit the people of Western Australia in perpetuity or, as one member of the then Labor Opposition stated, for 500 years hence.

The City of Perth Endowment Lands Act contains provisions for the proceeds of land sales to be used to provide and develop sporting, entertainment, and recreational facilities for the benefit of the public at large.

One of the original difficulties facing the Parliament in 1920 was that of attracting people to live in these areas which are part of what is now known as Floreat Park and the whole of City Beach and thus make the land sufficiently valuable to generate income from the sales. This was achieved by promoting what became known as the garden city concept and a special rating system which was included in the Act. After

many years and many trials and tribulations, this concept proved successful and we now have a very pleasant garden city suburb and environment in the City Beach and Floreat areas, as a result of which considerable rate revenue is generated for the City of Perth. In addition, as a result of the provisions under the Act, we have facilities for the benefit of the people of Western Australia as a whole. These include the Perry Lakes Stadium which was the focal point for the Empire Games held in the early 1960s which otherwise would not have been possible; Bold Park which in due course will rival Kings Park; an extensive beachfront park with facilities equal to any in Australia; and furthermore, a public golf course which is reputed to be one of the best in the country. These public facilities have all been developed at no cost to either the City of Perth or the taxpayers of the State generally.

So as a result of an Act of Parliament, formulated with great foresight in 1920, we have a high income producing residential area for the City of Perth and a large number of excellent facilities for the community generally. Of the original land, approximately 685 lots remain which the City of Perth estimates it can sell over the next 12 years or so for an estimated gross amount of \$90 million. Of course, the city will need to deduct developmental costs from this amount, but it will still leave a considerable surplus. The capital of this trust fund cannot be touched, but the investment earnings are currently transferred into the City of Perth's general revenue fund. This, of course, is not occurring in the original spirit of the Act and is one of the causes of discontent in this part of my electorate. Now is the time to act before the City of Perth becomes too reliant upon the interest earning of the endowment fund as an additional revenue raiser to rate revenue and Commonwealth funds, albeit small when it is compared with an overall budget of the city being approximately \$30 million today. To compensate the City of Perth for what could be claimed by the city to be a loss, it is proposed that the board of management will take control of the unsold land and the trust fund and its investment earnings and will also assume responsibility for the facilities currently involving the City of Perth in considerable expense; examples of these are the Perry Lakes stadium, Bold Park, and the beachfront.

It is proposed that representatives of the City of Perth be included on the board of management so that they can make a contribution on the basis of their knowledge and previous experience. With careful management, this arrangement will provide benefit to the public in significant ways.

Firstly, existing public facilities will be developed in the best possible way for the use and enjoyment of all citizens throughout the metropolitan area and indeed the State. The source of funding should be perpetual and it and the facilities should not ultimately become a burden on the taxpayer as is the case with Kings Park. Secondly, sufficient surplus moneys should be available to develop new regional facilities, again at no cost to the public. As we all know, public recreation, sporting, and entertainment facilities are becoming more and more important as technological improvements give rise to greater leisure time for all members of the public.

I am very pleased to have been advised that the Minister for Lands and Surveys is carrying out the review of the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act—he is the Minister responsible for it—and that he will take into consideration the policies which I have just described. I understand he is joined by the Minister for Local Government in this exercise. I trust every endeavour will soon bring a final solution to this problem along the lines that I have outlined.

I refer now to another subject which relates more to my present responsibilities as Opposition spokesman on water resources. I am sorry that the Minister and Leader of the House is presently not in his seat, because what I will say affects his portfolio, and, if he were here, he would be able perhaps to respond by way of interjection.

I refer to the general discontent among the public about the very high increases in rates and charges, particularly for water, sewerage, and drainage, and especially in the non-domestic area; that is, the business sector. I also want to refer to the discrepancies in local government charges arising between individual ratepayers of one local authority, particularly in the metropolitan area. These come about this year, more so than any other time, as a result of the triennial revaluation based on the gross rental value.

I am complaining not so much about the increases in rates and the fact that the business sector has been very hard hit, but mainly about the well-known fact that the Government, when in Opposition, is on record as having promised everything and having criticised the then Government for allowing much smaller increases. Yet, when it became the Government, it ignored completely all the promises to which I will point in detail. It brought about a situation in which it hurt not only itself, but also the system, because the credibility of the Parliament and the parties has been reduced to a point where the whole system has been brought into question and disrespect.

Increased charges arising out of a revaluation have the habit of striking quite unevenly and inequitably at individual ratepayers. The increases strike in such a way as to be outside the influence of the ratepayers, and it allows them very little time to prepare, and to draw up a budget for the debts they have to incur domestically. Much more important than that, it gives little time for them for preparation in their business activities, particularly in small business.

I emphasise that I am not claiming that all the problems can be solved immediately. We on this side always said—and I hope we never waiver from this point—that we did not want to be irresponsible in Opposition. Some almost ready-given solutions can be adopted in relation to local government rates. The Opposition has made a serious endeavour to adopt those propositions, and we did so by trying to amend the Local Government Amendment Bill which was debated here in August. At that time, the Government refused to entertain those suggestions although they would not have put any obligation on the Government, or involved it in any financial loss. Local governments would not have been compelled to do anything because the proposals were designed to be optional. They could not by any means have been called extravagant or just a fancy of the Opposition. They were based on experience in other areas and were easy to implement.

When the Government later woke up to the fact that it should not have rejected those proposals out of hand, it turned to those suggestions and said—not in so many words, of course—“some of the Opposition’s recommendations might have some merit”. The Government forgot the fact that we put forward those suggestions—they are recorded in *Hansard*—and we raised them outside the House. The Government suddenly said it would propose a differential rating which would go a long way towards ironing out the discrepancies between individual ratepayers. The Government saw the problem, apparently woke up to the solution, and wanted the credit for it.

The Government placed the then member for Mundaring in a quite unfair situation for a new member, for, having seen the merit of a differential rating and mentioned it in his maiden speech, he was then forced by the Government a day or two later to vote against our proposal for such a rating. That is the truth of the matter, and it is there for people to see.

Mr Carr: It is a pretty blatant misrepresentation of the whole situation.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not think so. Why is it so? I moved an amendment which would have en-

abled any local government authority on an optional basis to introduce a differential rating system which would have been subject to the Minister’s scrutiny.

Mr Carr: You are being unfair; you had nine years in Government and did nothing. You came into the House with a roughly worded amendment and put it on the Notice Paper one night and expected the Government to agree to it within 24 hours. We were handling a Bill brought here for specific purposes to meet a problem we wanted to deal with quickly.

Mr MENSAROS: I do not think that is the case. That is the old argument that when Governments change, nothing has been done about a certain situation.

The Minister knows that this situation—the problem of imbalance in rates—arises every three years, and it affects local government ratepayers more than in the intermediate periods, because that is when the revaluation is carried out. That occurred after the election. We were new in Opposition and members opposite were new in Government. The problem arose and we had to put our minds to dealing with it. An Opposition committee had prepared a report on this matter long before the amendment was put on the Notice Paper. That was not unknown to the Minister, who commented that he would examine it to see if it had any merit. It was not a question of the amendments being suddenly thrown at the Minister so that he could not make up his mind.

Mr Clarko: It was nearly two months.

Mr MENSAROS: Even if it were, the Minister could say—as Governments of the day often do—“I am not quite sure of the legal implications of this amendment; let me examine it and I might alter it in the other place”. That has not happened.

Regarding the rates for non-domestic properties particularly, the Government when in Opposition, promised not once, but untold times, in statements both inside and outside Parliament, in its policy speech, and in all sorts of reports, and also in instalments of its policy statement before the election, to change the rating system from a value-based system to a pay-for-use pay-for-service system. Just in case those promises went unnoticed—which would have been impossible—or are now denied, let me provide the House with documentary proof that those promises in fact were made. As far back as 17 July 1981 a newspaper article stated as follows—

The Opposition yesterday renewed its call for a full-scale inquiry into the operations of the Metropolitan Water Board.

The article goes on to talk about a pay-for-use system of water rates. On 11 August 1981, the then Opposition spokesman on water resources and present Premier was speaking particularly about small businesses and the way they were disadvantaged by the lack of a value-based rating system. He advocated a pay-for-use system, or a different system from that which applied at the time. He asked, "Why should big business be allowed extra water at the same rate as domestic consumers?" However, the same situation applies today.

A year later, on 13 May 1982, the now Premier, talking to the Bill to reorganise the then Metropolitan Water Board, and to create the Metropolitan Water Authority, advocated a change from the value-based rating system. Then we have the numerous Press statements and reports which have appeared on the subject. For example, on 24 January this year, the following appeared—

The Labor Party today promised . . .

To introduce pay-for-use water tariffs for industrial and commercial properties.

A few days later we saw the following article—

. . . a State Labor Government would . . .

Introduce a pay-for-use charging system for water supplied to industry and business.

On 30 January 1983, in a discussion of the then Opposition's policy, an article in *The Sunday Times* had this to say—

An investigation will be conducted into the Metropolitan Water Authority's operations.

Of course, that has not occurred. I could go on quoting statements which prove that the Government, when in Opposition, made firm promises to institute a pay-for-use system of rating. Not only has the Government not implemented such a system, but also—until recently—it discontinued the operations of the working party which I established as the then Minister to work with the Government in arriving at the new rating system.

I re-emphasise that the Opposition's complaint is not so much about the fact that something which needs consideration is not being immediately introduced, but about the way the Government virtually ignored its responsibilities when in Opposition in this place. Having made precise promises when in Opposition to implement a new rating system, with the strong implication the system would be introduced immediately it became the Government, the now Government is now backing down with all sorts of excuses. I note the Government recently arranged a meeting with the working party because apparently it could not

stem the criticism it was receiving from the business sector.

I repeat that this attitude is very bad for the parliamentary system and reflects equally on all parties within the system. The public will become used to the fact that, before an election, they will be presented with a number of promises by a supposedly responsible Opposition, but that once the Opposition becomes the Government, those promises are dismissed and dishonoured. That has been the experience of the public over this issue, because, as soon as the Labor Party became the Government of this State, it forgot about its promises to implement a new water rating system.

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion—

But we regret to advise your Excellency that the Government,

(1) despite its numerous undertakings when in Opposition, has omitted to ease the burden of the non-domestic sector of ratepayers and particularly small business as far as water, sewerage and drainage rates are concerned, beyond the measures prepared and already announced by the Opposition when in Government before the last election;

Mr I. F. Taylor: What a hypocritical amendment! You had nine years to do something about it.

Mr MENSAROS: My amendment continues—

(2) as far as local government rates are concerned, has decided not to accept Opposition suggestions by way of amendments to the Local Government Act to ameliorate excessive discrepancies in rate increases to individual ratepayers.

The SPEAKER: Order! Having perused the amendment, I find myself in some difficulty regarding paragraph (2) I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended from 3.58 to 4.10 p.m.

Amendment on the Amendment

Mr MENSAROS: Mr Speaker, I would like to seek your indulgence, knowing the problems that exist with the second paragraph of the amendment I have moved, to allow me to seek leave of the House to amend the amendment as follows—

That the second paragraph of the amendment be amended by deleting the words after the words "decided not to" down to and including the words "Local Government Act to".

The second paragraph would then read as follows—

- (2) as far as local government rates are concerned, has decided not to ameliorate excessive discrepancies in rate increases to individual ratepayers.

The SPEAKER: Order! Just by way of explanation to the House as some members were absent, I indicate that I had difficulty in accepting the second part of the amendment moved by the member for Floreat. After discussion, the member now seeks leave to make that change and I ask members, is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Debate (on amendment, as amended) Resumed

MR COURT (Nedlands) [4.12 p.m.]: I would like to second the amendment, as amended.

Prior to the recent election, the Labor Party made a big play about the terrific burden of water rates on the non-domestic sector, and particularly the effect of water, sewerage, and drainage rates on small business. The Labor Party drummed up a great deal of support amongst the small business sector, particularly the retail shopkeepers throughout the metropolitan area, where it pushed the message, "What you are paying is unfair and unjust. You support us and vote for us in the coming election and we will change it. We will introduce this pay-for-use scheme and lessen the burden".

Mr Tonkin: We said we would do this in one year?

Mr COURT: The Labor Party did not specify whether it would be done in one or two years. This call for a move to the pay-for-use scheme appealed to the retail sector, that sector being very vocal about the rates, and with just cause. However, I believe the retail sector has been sold down the drain.

Since coming to power, this Government has not taken the direction which it said it was going to take. The Minister has stalled for time in the introduction of a pay-for-use scheme by establishing a working party which has virtually duplicated the work just completed by a working party established by the previous Government. I believe the Labor Party's working party has just met for the first time; is that correct?

Mr Tonkin: Well, not just met.

Mr COURT: In August?

Mr Tonkin: Yes, that is right. This is September.

Mr COURT: It is a working party made up of representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the Independent Retailers Association, the Small Business Advisory Service Ltd., the Retail Traders Association, and the WA Shopping Centre Retailers Association, and Mr Don Rowe, one of the advisers that the Government has appointed. I think Mr Rowe is actually called the Government's consultant on media services.

This particular working party is looking into the water rating system.

As we heard just then, the Minister is trying to backtrack by saying that his party did not claim it would bring in this system straightaway. In the material the ALP put out before the election, it said that it would introduce a pay-for-use scheme.

Mr Tonkin: So we will.

Mr COURT: That is something that is easier said than done.

Mr Tonkin: That is right.

Mr COURT: This matter was debated in the House last year when the then Minister made it clear that the Government was moving towards such a scheme, but that it involved very many steps.

Mr Tonkin: We are doing it much faster than you ever moved.

Mr COURT: That is not correct.

Mr Tonkin: It is true—we are moving much faster.

Mr COURT: The Minister is now trying to make a few excuses as to why the Government has not moved in that area. I shall read from his Press release of 8 July in which he said—

The effect of an immediate change away from valuation based rates and charges would be completely unacceptable for many businesses and this was recognised by the working party in its report.

That is the previous working party. To continue—

Swift changes will only lead to dislocations. A system built up over the best part of a century cannot be undone in a day. While we, as a Government, recognise the benefits of a pay-for-service/pay-for-use system of charging, the practicalities of implementation are such that it must be phased in gradually.

In other words, he falls back onto the position that it is a good idea, but we will have to hang on for a little while.

Mr Tonkin: We have already started to introduce it this year.

Mr Mensaros: We made this announcement and you took credit for it.

Mr Tonkin: Get away! We have gone much further than you.

Mr Mensaros: We announced it and you took the credit for it.

Mr Tonkin: We have gone much further than you—millions of dollars further.

Mr COURT: The Minister does not have a proper knowledge of the working operations of the Metropolitan Water Authority. We can talk to the Minister about door-to-door salesmen and he says he knows a great deal; we can talk to the Minister about electoral changes and he certainly knew a lot about them today! However, we have heard very little about the MWA from the present Minister.

It is interesting that the Minister, when he first took over the portfolio of Water Resources, was not aware that the MWA was a self-funding operation. He thought it was a drain on the funds of Consolidated Revenue. I hope he has since been educated.

Mr Tonkin: When did I say that?

Mr COURT: I said that, when the Minister first took over the portfolio of Water Resources, he was not aware of the funding operations of the MWA.

Mr Tonkin: What makes you say that?

Mr COURT: I just mention it. Is it not true?

Mr Tonkin: Of course it isn't true.

Mr COURT: Okay.

Mr Tonkin: You just make up things! Come on! A little truth in this place. I don't ask for much.

Mr COURT: The Minister does not yet understand that the large increases in water rates paid by the business sector make it very difficult for that sector which is trying to operate in a climate of recession.

Mr Tonkin: Most businessmen have had a reduction in their water rates as a result of our actions.

Mr COURT: Many of them have had very large increases.

Mr Tonkin: Some have; but the majority have had reductions.

Mr COURT: Is the Minister saying that the majority of businessmen have had a reduction in their water rates?

Mr Tonkin: That is right.

Mr COURT: I would certainly like evidence of that.

Mr Tonkin: Okay. You ask me a question and I will get all the facts and figures. I like to educate you young fellows. I like to help you young fellows.

Mr COURT: Is the Minister saying the domestic sector also has had a reduction in its water bills this year?

Mr Tonkin: No.

Mr COURT: The Minister has done nothing to alleviate the anomalies which have been created by this valuation-based system—anomalies of which he was made very aware before the election. I know that in what used to be the Nedlands electorate, the Claremont shopkeepers had many problems and now they are very ably represented by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. These people have met with us again and they are concerned that their water rates have increased considerably once more this year.

As the Minister should be aware, retailers tend to operate in high value areas and the manufacturing sector tends to operate in low value areas. However, the manufacturing sector, in most cases, is the largest user of water, sewerage, and drainage services. Therefore, retailers are paying too much.

Many retailers to whom I have spoken in recent months in Claremont, Subiaco, and Nedlands, are concerned that it is difficult for them to budget for their water rates bearing in mind the large revaluations which occur. Those large revaluations have certainly occurred in the Nedlands electorate and, indeed, in many other electorates.

The Minister must answer many questions and I look forward to receiving the answer to the question about the business sector's enjoying cuts in its water rates.

However, does the Minister intend the percentages paid by the domestic and commercial sectors to remain the same or does he intend to change them? If a pay-for-use scheme is introduced, the retail sector's water rates will be reduced considerably. Has the Minister conducted negotiations with representatives from the manufacturing sector to ensure it is aware it could well be paying considerably more? It is one thing for the Minister to say the retail sector will pay less, but he must make the manufacturing sector aware that it could well pay considerably more by way of water rates. I should like to think that consultation takes place there.

The introduction of a pay-for-use scheme in the domestic area will be interesting, because if one

looks at the simple way in which this matter is listed in the Labor Party's policy document, one sees it appears to mean wealthy people in suburbs such as Nedlands could pay the same rates as those paid by people in some of the outlying suburbs. It would be interesting to hear the Minister's policy on that aspect.

Before the last election, it was simple and convenient for the then Opposition to cry, "We will introduce a pay-for-use system". However, now it is in Government, it is spending its first year finding out what happens in the MWA and it is buying time by establishing a working party to look into ways that a pay-for-use scheme might be introduced.

As the Minister is well aware, the previous Government was a long way down the track towards introducing its pay-for-use system and that impetus should be kept up.

Mr Tonkin: It had nine years!

Mr COURT: The system should not be pushed to one side by the Government's stalling tactics.

I turn now to the second part of the amendment which relates to local government rates. We have seen another debacle on the part of the Government. It was obvious that the new valuations produced in some metropolitan and country areas would show considerable movement. Several months before they were announced, it was easy to predict problems would occur.

As members know, the Opposition pre-empted the situation and issued a report. We realised many anomalies would be created by these changes in valuations. The major recommendations in the report related to the phasing in of new valuations, the application of an upper limit on the amount of increase, and the optional introduction of differential rating.

When the Government introduced its Bill in this regard, the phasing in of rates was dealt with. As the previous speaker outlined, the Government rejected the Opposition's recommendations and the amendments it sought to introduce. The interesting aspect here is that not one member of the Government, other than the Minister who introduced the Bill, spoke on the measure or the amendments. They all sat very quiet.

Mr Carr: Wasn't that the usual procedure during the nine years you were in Government? Wasn't debate normally carried on by the Minister with other minimal contributions from members?

Mr COURT: On such an issue which was obviously going to create and, indeed, had already created considerable problems among different

authorities, it would have been quite normal for members other than the Minister to speak. One would have expected the member for Joondalup and like members to explain the problems being experienced by their constituents. I would have thought that before the Bill came into the House, it would have been agreed in the party room to introduce other provisions along with the phasing in of rates to try to solve some of those problems.

Mr Carr: You don't have a very good memory of the time you were in Government, do you?

Mr COURT: I spent only one year in Government, so I do not have the experience of the Minister.

The Minister for Water Resources will remember that when we were debating the issue I simply referred to the problems of the people in Nedlands—the people on fixed incomes and pensions who were caught up in this circle of large increases in valuations on their properties.

We saw many examples of rates increasing in one year from several hundred dollars to \$1 000 and, in one case, from \$1 000 to \$3 000. Many members thought that was a problem unique to the Nedlands area, but, as we know, it is a problem common throughout the metropolitan area and in country centres where revaluations have occurred.

The week after we debated this measure in the House, it was interesting to see the hullabaloo which arose in areas such as Wanneroo where many anomalies cropped up. We saw a case of an 81-year-old Marmion woman who experienced a 240 per cent increase in her rates; another case in the Wanneroo Shire related to people who were paying rates of more than \$900 for a modest, two-bedroomed house; and so it goes on.

It is interesting to think that the members for Whitford and Joondalup might have attended some of the public meetings which were held and at which people expressed their concern about these increased rates. A report by Jim Maher appeared in the *Daily News* of 25 August—that was just after we had debated the measure—which read, in part, as follows—

The irony of course, is that the rate issue can be resolved only by the government, through legislation allowing councils to strike differential rates for suburbs. This week, the government rejected such a suggestion of the opposition.

Not a word was said during the debate which indicated the Government intended to face up to those problems.

It is too late now. Once the measure has been passed through Parliament, people must wait until it is dealt with again. Country shires have also been faced with some serious problems. Some of them conduct revaluations approximately only every seven years and, when this occurs, anomalies crop up.

Two examples were brought to my attention. One related to the abattoir operating in the Northam Shire and the other concerned the Katanning Shire where just last week people were saying they had been faced with big problems because of large increases in their rates.

Unfortunately, many of the councils have taken what I consider to be the easy way out of this problem by saying, "We are going to hit a few people very hard within a particular area". For example, in my electorate in the Dalkeith ward, people have been hit with these very substantial increases, whereas, in the rest of the council area, very slight increases have occurred and in some cases people have had their rates decreased. The Government should have made it possible for these councils to strike fair rates in these areas.

In conclusion, I indicate that the Labor Party has been less than honest in its policy on water rates. It did not say it would alleviate the situation in two or three years; it indicated clearly it would introduce a pay-for-use system. However, the Government has stalled on this issue and established another working party which is duplicating the good work which had been done already. I am not saying the working party is continuing to do good work; it is duplicating work which had been done already.

In regard to local government rates, the Government has certainly failed to stop the severe anomalies which have arisen this year as a result of substantial changes in valuations throughout the metropolitan area and in many country centres. The Minister should be aware that some of the country centres, which have not had a revaluation for five, six, or seven years, are becoming very concerned, because they are not too sure what will happen when revaluations take place in the next year or so.

I support the amendment, as amended.

MR TONKIN (Morley-Swan—Minister for Water Resources) [4.29 p.m.]: It is quite remarkable that a party which has been nine years in Government now suddenly condemns the present Government because, in six months, it has not pulled down the edifice which was built up over the past century.

Mr Mensaros: It is not because of that. I said that three times. It is because you promised and did not do it.

Mr TONKIN: We have promised to move towards a pay-for-use system and certainly we have moved in that direction. The previous Minister for Water Resources instituted a working party on this matter, and for that I congratulate him. I thought it was a good idea, so I used it and, of course, improved on it. In improving on it, I widened its scope, and it recommended no increase in total rates from the non-residential sector, and the halving of the water allowance.

When the recommendations came to me from that working party and from the Metropolitan Water Authority, I said that they did not go far enough. It must be remembered that by our going as far as that we did more than the previous Government did in nine years. Is it not amazing to find that the people who had the opportunity to change things, the people who had the numbers in both Houses, did so little in the nine years they were in office? Nevertheless, the then Minister for Water Resources had belatedly started to do something, and there was the possibility that something positive would happen if the Liberal Party was returned to Government.

As I have said, the recommendation was for no increase in total rates in the non-residential sector; and I went further by insisting on a 2.6 per cent reduction.

Mr Mensaros: We announced an eight to 10 per cent reduction in real terms, and that is what you have, if you halve the allowance for the non-residential sector.

Mr TONKIN: What about the payment of rates?

Mr Mensaros: Remember that you didn't call on this recommendation until about six months after you were in Government. We called before that.

Mr TONKIN: I had the advantage of the working papers. The recommendation was for no increase in rates in total for the non-residential sector, and I insisted on a reduction of 2.6 per cent. That took place as a result of the actions of this Government. If we relate that reduction to real terms, to allow for inflation, we see that there was a reduction of eight to 10 per cent. I am not aware of any sector of the community which has had relief of that nature.

Mr Mensaros: If you look at our Press statement, you will see that we announced an eight to 10 per cent reduction.

Mr TONKIN: When did the then Government announce that?

Mr Mensaros: It would have been just before the election.

Mr TONKIN: Was that reduction in money terms?

Mr Mensaros: It related to the additional income of those business people, which was to be used in the basic rate—the cent rate in the dollar.

Mr TONKIN: That is what we did, which was a movement towards a pay-for-use system.

Possibly Opposition members think other people are stupid, but they did say that I should have been able to control the price of goods manufactured in Victoria or I should have said before the election that I could not control those goods. We were told that we should have said to the electorate that there was section 92 of the Federal Constitution and that certain other constraints apply to the control of prices. If we referred to the law in detail, we would have had to have a document of hundreds of pages. Those points were understood. We did not say there would be pay-for-use immediately, and there will not be. We will move further towards it next year. If we were to move towards it straightaway, there would be an immediate impact upon 15 per cent of non-residential users, the people who use large amounts of water, and their increased costs would be passed on to consumers. Enormous increases in costs would occur, which is the dislocation to which I referred in the Press release quoted by the member for Nedlands. We cannot have a sudden rush into a new system.

As a result of the reduction in rates paid by non-residential users, which include the small business sector, the majority of non-residential users are paying less for their water in real terms. I have checked this personally with business people, and have had my officers provide reports of random checks to determine whether the reductions have operated in real terms.

Mr Mensaros: What was brought up all the time was this, if you can visualise it: You are a Minister, and business people come to you and say that they should pay rates according to their use, and, when you explain it to them, they say that the Opposition has said that it will immediately bring in pay-for-use if elected to Government.

Mr TONKIN: We did not say we would bring it in immediately.

Mr Mensaros: But that is what people said to us.

Mr TONKIN: One of the problems with politics is that people want to read things into state-

ments. If a Government becomes unpopular, as Governments often do, and the Opposition says that it will bring in a pay-for-use system, the people, because their wishes are farther to the thought, think that such a system will be brought in immediately. Prior to the last election, I was not the spokesman in this area, so I am not as familiar with it as I could be. The present Minister for Employment and Administrative Services was the Opposition spokesman on water resources. However, at no time did we say there would be an immediate adoption of the pay-for-use system. If businessmen went to the previous Minister for Water Resources and said they believed there would be an immediate change by a Labor Government, it would have been in his best interests to say to those business people that the Opposition at that time did not intend to bring in the system immediately.

Mr Mensaros: I think you will find that not many members approach matters more objectively than I do.

Mr TONKIN: I accept that.

Mr Mensaros: If you were in Opposition and had not been a Minister before, you would not have the same experience, although some people claim that they do. The point is that the public have a different impression, and it was the impression you gave them. It was not you personally, but the Opposition.

Mr Parker: The Minister is quite right. We never gave any indication that it would be implemented immediately our party became the Government, but we said it would be implemented as part of the normal process of Government.

Mr MacKinnon: What about the ads? Didn't you read the paper?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the House has the floor.

Mr TONKIN: The member for Murdoch scurries back to the sheet in front of him.

When the member for Floreat said that he is more objective than most members of the House, I agreed with him, but that is where the member for Murdoch is different from the member for Floreat. He has suggested that the ads in the paper said that pay-for-use would be brought in immediately, but they did not.

Mr MacKinnon: What did they say? I wasn't the spokesman.

Mr Mensaros: During the time you were in Opposition did you ever say anything which gave the impression that you would bring in the pay-for-use system during the full term of your Government?

Mr Pearce: During the term of a Government is the usual time for parties to implement their policies.

Mr TONKIN: In all honesty, I must put a caveat on that point also. I do not say there will be a complete pay-for-use system in the term of this Government.

Mr MacKinnon: Thank you.

Mr TONKIN: We have reduced the rate by 2.6 per cent this year, and I do not envisage that it will be a greater percentage next year, although I hope it will be greater. By that process, the rate will not be decreased by 100 per cent in three years.

We must consider also what the term "pay-for-use" means. It is not merely payment for water consumed. A person who has a tap installed, but does not use one drop of water, would not be required to pay one cent under that definition of the pay-for-use system. He must, however, pay for the facility, and the system is pay-for-service/pay-for-consumption. Perhaps the Cabinet will overrule me—which I would not mind—but I suggest we will not have a complete pay-for-use system in the life of this Government. It would be an enormous task to complete, and would cause the great dislocation to which I have referred.

We are moving towards pay-for-use; we have already taken big steps in that direction. Business people recently obtained a reduction in money terms, and I am not aware of any other sector, as I have said, which has had such a benefit. We would have liked the decrease to be more than, say, \$17 as it was in some cases, but we must realise we are dealing with an edifice which has existed for more than 100 years. If we tried to change it quickly by pulling out its foundation stones, we know what would happen—the whole thing would collapse. We have to move slowly in the right direction, and I reject the proposition that we have not taken proper steps in that direction.

The Government can be pleased with itself for taking these steps, even though they are small ones as a result of the nature of the present system. Perhaps next year we will have a reduction in the allowance, which will move again towards pay-for-use.

I remind members that I am commenting on only one part of this motion, the part which relates to my portfolio. Whatever the impression the public have of our moving towards the pay-for-use system this year, it is quite impossible for us to do so immediately. I have received abusive letters from some people in the electorate of the member for Nedlands to the effect that they will not pay

their rates because the Government, when in Opposition, promised pay-for-use. Remarks such as, "Why haven't you done it?" have been made, but people cannot expect an immediate move in this direction. In politics, people are naive, and Oppositions foster the belief that Governments can wave a magic wand to make everything fine, and that is a shame.

Mr Court: Is that what you did when you said you would bring in pay-for-use?

Mr TONKIN: No, I believe we said that the kind of aim we had—

Mr Court: You didn't put it like that.

Mr TONKIN: Any document by a political party, a document which says that when in Government that party will do something or other, should be considered in the light that the policy is a movement in a certain direction. If we had said that we would reduce the rates by a specific amount, such as 50 per cent in the first year, and we did not keep that specific promise, we could have been rightly criticised. Unfortunately, Labor Oppositions make the grievous mistake of being specific, whereas conservatives, generally, especially if we consider statements made by Mr Fraser and Sir Charles Court, make general statements. I remember that Sir Charles Court, at the end of one of his policy speeches, said "And another thing, we believe in the family". One would have thought the Labor Party had promised to abolish the family.

Mr Court: That was good stuff.

Mr TONKIN: It is good, cosmetic stuff—it means nothing.

Mr Court: Be honest. You said pay-for-use would be introduced, but you could have said that you would move towards it.

Mr TONKIN: Does the member have those words in front of him?

Mr Court: The document simply refers to the "pay-for-use water scheme".

Mr TONKIN: The Liberal Party says in its documents that it believes in democracy, but that is not true.

Mr Court: We have the most democratic State in the world.

Mr I. F. Taylor: What nonsense!

Mr Court: You name another State that is more democratic.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TONKIN: It is unfortunate that the public may have had the impression that we would do a certain thing within six months. It is unfortunate

that people sometimes wish that something will happen and, therefore, believe it will happen. I do not believe we ever said we would adopt this system immediately, and certainly we cannot. We have taken significant steps in that direction and we will continue to take those steps, but they will not be as great as we may hope.

MR TRETHOWAN (East Melville) [4.45 p.m.]: Anyone with any understanding of the question would not pretend it is easy to have an equitable system of revenue raising. It is normally a very complex task and is certainly a task which can be effectively approached only incrementally because it is very easy to overlook the anomalies that a change of an operative system can create. The advantage of moving incrementally is that the anomalies become slowly apparent and are much more easily corrected. This is one of the fundamental systems of Government in a western democracy.

It seems to me, particularly after the comments of the present Minister, that he now supports the introduction of an incremental change to the existing system. However, following his comments, I fail to see that he is really affecting the rate of internal change of that system beyond the scope of changes and directions announced by the previous Government before the last election. In fact, it appears that the current policy is perhaps largely following the lines that have already been established by the nature of the committee which has been reconvened to advise on the matter. There is very good reason for that because it is not easy to change an existing system without creating anomalies which will adversely affect individuals in society.

The fact remains that even though changes have commenced and are continuing in relation to water, sewerage, and drainage rates, those changes have not reduced the pressure that many individuals, particularly in the commercial sector, have been feeling for some time under the existing system.

The changes that were brought about by the previous Minister in the last Government were set in motion to alleviate pressures, but the pressures are still there and in hard economic times they are felt more keenly by people, particularly those in the small business sector. If things are difficult for one in business, it does not make much difference whether a small or large increase is imposed on what one considers to be an already high charge, that increase is still making it more difficult to survive in the competitive world in which one finds today. I believe many people in the small business sector of society were under the misapprehension that this Government, when it

attained office, would be able to wave a magic wand and change things overnight to alleviate the difficulties of people and particularly of those in the small retail sector. The fact is that anyone with any knowledge or commonsense should have explained to them that it is not possible for Governments to do this.

Mr Pearce: In fact, we did before the election. We did not make any promise of overnight cures.

Mr TRETHOWAN: The statements leading up to the election did not give that impression to the people in the marketplace. They had the impression that the Labor Party would be a super Government. The fact is that the Government has realised it is not possible to move more rapidly than, in fact, the previous Government had done. In reality, the stage had been set by the commonsense of the previous Minister and the steps he had taken some 12 to 18 months before the election.

It is very inequitable to change a system of rating. It is a difficult job for a Government and cannot be done quickly.

Mr Pearce: It was not hard to be fast because the previous Government was going backwards.

Mr TRETHOWAN: I inform the Minister for Education that the present Government has not moved any faster than the established plans of the previous Government would have led them—in fact, it has been moving more slowly.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Can you expect us to believe that?

Mr TRETHOWAN: It is a fact. The Government has reconvened the same committee to advise on the rating change. It is typical of the way this Government seeks to let down those people who had faith in it when voting for it. The Government cannot tell them and it did not tell them the truth before the election; that is, that it could not do these things. Instead, the Government created false impressions and now it has to find a way of rating people without facing up to the fact that it should have told them what the situation would be. The ALP did not define the realities—it did not say what it would be able to do in Government. The fact is that things can be done only slowly and they have to be done fairly and equitably.

Leaving that side of the argument, I would like to move to the area of local government rating. Over the last couple of weeks I have had brought to me a number of examples of the anomalies in the area of rating in the City of Melville which comprises a significant part of my electorate.

Several members interjected.

Mr TRETHOWAN: It has been only this year that the anomalies have occurred. Most of the anomalies that have occurred in my electorate have principally involved properties adjacent to the river. These properties have been subject to the largest increases in valuations following the current revaluation.

One of the most interesting facts about the City of Melville is that it has a relatively uniform and even valuation for residential lots. It has had one of the lowest consistent rates in the dollar compared with other authorities in this State which work on the GRV system.

The City of Melville has managed its finances extremely well in an endeavour not to place a burden on ratepayers. Movement towards higher valuations for properties close to the Swan River has given rise to the current anomalies which have shown in this year's rates. I would like to quote from a letter from one of my constituents who lives not on the river, but in a street adjacent to it. The letter deals with problems similar to those being encountered by many people in the area, and reads as follows—

I wish to draw your attention to the adverse effects of the current system of rating.

As a result of calculating annual rental value at 5% of unimproved value (in this case 5% of \$330 000) my municipal rates have increased from \$421.08 last year to \$1 065.90 this year. \$16 500, the assessed annual rental value is a rent value far beyond anything obtainable for this property, and the unimproved capital value is very dubious.

This property was built about 1938, and I have lived here for the last 23 or so years. I have not worked since 1969 as a result of illness, and no relief from these rates is available to me through any Pensions Act. Being on a fixed income these rates are punitive and will cause hardship.

I have appealed to the Valuer General against this current valuation. Revaluation is not the solution of the problem: better that the annual rental value should represent what is obtainable (and thus allow for the value of more favourable sites) and applied throughout the community, or else an equal rate applied to every property in the municipality as each property receives identical services.

To use 5% of unimproved value as a figure for annual rental value is a fiction, disguising what is, in essence, an indiscriminatory wealth tax.

I think that exemplifies the problem in which many people have found themselves. The assessed values of their properties have risen rapidly from one three-year period to the next and has placed many people in difficult financial situations. I believe this is a prime argument for the introduction of differential rating.

I consider that there is a very good argument for rate revenue to be split and that a proportion of the rate revenue paid by everyone within the municipality should be assessed on a direct service. This is already done in regard to garbage collection and I believe it should be carried forward to many other services which are spread through local authorities. I do not know what proportion would be most equitable, but I would say that at least 50 per cent of the annual rate revenue should be derived from charges for services. It would also reflect the use of the service in a particular situation. Where a business may have a larger demand or usage on a particular service supplied by a local authority, it is only equitable that that business should pay a larger proportion of the cost of that service than do those who do not use it to such a great extent.

At the same time, it is only equitable that the residual of the amount of money required to be raised by the local authority should be raised in a manner that represents an alleviation of the burden on those people without the capacity to pay, which, in fact, is somewhat similar to the argument put forward for the current system.

I do not believe that there is much equity in the adoption of a system which differentiates more than five or six times between that particular kind of charge and between the lowest level of rate in a local authority and the highest. It appears to me that once we get out of that ratio, the rate imposed on those people who pay high rates in the domestic sector is inequitable. The situation in the non-domestic sector could be argued on a different basis.

I believe the time is right for a reassessment of the way in which local governments raise their rate revenue and that we should look for a high proportion of that rate revenue to be based on the usage of the services that are provided by the local authority and also that a proportion should be based on a system which does alleviate the stresses placed on those people with a lower capacity to pay.

It seems to me that this is the way in which we should be moving because that would alleviate the kind of problem that is outlined in the letter I received from my constituent. I know that many others of my constituents find themselves in the

situation where, because of their geographical position, their property values have risen to such a degree that they pay significantly higher rates than do people in the next street, and people in the next street may pay rates similar to those of the majority of the rest of the community.

Mr Burkett: They should be able to pay a notional value to the value of that home for old age pensioners. All the while you are blaming this Government when your previous Ministers did nothing in nine years. When Wilson Tuckey was President of the Country Shire Councils Association, he had to accuse that Minister of being against local government.

Mr O'Connor: A good Minister, that.

Mr Burkett: Yes, when you had to intervene.

Mr TRETHOWAN: Anomalies that occurred in the metropolitan area, and especially those in my electorate which I am highlighting, arose only at the current revaluation. The escalation in property values occurred between the last valuation and this valuation—a period of three years. The problem was not apparent to these people until they received their rate notices less than two weeks ago.

Mr Carr: That is just not true.

Mr TRETHOWAN: From my constituent's point of view it was, because he was reasonably happy with his rates for the previous year. It was only when the rate notices on the new valuation came in that problems arose.

The city had to revise quite significantly the aggregate values provided by the Valuer General in order to achieve accurate values on which to base its rates. The first estimate was that the rates would be raised on an aggregate value of \$87 million, and that figure was provided by the Valuer General. When the city had adjusted the figure for anomalies, and with a realistic knowledge of the situation, the aggregate came to \$93 million. This meant that the city had to adjust its rate downward by 11.8 per cent to take account of that difference. Those kinds of anomalies exist in revaluations under the present system.

I maintain that it is not easy to change any revenue raising system, and that it needs to be done incrementally. Many of the valuations under the current situation establish a very good case to indicate that it is desirable to explore and implement a system of differential rating. In fact, in the local government area, a high proportion of local government revenue should be raised as direct charges for services used. I believe that a move towards that objective would increase the equity from the point of view of the individual ratepayers and reduce the kind of anomalous situ-

ations I have presented before members. Because of those facts, I support entirely the amendment, as amended.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [5.04 p.m.]: I wish to speak only to the second paragraph of this amendment which states that, as far as local government rates are concerned, the Government has decided not to do anything to ameliorate excessive discrepancies in rate increases to individual ratepayers. I must state very emphatically that, about May 1983, as soon as the horrendous consequences of the revaluations that took place after the present Government came to power became evident the Minister and the Government should have prepared amendments to the Act.

I want to respond to comment, properly made, which was to this effect: "Why did you not do something during your nine years in Government?" I could equally say, "Why did not the Tonkin Government do something in the period 1971-1974?" The reason that neither Government did anything to change the system of valuations was that the matter did not come to a head as it did this year. In western democracies, such a system of rating valuations has been in operation for about 400 years. During the years of the Liberal Government, we did not see photographs in newspapers such as this one I am holding up now. The photograph shows a lady in front of her house in Sorrento and she is holding up a notice which reads, "Rates \$950 a year—who can live here?" That situation did not apply in the past. The dramatic change in valuations and rate accounts has occurred this year.

Mr Burkett: Through no fault of the present Government. Now admit that.

Mr CLARKO: The point I am trying to make is that since the Labor Government came to power, it has had the time to amend the Local Government Act.

Mr Burkett: You did not do it in nine years, but we can do it in six months!

Mr CLARKO: The situation was different. I said that it came to a head this year. If the member likes to go back over the last three or four years—

Mr Burkett interjected.

Mr CLARKO: But it never happened to that extent. I do not say the system has been around in this State for 400 years, but it has been around for a very long time. The problem came to a head only after the member's Government came to power, and his Government has had the time to amend the Local Government Act. It has already amended that Act in regard to the one-third, and one-third basis for local government valuations.

So the Government had the opportunity to amend it, but it decided not to do so.

We introduced an amendment in this Chamber, under which we tried to control the maximum amount by which a council could put up its rates in any one year. This amendment would have given local government the option of adopting the system. However, the Government did not accept our amendment.

When I read in the *Wanneroo Times* that the member for Joondalup, the member for Whitford, and the Hon. Graham Edwards were trying to blame this increase on the previous Government, my response was, "Since you have been in Government, you have had the time to change it". In fact, the Government has amended the Local Government Act once, and that proves conclusively that it has had the time to amend it. The Government chose not to change the Act in this respect, but it did take up our recommendations in regard to revaluations through the one-third proportions.

As soon as it came to the notice of the Leader of the Opposition that there were dramatic alterations in rates in the Shire of Wanneroo, and particularly in Two Rocks, Marmion, and Sorrento, he immediately set up a committee. The member for Floreat and I were members of that committee as was the Hon. Peter Wells, and we met immediately.

Mrs Watkins: If your halo slips any further, it will cut off your air supply.

Mr CLARKO: The member for Joondalup and her two colleagues went around pretending to the ratepayers that the increases were not their fault. I am saying that the Government could change the Act, but that it did not do so. The member for Joondalup voted against the amendments which we put forward. Our amendments would have enabled councils to accept a maximum by which the rates could be put up. We also suggested a system of quarterly payments. The Minister said, quite properly, that there was no need to amend the Act to allow the rates to be paid quarterly, or to allow benefits for early payments, as that could be done now. However, I forecast that one day something like those provisions will be written into the Local Government Act and then large numbers of local authorities will adopt such a system of quarterly payments, early payment benefits, and payment on time with no impost.

The Minister said there was not time to implement such changes, but that is nonsense. There was time to implement the change embodied in the Government's legislation, so the arguments of members of the Government fall rather flat.

Members opposite deliberately voted against our amendments, and that fact is recorded in *Hansard*. If members opposite like, I will post copies of that voting list to all their constituents. They voted against our amendment which would have limited the increase in rates and they cannot wriggle off the hook now. I will ensure that everyone in their electorates knows what they did. It is no good these members being sympathetic to their constituents now.

Mr Parker: You acknowledged yourself during the debate that there were deficiencies in the amendment you put forward.

Mr CLARKO: I did not.

Mr Parker: The member for Floreat did.

Mr CLARKO: I think what he said was that he met with the private members' parliamentary draftsman who framed an amendment. The member for Floreat moved his amendment and said that he would be happy if the Minister wished to change it as long as it had the same effect. The Government simply rejected it.

When this problem came up, we acted with proper speed, but the Government did not act at all. Government members voted against what we were proposing; I suppose they were afraid that we had a sensible recommendation, and we did have.

This problem was first brought to notice by the Hon. Peter Wells—it came to a head in the Shire of Wanneroo particularly. We met with the President of the Shire of Wanneroo, with the shire clerk, and with some of the shire's treasury officials and discussed the matter. I wrote to each one of the 139 local authorities in Western Australia advising them that we had set up this particular committee and we asked for any response. We called for suggestions and, after receiving a letter from the Mayor of Canning, we met with him and certain of his councillors. By mid-July the Mensaros committee had brought forward a series of recommendations, but the Government chose to adopt only one of them. It could have adopted several, if not all of them.

The present system based on property values, a system to which I am justly opposed, is revealing tremendous inequities. It is causing problems particularly to those people who live in areas which are considered to be favourably sited. Property valuations are especially high if one has attractive views, and, particularly, attractive views of the ocean. Presumably a view of a swamp is not so favourably regarded unless the swamp is cleared.

It is grossly unfair that the cost of running a municipality should be transferred from one group of people to another. Friends of mine have

lived in Floreat Park since just after the war. This year the rate for their property was about \$50 less than the rate last year. This couple's son lives at City Beach, and I presume he is paying \$50 or \$100 more in rates. It is a foolish system, as the former Mayor of the City of Stirling knows.

When properties in the City of Stirling were last revalued, the values in certain wards went up by at least twice as much as they should have done, and yet the owners of some properties in other wards paid less in rates than they had the previous year. That is a very foolish system, and one which should not be supported by any Government.

Mr Burkett: And every time recommendations went forward particularly in the past five years, through the Local Government Association, they were rejected by the Ministers of the day who said that the present system was okay and everyone—and particularly if you lived out there in a beautiful location—knew we could get a galloping hike through the valuations and revaluations which are no fault of the present Government. You were one person who sympathised with the local government authorities to change the system, but the Ministers in your Government of the day would not accept it because they were opposed to change. So nine years versus six months, and no-one gave more sympathy to local government than you, but your Ministers would not listen to you.

Mr CLARKO: I came to this Parliament in 1974. In 1975 the Keall committee of inquiry was set up and about 1980 the McCusker committee of inquiry was set up.

Mr Parker: And what happened?

Mr CLARKO: Those two recommending bodies felt they were involved in a Pandora's box situation. This was because they never faced up to the fact that we should move away from the system based on valuations of property to a situation which gives a charge per equal property. In the City of Stirling, for example, throughout the residential areas one might charge equal properties \$200 for each property; and then the remaining charges would be based on the user-pays principle. In the City of Stirling, rubbish is handled in that way; but many municipalities do not have a separate rubbish charge. In effect, the people on the more valuable properties are paying some sort of extra moiety in terms of their rubbish bin removal.

We should have a system under which a figure such as \$200 per equivalent property is paid, and the rest should be charged on a user-pays basis. Until we have that system, we will always have

gross inequities. The greater the attenuation of property values in a particular authority, the more will this problem occur. I will be interested to see whether it is this Government or another one which decides to move away to a system like the one I have recommended; but until that is done, the problems will continue. The Government will continually be trying to close doors, take down hurdles, resolve problems, and patch up all the things within the present system of the funding of local government.

I will now deal specifically with the Minister's recommendation on the pilot scheme which, apparently, will include the municipalities of Mundaring and Swan, and perhaps one other. I see that as a political gimmick, to try to give Mr Gavan Troy the opportunity to win Mundaring next month.

Mr Davies: He does not need that.

Government members interjected.

Mr CLARKO: According to the judge, Mr Troy lost that election the last time, by three votes.

The situation is that a pilot scheme is not needed. In these days of computers, the Government does not need a council to put into practice for one year, two years, or three years, a different system of rating. Local governments do not need to have Mrs Smith pay more under the pilot scheme, and Mrs Brown pay less. All they need to do is to get in touch with a computer company and have it try each system on its computer. There is no need to have people taking dollars out of their pockets as if they were playing Monopoly. That is why it is a complete farce to talk about a pilot scheme.

Through the Department of Local Government, the Minister could choose any municipality in Western Australia and run the information through a computer, trying a host of systems. In fact, it is interesting that the former President of the Shire of Wanneroo (Mr Pearce) proposed 15 different systems from which a council could choose. I do not know whether 15 is an appropriate number; but what he was saying was that we should have a multiplicity of options so that responsible municipalities could decide whether to try scheme A, scheme B, or whatever. The constituents or ratepayers of the municipality could decide whether they liked a particular system.

Through the member for Floreat, we have continually worked on the basis of options. We have communicated with the local authorities, by way of the letter I wrote in June, and subsequently in July when I wrote enclosing a copy of the Mensaros report. We have been in contact with

councillors and officers; and we have urged them to look very carefully at a new system of collection of local government funds.

The present system assumes not only that the value of a property equates with the property holder's capacity to pay, but also that it is his responsibility or duty to pay that amount. In essence, when an officer of the Valuer General's Department goes to the municipalities on a three-yearly basis—I understand some are on a four-yearly-basis—he actually assesses a notional capital gain. In effect, a notional capital gains tax is applied. It is my view—my very carefully considered view—that it is primarily the responsibility of the Federal Government to apply income tax on a progressive scale, and that is the appropriate time to take more money from the people who allegedly have a greater capacity to pay for the affairs of the community. In my view, it is not the prime role of local government to redistribute income.

The Government failed last month; and it had had plenty of time before 31 August, when the rates were to be struck. It had more than six months after it came into office.

Mr Burkett: And your Government failed for nine years.

Mr CLARKO: The Government failed to do anything for the ratepayers of Western Australia. It is most noteworthy that in the Shire of Wanneroo, which is represented by the members for Joondalup and Whitford and the Legislative Council member, the members failed to support the introduction of any method to alleviate the position of the ratepayers.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I point out to the member that paragraph (2) of the amendment moved by the member for Floreat was amended by leave of the House so that subsequent speakers would not transgress Standing Order No. 125 which reads—

No Member shall allude to any debate of the same Session, upon a question or Bill not being then under discussion except by the indulgence of the House for personal explanations.

I point out to the member that on a number of occasions he has come very close to transgressing that Standing Order; and I ask him to consider his remarks for the remainder of the time he has left.

Mr CLARKO: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I take note of your comments.

It is a matter of grave concern that many ratepayers in the metropolitan area, at least, have re-

ceived very heavy accounts for local government rates which are placing on many of them a very heavy burden which I have tried to illustrate today is unfair and unjust.

It is easy for members opposite to talk about the nine years in which we did not do something. Even if I were to accept that argument and accept some responsibility for no action being taken, in no way does that excuse the present Government, or any successive Government, for not trying to take a course of action which will bring in a fairer system under which people will pay their rates.

Mr Burkett: Nor does it excuse your two previous Ministers for Local Government who would not listen to you when you were trying to get changes made.

Mr CLARKO: I am running out of time; but I must say that whether or not one takes account of that point, it is incumbent on the Government to take every step it can to bring into Western Australia a fairer system of collection of local government moneys. That is now the responsibility of members opposite. They are the Government and they have an opportunity to take steps in this regard.

The Minister has said that he will negotiate closely with local government authorities, both separately and by way of their associations, and I am sure he will do that. That is an important matter, and the Opposition will seek to do the same thing. We will communicate with the local government authorities, as we did in the past, so that in the earliest possible time span we can make the proper changes to ensure that the old, virtually feudal system of taking money from people who do not have the capacity to pay it, is changed. That would relieve the burden on some people who are paying, and is another reason for our not supporting any system of compulsory voting and full adult franchise in local government elections.

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Local Government) [5.24 p.m.]: I intend to speak fairly briefly and specifically in relation to paragraph (2) of the amendment before us. I would like to think I could introduce into the debate more rationality than we have heard in the last 20 minutes.

A tremendously ironic situation has been witnessed in the House this afternoon. We have had members of the former Government, who have had nine years in which to do something about the rating system of local government, coming in here and making efforts to criticise the performance of the Government during its six-month term of office. The simple truth is that in those six months

that we have been in Government, we have done more to ameliorate the circumstances of all rate-payers than the previous Government did in nine years. If we have done more in our six months than it did in nine years, that does not necessarily mean we have done much because, after all, when members opposite were in Government for nine years, they did absolutely and literally nothing.

It is ironical to have senior members of the Liberal Party coming here this afternoon, crying crocodile tears about the terrible situation the people face with the local government system presently in existence in this State which is causing serious problems.

Several members interjected.

Mr CARR: Of course I am concerned with the particular problems confronted by people; but let us not have the suggestion that the problems confronted by people now have not been confronted previously.

We saw the member for Karrinyup saying, "Look at this newspaper photograph showing somebody complaining about his rate bill". Has anyone ever seen a photo like that, with people complaining of rate bills in other years? Of course we have. We see that sort of thing every year—

Mr Clarko: Not to that extent.

Mr CARR: —and not necessarily in the same council area, either. However, every year a number of councils receive revaluations; and the revaluations highlight the disproportionate changes in the valuations of different properties. Certain people find themselves relatively better off, and some people find themselves relatively worse off and, in other cases, considerably worse off with their valuations. This has been the situation every year we have had a revaluation.

It may well be true that certain councils this year have faced a particular problem that they did not face for three or four years. I appreciate that point. However, we should not pretend that the problem is totally new.

The present Opposition was in Government for nine years. It is the party that set up or, at least, maintained a system that was in place at the commencement of this rating year, on 1 July this year. In those nine years, the former Government received a range of reports on the matter. Did that Government make one change or adopt one recommendation from any of the reports to improve the situation of people confronted with high rate values? Of course it did not. We know that, during the nine years, many seminars were held; and I am sure members will recall a particularly large seminar held at the Maylands Hotel some four or five years ago by the Country Shire

Councils Association, which was headed at the time by Mr Wilson Tuckey. Members will recall the large number of people present at that seminar, and the very strong arguments put forward in support of differential rating. The former Government, during its nine years, took no step towards introducing a measure arising out of the recommendations of that seminar.

In a moment I will state what we have done, what we are doing, and what we intend to do. We find the Opposition, which has moved the present amendment, had the opportunity to do something about this problem, but for nine years it did exactly nothing.

A range of representations were made to the Government during that time by the associations of local government authorities. Representations were made by individual councils and by other sources; and nothing happened. I am sure the shadow Minister for Education would be well aware that at a recent conference of the Local Government Association, when he put forward policy items, he was told, "Your ideas are very interesting. They are good", and so on: "but what did your Government do during the last nine years? You should have been doing something during that time".

Mr Clarko: That is not constructive. What is the point in referring to what didn't happen before?

MR CARR: I am trying to set the scene before I detail how much this Government has achieved; I am trying to contrast this with the pitiful performance of the previous Government, this hypocritical group of members opposite who complain about our doing only a certain number of things in six months. I make the point that they did nothing during the previous nine years.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr Speaker, I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of this day's sitting.

Leave granted.

Debate (on amendment to motion) thus adjourned.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: EIGHTH DAY

Amendment to Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Local Government) [7.30 p.m.]: In the five minutes before question time earlier today, I made the point as clearly as I could that a situation exists in local government rating in Western Australia which had been in place, and which was kept in place, during nine years of the previous Government. After this Government came to power earlier this year, the situation was that Parliament would not meet until some time in July and we were confronted with the fact that on 1 July, when the new rating year commenced, a system of rating would be in place. The Government was not keen to be excessively disruptive in a short period of time. After all, most of the councils wanted to set their rates early in July so they could receive payments and interest on those payments.

At the same time, we did not want completely to disregard the problem because of the particular difficulties faced by people in some areas where there had been considerable revaluations. That is why we spelt out clearly our intention to move quickly to do one simple thing which, if acted upon by councils, we believed would alleviate their position. It is a matter of some regret that not many councils waited to exercise the option available to them.

I want to spell out what the Government is doing with regard to the rating situation, and I point out that in contrast to its predecessor, the Government is taking positive and constructive action to deal with the problem. That action consists of two main thrusts.

We are looking first at a long-term strategy of assessing the whole system and considering whether a substantial change should be made. We are also looking at the shorter term and the fact that we have a system in place, and we are considering a number of measures that may ameliorate the problems in the existing system. Both these assessments are aimed at extending the range of options available to local government.

Members of the Opposition who spoke earlier quite rightly pointed out that the present system is very constricted and does not provide an extensive range of alternatives to local authorities. The main direction this Government is taking is in attempting to increase the number of options available to councils. In that context we are looking, on the one hand, at providing a system of differential rating which should become an option available to councils which choose to use it and, on the other hand, to maintaining the present system, but with a number of measures which can be used by councils to ameliorate the difficulties it involves.

Mr Laurance: That sounds terribly logical, but you are going around in circles. Will you look at the long term, the short term, or the medium term? Let us know what you are going to do.

Mr CARR: If the member will be patient, I will move on. Having set the general picture that we are looking at the long-term situation, I pointed out that, in the meantime, we are also looking at the short-term problems.

Mr Laurance: I thought you were going to leave it at that.

Mr CARR: The long-term view lies within the system of differential rating. Many sectors of local government have expressed a strong demand for such a system. At the same time, however, a fair amount of caution has been expressed by many people in local government as to how it would be implemented, and the implications if such a system were implemented.

The Government has announced it will be conducting a pilot study, which is intended to involve a small number of councils—perhaps three, four, or five—and also developing a model for differential rating; and then the model will be adopted on a trial basis.

Mr Clarko: Can I ask you—

Mr CARR: If the member for Karrinyup is about to ask me about the use of computers, I will come to that. I see the differential rating pilot study as having two phases. The first will be to take the information available, put it in the computer, and see the developments flowing from it. We would see how the rating system would provide rate assessments for particular properties. While it is fair to say this computer model probably will give a significant indication of how successful such a scheme is likely to be, it is essential that it be tried in practise with people receiving rate assessments which require them to pay an amount of money. That would occur before the scheme became available on a wholesale basis throughout the councils. I see that as phase two of the pilot study.

Mr Clarko: Why do you think it needs to be applied, rather than just do it? Why not have a numerical figure?

Mr CARR: I do not understand.

Mr Clarko: Why get people this year to pay rates of \$200, instead of \$210, and the persons next door to pay \$250 instead of \$290? Why not just work it out?

Mr CARR: It is one thing for us and the group of people who prepare the pilot study to say, "This is the range of assessments for the properties; it looks fairer and more reasonable than the

range under the previous system", and it is another thing for us to sit in our offices and decide the trial has been successful. It is important to gauge response to the system, and that will come when people receive notices, and we see how pleased they are, or whether they are screaming because they are not happy. It is a relatively minor difference between us.

The timetable I see is that work on the computer basis would be carried out during the next six months, and we would be looking then to phase two and trialling it in a number of councils. It would require an amendment of some form to the Act, probably in the first half of next year in plenty of time before 1 July. We announced that Gavan Troy would be the chairman, and the member for Karrinyup suggested it was a political move. I can understand his saying that if he wishes to make that sort of comment.

Mr Laurance: I can see you making that comment if the positions were reversed.

Mr CARR: Gavan Troy has been very involved in the issue of differential rating. He made representations to me about a pilot study while he was a councillor at Mundaring and he put forward some ideas as to how it could be undertaken.

Mr Laurance: We do not doubt his capacity or ability, but the timing.

Mr CARR: The member is entitled to his views. It is not meant to be a political exercise.

Mr Mensaros: When you talk about differential rating, do you consider only the horizontal differences—zones within a municipality—or also vertical differences such as between domestic, residential, and business ratepayers?

Mr CARR: Most of the suggestions put to me have been in terms of different land use within a council. At this stage, I would not want to close off various options that might be looked at. It is important as the scheme is trialled that as much opportunity should be available as possible to use councils in different situations—councils which use different rating systems, which have different make-ups in their areas, and which are programmed into different computer models. Groups of local authorities use various computer programmes, and we would seek to have a representative sample of those during the pilot study.

We intend to consult local government as much as possible, and the local government liaison committee met this morning and considerable discussion took place on this particular subject. While there is enthusiasm in local government circles for differential rating, there is also caution. They do not want something thrust upon them which they are not ready to appreciate. The idea

of consultation is in contrast to the situation earlier in the year when we were given 24 hours' notice to agree or disagree with a particular amendment. That vote should not be interpreted as disapproval of differential rating as a principle.

In relation to the amelioration of the existing system, I point out that the phasing in option has been dealt with in this Parliament. Interim rating has been announced and will be dealt with this session, as will be the question of the rating of mining tenements. I know these two matters are not related particularly to problems in the outer suburbs.

Mr Clarko: When will the mining tenements be dealt with?

Mr CARR: This session.

Mr Clarko: In the latter part?

Mr CARR: I am not sure of the exact timing, but it is intended the amendments be here before Christmas.

Through a committee in my department we also are looking closely at the questions of the maximum level of the minimum rate and the two-component rating system. In relation to the maximum minimum rate, we are looking not only at raising the maximum level of the minimum rate, but also perhaps taking the necessary provisions out of the Act and putting them in regulations so the rate can be upgraded each year in line with inflation. We are looking at urban farmland rating and the problems presented by the gross rental value system in relation to vacant property.

Many councils in the metropolitan region have urban areas which should be on a gross rental value as a more appropriate alternative to unimproved capital value, but they have not been prepared to move to the gross rental value system because of the difficulty in gaining a better return from a block of vacant land. We are also looking at a shandyng measure of gross rental value and unimproved capital value so that councils more readily could transfer from one system to the other. A council on UCV, which wishes to change to gross rental value over three years, may use two-thirds UCV and one-third GRV in the first year, one-third UCV and two-thirds GRV in the second year, and in the third year it could implement a gross rental value system of rates.

I appreciate that some members do not see that as an ideal system and I understand that, but nevertheless, it is generally agreed that gross rental value is a more appropriate rating system in urban areas.

I expect that a package of measures along the lines I have suggested is likely to be introduced in

April, in the autumn session next year, so they will be in place by 1 July.

The idea of ameliorating some of the difficulties with the present scheme will be looked at in the meantime while we are considering the question of differential rating on a long-term basis.

Mr Old interjected.

Mr CARR: That is one of the points that needs to be worked out—the extent of the freedom given to councils; also whether councils should be given complete freedom or should be subject to the Minister. That is the sort of detail that needs to be worked out during the study.

Mr Old: Problems occur if the council applies the differential rating in one area and not in another.

Mr CARR: The risk with differential rating is that if councils are given open slather, it is possible for one group of councils to impose a differential rate which could be completely unreasonable for a different section. Of course, the answer to that is that ratepayers may respond in the ballot box. However, a difficulty arises there and it needs to be addressed seriously.

Another point arises in relation to the two amendments moved by the Opposition a few weeks ago. We said those amendments did not need to be moved, because provisions existed in that regard in the Act already. That is the case, but, nevertheless, we shall send a circular to all councils to advise them of the powers contained in the Act for instalment ratings, and such like.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [7.46 p.m.]: I support this amendment. Prior to the tea suspension, some heated exchanges occurred. The amendment was brought here in good faith and was moved in an unemotional way by the member for Floreat who has had a great deal of experience in the two areas covered by it. The amendment refers to two different issues and I appreciate it was necessary for two different Ministers—the Minister for Water Resources and the Minister for Local Government—to respond to it. The first part of the amendment deals with water resources and the second part deals with local government rating. However, both of these matters are complex and although water resources and local government rating are two different issues, and are worlds apart, the problems that confront us in both these areas are very similar.

There has been a considerable amount of backslapping and *bonhomie* going on in the Government benches in the last few days. During question time this evening, the Minister for Transport was asked how many times he had been

to Bunbury in the last two weeks and he gave us a long talk about the number of occasions on which he had been to Bunbury.

Mr Evans: Your Minister for Transport was not bad at that, either.

Mr LAURANCE: I was not complaining about the time taken by the Minister—I just mentioned that in passing. I was simply saying it was an opportunity for him to expand on the wonderful job he was doing. We have seen a number of similar Dorothy Dix questions which give Ministers and Government members an opportunity to backslap and enjoy goodwill among themselves.

Mr Parker: You are the bloke who, in the Address-in-Reply debate last year, spent half an hour reading a Press release about the Year of the Tree.

Mr LAURANCE: It was very instructive, too.

Mr Old: It was very important.

Mr LAURANCE: I was very disappointed at the humorous way in which members opposite accepted my remarks and it was not until later that they realised the subject was important for Western Australia.

Mr Parker: The Year of the Tree was important, but your speech was of monumental inconsequence.

Mr LAURANCE: I turn now to the main thrust of my argument. We have heard expressions of goodwill being passed among members opposite. This amendment gives me an opportunity to make some complimentary remarks about its mover.

The member for Floreat has had a great deal of experience in both the areas about which we are talking; that is, local government and water rating. I pay a tribute to the member for Floreat for the work he has done in this regard. In his remarks, the member for Floreat indicated the whole question of rating has been a difficult one in his electorate, and that is certainly the case. All members of the House would know that, for historical reasons, problems have occurred in relation to rating in the coast ward of the City of Perth and the member for Floreat has had to bear the brunt of them. People have got pretty stropky, if I may use that term.

Mr Parker: And Independent candidates stood there.

Mr LAURANCE: That is true. None of us would appreciate that sort of pressure arising in our own electorates.

The member for Floreat obviously had some very practical reasons to become involved heavily in this subject, but he certainly did so with great

gusto and the results he has achieved and the assistance he has provided not only in the field of rating, but also in local government generally, are a great credit to him.

However, the member for Floreat has had successes as well as difficulties. This year, while the whole question of rating has been raging in the community, the coast ward ratepayers have had some relief. I am aware many coast ward ratepayers in the Perth City Council have enjoyed a reduction in rates this year and they are very happy. It is amazing how an issue goes away in an area where rates are reduced while everybody else's have increased.

I compliment the member for Floreat on his very close involvement in that area. He chaired an Opposition committee on rating and the way in which increases in rates can be limited. That committee worked very quickly, and the Government acknowledged the value of the work it did. I do not say the Opposition, along with the Government, did not try to gain some advantage in this regard, but at least members on this side of the House were up with the play in relation to that issue. The Opposition's committee worked quickly and well because members saw advantage in their doing so, and also as a result of the ability of the members of the committee in the area of local government generally in this State.

The member for Floreat and the other members of the committee are to be thanked by the community of this State for the work they did in that area and also for the fact that considerable benefits have flowed already from the decisions at which the committee arrived.

I turn now to water resources in which the member for Floreat has had considerable input over the years not only as Minister for Water Resources, but also as the person who pioneered the establishment of the Metropolitan Water Authority and piloted it through its early days.

The member for Floreat was Minister for Water Resources for three years during which time a great deal happened. I do not deny the people of this State the right to change the Government, but obviously many disappointments are experienced when that occurs. Apart from the personal disappointments experienced, I believe it was disappointing for this State that that Minister for Water Resources was removed at that stage.

A slanging match occurred earlier about who should have done what and as to how much one could do in nine years or six months. I do not want to traverse that ground again, but a number of things happened in the three-year period the member for Floreat was Minister for Water Re-

sources. He approached the issues affecting water rating very enthusiastically.

We knew the method of water rating caused problems. We knew that small business, in particular, was rather unhappy about the increases which had occurred in water rates. I shall say more about that in a moment, because it was only one of the issues which created difficulties. However, it was an issue the then Opposition latched onto and there seemed to be a continual round of increases in water rates as a result of which that particular section of industry was very unhappy. The member for Floreat dedicated himself to making improvements in that area.

In concluding my remarks about him, I indicate that history will record the excellent work he did with the State Energy Commission. Before he became the Minister in 1974, the SEC was a very discredited organisation. Other members on both sides of the Chamber who, like me, were on the Public Accounts Committee at that time—the member for Karrinyup was the chairman of the committee—would know that the committee investigated the activities of the SEC which was then called the State Electricity Commission.

Some of the evidence given to the Public Accounts Committee at that time indicated that the position in relation to the SEC was less than satisfactory. Therefore, it is reasonable to say it was a rather discredited organisation. However, in 1974 the member for Floreat became the Minister for Fuel and Energy and, in a six-year period, he changed that organisation dramatically into one of which the State can be very proud. The member for Floreat achieved that at a time when the State was facing tremendous challenges in the field of energy and he created an organisation which was well placed to meet those challenges.

I make that point, because I believe, given time, the member for Floreat would have been able to create a similar sort of organisation out of the MWA. Indeed, he went a long way towards establishing that body and he left a challenge for the current Minister for Water Resources who should continue the good work and set up an organisation which operates as efficiently as the SEC does today.

That will not be an easy task. When the member for Floreat took over the then Metropolitan Water Board, it was a very discredited organisation also. The present Government, then in Opposition, and the present Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, did a great deal to ensure the MWA was discredited. That action was taken by members opposite to further their own political ambitions and I must say they were fairly success-

ful and the present Premier was able to do that, because the MWB was a rather discredited organisation at that time. However, that position was changing while the member for Floreat held the Water Resources portfolio and I hope that continues.

Everybody who is in business, or who owns a property, is exposed to the necessity to pay shire rates, water rates, and other reasonable charges. Therefore, the problem is not caused by the need to pay those rates or imposts; rather the rate of increase in those charges causes difficulty. If rates are increased suddenly, the public will squeal. Ratepayers express very strong feelings when suddenly, as a result of a revaluation or for some other reason—if a shire just decides it will increase its rates—their shires substantially increase their rates.

If the expenses of a business go up, whether this is caused by increased water rates or any other increased charges, businessmen are very upset and vocal about it. Therefore, this amendment is not to do with the fact that people have to pay rates; it relates only to the fact that, in recent months, for a variety of reasons, water rates and local authority rates have increased substantially. In many ways, that is a matter for the Government to look at.

The Government made a promise to the people of this State that it would keep charges down. It said small businesses would be better off, domestic householders would be in a better position, interest rates and local government rates would go down, and it would be the answer to everyone's prayers. The Government made a tremendous number of promises.

Perhaps when the then Opposition made those promises, it did not expect to be in Government and was just casting a wide net. However, one of the things Oppositions do when they have just gone out of Government is to keep a record of the promises made by the previous Opposition. We are not arguing about the level of rates; we are arguing about the increases which have occurred this year. There is no point in the Government's saying its defence on the matter is that the issues are very complex and difficult, they have been examined for a long time, and the previous Government had years to do something about them. Everyone knows that; indeed, the Government knows it. The previous Government was doing its best to cope with all those difficulties when it was in power.

The Opposition was well aware of all the difficulties and complexities at that time. The point

we make is that did not stop the then Opposition's making all those promises.

All we are asking is that the Government wear the promises. The Government made the promises and it should wear them. It is of no use its saying, "Give us more time. It is not our fault. We did not create this situation". The public look only at the total amount they are asked to pay and that is substantially more than it was previously. The increases in water and local government rates are not isolated. They have come on top of the 16 per cent increase in electricity charges and some people who are forced to meet these increased rates are senior public servants whose capacity to pay them has suddenly been diminished.

It represents a compounding of the problems; this broken promise comes on top of a host of broken promises by this Government. The people are concerned and are complaining about the compounding effect of these broken promises; they are critical of this Government because it said that not only would it be the answer to high water rates and other problems, but also it would keep charges down.

This Government's record is pathetic in the short time it has been in office. We do not say we could have done more in Government or that this Government has not done enough in the months it has been in office; we have brought this amendment forward to put light on the Government's statements when in Opposition that it would be the answer to all our problems. The then Opposition said that it would answer all the problems of the poor, suffering ratepayers, including householders and small businesses. But of course, it has not been the answer. We want to highlight the disillusionment of electors and the fact that this Government had wooed small business by saying that everything would be all right. The people voted for the ALP, but everything has not been all right.

It is the Opposition's job to remind the Government about these broken promises and to remind the people of this State what this Government has done. The amendment relates to this Government's credibility—that is what it is all about. It relates to what this Government has said it would do and what it has done.

I intended to refer to the Government's shadow Minister for Local Government, but that would be unfair, although he did refer to the Opposition's transport spokesman. I acknowledge that the member for Scarborough has had long experience in local government and he was correct in being involved in the debate by way of

interjection, but I suggest he should take a more active role in the debate by getting to his feet.

The Minister for Water Resources and the Minister for Local Government have said that the Government has encountered certain difficulties and that it will do certain things about those difficulties. The Minister for Water Resources said that we cannot expect the Government to solve those difficulties in five minutes—that the Government has been here for only six months. He said also that the Government will move towards a pay-for-use system, but that the people cannot be guaranteed that system even in the life of this Parliament. Surely when in Opposition, members opposite should have said that they would only move towards this system; but that is not what they did. They said to the electorate, "You vote for us and you will get a pay-for-use system, and all the problems for small business people will be solved". The people were told that, if they voted for the ALP, they would be in the land of milk and honey, but unfortunately that has been not been the case.

Small business people are disillusioned by this Government, especially when one considers payroll tax, to which I will refer during the Budget debate. This Premier, this defender of small business, sent out letters even today to small businesses to involve them more in the need to pay payroll tax. Under this Government workers' compensation payments will increase; already, electricity charges have increased by 16 per cent and water and drainage charges have increased substantially. Some businesses have to pay a 100 per cent increase in their gas accounts. We have already witnessed a litany—I like that word—of broken promises.

They said payroll tax would be abolished, but the Government is reaping in the last dollar it can from payroll tax. I will bring to the Parliament evidence of that when we get to the Budget.

It is true that last year small business people were under financial pressure, and left the then Government because they were clutching at straws. However, they got a Government that has quickly lost credibility and cannot provide the solutions it promised.

It is no use the Minister for Local Government and his colleague, the Minister for Water Resources, talking about medium and long-term solutions. We did all the work to prepare for a change in the system. The Minister for Local Government says that he will carry out computer studies. Of course, such studies are the in-thing these days. He said also that he will consider differential rating. He knows that the problems as-

sociated with differential rating are horrendous and that maybe we will never go down that track. I know that certain aspects of differential rating are attractive, although, as the Minister believes, they will not be the panacea for local government.

Mr Parker: Do you believe we should have implemented it in the first six months of office?

Mr LAURANCE: No, but the people are waiting for this Government to perform as it said it would. The people were told that, if they voted for the ALP, they would get all these benefits, but the benefits are not here.

Mr MacKinnon: At the time, the Government said it had 20 000 jobs identified.

Several members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: I cannot get a word in anywhere. I support the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 17

Mr Blaikie	Mr MacKinnon
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Mr Court	Mr Spriggs
Dr Dadour	Mr Trethowan
Mr Grayden	Mr Tubby
Mr Hassell	Mr Watt
Mr Peter Jones	Mr Williams
Mr Laurance	

(Teller)

Noes 22

Mr Barnett	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bateman	Mr Tom Jones
Mrs Beggs	Mr McIver
Mr Bridge	Mr Parker
Mr Bryce	Mr Pearce
Mrs Buchanan	Mr Read
Mr Burkett	Mr P. J. Smith
Mr Carr	Mr A. D. Taylor
Mr Evans	Mr I. F. Taylor
Mr Grill	Mrs Watkins
Mr Hodge	Mr Gordon Hill

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Rushton	Mr Tonkin
Mr Crane	Mr Brian Burke
Mr O'Connor	Mrs Henderson
Mr Coyne	Mr Wilson
Mr McNee	Mr Terry Burke
Mr Thompson	Mr Bertram

Amendment thus negated.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

DR DADOUR (Subiaco) [8.10 p.m.]: The Government has called for suggestions from the public for a replacement promotional name for the State. The present name is "State of Excitement". The State should be known as the "State of Plenty". I will enumerate the number of "plenties" this State has so that members will know I am not that far off target. We have plenty

of politicians, balderdash, rubbish, advisers, pettiness, increases in service charges, wastage, hand-outs, insincerity, mistakes, jobs for the boys, untruths, etc., bad decisions, broken promises—

Mr Pearce: We have done a good job for your electorate.

Mr I. F. Taylor: We have plenty of rubbish here.

Dr DADOUR: I am not referring to the Government alone. I ask Government members not to break my train of thought because it would not look good in *Hansard*.

Mr Parker: Do you want it printed?

Dr DADOUR: We have plenty of power seeking, exaggeration—

Mr I. F. Taylor: Sir Charles Court all over again.

Dr DADOUR: —unemployment, non-incentives, perks, Government taxes, Government cars, restrictions, union unrest, misdirection, QANGOs, unnecessary demands, nothing that is good and wholesome, and theft. We could easily say that this State is the "State of Plenty".

A new medical scheme to be known as Medicare will be introduced on 1 February 1984, which will represent the sixth major change to health care since the Whitlam Government produced the first version of Medibank in 1975. Each change has been harder to work out.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Who made all the changes? It was Fraser.

Dr DADOUR: The Whitlam Government made a few changes, and other changes were made by Liberal Governments. Members opposite may be under the misapprehension that I am throwing dirt at them, but I am merely trying to be honest. If they are thin-skinned I cannot do much about that.

We must work out whether we should maintain private health insurance. Each time changes occur to our health care with the introduction of new schemes, we find ourselves in more trouble; the system becomes more complex. The proposed system for February next year will cause a one per cent levy to be imposed on taxable income with a ceiling on incomes of more than \$70 000 a year, which may be either single incomes or combined family incomes. Exemptions are available to people who earn less than \$120 a week; for one person with one dependant, the exemption applies to those people who earn \$199 a week or less; for each additional dependant the amount can increase by \$20. I ask: What other categories of people will be exempted? At the moment, war widows and totally and permanently incapacitated

people receive free medical treatment, but most of those people would earn more than \$120 a week. I suggest that they may have to pay the one per cent levy when this version of Medibank is introduced. When the original Medibank was taken out in, I think, 1980, its running cost was equal to a 2.5 per cent levy on taxable income.

Mr Laurance: Does that mean that eventually we will be paying not one per cent, but 2½ per cent?

Dr DADOUR: We will be paying more than that.

Mr Parker: Do you have some basis for that statement?

Dr DADOUR: I do have some basis for that statement and will advise the House accordingly at a later stage.

The introduction of Medicare on top of existing medical and hospital costs will result in a one per cent levy. The one per cent levy is for the provision of Medicare and for nothing else. When Medicare is first introduced, I believe that the one per cent levy will not be sufficient—the levy will grow and grow. As I understand it, Medicare will equal the cost of Medibank plus an extra \$8 million per year to fund a fraud squad. That is the thinking of the super architects of Medicare. They are thinking of fraud and will spend \$8 million in the first year to detect it.

What will Medicare give the average person? The one per cent levy will cover 85 per cent of a doctor's scheduled fee and free public hospital treatment. It will cover no more and no less. Those people who wish to retain private insurance will be able to insure only for private hospital treatment and some ancillary benefits that have not yet been named. We will not be able to insure for the 15 per cent gap—the difference between what the Government pays and what the doctor charges will be borne by the patient.

The Federal Government predicts that 50 per cent of the population will maintain private health insurance cover. In my opinion that is optimistic, but if it is true, 50 per cent of those people now holding health insurance will not retain it. These people will compete with the chronically ill and the socially disadvantaged for hospital service.

At present the chronically ill and the socially disadvantaged have a right to hospital services, but with the introduction of Medicare they will have to compete with other people.

Hospitals are under a strain presently because of extra costs, and Medicare will increase that strain. The Federal Government has stated that the public hospitals, because of Medicare, can ex-

pect a 10 per cent increase in patients. This would mean that public hospitals will have to find 120 beds per day to cover the increase. I believe that the 10 per cent estimate is rubbish and it is not half of what the increase will be. Initially, it will be over 20 per cent and this will mean that public hospitals will need 240 beds per day. This additional burden will be borne by the taxpayer.

I remind members I have said already that people cannot insure for the 15 per cent gap. It is unlike Medibank because under that system we were permitted to have private insurance cover for that gap. All we will be able to insure for is private hospital cover and the choice of our own doctor for hospital treatment. A person will be permitted to have his own doctor treat him in a public hospital provided that doctor has access to beds in that hospital. No general practitioners have access to beds in teaching hospitals which means a patient cannot have his own doctor look after him in a teaching hospital.

The public hospitals will not be able to cope with the increased demand and the waiting list for elective surgery will become longer. Patients will be compelled to wait longer for all except urgent surgery. This has occurred in Britain where many people have taken out private insurance to have surgery and, after the surgery, they have reverted to the old system.

It is a fact that doctors in private practice work longer hours than doctors employed in the hospital system. When Medicare is introduced, the number of salaried doctors in hospitals will increase, but their workloads will not. Generally, they will not exert themselves because there is no incentive.

Mr Parker: Who will not exert themselves? That is one of the most outrageous statements I have ever heard.

Dr DADOUR: It is a known fact; it occurred when Medibank was introduced so I suggest the Minister should not be funny about it.

Mr Parker: I am not being funny about it, I am being serious.

Dr DADOUR: I spoke last week to a doctor who had retired as a specialist in private practice and who now works 2½ sessions per week in a teaching hospital. He does not do a quarter of the work that he used to do and he receives \$400 a week.

Mr Parker: You were talking about permanent employees.

Dr DADOUR: I am talking about part-time and full-time employees. If the incentive is taken away, the will to work so hard is taken away.

Mr Parker: I do not believe that.

Dr DADOUR: I have experienced this situation and I know.

Mr Parker: I have seen a bit of it myself—but perhaps from a different angle. Full-time employees at teaching hospitals work long hours and they are dedicated. They work harder than most specialists who drop in to see their patients, who pay \$40 to \$50 for that privilege.

Dr DADOUR: I am talking about those who do not exert themselves.

Mr Parker: You are casting aspersions.

Dr DADOUR: I know what I am talking about.

The only time one will find a resident doctor who works hard is when that doctor wants to gain experience. If he does not want to work no-one can make him.

Mr Bryce: A lot of people enjoy their profession in the same way as members in this Chamber derive satisfaction from their profession. They work hard to do so.

Dr DADOUR: I am saying it slowly destroys a person to work under another system.

Mr Parker: That is a different question.

Dr DADOUR: The Minister should ask the back-benchers how slowly they are being destroyed; he is being pedantic.

Mr Parker: I am not being pedantic.

Dr DADOUR: I can take the Minister to some of the hospitals and show him those people who do not work as hard as those doctors in private enterprise. The Government wants to destroy private enterprise and that is what Medicare is about to do.

Mr Parker: I do not want to destroy them and neither will Medicare.

Dr DADOUR: It will succeed in destroying them.

Mr Parker: You are casting a slur on valuable members of this community.

Dr DADOUR: I will leave the Minister alone.

If there is a fall-off of more than 10 per cent in the private sector, many of the private hospitals will have to close down and this will be tragic. Let us look at the cost per bed per day in hospitals. Private hospitals charge \$130 per bed per day; public non-teaching hospitals charge \$170 a day; public teaching hospitals charge somewhere in the vicinity of \$300 per day, and a bed in intensive care could cost anything in the vicinity of \$500 to \$1 000 a day. If we consider 240 beds at \$170 per

day we realise a considerable sum of money is involved.

Let us look at the schedule of fees. A standard consultation by a general practitioner is \$11.60—I do not know many doctors who charge that amount, many of them charge \$12 to \$14 depending on how good they think they are. The Medicare repayment would be \$9.50. A standard general practitioner visit costs \$18 and the Medicare repayment would be \$15.30. A consultation by a specialist would cost \$35 and the Medicare repayment would be \$29 and a subsequent consultation would be \$17.80 with the Medicare refund at \$15.50. For ante-natal care, confinement, and post-natal care, the charge by a general practitioner is \$154 of which the Medicare repayment is \$144. For the same treatment by a specialist, the charge is \$192 and the Medicare repayment is \$182. For a tonsilectomy and adenoidectomy, the charge by a general practitioner is \$86 with the Medicare repayment being \$76. A specialist would charge \$110 for the same treatment and the Medicare repayment would be \$100.

The reason there is no provision for 15 per cent gap insurance is to force or pressure the doctor into bulkbilling. I presume that members understand the term "bulkbilling". That is where a doctor directly bills the Government for a consultation or procedure. Many patients will shop around until they find a doctor who will bulkbill. Doctors will be reluctant to bulkbill as it will cause a reduction in their incomes. It is interesting that in the future more and more medical services will be bulkbilled at the patient's request and the Government will be able to monitor doctors' incomes. I suggest that doctors will not remain in private practices as they do now. We will have a new type of doctor who will be a salaried doctor. There is no doubt that many doctors will find their incomes greatly reduced as a result of Medicare.

Fifty per cent of the people who have private insurance cover at the moment are covered for 100 per cent of a doctor's scheduled fee. This will no longer be permitted and a great incentive for those people to hold private insurance will be removed. I estimate that many of these people will opt out of private insurance and this will place a bigger strain on the Medicare scheme. Under the present scheme, the system is policed by the patient. A doctor cannot charge a patient for two consultations when there was only one—it is just not on. The patient would certainly see that the doctor was not paid. The patient will not be responsible for policing the fee when Medicare is introduced. The system will lend itself to fraud, as

did Medibank. Under the bulkbilling arrangement, there is no real way of policing the system. It is an open-ended system that lends itself to fraud.

The way this is done at the moment is that every now and then the Commonwealth Health Department monitors the number of pensioners seen by each general practitioner. The number of pensioner visits per year are added up and divided by the number of different pensioners seen by that doctor. That then is compared with the average for the area. If a doctor is out of kilter with the average for the area, he is soon told about it. It is easy to be out of kilter if one practises a type of medicine slightly different from some of the others. Some other doctors are not happy to see pensioners, and most certainly they will not visit pensioners in their homes when they become too ill to attend the surgery. So the workload is left to the few people willing to do these chores.

The system at the moment of detecting whether a doctor is overservicing is just not good enough, particularly considering the type of patient some doctor is compelled to see and to minister to in what he believes is a humane way. On some occasions doctors do not charge pensioners because they fear they may be in trouble for overservicing. This is a real fear at the moment and it has been so for some time. Medicare will add to the doctor's burden. There is nothing like the patients to keep the doctor honest, and nothing like the doctors to keep patients honest—these two things seem to work in harmony.

It will not be until the actual scheme is introduced that we will see what will and will not happen. We will then be able to ascertain problems in many other areas. Medicare will place a strain on doctor-patient relationships. The patients will be looking to bulkbilling and the doctor will be reluctant to do that. This will place a strain on the relationship.

The Court Government came to office in 1974, and very early in its term I said that good government was essential, and the only way we could have good government was to clean up our own backyard, get our priorities in order, and eliminate the vast wastage in Government spending. If we do not clean up our own backyards, it is not possible to have good government and good housekeeping. I say the same to this Government: I do not know how the Government is to do it because it has become more difficult now than it was then. I warned members about what would happen in the public hospital system, and after about five or six years of constant battering on that theme, most of the members came to me and said, "We did not believe you, but you were

right". The rot is there and I do not envy the present Minister his task of trying to undo some of the problems. A succession of Governments have poured money into the public hospital system, far above and beyond what I believe was reasonable. The problem exists mainly in administration. Members will notice that there are more and more administrators in lay areas, in medical areas, and in nursing. This is one aspect the Government should be looking at, and looking at very hard.

Just to digress for a moment, when I was at the Royal Perth Hospital, a time and motion inquiry was held. I can remember one of the time and motion people studying the work of the orderlies. A call came in for an orderly to pick up a parcel from Fauldings. The orderly knew that the package was no bigger than a cigarette box so he took out a three-ton truck to pick it up. He waited until lunch time, and then attempted to park in Murray Street to pick up the package. He drove around the block three or four times, finally found an empty parking bay, went into the building and got the package. He then proceeded back to the hospital, having taken more than an hour to do the chore. Time and motion studies do not work because it is so easy for the people carrying them out to be deceived. Problems occur when this type of thing happens in many areas.

When the screws were put on the various hospitals, it was noticed that certain workers were the ones to be dismissed. The people working at Princess Margaret Hospital realised that the cleaners were the ones to be dismissed. This happened quite recently, and the hospital became quite filthy. Some of the other hospitals played the same little trick.

As I say, the Minister for Health has a problem. I can only advise him of areas where I think he can take steps to improve the situation. The other area the Minister should be looking at is the new categories in the hospital system. These categories were decided upon by the public health inspector and they should be looked at very closely. The Minister should decide whether these categories should ever have been passed at all—were they necessary. There is a build up in every area, and the problem becomes worse and worse. If the Minister decides to retrench people, he will increase unemployment, so he is in a fix, and it is a fix I do not think he can get out of. So I cannot see good government coming, but Medicare may save him in that he will get more Federal funds.

Our public hospital system is still spending about \$120 million a year more than the hospitals in our sister States. Taking into account our population, distance, and everything else, we still spend

over \$100 million more than the other States in their hospital systems. What is wrong with our hospital system? I started to ask questions, and the first thing I got back was the sort of answer I received from the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services. He got a bit emotive about my question.

Mr Parker: Who got emotive?

Dr DADOUR: The Minister misunderstood what I was saying.

Mr Parker: I understood it perfectly well.

Dr DADOUR: The Minister found himself in more trouble than enough. Patients in the teaching hospital beds are treated *par excellence*, and we know what that means. It does cost a lot—we are talking about a lot of money. The money probably is going into many hidden areas and we will never determine these areas unless we hold a comparative inquiry based on a similar hospital in, say, Victoria. It would have to be a hospital with a similar number of beds, a similar turnover, and performing similar surgery. That is the only way to determine where we are losing money.

We are very lavish with our hospitals. When the new podium block was opened at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital I stated that the passageway was big enough to take four doubledecker buses. I was told it would take only three, but I did not know there were four storeys, all above ground with similar passageways, and a few others below ground. When I asked, "Why the lavishness?" I was told that if there was a war or a calamity, wards could be put into this area. So the die is cast.

Since I first started to talk about the building of hospitals in Western Australia, some \$400 million has been spent. So, that means over \$400 million has been spent on hospitals while I have been in this Parliament. I am not referring to the cost involved in running the hospitals, but just in building them. Surely there is something wrong somewhere. We just seem to flounder and everyone looks at the problem and says, "It is too big for us". As I say, I do not envy the Minister for Health his problems. I do not know how he will get around those problems because more and more demands are made. The Minister dare not retrench one worker because he will increase the unemployment rate if he does so. We are moving further and further into the quagmire.

I would like to comment on the indecent haste of the present Government in increasing the service charges after the promise had been given that no such increases would be implemented. The election promise contained no proviso about a deficit; it was just a promise that no increases

would occur. Well, it occurred with indecent haste. The Premier told us about the increases, but he did so with good timing because the next day he showed us how he intended to rob the rich to give to the poor. The Government coffers were to receive the money which was to be taken away from the public servants. I believe that if the Government had a mandate of any magnitude it was that there would be no increase in public service charges.

That promise was broken with indecent haste, and that is where the Government cut its own throat. We have heard a lot about the deficit, but it has been proved now that there was no deficit.

Mr Evans: Come off it, Tom.

Dr DADOUR: The short-term money market would make up the shortfall. If there was a deficit it was made up twofold by the new taxation on cigarettes and tobacco. That will reap \$20 to \$30 million and more than pay for any shortfall.

The Government believes that it has a mandate to introduce electoral reform, but electoral reform was never a big issue in the mind of anyone except Government members. Joe Blow in the street knows nothing about it. The only mandate this Government has would expose it to AIDS.

I have played around with a poem I learnt when I was in the Navy. This poem was known as *The Lovers' Alphabet*, and I have changed it sufficiently to make it decent. The poem refers to the Premier and Joe Citizen. I am not much of a poet, but I have tried to put it together to express the situation. If I may just read out this poem, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: As long as it does not reflect adversely on members.

Dr DADOUR: I do not think it does, Mr Speaker. It reads as follows—

A is the artful words the Premier uses.

B is the Blush as Joe gently refuses.

C is the Creep of his hand into Joe's cheque book.

D is 'Don't' as he at Joe's bank balance to look.

E is the eager hand creeping higher.

F is the feeling of urgent desire.

G is the groan as Joe's fob pocket he touches.

H is the helpless way Joe falls into his clutches.

I is the itch as the Premier gets all hot.

J is the jump as he reaches his fob pocket spot.

K is the unkindness the Premier rewards him.

L is the lack of love the Premier shows towards him.

M is the attempted move of Joe out of the state.

N is the nastiness Joe receives of late.

O is the open bank balance now revealed.

P is for Plenty of Joe's money Peeled.

Q is the queerness Joe feels about him.

R is the rapture the Premier gets from him.

S is the shout as he calls Joe a fool.

T is the trouncing when the Premier loses his cool.

U is the union movement all powerful and expanding.

V is the vastness of union fees demanding.

W is the wish to do Joe in again.

X is the extent of the Premier's Pleasure & Joe's Pain.

Y is the yearning to get more taxes every day.

Z is the zeal that carried it away.

I thought it would be acceptable.

Mr Parker: At least you did not try to sing it.

Dr DADOUR: One does not sing that verse. I will give the Minister the original version later, if he has not heard it.

They are the points I wanted to bring forward. Medicare will confuse the people greatly. By the time they are used to it, we will probably have a change in the Federal Government and we will move into another type of health scheme. Each time, we move closer to a socialist type of scheme.

This is not any good. The scheme we had before Medibank was introduced was a much better one. It was one of the best schemes in the world. It was ruined by the socialistic actions of the Government of the day.

Health care is costing us more and more. This State alone spends more than 25 per cent of its total expenditure on health, and more than 25 per cent on education. More than 50 per cent of the total State expenditure is absorbed in those areas. What incentive is given in other areas? Those areas already have the funds earmarked. The Government is hooked on those areas for that amount of money, and the other areas of government will not receive a fair share. That is the tragedy of it.

The money I am talking about is mainly absorbed by the teaching hospitals. There is too much emphasis on the super specialties. We go too far with them. We have just over one million people in the State, and we do more than 800 open heart operations a year. The numbers seem to be growing. Each one of those patients is in hospital for about three weeks. The investigations are carried out for about a week, and then the patient is in hospital for two weeks after the cardiac surgery. With 800 people having operations and staying three weeks in hospital, how many beds are occupied a year? That would be about 40 or 50 beds. Here we are looking at 50 of the *par excellence* beds costing anything from \$300 to \$1 000 a day each. The cost of the time spent in intensive care depends on the number of tests done in that time. When the results of the tests are returned, if they are normal the doctor says, "I don't think they should be normal, so I will repeat them". Some of those tests cost in excess of \$250.

This is the sort of thing that happens. This is part of the *par excellence* service; but the doctors are not infallible. None of us is infallible. We all have our areas in which we are wanting. This is where the problems lie.

As a State we should be giving consideration to these problems. Sir George Bedbrook was a little rough when he spoke about the number of staff in the hospitals. He went a little bit too far, because he did not try to comprehend the problem totally. When we were in Government, we were faced with the same problem as the present Government is facing in trying to be fair about these matters. I cannot see how we can overcome the problem, especially with Medicare being introduced.

Medicare will come in with more Commonwealth money; then the Federal Government will provide more funds and we will be committed to a Medicare type of health scheme. The Government's funds will be squeezed.

How much do we receive from royalties each year? Is it about \$80 million from our iron ore and mineral royalties? That would not even put the top layer on our hospital system. Therefore, we find ourselves with increased State taxation.

This is not the way to run the State. The State should be run properly, effectively, and efficiently. I challenge the Government. I give it the chance to show exactly what it is going to do. I am dying to get my eyes on the Budget to see exactly where the money will be allocated, and what the Government will do. I want to see what money will be provided for the hospitals, and how much more wastage there will be. As I said, since

I have been here, over \$400 million has been put into building the hospitals. That is the kind of money that has been spent on the monoliths that are costing us a fortune to run. We do not seem to comprehend the problem, so we should leave it alone.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [8.51 p.m.]: I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that other members wish to address you during the debate on the Address-in-Reply.

I wish to deal with some matters that come within my responsibility as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and as a shadow Minister. The first point I wish to raise falls within the area of administrative services in a general sense, but more particularly relating to the sports-culture instant lotteries. A few days ago, on Monday, 12 September, an announcement appeared in *The West Australian* headed "Lottery Funds to help TV Bid". The Minister for the Arts issues grants from the moneys provided for the purpose, but the Act is within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services, as I understand it.

Mr Parker: The Act is, but the distribution of the funds is within the discretion of the Minister for Sport and Recreation and the Minister for the Arts, as the case may be.

MR HASSELL: That is my very point. I assure the Minister that he had better take heed of what I am saying, because the Act is within his jurisdiction.

Mr Parker: That is true.

MR HASSELL: The announcement in *The West Australian* read as follows—

The State Government will give \$33 500 to help gain a public television station licence for WA.

The money will come from instant lottery funds.

The Minister for the Arts and Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs, Mr Davies, said yesterday that Public Television (WA) Inc. would use the grant for programme development and detailed engineering studies.

The organisation has worked for several years towards establishing a public television station in Perth. Its board includes representatives of ethnic, cultural, sporting and other community organisations.

Mr Davies said the Government fully supported public broadcasting and believed in a diversity of ownership and control in the WA media.

I have a copy of the Minister's Press release of 11 September. This is his own statement, not a newspaper report of it and it reads as follows—

The State Government has agreed to grant \$33 500 to assist in an application to set up a public television station in Perth.

It continues—

The organisation would use the grant to carry out detailed engineering studies and programme development for an application for a public television station licence.

That is the precise purpose of the grant, as stated by the Minister. In the newspaper report, as in the Press release, reference is made to the grant being made from instant lottery funds to Public Television (WA) Inc. I suggest that the Minister had better check with the Crown Law Department as to whether what he is doing is lawful because, on the information I have available to me, I doubt that it is.

Mr Bryce: Which Minister?

Mr HASSELL: The Act is within the administration of the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services, but the funds are distributed from the instant lottery by the Minister for the Arts. The grant was announced by the Minister for the Arts.

I suggest that the grant may not be lawful. I am quite serious in saying that.

Mr Evans: On what grounds?

Mr HASSELL: I will come to that and deal with it in great detail.

I am not here to make wild accusations, and I am not here to attack the grantees of the funds. I hope that the grant has not been made, because on my reading of the law, I do not believe it is an acceptable grant. The Minister ought to check it before it proceeds, and he ought to check it carefully.

Tonight, during question time, I asked the Minister if he knew whether the group to which he had promised the money was yet incorporated. Of course, I do not have a *Hansard* transcript of the Minister's response, but clearly it was to the effect that he did not know whether the body in question was incorporated.

Mr Parker: I do not know whether it is or not; but there is no requirement under the legislation for the grants to be made to incorporated bodies.

Mr HASSELL: That may be so but—

Mr Parker: I remember that a former Minister for Cultural Affairs and Recreation gave money to the Narrogin jigsaw club.

Mr HASSELL: I assure the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services that his colleague announced that the grant was to an incorporated body. So far as I know—so far as my investigations have shown, and I have not conducted them personally—the body in question is not incorporated. Here we have a grant of \$33 500 being made from public funds raised in the lotteries—money that would otherwise be available for cultural activities—to a body the legal status of which is not clear.

Perhaps the body is incorporated; perhaps it is in the process of being incorporated. However, it certainly is not incorporated, so far as I have been able to ascertain from the public record. The Minister who is giving \$33 500 of public funds to that body did not know whether it was incorporated.

I further asked the Minister whether he had taken advice from the Crown Law Department or any competent legal authority about whether the proposed grant to that body could be made lawfully in terms of the provisions of the Lotteries (Control) Act relating to the disbursement of moneys gained on the instant lotteries. Again, the Minister's reply was not direct. He did not say that he had taken advice, and he did not say that he had not. However, it was clear, by implication, that he had taken no advice. He said almost exactly what the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services just said by way of interjection. The Minister for the Arts said, "It is completely within the discretion of the Minister to decide to whom he will give the money". That is not the case. That is not the law. The Parliament did not confer on the Minister an unlimited discretion as to the granting of moneys. Clearly it would be quite unlawful for those moneys to be granted, for example, to the Australian Labor Party for political purposes.

Mr Parker: It has never been suggested that it should be.

Mr HASSELL: No, it has not. I am taking an example to show the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services that a limitation is placed on the power of the Minister for the Arts to make grants.

Mr Parker: I can assure you he is well aware of that, because on several occasions he has discussed with me certain types of organisations that might be given a grant and Crown Law advice has been obtained in relation to them.

Mr HASSELL: So the Minister now acknowledges that there is a limit; both Ministers have said tonight that it is completely within the discretion of the Minister.

Mr Parker: It was within his discretion rather than mine; but it is within the scope of the Act.

Mr HASSELL: Quite so, and that leads me to comment on the Act. Section 9 of the Lotteries (Control) Act was amended in 1982 to authorise the conduct of Instant Lotteries. It provided for a system under which the moneys received from Instant Lotteries could be dispersed. Section 9(1a) provides that the commission, at intervals not exceeding one year and as the Treasurer directs, is to pay certain moneys to the hospital fund and other moneys to the Treasury account to be called the "Sports-Culture Instant Lottery Account". Section 9(1b) says—

(1b) Whenever moneys are paid into and placed to the credit of the Account under subsection (1a), the Minister shall forthwith cause those moneys to be paid out of the Account and—

(a) half of those moneys to be paid to the Minister for Recreation, who shall distribute that half in such proportions as he thinks fit among bodies engaged in the conduct of sport; and

I interrupt the quote to say that it can be seen that clearly there is a legal limitation on the disbursement of those moneys by the Minister for Sport and Recreation. He may distribute them among groups engaged in the conduct of sport. That has a very real legal meaning.

Mr Parker: And, again, the Government is aware of that. There have been some problems with some very valuable groups in the recreational area which might have been funded, but, because of advice received from the Crown Law Department, we have been unable to provide them with funds.

Mr HASSELL: I cannot remember the problem areas. Was one the playing of chess?

Mr Parker: Chess or birdwatching—ornithology.

Mr HASSELL: It was perfectly legitimate, but it was not within the Act.

Mr Parker: That is right.

Mr HASSELL: It was questionable and the Government had to pull back from making a grant for that reason. So there we have the sporting side of the issue.

Section 9(1b) continues—

(b) half of those moneys to be paid to the Minister for Cultural Affairs, who shall distribute that half in such proportions as he thinks fit among bodies engaged in the conduct of cultural activities, in the State.

Let us go back to what the Minister said on Sunday when he announced this grant. He said, "The grant is \$33 500 to assist in an application to set up a public television station in Perth". One might argue whether a television station is at any time a cultural activity within the meaning of that subsection.

Mr Parker: Some of the current ones could not be so described.

Mr HASSELL: I do not mean it in the derogatory sense the Minister is implying, but in the sense of the legal meaning of the Act which controls his colleague. The conduct of a television station is not of itself a cultural activity. A television station may indeed conduct many cultural activities. It may produce plays and all sorts of things that could be described as cultural, but if a television station were taking a live telecast of a football match, would that be a cultural activity? It would in fact be an electronic distribution of a picture and a commentary of a sporting activity. That is the broad issue.

The problem the Minister has is much greater than that, because he has not granted the money to a television station anyway; he has granted it to a group who may or may not be incorporated to "assist an application to set up a public television station in Perth". It was never contemplated that sports-culture Instant Lottery moneys would be used for such an activity; it is outside the scope of the Act.

I come back to the point that, in my opinion, the Minister's proposed grant is not lawful and cannot be made within the terms of the Act. If the Minister does not want to get himself into a serious problem—because it is serious to disburse public moneys without the authority of a Statute of this Parliament—he had better check this matter properly. He brushed it aside when I asked a question of him tonight; but he cannot afford to brush it aside any more now that I have explained very clearly the problem he has. What is clear to me is that an application to set up a public television station is not of itself either a cultural or a sporting activity.

I come back to an even broader issue; that is, whether the proposed television station is a proposition which should be supported by the State Government, given that the Government says it supports public television generally and diversity of media control.

I will not argue about that. I think some of the Government's propositions in respect of the media are very questionable, but I do not want to debate

that. I want to debate this particular grant to this particular applicant.

As far as I am concerned, the beginning was when the promoters of this public television station were active last year. Approaches were made to me, to other members, and to other Ministers about the possibility of establishing such a station. Clearly at that time the Government was not in a position to provide aid and it had no basis upon which it could have provided such aid any more than the present Government has, in my view. However, let us put it on the record that those promoters, if they are the ones I believe they are, started some time ago. The promoters were seeking support from a whole range of groups in the community—some social, some cultural, and some political. The promoters wanted all these groups to come in with this proposal for a public television station. Their proposal was to use the excellent facilities at Murdoch University as a base for that television station.

To take the matter further down the track, and bearing in mind I have just mentioned that we were approached about this, I indicate that a few weeks ago "Nationwide" showed a report about the possibility of this public television station being established. My recollection of that programme—I do not have a transcript and I have made no attempt to obtain one—is that the clear conclusion was reached from the various comments that the public television proposal could not succeed or would not be likely to succeed standing on its own two feet. Indeed, my advice is that that is correct. The cost of operating such a public channel without the support of advertising would be very much greater than any reasonable income it could expect to generate.

Mr Parker: It happens a lot in America and in Italy on the same basis.

Mr HASSELL: They have very much larger populations to support them.

Mr Parker: In many cases they are small communities.

Mr HASSELL: Some are supported commercially, which is not the proposal here. Under the rules relating to public television here, this station would not and could not be supported commercially.

Mr Parker: True, but it could attract funds in all sorts of different ways as I understand the general rules that apply to public television stations. The question in terms of improving the cultural amenity of the community is very substantial.

Mr HASSELL: That is understandable, although I would debate what the Minister believes to be the cultural amenity of the com-

munity, but I will not do so tonight because that is not my point. My point is that there is every possibility that, should this application succeed, the total burden of conducting the public television station will be on the public—the taxpayers—because it is unlikely that that television station, should it succeed, will get any support other than taxpayer funding support. That is clearly established by the fact that the Minister has made, or has said he will make, this grant. I sincerely hope for his sake he has not made it, because the group, well-meaning as it is—and I do not make any criticism of it—has not been able to get sufficient support even to apply for the licence. It has had to seek a grant from the State Government out of the sports-culture Instant Lottery moneys so that it has enough money to apply for the licence.

I conclude my remarks on this matter by summarising the points I have made. Firstly, the Minister has an urgent need to seek legal advice about whether he can make the grant; secondly, even if it were an operating television station, he could not within the Act make a grant to the station, although he might be able to make a grant to it for a particular cultural activity; thirdly, he cannot lawfully make a grant to that station from the sports-culture Instant Lottery moneys for the purpose of the group making application for a licence; fourthly, the Government has a responsibility to question the ultimate viability of the station in the event that an application for a licence is made or is granted. If the Government does not question that viability, it may have wasted this part of the funds on an application for something which will be no more than a burden on the community, and the taxpayer in particular. I leave it to the Minister, but I think he had better move on it before he gets himself into strife. If my opinion of the law is wrong, I will be the first to withdraw, but I do not think it is that far out.

The second area I want to deal with tonight is that of employment, undoubtedly the most important issue in the community, undoubtedly the issue on which the last election was fought and on which this Government was elected, and undoubtedly in regard to which it has a great responsibility. I do not want to harp on the programmes that we were conducting as though they were the only programmes that could be conducted, and go through a whole lot of things from the past. I want to make some points about the job bank programme and what it meant as opposed to what we have now and what is being done now. The job bank programme was ambitious. It might have been criticised for being too ambitious, but it was

a genuine attempt by a State Government to do something about this very serious problem of unemployment. It was introduced at the same time as the State Government appointed for the first-time a Minister for Employment and Administrative Services and established a Ministry of Employment.

Mr Parker: Only in a very general sense. In technical terms he did, but that is about all he did.

Mr HASSELL: I am interested to hear the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services make that remark, because that issue is one on which I am going to challenge him and his Government. I am going to do that in the sequence in which I want to follow this through. The job bank scheme was a \$251 million programme for public works. We drew together the threads of a number of public works programmes and put them under the umbrella of a job bank and we brought forward a number of public works projects which otherwise would have occurred further down the track. The misfortune of job bank was that the media had in many respects decided that the Government of the State was going to change and they were going to hold up the debate, so they materially assisted in the then Opposition's attempt to discredit job bank. Indeed, the then Opposition so well succeeded in discrediting job bank as a deliberate election ploy—

Mr Barnett: That was fortunate.

Mr HASSELL: —that when it was elected to Government it was compelled to abandon the programme despite its good features.

Mr Parker: There was nothing to the programme. When we came into Government we did not discover anything to abandon.

Mr HASSELL: The \$251 million job bank programme has been replaced by some employment creating schemes which have now been revealed in their true light by the latest announcements of the Minister, based on the idea of the Government being out for what might be described in many cases, perhaps not most cases, as welfare-type jobs.

Mr Parker: What do you mean, welfare-type jobs?

Mr HASSELL: I will come back to it. The job bank programme embraced a major public works effort to provide employment and stimulation of the private sector, directed towards making the private sector get on with its job of investing and reinvesting and providing moneys for employment. Part of the job bank programme incorporated the fast-track procedures which on one occasion at least the present Minister for Employ-

ment and Administrative Services indicated were a desirable feature of job bank, and which he said would probably continue. However, that has not occurred.

Mr Parker: In fact it has occurred. The bulk of the fast-track procedures which were disrupted were procedures in relation to projects which fell within or had fallen into some of the planning authorities in one sense or another. That would have been a substantial number of the fast-track proposals. In fact, when I became Minister for Employment and Administrative Services and Minister for Planning, I found that not one of the fast-track recommendations that had been made to my predecessor had been acted upon in the planning area; indeed, I acted upon a number of them including one to which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred and which he subsequently criticised me for acting upon very quickly. The only thing which was fast-track when you were in Government was the Derby Motel or something, where you gave them a guarantee.

Mr HASSELL: That is not accurate. Fast-track procedures were very real as a concept and needed to be further developed, something which I certainly was aware of and intended to work on. In the short time that I had available to me, I produced an official fast-track procedures document. What was needed was for that document and programme to be developed, because what business in this State urgently needs is the development of a one-stop shop for Government approvals. I think that is where fast-track procedures should have led.

Mr Parker: That is where they are leading. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done in a number of areas to achieve that.

Mr HASSELL: The Minister can stand up and make his speech about what he is doing one day, but none of this has yet seen the light of day.

Mr Parker: Some of it has. Talk to the private developers.

Mr HASSELL: What we did in a few weeks was quite remarkable when compared with the publicly disclosed achievements of this Minister in seven months.

Mr Barnett: He did nothing.

Mr I. F. Taylor: What a farce!

Mr HASSELL: The business community of this State needs development of a one-State shop for approvals. An increasingly bewildering number of Government instrumentalities must give their approval to the promoters of the developments and the promoters of projects. It is diffi-

cult, and in many respects, it is impossible to argue that those various problems can be eliminated. If one wants to be simplistic about it, one could say, "We have got too much bureaucracy. We have too many authorities. We want to get rid of them. Business will succeed only when you do get rid of them". The unfortunate fact is that we will have to live with that system for as far down the track as any of us can foresee, because that system of control is what our community wants. It is unrealistic to assume that we can do away with the controls required for the provision of power or those required for the provision of water, roads, health facilities and local government and planning requirements.

I had hoped to have time tonight to talk about the planning area, but clearly I will not get to it. The planning area certainly does need to be looked at, but it would be unrealistic to think that at the end of the day we will eliminate the requirements of the planning system for people to get approvals to do what they want to do, albeit with their own land, or to fit in with the overall schemes. In some respects, planning schemes and controls are becoming more and more capricious as some authorities seek to make them increasingly discretionary and less precise.

I interpolate to say that, as far as possible, planning must be translated into a system which is clear and results in owners and developers having rights rather than merely "the right to ask". By that I mean that it is not good enough for people who own a piece of land to have to ask a public authority whether any form of development is permitted on that land. They should be able to look up the planning rules, the town planning scheme, and the regulations and in the privacy of their business planning say, "If we comply with A, B, C, D, and E" or however many other requirements there are, "we have the right to carry out this development".

Mr Parker: How do you correlate that view with your expressed comments on the Cottesloe Hotel?

Mr HASSELL: Again, I definitely am not going to have time to deal with that topic.

Mr Parker: They are at variance with each other.

Mr HASSELL: No, they are not at variance.

Mr Parker: They are very strongly at variance. You are in exactly the same position in which the developers of the Cottesloe Hotel found themselves.

Mr HASSELL: I have a great deal of sympathy for the developers of the Cottesloe Hotel and I have said so publicly.

Mr Parker: You attacked me for giving an approval to develop it.

Mr HASSELL: I attacked the Minister for doing something which was inconsistent with what he said he would do when in Government before his party came to Government.

Mr Parker: Absolute nonsense!

Mr HASSELL: I do not want to stray from my point. In dealing with the issue of employment creation, I made the point that, if we are to promote private investment, which is the essential ingredient for the creation of employment on a long-term basis we must give those involved in development and investment an opportunity to get on with the job and, not forever, to go through endless series of new hurdles based on an unending discretion.

I do not want to enter into the controversy about the canal developments in Mandurah except to say that there just does not seem to be any way in which the people who have an interest in doing that will ever be able to define those things which they must do or the hurdles which they must jump before being able to get on with the job, or know that they will never be able to get on with the job.

Mr Parker: But every single hurdle that those people have had to jump—and I agree there have been literally hundreds of them—was created and put in place by your Government.

Mr HASSELL: I am talking about the general issue. I am not attacking the Minister, and I am not going through an analysis of who created the hurdles. As the Minister knows, a lot of those hurdles which came out of the Department of Conservation and Environment were jumped. They still have not reached the end of the track. I am using this only as a general example. How long do some of these people who want to invest their money and create the employment we need in this State have to go on with systems which leave them running from one public authority to another and meeting new sets of rules as they do so? It is not a problem I expect the Minister to have solved in the last six months, and it will not be easy to solve at any time. However, the "fast track" concept of job bank provided the beginnings of the idea that we have to put obligations onto the Government and the bureaucracy to provide explanations as to why they do not perform, rather than leave it perpetually on the basis that it is always those who want to do something who have to justify their actions. We have to develop the idea that the bureaucracy must perform or be accountable.

We need to start developing provisions to write into Statutes which say that when one applies for X approval, or Y licence, or Z authority, one is deemed to have received that approval if an answer is not received by a certain date, rather than the other way around, where one makes application and the bureaucracy sits on it, perhaps makes a decision, runs into a difficulty, and cannot proceed. Parliament must begin to intervene in writing the law to shift the onus and burden to give people who want to get on producing employment, and who have imaginative ideas, a chance to put them into effect.

Mr Bryce: You and your colleagues had the chance for nine years to really free up the system and give some substance to the sort of things you are saying. It really sounds a bit hollow after just a few months.

Mr HASSELL: I do not seem to be able to get my point through. I am not trying to say the Minister should have done all this, or he should analyse why we did not do it. I have not been in Parliament for nine years, and I was a Minister for only three years. Until I became Minister for Employment, all my Ministries were related to areas not connected with these matters. I have been shadow Minister for Planning only since the election, so I have not had any direct opportunity to put any of this into effect. I am in the process quite deliberately of seeking to develop concepts which I believe need to be developed.

Every time I talk about employment, which is so important, I seem to run out of time. I conclude by making this point: In our job bank programme, which was a much larger and more imaginative programme than the Government's employment creating efforts through the Ministry of Employment and Administrative Services, as distinct from its broader efforts at economic development, we specifically gave recognition to the fact that any Government employment-creating programme is necessarily bridging in nature. It fills the gap between the bad times now and the better times that need to be generated by private sector economic activity. Government jobs on a handout basis will never solve the problems of unemployment.

Mr Parker: They do represent a bridging basis as you have said.

Mr HASSELL: They will never provide the need of people for long-term secure employment.

This State and our economy need more business activity. Part of that need is dependent on overseas markets over which we have little or no control. We must be careful to preserve those markets, and we expressed our concern about one

of them in an urgency debate yesterday about the iron ore industry. The Government at last has moved today.

Business needs higher profits, stable wages, lower interest rates, increased investment opportunities, and a climate in which development is welcome and not treated with suspicion. We in this State must also face the great issue of tariffs. That issue has hardly been confronted politically by any party in this State. It will have to be confronted in future because the disadvantages to this State from tariffs increasingly will be perceived. We are supporting at a very great rate per head a lot of inefficient industries in the Eastern States.

MR SPRIGGS (Darling Range) [9.36 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to refer to some of the activities that have taken place in my electorate. The first is the completion and occupation of the first stage of the Roleystone District High School. I place on record my congratulations not only to the Education Department but also to the Public Works Department, and the designers and builders who developed the project to such a high standard. I am pleased that the Minister has taken an active interest in that development and seen it come to fruition. It has been some two or three years in development, but it is unique as a district high school. I do not mean that in the sense that there are no other district high schools, but it is the first the department has developed for that role.

Other district high schools have developed after a need was established from a primary school, but the Roleystone school will incorporate a primary school and advanced pupils from its opening. As members will have seen on television the other night, it is situated in very pleasant surroundings at Roleystone. It fits in to the district—it is designed to do just that—and the design is of a very high standard.

I am pleased that the Government has continued with the final phase of the Lesmurdie High School. It, too, is one of the new schools; it is a delightful school with facilities that are second to none. The only disappointing aspect is that the Minister has seen fit to develop the final stage with day labour. As we know from experience, the school probably will take anything from two to three years to be completed. Had the normal procedure applied of contracting the development the school probably would have been in use in 1984. Transportable classrooms will be used and I am not particularly happy about that. However it is a delightful school, and a great credit to the department.

I voice my disappointment today at the actions of the Government. Great and grandiose promises were made by the then Opposition in the run up to the election. The Opposition was going to do all sorts of things; its promises came fast and furious and were extravagant in the extreme. It knew full well it could not carry out those promises; in Government it has not attempted to carry out one of them.

Mr I. F. Taylor: It is better than rolling backwards down the hill as your Government did.

Mr SPRIGGS: The Minister for Employment and Administrative Services has often said that we on this side have not accepted what happened on 19 February. I believe members opposite have not accepted what happened on that day. Government members are still acting as though they were in Opposition; they are not acting as a Government and do not appear to be capable of acting as a Government.

Mr I. F. Taylor: What nonsense.

Mr D. L. Smith: Interest rates have been reduced.

Mr Bryce: Rain is falling and the dams are full.

Mr SPRIGGS: The only reason interest rates are declining is that the economy is in a depressed state and becoming more depressed.

Mr Bryce: What about the rain?

Mr SPRIGGS: That is no credit to the Government.

This Government is a disgrace. Last night we listened to the Premier who made all those extravagant promises some months ago before he was elected.

Mr MacKinnon: The best new leader in Australia.

Mr SPRIGGS: The Premier was going to do all sorts of things when he got into Government, but we have seen petrol prices climb to ridiculous levels—record levels—and increased water, electricity and gas charges; indeed they have gone to such heights they are nearly through the roof.

That has happened under a Government which came into office when wage restraint was in effect and which promised faithfully it would keep prices down and, in some cases, reduce them. The Government has a complete and utter disregard for any promises it made.

Mr Bryce: That is not true.

Mr SPRIGGS: I refer to transport costs. People at Roleystone who used to be able to catch the bus for 80c now pay \$1.20 and people at Kelmscott have found their fares have gone up from 60c to \$1.20.

Mr Laurance: Is that an excessive price increase? Perhaps the Government should pass legislation to deal with it.

Mr I. F. Taylor: Are these two Heckle and Jeckle?

Mr Bryce: No, it is Huey, Louey, and Dewey.

Mr SPRIGGS: The Premier should buy the Deputy Leader of the Opposition a Meccano set and tell him to play with it.

Mr Bryce: I do not think you understand what happened on 19 February. Do not refer to me as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPRIGGS: The Government is an utter disgrace. This debate gives me the opportunity to tell the public never to let it happen again. In 1986, members opposite will no longer be in Government and I doubt the Deputy Premier will ever get a position back in the Government.

Let me indicate to members why the Government is not doing its job. The other night in regard to the situation in the Pilbara, we heard the Premier say, "How can we interfere? What can we do to solve the problem up there?" What is happening in the Pilbara is a disgrace to any Government or member who sits opposite and does nothing. We are seeing our State being destroyed. We are seeing royalties go out the window and ships leaving our State and probably travelling across to Brazil. We are seeing opportunities being taken away from our children. Surely members opposite must blush with shame when they get up in the morning and sit at the breakfast table across from their children and think about what they are doing to destroy any opportunities their children have—opportunities most members opposite grew up with in this State under good Liberal Government.

Several members interjected.

Mr SPRIGGS: The Government said it would employ 30 new school teachers if it were elected.

Mr MacKinnon: It said it would employ 50.

Mr SPRIGGS: And what do we have? We have a promise that next year or perhaps the following year the Government might do that. That is the problem of the Government and it indicates where it stands.

Mr MacKinnon: It said it would employ 50 new primary school teachers.

Mr SPRIGGS: It said all the four-year-old children would be taught. However, what does the Government do? It is a disgrace!

Mr O'Connor: Your speech would be very short if it related to the promises the Government had kept.

Mr SPRIGGS: Let me return to the situation in the Pilbara. Members opposite must sit there in shame, because the strike in the Pilbara is the most destructive strike we have ever seen in that area.

Mr Jamieson: I would like to see you go up there and sort it out. We would be in a worse mess then!

Mr SPRIGGS: I had some dealings with Mr Cowles a few years ago and I managed to sort them out.

Mr Bryce: You managed to bring the steel industry in this State to a grinding halt because of your efforts.

Mr O'Connor: It is all right for you to support standover men, but I don't.

Mr D. L. Smith: That strike is operating under industrial legislation introduced by the Opposition when it was in Government.

Mr SPRIGGS: And had it been implemented with this Government's support, the strike would have been over weeks ago! This Government cannot govern. It is not a proper Government. It cannot govern because of the extravagant promises it made not only to the people, but also to the unions which supported it in the months prior to the election. The Government made promises to the people it has now appointed as advisers all over the State. Those advisers are certainly advising the Government well! They are advising the Government to let this country be destroyed. They are destroying every opportunity this State has to provide incentive to people who will be here in the future. It is destroying our children's opportunities.

Mr Bryce: Do you know ministerial advisers are being employed all over the world?

Mr SPRIGGS: The member for Warren will be very pleased to know what is happening to the Forests Department in this State. The Government is prepared to destroy one of the most efficient and progressive organisations in this State.

Mr Bryce: Do you like anything that is progressive?

Mr SPRIGGS: The Government is prepared to destroy not only the Forests Department, but also the job opportunities of thousands of people throughout the south-west. Why is the Government doing this? It is doing this because of the trendies. It says, "Let us satisfy the trendies. We will take away the Shannon basin. We will take away 100 000 hectares of the northern forest". Not only is the Government prepared to do that to satisfy the trendies, but also it is prepared to destroy the very structure of the Forests Depart-

ment. That is an efficient department which has a proved ability and, in the last few years, has made magnificent strides in providing a timber industry that would not be here only for this decade, but also for the next 10 000 years.

The Government is prepared to stop the pine plantation programme which was to provide jobs for generation after generation of Western Australians. The member for Warren is seriously embarrassed over this. There is no argument about that. He knows his hopes that he will see his part of the State develop and prosper are disappearing out the window.

We can look at Bunbury and the wonderful things the Government said it would do there. We have "Bunbury 2000"; the way members opposite are going, believe me, we will not have a Bunbury in the year 2000. People will have to leave Bunbury and live elsewhere. This Government is the greatest destroyer of all time.

Mr Bryce: Do you realise we would not have discovered you had there not been a change of Government?

Mr SPRIGGS: The Deputy Leader of the Government should go home and play with a mecano set. That is all he is capable of doing.

Mr Hodge: You should go to sleep for a few more years.

Mr SPRIGGS: This Government is pathetic. All we have seen are gimmicks and no Government can govern with gimmicks. The sooner members opposite realise that the better. It is time they started to govern. We saw an episode today; the Government has 14 school teachers, yet it could not even count!

Mr Bryce: We always thought there was a rough chance you were asleep on the benches over here. There was a chance you were still here.

Mr SPRIGGS: Members opposite cannot take those chances. They have to learn to count. I found that episode rather humorous and it certainly showed the depth of the Government. It is completely and utterly inept and unsuitable to govern.

What is the Government going to do about the employment situation? As I mentioned previously in this House, we have seen job opportunities diminish. For the first time in two decades in Western Australia jobs are decreasing at the rate of at least 50 every working day. The Government said, "We shall create 20 000 jobs". The Government said it would do that within the first week it was in office. I think it was almost as extravagant as that! But what do we have? We have seen the loss of 5 000 jobs in six months.

Several members interjected.

Mr SPRIGGS: Over the last two decades in this State jobs have been created. Every day jobs were created.

Mr Jamieson: One hundred thousand in 18 months!

Mr SPRIGGS: Jobs have just disappeared. As I said, how can members opposite face their children in the morning knowing they are destroying any opportunities and incentive they have? The quicker 1986 comes and we can get back to that side of the Chamber the better.

Mr Bryce: The quicker you can go back to sleep.

Mr SPRIGGS: We will then be able to see some activity in the area of job creation in this State.

I cannot imagine we have ever had previously a Government with such a dismal record in its first few months in office. It is a record that would be disgraceful judged by any standard. It is a record of complete and utter chaos. There is just no incentive; nothing whatsoever is being done in respect of the mandate members opposite claim they have. They had a mandate to create jobs and to get this State going. However, the Government is completely and utterly destroying Western Australia. Its performance has been dismal and it has not kept its promise to create jobs. I can say only that 1986 cannot come quickly enough.

Mr Hodge: Are you retiring then?

Mr SPRIGGS: In 1986 the people will have an opportunity to put us back into Government.

Several members interjected.

Mr SPRIGGS: Members opposite want one-vote-one-value. If we get one-vote-one-value we will be sitting on that side of the House. Based on the statistics seven members opposite will no longer be sitting on that side of the House. That is why we hear nothing about one-vote-one-value for the Assembly.

Mr I. F. Taylor: It is an excellent idea. Weren't you here last night? Have a read of what we said about it last night.

Mr MacKinnon: Why don't you make a speech occasionally? Ever since you have been in Government you have been strangely silent.

Mr SPRIGGS: The proposed changes to the Electoral Act have been mentioned as they relate to proportional voting. I do not believe we shall ever see a system of one-vote-one-value suggested by members opposite.

It is hard to believe members opposite are so poor at counting that, with 14 school teachers in

their ranks, they could not have anticipated what would happen today. Quite frankly, I believe members opposite were pleased about the matter because they know what they were proposing was a heap of rubbish. Not only is it rubbish, but also it will not be accepted in any shape or form by the people of Western Australia because it is hypocritical. It is completely and utterly unacceptable. I am only thankful those 14 school teachers are sitting on the other side of the House and not teaching my children.

This Government will go down on record as the one with the most dismal performance that could ever be perpetrated on the public, particularly after the promises it made. It is a complete and utter waste of time.

MR WATT (Albany) [9.48 p.m.]: I should like to contribute to this debate.

Mr Hodge: I hope you are going to raise the standard of the debate.

Mr WATT: I shall refer to tourism. The electorate of Albany which I represent is a tourist area and we would like to think it is one of the prime tourist destinations in the State. The area has only two natural advantages which are tourism and agriculture. In the area of agriculture, we have exploited all available avenues for industrial opportunity. Although job opportunities in agriculture obviously fluctuate from time to time because of seasonal conditions, we have a fairly stable workforce in that area.

It is still hoped that negotiations which have been continuing for some years and are proceeding at the moment for a tannery to be established at Albany might come to fruition in the not too distant future. That is something for which we hope, but about which I cannot speak with any confidence of achieving. However, we shall endeavour to achieve that aim.

In my opinion, tourism is to Albany what iron ore is to the Pilbara, what gold is to Kalgoorlie, and what coal is to Collie. The Government should give favourable consideration to expending tourist dollars at a higher rate in the Albany, great southern and south coast areas than it has been prepared to spend in other areas. In some of those other areas, natural resources can be exploited to provide employment and economic stimulation. It is only fair that every region should be assisted by the Government according to its potential and its natural resources.

Mr D. L. Smith: That is why there was a grant for the Whale World project.

Mr WATT: This question might reasonably be asked: In which areas should or can money be spent? I take the point made in the interjection. I

commend the Government for supporting the expenditure on tourism projects of money gained from the wages pause. The first grant was for a project at Frenchman Bay. The Jaycees foundation is endeavouring to restore the former Cheynes Beach whaling station so that it is a tourist attraction to be known as "Whale World". The Government made available \$225 000, which will pay for a considerable amount of restoration work. The tourist potential of that place was recognised by the former Government in its contribution of \$50 000.

Mr Evans: That was pretty measly.

Mr WATT: We must be fair; \$50 000 out of revenue is probably every bit as good as \$225 000 as a magnanimous gesture out of the wages pause money, which was not available previously. The member would acknowledge that point.

Mr Evans: You have a point, but \$50 000 compared with \$225 000 is a bit of a disparity.

Mr WATT: Another project is to be funded to the extent of, I think, \$14 000 which will be an important start. The project is an area known as the Forts at Albany. It is a wartime area at Mt. Adelaide overlooking King George Sound. The area housed a considerable complex of military buildings, concealed observation posts, and land gun emplacements. The funding is designed, firstly, to clean up the area and, secondly, to restore what is left after vandals have had a delightful time wrecking most of the area. As well, a research officer will be employed to determine as far as is possible plans of the area and obtain information so that progressively a greater restoration programme can be undertaken.

I must say that, after hearing the interjections from the Minister for Agriculture and the member for Mitchell, I thought there was a touch of irony in the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services having chartered a plane at considerable expense to taxpayers to fly around the countryside to announce these projects. Obviously he sought to claim some kudos for the Government. I have said I am grateful for the money being provided, but it must be said also—

Mr D. L. Smith: You must recognise the resources of Albany and its needs, and what it will need in 1986 is a new member.

Mr WATT: That interjection is pathetic. We have a new boy coming into the class. When I first came to this place, the then member for Mundaring (Jim Moiler) said every time I commenced to speak that I was only a temporary member, but he left the Parliament at the following election. I suggest to the new member that he do not make such statements; he may find that

the situation is reversed, as I have seen it happen many times.

Mr D. L. Smith: I assure you that Mitchell will be better off after my time in office than Albany is after your time in office.

Mr WATT: Apart from the other attributes of this member, he is modest!

Mr Stephens: He has Albany so well handled that he has time to talk about the Stirling electorate. Whale World will be in the Stirling electorate.

Mr Bryce: We have a demarcation dispute.

Mr WATT: I would much prefer to make my speech. It might be interesting to members to know that the member for Stirling chooses to live in the Albany electorate. I think we can put that matter to rest.

The Minister for Employment and Administrative Services when in Opposition last year strongly opposed the legislation for the wages pause introduced by the then Government. He made strong comments against that legislation, but it is ironic that he chartered an aircraft at great expense to taxpayers to announce grants of money from something of which he did not approve. Aircraft should not be chartered for such purposes. They can be chartered for legitimate purposes, but the Minister for Employment and Administrative Services took this trip around the countryside to announce grants.

Mr I. F. Taylor: It sounds like sour grapes.

Mr WATT: I have already commented on that point.

Mr I. F. Taylor: He went down to announce the grants.

Mr WATT: He did not need to announce them.

Mr Stephens: The member for Stirling would have been quite capable of announcing the grants if the Minister had let him know about them.

Mr WATT: I want to make constructive comments about the tourist scene. I refer now to the Western Australian National Parks Authority. National parks cover a considerable area of the southern part of the State. Indeed, the NPA has responsibility for many areas in the State. I am told it has the lowest number of staff and receives the lowest funding of any national parks service in Australia, including the service in Tasmania. That fact is rather alarming.

Mr Davies: What did your Government do about it?

Mr WATT: All that members of the Government can do is harp about what may or may not have happened in the last nine years.

Mr Davies: You had nine years. You should wait until the Budget comes out.

Mr WATT: We are still operating on last year's Budget, passed by the previous Government. Members opposite should think about what they are saying. I am in fact criticising the current Budget. Tourism is recognised by this Premier as a growth industry. He has appointed himself as the Minister for Tourism in the hope that he can give some impetus to that industry. It is a worthwhile industry, and if members opposite wish to disagree with that, they should say so. I am trying to suggest where money can and should be spent to benefit that industry.

National parks in the southern part of the State attract a significant number of tourists, and could attract many more if they were better developed with decent facilities. I do not want it thought that I am critical in any way of the people who work for the NPA. From the top to the bottom of that organisation the people involved do a first-class job, but they are limited by a lack of funds. In August, I checked proposals for projects to be funded, but no job creation schemes in national parks had received any support, while projects for the Forests Department had received funding for its projects in order to provide some 35 jobs. I am not necessarily suggesting that funding should not have been provided. However, I refer members to an article in the *Warren-Blackwood Times* of Wednesday, 3 August this year, under the heading "Scheme gives 35 work with Forests Department". The article states—

A total of 35 people have been recruited through the Manjimup Commonwealth Employment Service to carry out general forestry work, establish and improve public facilities and to do back-up office work.

Of these, 14 are working in Manjimup and six at Pemberton. The others are at Nannup and Kirup.

They are among 95 previously jobless people who are being employed—mostly for one year . . .

It might be a coincidence that the area happens to be a Government-held seat, but I do not know whether that is the reason. I refer now to an article in the *Albany Advertiser* of Tuesday, 26 July this year, under the heading, "Toilet on the move". The article refers to a grant of \$9 150 the State Government agreed to contribute towards the cost of building a new toilet block and shower facilities at the Cape Riche reserve. The photograph shows an old tin toilet, and the article states—

Hardly the picture of elegance—this old 'thunderbox' toilet has had the death sentence passed on it at Cape Riche.

Mr MacKinnon: What electorate is that in?

Mr WATT: It is in the Stirling electorate. The article continues—

The old 'thunderboxes' are expected to be relocated to other reserves.

I wonder whether they will be a donation to the National Parks Authority so that it can upgrade its facilities.

I must give credit to the Cape Riche Progress Association for its lobbying to obtain those funds. No doubt exists that the Cape Riche reserve is an attractive place to which a number of visitors go each year, but in no way could it be compared with some of the national parks. Let us consider some of the areas crying out for assistance.

The Torndirrup National Park is only 10 minutes' drive along the coast from Albany and has such well-known land marks as the Natural Bridge and the Gap. This area has at least 120 000 visitors each year, yet it does not have toilet facilities.

Mr D. L. Smith: When your Government was in office for nine years it didn't provide any facilities.

Mr WATT: I am getting a bit tired of hearing this comment. I do not know what the member wants me to do. Does he want me not to draw attention to the problems that exist? Does he want to suggest to me that he will be able to identify and solve every problem in his electorate in his term of office? He should not talk nonsense.

Mr D. L. Smith: I recognise the need for these facilities.

Mr WATT: I will identify some of the other areas such as Salmon Holes, which some 30 000 people visit each year. It has a most attractive beach and the area is used by people for picnics, fishing, surfing and swimming. Once again, it has no toilet facilities. The ranger has done a tremendous job and has improved facilities by installing fencing, undertaking dune restoration, and providing picnic tables and chairs, and things of that sort.

Mr Laurance: He would be one of the most dedicated rangers in the State.

Mr WATT: I should take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr Jack Andrews for the work he has done in that area. In summer and on weekends approximately 1 000 people per day visit Greens Pool at William Bay near Denmark. Swimming classes are conducted, but again no toilet facilities are provided. In the entire southern

region only a handful of facilities are provided by the National Parks Authority and these include two caravan parks, one at Walpole and one at Pemberton. Facilities are also provided in the Stirling Range at Toolbrunup campsite, which is at the Porongurups, where there are two small single toilets below the Bolganup Dam. Hamelin Bay near Augusta and Canal Rocks at Yallingup also have facilities.

I think we should be encouraging people to visit our national parks in this State. In order to do this we must improve the facilities that are attached to them. The point to which I am alluding is that I recognise that in the past it has been difficult to justify funds for these sorts of things. This is where the member for Mitchell has not appreciated the point I am trying to make. He is saying, "You have been in Government for many years and have done nothing". I am saying there are funds from the wages pause available for projects which will provide employment, but at the same time will benefit the community. It is a great shame that some of the projects submitted for improvements to national parks have not been accepted. The unemployment situation in Albany is not good and a number of young people would very much appreciate the opportunity of a job in a national park. This would result in a great residual benefit to the community.

A programme known as the great southern volunteer conservation programme has been in operation for some time. A number of people are involved in the organisation and they have spent many weekends on dune restoration, building facilities, and general improvements to national parks on a voluntary basis. The community has done its share and has demonstrated a willingness to work. It is time now for the Government to do something.

I have mentioned the unemployment situation in major towns. Many people in smaller towns are finding it difficult to obtain employment. They would grab at an opportunity to work with the rangers in the national parks.

I recently suggested to the Superintendent of National Parks in the southern region that a job creation scheme be implemented, and he advised that a number of these schemes had already been suggested. The superintendent is Dr John Watson, who is worthy of praise. He is a dedicated officer and is innovative. He works long hours and spends many hours away from home. I cannot commend him too highly for the work he has done. Recently he was awarded the Churchill Fellowship and he will be travelling to America to further his studies. The schemes that were suggested covered a wide range of national parks and included the

Cape Arid National Park near Esperance, and the Cape Le Grand National Park, which is in the same area. Many of the schemes that Dr Watson put forward did not involve any capital expenditure but required manpower only. Other national parks included the Stokes National Park, which is between Munglinup and Esperance, the Fitzgerald River National Park, and the Stirling Range National Park.

In these parks a lot of work can be done, such as the realignment of walking paths and erosion control. In the Porongurup National Park current projects include footpath maintenance, picnic area development, the erection of railings, and erosion control. I have already mentioned the Torndirrup National Park and the William Bay National Park. The Walpole-Nornalup National Park project includes a major dune stabilisation and beach access programme at Mandalay Beach. Most of the work required cannot be done by machinery, it requires manpower.

Mr Laurance: Western Australia has more land set aside for national parks than any other mainland State. One of the difficulties of national parks is that although we have the land we don't have the facilities.

Mr WATT: The point made by the member for Gascoyne is well recognised and I want him to understand that I am not making a criticism of the former managerial decisions or of those people who have worked in the national parks. The point I am making is that we have the opportunity to obtain funds that have not been available until now. As this work is highly labour-intensive—it has been recognised that tourism is a growth area and has the capacity to employ a large number of people—we should be doing our bit to make sure it occurs in that way.

Before I leave the subject of the national parks committee, I refer to a Press release by the Premier on 3 July 1983, which announced the membership of the Government's interim tourism consultative committee. I know that with most Government committees it is difficult to know who should be included and who should be left off them. I express my disappointment that in this committee of 11 not one member of the National Parks Authority has been included.

The National Parks Authority is a major contributor to tourism in this State. Either it is an oversight or there is some reason that I do not appreciate for the National Park Authority not being represented on the committee.

One has only to look at promotional films or tourist brochures to determine that somewhere in

the order of 30 to 40 per cent of the depicted areas are national parks in this State.

Having dealt with the subject of national parks, I want to canvass one other point, which relates to the Albany Technical College. It is an extremely fine facility which has been established progressively over a number of years, and it has provided educational opportunities for both vocational and hobby courses for people in Albany. The vocational courses have obviously enabled many young people to avoid going away from home for such courses, and for this we are grateful. Provision is being made for a new section that will cover the catering and hospitality industries and will provide opportunities similar to those in technical colleges at Carine, Bentley, and Fremantle. It will be a great asset to the Bunbury region.

Another part of the new building will cater for computer studies which will commence next year. Albany is a town that has a wealth of talent in craft activities. It is a disappointment to me to learn that the fees for TAFE courses in hobby areas have been increased by 60 per cent. It is a savage increase. Admittedly the fees are not high, but a 60 per cent increase for many of the people attending these courses will be an obstacle, and it is likely to result in many of these people not being able to participate in the courses.

Mr Court: It is \$70 a term, isn't it?

Mr WATT: We must remember that these are often two-hour sessions and the cost is per hour. It used to be \$1.25 per hour per course. So it has gone from \$2.50 to \$4 and many of these people are not particularly well off. I think that is a great problem.

Mr Davies: Do you know whether a survey has been carried out to assess these courses?

Mr WATT: What does the Minister mean by "survey"?

Mr Davies: You said these people are not particularly well off. Has anyone surveyed them?

Mr WATT: Yes, some representations were made to me and I made some inquiries of the college. There is some validity in the suggestion put to me. Many of these people—and I commend them for it—take up hobby courses to try to beat the housewives' syndrome or to overcome boredom. They could perhaps be out working or doing something else, and it is good that the people want to use their time constructively. I am aware that pensioners and certain other disadvantaged people do receive appropriate help. That is good, but in the past many of the people, through these hobby courses, have been able to enter into full or part-time employment. Some of them have become self-employed, and many, although not pro-

ducing an income, can at least supplement the family income. I hope that the Minister for the Arts is in Albany at some time when there is a craft display.

Mr Davies: I think I have to open the refurbished town hall in October.

Mr WATT: I do not think there will be any arts and crafts displays on at that time. Just last week I opened a craft display by four potters and a weaver. The work produced was excellent. Some of my colleagues who were in Albany saw it.

Mr Williams: It was excellent—top class.

Mr WATT: The work is of as high a standard as one would see anywhere.

Mr Davies: I quite believe that. There is some remarkable talent around. I would be delighted to come to one of the shows, if invited.

Mr WATT: We may even arrange for the Minister to see some of this work privately if he would like to do that. I would just like to make the point that this increase has been inflicted on these people to cover the cost of providing the courses.

Mr Hodge: That was your Government's policy as well, that courses should cover the costs.

Mr WATT: But it never achieved that aim.

Mr Davies: We won't either.

Mr WATT: I am trying to be constructive, and I wonder whether \$19.30 an hour is a little high for the tutors.

Mr Hodge: That is what it costs—that is the cost price.

Mr WATT: That is what I am saying; that is the rate per hour paid to the teachers.

Mr Hodge: Your Government always set the fees at cost price.

Mr WATT: That is right, but I am just saying I wonder whether it might be a bit high.

Mr Hodge: Perhaps it is, but how do you suggest we lower it?

Mr WATT: Well, did that price need to go up as well?

Mr Hodge: Do you think we should have made a loss?

Mr WATT: I think that the hourly rate could have been left as it was. It is no wonder that the Minister for Health cannot balance his budget—he is as thick as a brick.

Mr Hodge: I am just trying to give you a bit of help.

Mr WATT: That kind of help I can do without. The point I am making is that these tutors are really only practising a craft they have learnt themselves. While it is appropriate that they

should be paid something, I suspect the \$19.30 an hour is a little high for someone who is unqualified.

Mr Davies: There is no examination in many of these things. What is the standard?

Mr WATT: That is right.

Mr Davies: It is a bit high. I agree with you.

Mr WATT: The Minister made it clear in his answer to my question today that he has no intention of reviewing the increases he has imposed. I want to register my objection to those in-

creases. Approximately 600 people are undertaking these hobby courses at the Albany technical college and, by any standard, that is a lot of people. I hope only that events will prove me wrong and that the number is not reduced because of the increased fees.

With those comments I support the Address-in-Reply.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Grayden.

House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

944. *This question was further postponed.*

GOVERNMENT CHARGES

Increase: Treasury Guidelines

971. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) In relation to all charges recently increased by the Government, were all proposed increases referred to Treasury prior to receiving Cabinet approval?
- (2) In any instance, were private financial consultants engaged to help Treasury with the evaluation of these proposals?
- (3) If so, who was employed?
- (4) For which proposals were they employed?
- (5) In this assessment, what guidelines do Treasury or private financial consultants use to ensure that the increases provide the public with an acceptable standard of service?
- (6) How do these arrangements differ from those of the previous Government?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) and (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Treasury closely checked all proposals for reasonableness and consistency of data and assumptions as to inflation rates relating to cost sectors and expressed an independent view on the conclusions derived from the data presented.
- (6) In the greater time Treasury was given to examine the proposals and the extent of Treasury involvement. The decision to employ consultants or not was also left to the Treasury to decide on the basis of need and capacity to undertake the work load.

RAILWAYS

Houses: Tambellup

975. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many Westrail employees are currently stationed at Tambellup?
- (2) How many houses does Westrail own in Tambellup?

- (3) How many of these houses are occupied by—
 - (a) Westrail employees;
 - (b) other tenants?
- (4) What plans has Westrail with regard to future use of these houses?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Three.
- (2) Seven.
- (3) (a) Three;
- (b) one.
- (4) When the actual employee housing requirement for Tambellup is determined surplus housing will be leased to the private sector on an "as is" basis.

NATURAL DISASTER: DROUGHT

Loans

976. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is Commonwealth funding still available for administration by the State of Western Australia for the provision of drought loans?
- (2) If not—
 - (a) on what date did the Commonwealth advise the State that no further funds were available;
 - (b) what provision was made for areas covered by late drought declaration backdated to 1 April 1983, to have applications for loans considered?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) (a) Under current Commonwealth/State natural disaster arrangements, in any one financial year, Western Australia must spend a minimum of \$3 million on approved natural disaster relief measures before any Commonwealth funding is available.
- (2) (b) The provision of loans to farmers in these areas is being considered.

977. *This question was postponed.*

VALUER GENERAL

Geraldton

978. Mr TUBBY, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is it a fact that the office of the Valuer General's Department in Geraldton is to be closed?
- (2) Does he realise this move will deprive the Geraldton region of the readily available services of a Valuer General?
- (3) If "Yes" to (1), what are the reasons for the proposal to close the office?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The office merely existed to carry out valuations initiated from Perth.
It was not a public office and because of the nature of the work required to be performed the office, of necessity, was unmanned for a large part of the time.
Consequently, no readily available services have ever been supplied.
- (3) There was insufficient work in the area and the officer could be more gainfully employed in Perth.

HEALTH: INSURANCE

Medicare: Hospitals

979. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have any Government hospitals, apart from Royal Perth Hospital, cancelled elective surgery?
- (2) Is it expected that with the introduction of Medicare, more Government hospitals will have to cancel elective surgery because of the additional strains which Medicare will place upon them?
- (3) Have fears been expressed that patients wanting elective surgery may soon have to wait years before they get it because of staff shortages in Government hospitals?
- (4) Can he give an unequivocal assurance that—
 - (a) Medicare will not be permitted to exacerbate the situation from one of stress for hospital staff to one of intolerable strain;
 - (b) that hospital care in Government hospitals will not be permitted to deteriorate to the extent that patients wanting elective surgery in Government hospitals will be required to wait long periods before obtaining such surgery?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes—most hospitals meet situations where they have to postpone, not cancel, elective admissions including surgery, if the available beds require to be filled by patients suffering from an emergency medical condition which presents to the hospital for immediate admission.

- (2) Medicare will not alter the incidence of disease. The public hospital system already takes the majority of emergency admissions.
- (3) Some persons who oppose the introduction of Medicare have made allegations about delays amounting to years. One of the motives behind such allegations may be an attempt to influence patients to take out additional private insurance.
- (4) (a) and (b) The Commonwealth has agreed as part of the Medicare arrangements to provide additional funds to the States to meet any increase in hospital in-patient and out-patient activity or any loss in revenue incurred by the State hospital system as a result of the introduction of Medicare.

HEALTH: NURSES

Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital

980. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the desired level of nursing staff at the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital?
- (2) How many nurses are currently employed?
- (3) What is the current ratio of registered general nurses to enrolled nurses and student nurses?
- (4) Is the shortage of nurses at the hospital affecting nursing care and, if so, to what extent?
- (5) What specific steps have been taken in an effort to recruit more nurses by—
 - (a) the hospital;
 - (b) the State Government?
- (6) Are there any unemployed nurses in—
 - (a) Kalgoorlie;
 - (b) the Perth metropolitan area, who are seeking work?
- (7) What action is the State Government currently taking to relieve the immediate pressure on the hospital by recruiting additional nurses?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 211.68.
- (2) 216.46.
- (3) 0.63 registered nurse: 1 other (enrolled nurses and students).

- (4) The hospital has recruited up to its winter establishment numbers. It is difficult to recruit for specific classifications of staff on occasions and temporary staffing can be a problem.
- (5) The hospital and the Department of Hospital and Allied Services have carried out extensive recruiting campaigns nationally and been supported by the Emergency Nursing Service.
- (6) (a) None known;
(b) yes—enrolled nurses are seeking work in metropolitan area.
- (7) Continuing to advertise nationally for registered nurses.

HOSPITAL: OSBORNE PARK

10-hour Shifts

981. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that—
 - (a) the majority of night staff at Osborne Park Hospital are permanent part-time;
 - (b) most of the night staff have worked at the hospital for a considerable number of years;
 - (c) in the past this method of staffing has been a reliable and stable one;
 - (d) of a night staff register of some 36 nurses (until the present shift changes) some 27 were permanent part-time, working two, three or four nights of eight hours;
 - (e) recent shift changes at the hospital have caused grave concern to night staff?
- (2) Is it also a fact that prior to the introduction of the new shifts—
 - (a) a document entitled "Notice to all nursing staff" together with a draft roster was placed on the hospital notice boards;
 - (b) the draft roster gave all full time night duty staff 4 x 10-hour shifts and left the permanent part-time staff on 8-hour shifts (except for a birth suite where a staffing compromise had been reached some time previously);
 - (c) the notice clearly stated that part-time staff (with the exception of the

birth suite) would work 8 hours per night;

- (d) that as the concept as stated appeared reasonable, written protests did not exceed the 25 per cent stipulated as being necessary for a ballot to ascertain the majority view on the 10-hour shifts;
- (e) that at a subsequent meeting of staff a motion was carried that all night staff, both full-time and permanent part-time, in the wards concerned must work 10-hour night shifts;
- (f) that at this meeting both day and night staff voted on the motion although in a letter from the Government dated 31 March 1983, it is stated, "The Government has re-affirmed that the 10-hour night shift will be introduced into hospitals where the majority of staff directly affected by the arrangement wish to work the 10-hour shift"?

(3) As—

- (a) the overwhelming majority of night staff at the hospital are opposed to the 10-hour night shifts;
 - (b) in the wards affected, many night staff have had their hours increased by 8 hours a week and others face increases of up to 14 hours a week;
 - (c) the night staff, in the majority, are married women or supporting women with children, and as such have responsibilities outside working hours (which is the reason why they are prepared to work the unpopular night shifts);
 - (d) the extra burden will in some situations result in resignations;
- will he intervene in the dispute with a view to honouring the commitment contained in the letter of 31 March 1983?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) Yes;
- (b) yes;
- (c) yes;
- (d) of the night staff register of 39 nurses, 28 are permanent part-time staff;
- (e) the shift changes currently operating at the hospital are on a trial

basis until 21 September 1983. 28 of the staff working night shift at the hospital wrote to me concerning the 10-hour night shift and I have advised them that in accordance with the Government's decision on the implementation of the 10-hour night shift, those part-time staff who did not wish to increase their weekly or fortnightly hours of duty would not be required to do so.

- (2) (a) Yes;
- (b) yes;
- (c) yes;
- (d) written objections to the concept of the 10-hour night shift did not exceed 25 per cent;
- (e) a meeting of staff agreed to a trial roster incorporating a 10-hour night for part-time night staff (excluding the birth suite) to operate until 21 September 1983 and to be reviewed after that date;
- (f) both day and night staff did vote on the motion. Staff directly affected by the introduction of the 10-hour night shift are considered to be those staff working shifts or likely to work shifts.
- (3) As has been indicated in reply to 1(f) the part-time night staff have been advised that they will not be required to increase their hours unless they wish to do so.

The RANF has been involved in discussions and has visited Osborne Park Hospital on several occasions.

HEALTH: INSURANCE

Medicare: Private Health Funds and Hospitals

982. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it a fact that—

- (a) the Commonwealth Government has estimated that with the introduction of Medicare withdrawal from the health funds is likely to be of the order of 20 per cent and this will result in a swing from the private to the public hospital sector;
- (b) even if the swing is only 10 per cent the public hospitals will be required

to provide an additional 119 beds a day to cope with the demand;

- (c) this additional demand will exacerbate physical stress experienced by staff and add an estimated \$9 million at least to Government costs?
- (2) If any of the assertions in (1) are not correct, what are the relevant facts?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) No.
- (b) The estimate of 119 beds has been made by spokespersons for the private hospital industry. The basis of their calculation is not known.
- (c) The basis of the calculation for this assertion is also unknown. However the Commonwealth Minister has indicated that any demonstrated increase of activity in the public sector which results from Medicare will be funded.
- (2) Relevant facts will only become available in the light of experience. Until then wild assertions fuelled by persons opposed to the introduction of Medicare are likely to continue to be presented to the member and I suggest that he endeavour to carefully seek the source of quantification of each allegation.

HEALTH: CHILDREN

Accidents: Education Programme

983. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he any plans to help alleviate the acute problem of children's injuries as highlighted in a study carried out late last year into accident victims at Princess Margaret Hospital?
- (2) If so, what are these plans?
- (3) Would an education and awareness programme aimed at parents be viable and effective in helping reduce such injuries to children?
- (4) Could the Government use some of the extra money it raises through the recent cigarette levy to finance such a programme?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) The study carried out late last year into accident victims at Princess Margaret

Hospital for Children was commissioned by the Children's Accident Prevention Foundation. The foundation has representation from the Public Health Department and is at present examining alternative strategies to alleviate this problem. Responsibility for preventive programmes in the field of child accident prevention also lies with the home safety division of the National Safety Council.

- (2) Audio visual and printed material has been made available to child health nurses and other health professionals concerned with preventive services in children.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Funds raised from the tobacco tax will be used to finance a comprehensive antismoking campaign. The Government believes it is more appropriate to tackle this particular problem "in-depth" during the current financial year. Future planning of health promotion and education strategies will include this important issue as a high priority.

HEALTH: PEST CONTROL

Licences

984. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will the Government's new licensing requirements for pest control operators apply to all those who use pesticides associated with pest control, or will they only apply to commercial pest controlling operators?
- (2) Will gardeners and curators, such as those employed in schools, be required to pass any tests before they may use pesticides?
- (3) What controls exist as to regulating the types of pesticides used by such "part time" pest controllers?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Licensing requirements apply only to commercial pest control operators and firms.
- (2) Not if they are not commercial pesticide operators. The Education Department, however, conducts training courses covering pesticides for these persons, in conjunction with the Bentley Technical College, at the end of which courses a

certificate of attendance is issued. The safety officers of the Education Department are supervising these activities.

- (3) The Education Department is continually reviewing pesticides in use in schools and will minimise the number of chemicals to be used. All major pest control work is carried out by licensed pest control operators under contract in the country and by Public Health Department officials in the metropolitan area.

FLORA

Poisonous

985. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are new arrivals to this country given any precautionary instruction as to which common plants in Australia are poisonous and dangerous?
- (2) If not—
 - (a) would such instruction be practical;
 - (b) will the Government provide such instruction?
- (3) (a) Does the Public Health Department remove potentially dangerous plants such as castor oil bushes, from publicly accessible areas like old rubbish tips, vacant blocks and suburban roadsides;
 - (b) if not, will this practice be introduced by the Government?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) No.

HEALTH: DRUGS

Schools

986. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has any study been done to ascertain the availability and use of drugs in Western Australian schools?
- (2) If so, what were the results?
- (3) (a) If not, will one be undertaken; and
 - (b) if so, when will it be undertaken?
- (4) Has the "glue-sniffing" problem in some schools which was highlighted last year been alleviated to any extent?

- (5) What is currently being done in the schools concerned to overcome the problem?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) and (2) See answer to question 752.
- (3) (a) Current thinking of health educators is that publicity resulting from such surveys can be counter-productive because of the undue emphasis that would be placed upon the use of illicit drugs.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (4) No schools have reported significant problems with "glue-sniffing" during the current school year. The main problem, if any, occurs outside school hours and has not been brought to the attention of school authorities or support school staff.
- (5) See (4) above.

HEALTH: CHEMICALS AND DRUGS

Animals: Monitoring System

987. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does a drug and chemical residue monitoring system exist in Western Australia to detect the level of drug and chemical residues in food animals?
- (2) If not, is such a system intended to be implemented for the safety of Western Australian consumers?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Strictly speaking, a food animal is a live animal. The level of drug and chemical residues in live animals is not monitored. There are several residue testing programmes which monitor for pesticides and heavy metals and other residues in animal products (slaughtered animals)—
- (a) The National Health and Medical Research Council Market Basket Survey, which is a national survey involving the joint resources of Commonwealth and State departments of health, examines pesticide residues and heavy metals in a wide range of foods including meats and fish.
- (b) The Department of Public Health maintains routine and ongoing surveys of meats for heavy metals.

These surveys are directed to meats taken direct from the abattoirs and at the retail level. The department's monitoring also covers all food animals including fish and oysters.

- (c) Specific surveys are also undertaken where concern is expressed as to the likelihood of chemical residues in meats and in animal products such as eggs and milk. These surveys are conducted by the Departments of Public Health and Agriculture.
- (d) A national residue survey is also conducted by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry on all food derived from animals intended for export.

- (2) Not applicable.

HOSPITAL: HOLLYWOOD REPATRIATION

Construction Work

988. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

When is construction expected to commence on replacement operating theatres and wards at Hollywood Repatriation Hospital?

Mr HODGE replied:

This question should be directed to the Commonwealth Minister for Veterans Affairs who has responsibility for the Hollywood Repatriation Hospital.

TRAFFIC: DRIVERS

Drink Driving: Written Tests

989. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) As the special written tests which are required to be passed by those who have had their driving licences cancelled for drink-driving offences, have come under recent criticism, does the Government intend to make the tests more difficult?
- (2) Have these tests been effective in respect of increasing drivers' knowledge of alcohol and its effects?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) Not at this stage.
- (2) Yes.

HEALTH: TOBACCO

Smoking: "The Puffability People"

990. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

In view of the outstanding work of the Puffability People and the nature of the organisation together with the fact that it has already provided over \$250 000 worth of free computerised lung testing in addition to other free services, will the Government urgently grant the financial support which it currently requires in order to continue such work?

Mr HODGE replied:

Puffability People is an organisation of young health professionals who are active in the field of pulmonary function testing and the effects of cigarette smoking upon health. Puffability People has already approached the Government for financial support and this will be considered along with proposals put forward by other voluntary organisations who wish to participate in the antismoking campaign.

HEALTH: ABORIGINES

Survey

991. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) (a) Has he seen a copy of the survey on Aboriginal mothers in the Kimberleys by associate professor Michael Gracey;
- (b) if not, when does he expect to have an opportunity of reading a copy of the survey?
- (2) Has he obtained the views of the Commissioner of Public Health on the survey findings?
- (3) If so, what were the views expressed by the Commissioner of Public Health?
- (4) Does he accept the recent statement by the Vice President of the Aboriginal Medical Service in Western Australia, Mrs Phillipa Cook, that the State Department of Public Health is largely responsible for the standard of Aboriginal health in Western Australia?
- (5) Is it intended to hold an inquiry into Aboriginal health and medical services, and if so—

(a) when is the inquiry likely to commence;

(b) what form will the inquiry take?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) No. However a copy of the original Press statement issued by Professor Gracey on the 26 August 1983 concerning the pilot study to the survey and the pilot study report have been seen. Also the protocol of the survey was reviewed by the Public Health Department and the survey is being conducted with the department's support.
- (b) The survey is not completed. When complete, Professor Gracey will supply a copy of the results.
- (2) No, but his views on the result of the pilot study have been obtained.
- (3) 1. The department is pleased that the survey is being conducted.
2. The pilot study results indicate major improvements in Aboriginal health over the last 10 years as particularised in Professor Gracey's Press statement.
3. There remains very considerable room for improvement.
- (4) The Public Health Department has contributed significantly to the improvement in Aboriginal Health—e.g. the lowest infant mortality rate in Australia and the gastro-enteritis admission rate in the Kimberley now being one-tenth of that in 1971.
- (5) Consequent to an election undertaking, the Government is currently giving consideration to a joint Commonwealth/State review of the delivery of health care services to Aborigines.

HEALTH: DENTAL

New Technique

992. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has new-style school dentistry that allegedly eliminated extensive drilling and the need for injections been introduced into Western Australian school clinics?
- (2) If so, when was the technique first introduced?
- (3) Is the technique in common use elsewhere in the world?

(4) If so—

- (a) in which countries has it been introduced;
- (b) has the technique been proven successful?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) It is presently being progressively introduced into the School Dental Service in Western Australia, and is confined to the prevention and treatment of decay in deciduous teeth.
- (2) See (1) above.
- (3) It is used extensively in New South Wales in private practice, the school dental services, Sydney Dental Hospital Paedodontic Clinic and the Sydney University Paedodontic Clinic. The technique is and has been taught in the dental faculty of the University of Sydney for the last four years. It is also currently being used by private dentists in Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.
- (4) (a) Australia;
- (b) the published research and experience of Dr C. Craig of the dental faculty of the University of Sydney, has shown it is successful.

HEALTH

Expenditure

993. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What items comprise the \$700 million figure which he has stated was spent on health in Western Australia last year?
- (2) What was the expenditure on each of the items?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) Public Health;
- (b) Hospital and Allied Services;
- (c) Mental Health Services;
- (d) WA Alcohol and Drug Authority;
- (e) Nurses Board of Western Australia.
- (2) Expenditure on each of the above in 1982-83 respectively is—

\$

- (a) 65 million
- (b) 544 million
- (c) 77 million
- (d) 4 million
- (e) 93 thousand

HEALTH: INSURANCE

Medicare: Hospitals

994. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) (a) Have discussions between the Government and officials of the Government hospitals on the probable impact which Medicare will have on Government hospitals been completed;
- (b) if so, what impact do the officials expect;
- (c) if not, what is the reason for failure to complete the discussions?
- (2) When is it expected that the discussions will be finalised?
- (3) (a) Has any assessment been obtained as a result of the discussions to date;
- (b) if so, what does the assessment indicate?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) No;
- (b) not applicable;
- (c) the proposed Federal legislation was received only on Monday 12 September 1983, and is still being studied.
- (2) Not known.
- (3) (a) No;
- (b) not applicable.

HOSPITALS: PRIVATE

Medicare: Effect

995. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Apropos his answer to question 818 of 24 August 1983, respecting Medicare, what is the extent of the reduction in admissions anticipated by private hospitals when Medicare is introduced?
- (2) (a) Have discussions on action which the Government intends to take to minimise any adverse effects on private hospitals been completed;
- (b) if so, what action is intended;
- (c) if not, what is the reason for the delay in finalising the discussions;

- (d) when is it expected that the discussions will be finalised?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) The estimate by the Federal Government is in the order of 10 per cent reduction in private insurance status. The effect of such a reduction in the number of persons who seek admission to private hospitals is not known.
- (2) (a) No;
- (b) not applicable;
- (c) the proposed Federal legislation was received only on Monday 12 September 1983, and is still being studied;
- (d) not known.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Load Growth

996. Mr TOM JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Will the Minister detail the increase in load growth within the Commission for the years 1973 to 1983 inclusive?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The information requested is being collated and will be forwarded to the member by letter as soon as it is available.

FUEL AND ENERGY: COAL

Stockpiles

997. Mr TOM JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What are the current stockpiles of coal at the following areas:

- (a) Muja power station;
- (b) Bunbury power station;
- (c) Kwinana power station;
- (d) South Fremantle power station; and
- (e) Delta screening plant at Collie?

Mr BRYCE replied:

The information requested is being collated and will be forwarded to the member by letter as soon as it is available.

EDUCATION: NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

Langford Catholic Primary

998. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) As there are 260 children attending St. Judes School in Langford, is he aware these children have to cross the busy Nicholson Road with a 70 kilometres per hour speed limit to attend this school?
- (2) If "Yes", is he also aware that Nicholson Road is the main artery for heavy haulage vehicles serving the Canning Vale industrial complex?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), will he have a manned crosswalk attendant situated at Petry and Nicholson Roads to prevent a serious accident happening to one of the school children crossing the road?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) and (4) School crossings are under the control of the Police Department. However, I am aware that in response to earlier requests the need for a guard-controlled crossing was examined but could not be substantiated. The investigation showed that children were crossing the road safely but additional signs were provided on 12 May 1983 and arrangements made for increased enforcement of the speed limit before and after school hours.

EXPEDITER

Employment

999. Mr BATEMAN, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the expeditor appointed by the former Government still employed in the Eastern States to expedite supplies, materials, etc., to Western Australia which are in short supply in this State?
- (2) If "Yes", is he aware there has been a shortage of spare parts in Western Australia for Holden Gemini vehicles, in some instances keeping vehicles off the road for periods of up to three months?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), will he inform the expeditor of this situation?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) A Western Australian Government trade representative is based in Sydney whose role embraces trade and investment promotion and assistance as required in expediting supplies.
- (2) The Controller of Stores is experiencing no difficulty in obtaining spares for Gemini vehicles and is unaware of any vehicle of this class in the Government fleet being off the road through lack of spares.

Gemini spares are normally readily available but delays in supply in both the public and private sectors could happen in unusual circumstances such as industrial strikes, delays in overseas supply, breakdown of equipment in the manufacturer's factory, etc.

Inquiries from major General Motor Holden distributors reveal that there are no hold ups at present in their service departments.

- (3) and (4) If the member will advise of specific cases or nominate the spares that are unavailable, the Controller of Stores will make further inquiries and if necessary follow the matter up when attending a conference in Melbourne at the end of this month.

FUEL AND ENERGY: HYDROELECTRICITY

Ord River

1000. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) In connection with his recently announced intention to instruct the State Energy Commission to undertake a feasibility study for the construction of a hydro power station at the Ord River Dam, could he please say if the study will be simply an updating of the comprehensive study and report on this very same subject commissioned by the previous Government and prepared by the State Energy Commission and updated from time to time, particularly when the Argyle diamond project became interested in principle?
- (2) If not, what are the different aspects of the present study?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) The studies and negotiations which were previously undertaken by the State Energy Commission and the Northern Territory Electricity Commission into the prospects of developing an Ord Dam hydro station to supply power to Darwin, lapsed in 1981 because agreement could not be reached between the parties on apportioning the costs involved. Since that time, the cost of generating power in Darwin, and in the local towns of Kununurra and Wyndham, has risen. It is prudent to review the project again. Much of the information previously obtained will be most useful in finalising the proposed updated study.

FUEL AND ENERGY: HYDROELECTRICITY

Ord River

1001. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

What are the engineering/technical differences and/or improvements that have come to light over the last five or six years which would warrant an entirely new study of the Ord River Dam hydro-electric power station?

Mr BRYCE replied:

I refer the member to the answer given to question 1000.

FUEL AND ENERGY: HYDROELECTRICITY

Ord River

1002. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the fact that the Northern Territory Government's rejection of the proposed agreement to participate in the Ord hydro-power generating project hinged mainly on the Commonwealth Government's respective subsidies of the Northern Territory power supply from various sources?
- (2) What is the Commonwealth Government's present attitude in this matter and to what extent is it different from what it was when the Northern Territory Government rejected the proposed agreements?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) There were a number of factors. It is wrong to ascribe only one as the reason.
- (2) The attitude of both the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments will be determined as part of the review already announced.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Northern Territory: Sales

1003. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Is the Minister proposing to negotiate electric power sales to the Northern Territory on the same principle as the previous Government did; that is, a constantly diminishing quantity from that of the first year's supply throughout the contract period?

Mr BRYCE replied:

All possible alternatives for the supply of power to Darwin will be examined during the review.

FUEL AND ENERGY: HYDROELECTRICITY

Ord River

1004. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Approximately how many megawatts of electricity produced from the proposed Ord River Dam hydro-electric power station is he promising to sell in each of the, say, 30 years, following commissioning of the power station to—

- (a) Northern Territory electricity supply;
- (b) Argyle Diamond Project Venturers;
- (c) other Kimberley projects?

Mr BRYCE replied:

I refer the member to my answer to question 1003.

TRANSPORT: AIR

Western Australian Routes

1005. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Regarding his recently publicised endeavour to let airlines serve additional Western Australian routes, would he please say that as a result of his action,

if it succeeds, which are the routes where the services are expected to improve?

- (2) Which are the routes where the services are expected to deteriorate and/or discontinue altogether?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) It is expected that services will improve on all routes where competition is proposed, these being—

Perth-Geraldton
Perth-Kalgoorlie
Perth-Karratha
Perth-Port Hedland.

- (2) It is not anticipated that services on any other routes will be discontinued or deteriorate in any way. In fact, in the long term, services on some routes may well improve.

WATER RESOURCES: SINGLE AUTHORITY

Steering Committee: Terms of Reference

1006. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Has the steering committee looking into ways of setting up a single water authority, ever been charged to deliberate about the advantages and disadvantages of a single water authority, or was it only charged with recommending how to implement the decision already made?

Mr TONKIN replied:

The steering committee is charged with recommending how to implement a decision which had already been made.

LAND: AGRICULTURAL

Clearing Bans: Compensation

1007. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Does the Government intend to change the presently prevailing guidelines governing the compensation to be paid for damages suffered by land owners because of the clearing bans?
- (2) If so, what are these changes?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government is investigating catchment clearing controls but no decisions have been made to date. This

course of action is part of the Government's State election policy.

FISHERIES

Licences: Transfers

1008. Mr TRETHOWAN, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

Following the article in *The West Australian* of 6 September headed "Govt. freezes fishing at Current Levels", will he indicate on what basis transfers of existing licences will be approved for—

- (a) limited entry fisheries for—
 - (i) crayfish;
 - (ii) prawns;
 - (iii) salmon;
 - (iv) abalone;
- (b) restricted entry fisheries for—
 - (i) Southern bluefin tuna;
 - (ii) Shark Bay scallops;
 - (iii) estuarine net fisheries;
- (c) or any other species for which restricted licences are issued; and
- (d) if so, would he specify them?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (a) The limited entry notices issued under sections 17 and 32 of the Fisheries Act include a paragraph setting out that the benefits of an authorisation granted pursuant to the notice may be transferred to another person by the person named in the authorisation if the director gives his written approval. Unless there are exceptional overriding reasons, approval is granted by the director.
- (b) Unless there are exceptional circumstances, transfers are not permitted.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Not applicable.

RAILWAYS: WESTRAIL

Staff: Number

1009. Dr DADOUR, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Would he please detail the number of staff presently employed in Westrail—
 - (a) salaried;
 - (b) wages?
- (2) Because of a downturn in freight tonnages or changed work methods, will

Westrail have staff surplus to its requirements in the years ending—

- (a) 30 June 1984;
- (b) 30 June 1985?

(3) If "Yes"—

- (a) what classifications are they, and what is the number;
- (b) where are they located;
- (c) will Westrail terminate their employment as they become surplus;
- (d) will they receive a severance pay;
- (e) will Westrail be taking other steps to overcome the surplus;
- (f) if so, will he detail what action is proposed?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) (a) 1 910;
- (b) 6 339 including part-time and casual workers.
- (2) (a) Yes;
- (b) yes.
- (3) (a) and (b) Work on identifying classifications, numbers and locations is in progress and will take some time to complete;
- (c) and (d) no employee will be made redundant; however, a voluntary severance pay scheme is currently operating successfully;
- (e) and (f) Westrail is actively marketing its services in the areas in which it is best equipped to compete and is making every effort including re-training to place surplus staff in other positions, where practicable.

LAND: AGRICULTURAL

Clearing Bans: Guidelines

1010. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is the Government upholding the clearing bans in the areas to which they have so far applied?
- (2) Is it intended to have any changes in the prevailing guidelines as to how the bans should apply to individual landholders?
- (3) If so, what are these changes?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The control of clearing is continuing in accordance with the provisions of the Country Areas Water Supply Act.

- (2) and (3) The Government is investigating catchment clearing controls but no decisions have been made to date. This course of action is part of the Government's State election policy.

WATER RESOURCES

Western Australian Water Resources Council: Advisory Role

1011. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Water Resources:

Considering the important and welcome statement expressed in his reply to question 737 of 1983, concerning water resources, could he please say what are the matters he has asked the Western Australian Water Resources Council to deliberate upon and advise him?

Mr TONKIN replied:

Matters which have recently been under consideration by the Western Australian Water Resources Council include a review of groundwater problems in the Lake Coogee area, a proposal for a study of sulphate contamination in groundwater, the distribution of various pamphlets related to water resources by or through the Council, recreation in water catchments and reserves, the assessment of the water resources of the State, the preparation of a paper on perspectives for water supply to the year 2000, an education programme directed particularly to water conservation in the Pilbara.

Although these matters have been initiated generally by various members of the council itself, I have in each case been made aware promptly of the initiative and have approved it, and I have been kept informed of progress.

I should add that I expect shortly to be in a position to table the first annual report of the new council.

TRAFFIC: DRIVERS

Drink Driving: Random Tests

1012. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) If random breath testing were introduced in Western Australia what would be (based on experience in other States) the likely percentage of

offenders identified from random testing programmes?

- (2) What is the approximate percentage of alleged offenders identified by current Western Australian programmes to detect excess drink drivers?
- (3) What would be the result in terms of convictions likely to occur by reducing the permitted blood alcohol upper limit from 0.08 per cent to 0.05 per cent?
- (4) Comparing Western Australia and New South Wales, what are the latest available figures on road deaths per 10 000 vehicles in each of the two States?
- (5) How does Western Australia's record compare with that of other States?

Mr CARR replied:

- (1) The information is not readily available but could be sought.
- (2) As this question is not fully understood, could the member be more specific in the information he is seeking?
- (3) Reduction of the permitted blood alcohol upper limit from 0.08 per cent to 0.05 per cent would lead to increased charges. Statistical information as to the degree of increase is not known.
- (4) The latest figures available for this year, as at 31/7/83, indicate the deaths per 10 000 vehicles in New South Wales as 2.6 and Western Australia as 1.5.
- (5) With the exception of the Australian Capital Territory, which has a figure of 1.4 deaths per 10 000 vehicles, Western Australia has the lowest figure of all States.

PRISON: CANNING VALE

Cell Block: Closure

1013. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Prisons:

- (1) What cell block at Canning Vale prison has been closed?
- (2) Why was the closure effected?
- (3) How many prisoners have been removed from Canning Vale prison?
- (4) How many cells at Canning Vale prison are not in use?
- (5) What were the security classifications of the prisoners removed from Canning Vale prison?

- (6) To what prisons were those prisoners sent?
- (7) Has any section of Fremantle prison been brought back into use as a result of removal of prisoners from Canning Vale prison?
- (8) Is such a move contemplated?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Cell block 3.
- (2) In the interests of good economic management and to obtain the maximum benefit from resources and facilities available to the Department.
- (3) 55.
- (4) 63.
- (5) 3 low max.
26 medium
23 minimum
3 open
—
55
- (6) Albany 5
Barton's Mill 2
Bunbury 7
Eastern Goldfields 1
Fremantle 16
Geraldton 1
Karnet 16
West Perth Work Release
Centre 1
Wooroloo 6
- (7) No.
- (8) No.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Subdivisions

1014. Mr HASSELL, to the Treasurer:

Following the question asked by the Hon. G. E. Masters, MLC on 2 August 1983 and question 625 asked by me on 16 August 1983 and question 915 asked by me on 25 August 1983, when is it the expectation of the Treasurer that the collation of the information sought respecting Government agencies will be completed?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The member has referred to questions No. 625 and 915 which deal with different topics.

Assuming that the detail sought and undertaking given in respect of question

625 is the matter now being queried, the Minister for Industrial Relations has advised that extraction of the information requested is not yet finalised, but he has not estimated when it will be completed. Nevertheless, the member may rest assured that as soon as the information is available it will be provided to him.

1015. *This question was postponed.*

EDUCATION: TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Fees: Increase

1016. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it fact that fees for some technical and further education courses have been increased?
- (2) If not all courses, which are affected?
- (3) What percentage increase does the increase represent?
- (4) Why was such a large increase considered necessary?
- (5) What is the hourly rate paid to lecturers?
- (6) What qualifications are required for hobby and non-vocational classes?
- (7) Is he aware that these increases will impose considerable hardship on many people who are undertaking hobby and non-vocational classes, especially in country centres where no alternatives exist?
- (8) As hobby and non-vocational courses often lead to later employment or self employment, will he review the increases with a view to reducing them?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Non-vocational community adult education courses.
- (3) 60 per cent.
- (4) To cover the cost of providing the courses.
- (5) \$19.30 per hour.
- (6) Staff—various; students—no pre-requisites.
- (7) Yes. But provision exists for exemptions for people in necessitous circumstances. No tuition fees are payable for vocational courses.
- (8) No.

EDUCATION: SWIMMING LESSONS

Teaching Qualification

1017. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the qualification to teach vacation swimming classes be changed for the 1983-84 summer?
- (2) If not, is a change being contemplated?
- (3) What was the previous qualification?
- (4) What will be the new qualification?
- (5) Is it expected there will be sufficient teachers with the new qualification in—
 - (a) the Perth metropolitan area; and
 - (b) country areas?
- (6) What opportunities exist for those with the previously accepted qualification to obtain the new qualification in—
 - (a) the Perth metropolitan area; and
 - (b) country areas?
- (7) Will he give consideration to reverting to the old qualification, given the many years of success it achieved?
- (8) If not, if sufficient qualified teachers are not available in the country, will he defer the introduction of the new qualification?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes, but not before 1 January 1985.
- (3) Bronze Medallion of RLSS or SLSS (Royal Life Saving Society or Surf Life Saving Association).
- (4) Austswim (Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate).
- (5) (a) Yes: but the Education Department will have the right to employ other suitably qualified people should this expectation not be realised.
- (b) In most country areas—Yes.
Some remote country areas may not be able to provide sufficient personnel with an "Austswim" certificate in the initial stages of its official introduction.
In these cases people possessing a "current" bronze medallion will be employed until such time as there are adequate "Austswim" courses conducted to fill the need.
- (6) (a) and (b) The Western Australian Branch of "Austswim" through its

member organisations is conducting regular training courses in both metropolitan and country areas. Secondly, all campuses of WACAE and UWA are including the "Austswim" TSWSC in their physical education courses.

- (7) No—The old qualification was a test of rescue and resuscitation ability with no reference to teaching ability.

All States of Australia have adopted the "Austswim" TSWSC as a minimum qualification for teachers of swimming and 10 000 certificates have now been issued in Australia since 1979.

- (8) No—In fact preference is already being given to holders of the TSWSC.

Reference has been made already to the fact that where the Austswim certificate course cannot be made available, people with current bronze medallions will be eligible for employment. However, where the course is offered and people choose not to participate, they can be given no guarantees about ongoing employment.

TAXATION: PAYROLL

Abolition

1018. Mr PETER JONES, to the Treasurer:

What specific discussions have been held with the Federal Government regarding the abolition of payroll tax in Western Australia?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This issue was raised with the Federal Government in the context of discussions at the economic summit conference held in Canberra earlier this year.

RAILWAY

Bowelling-Wagin: Reopening

1019. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has he received a recommendation from the Commissioner for Transport that the Wagin-Bowelling railway not be re-opened?
- (2) When does he intend to accept or reject the recommendation?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) No. The Commissioner of Transport has recommended that only the Bowelling-Bokal section of the branchline remain closed, with the Bokal-Wagin section remaining open for seasonal rail freight services.
- (2) The report of the Commissioner of Transport evaluated several alternative transport options for the Bowelling-Wagin region. Because some of these options were only marginally inferior over a wide range of costs to that option recommended by the Commissioner of Transport, the ultimate decision as to the future of the line is not a clear-cut one. For this reason I have undertaken to consult further with all interested parties. I expect this consultative process to be concluded in the near future, at which time the matter will be placed before Cabinet for a decision.

FUEL AND ENERGY: HYDROELECTRICITY

Ord River

1020. Mr PETER JONES, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) As referred to in the Diamond (Ashton Joint Venture) Agreement Act for which he is the responsible Minister, what consideration has been given to the provision of a hydroelectric generating scheme at Lake Argyle?
- (2) What feasibility studies have been undertaken?
- (3) What costs have been involved in any studies?
- (4) Is it proposed to proceed with the project?
- (5) If not, why not?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The Diamond (Ashton Joint Venture) Agreement Act requires the joint venturers to give consideration to the use of hydro power from the Ord and to conduct studies. These studies were arranged in conjunction with SECWA utilising the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation for the hydro power plant facility and SECWA has carried out the studies regarding power transmission lines.

- (2) Refer (1) above.

SECWA has also provided a tariff proposal to the Ashton joint venturers.

- (3) The Ashton joint venturers have contributed \$719 000 towards the cost of these studies. The principle involved has been that the Ashton joint venturers have carried the costs of the studies.
- (4) and (5) On the basis of their own investigations the joint venturers have argued that power generation by on-site diesels is a lower cost option and involves less financial exposure to them. The Government intends to keep this matter under consideration. The final decision has not been made.

DAIRY INDUSTRY ACT

Amendment

1021. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Have the amendments to the Dairy Industry Act been finalised?
- (2) When will these recommendations be available to the public?
- (3) When will the moratorium on milk quotas be lifted?
- (4) When will the amendments to the Dairy Industry Act be presented to Parliament?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) to (4) The amendments to the Dairy Industry Act are in the final stages of drafting for presentation to Parliament in this session. Changes to the present policies regarding the allocation and transfer of milk quotas are contained in the amendments.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Power Station: South-west

1022. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) At what stage is the investigation to site the proposed new powerhouse in the south-west?
- (2) Is the new powerhouse dependent on the proposed aluminium smelter?
- (3) If so, what are the changes of the aluminium smelter being built?
- (4) If built, at what site?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The investigation is proceeding and is not complete.
- (2) As to timing only.
- (3) The question is not understood.
- (4) Not applicable.

PORTS

Single Authority

1023. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

Is he in favour of a single port authority in Western Australia to replace the existing local regional port authorities?

Mr GRILL replied:

It would be premature to express a viewpoint until I have seen the results of the Co-ordinator General of Transport's current review of port administration.

FUEL AND ENERGY: PETROL

Lead-free: Legislation

1024. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When is it intended to legislate to require all petrol stations in Western Australia to sell lead-free petrol as from 1 July 1985?
- (2) What effect is lead-free petrol expected to have on the level of exhaust pollution?
- (3) Will the effect be significant in terms of the current exhaust pollution levels in—
 - (a) the Perth metropolitan area;
 - (b) country areas of the State?
- (4) Is the lead-free petrol expected to be more costly to the motorist?
- (5) What measures is the Government considering in order to control the price of lead-free petrol?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) It is envisaged that a Bill will be put before Parliament during 1984 but it is not intended that all outlets sell lead-free petrol from 1 July 1985.
- (2) and (3) The national policy, including Australian design rule 37, as endorsed by the previous Government, requires stricter limits on exhaust pollution levels

together with the use of lead-free petrol. The use of lead-free petrol will—

- (a) reduce and, in due course, eliminate lead pollution from motor vehicles;
- (b) enable exhaust pollution to be controlled by a catalyst in the vehicle tail pipe instead of by the present techniques which constrain combustion within the engine. This is expected to benefit fuel economy and responsiveness.

Lead-free petrol will need to be available for the new cars in both country and city since the use of leaded petrol would cause catalyst damage and lead to an illegal level of pollutants from the vehicle in all its subsequent use, wherever that may be.

The specified limits for hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide emissions under Australian design rule 37 are some 60 per cent of those under the currently applicable Australian design rule 27 C.

- (4) No.
- (5) The matter is presently being addressed by the advisory committee on vehicle emissions and noise. The Government will await the outcome of that discussion before considering the matter further.

FUEL AND ENERGY: PETROL

Lead-free: Other States

1025. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

Can he tell me what the current situation in each of the other Australian States is in relation to legislation or regulations governing lead-free petrol?

Mr GRILL replied:

All States, including Western Australia, agreed in 1981 to adopt a nationally uniform policy and resolved, among other things, that "measures be introduced on a national basis to require the availability of 91.5 octane unleaded petrol at a significant number of fuel retail petrol outlets from 1 July 1985".

New South Wales has legislated for all retail petrol outlets to sell lead-free petrol from 1 July 1985.

Victoria has legislation in preparation.

South Australia intends to legislate. The possibility of achieving this through amendments to existing Acts is being examined.

Tasmania and Queensland have yet to take substantive steps.

TRAFFIC: ACCIDENTS

Trucks

1026. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is there any evidence to suggest that heavy trucks have been involved in an increasing number of crashes in Western Australia in recent times?
- (2) Was the Western Australian Government consulted before the announcement by the Federal Transport Minister that a national inquiry into the road freight industry will be investigating the increasing number of heavy truck crashes?
- (3) What involvement does the State Government intend to have in this inquiry?
- (4) What other inquiries have been instituted by the present Federal Transport Minister that will affect this State?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) No. In fact, the trend is the reverse.
- (2) Answered by my response to the member's question No. 116 on 26 July.
- (3) I have indicated to the Federal Minister for Transport that the Western Australian Government will co-operate to ensure that the inquiry is of greatest possible benefit.
- (4) I am not aware of any major public inquiry of the magnitude of the National Road Freight Industry Inquiry, although the member will appreciate that the Federal Transport portfolio's interests are extensive. There are a great number of ongoing transport issues which are of mutual importance, and on which Federal and State Governments consult.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

Pipeline: Kalgoorlie-Perth

1027. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Who has been commissioned to complete the Western Australian Government study into proposals for the building of a gas pipeline from Perth to Kalgoorlie?

- (2) How much is the study estimated to cost?
- (3) When was the study begun?
- (4) When is it estimated the study will be completed?
- (5) Does the study include an examination of the impact that such a pipeline would make on the power demands of local industry supplied through the soon to be completed Muja to Kalgoorlie power line?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) to (4) The State Energy Commission recently completed a preliminary study of the proposal to construct a gas pipeline to the eastern goldfields region using the services of consultants already engaged by the commission for the Dampier to Perth natural gas pipeline project and also for extensions and laterals from the main pipeline. The study, which was undertaken during a period of several weeks, was carried out at minimum cost and concluded that, in view of the small market for natural gas in the eastern goldfields region provided by current and foreseeable developments and the long distance and high cost of the pipeline, the project was at best marginal in terms of economic return on invested capital.
- (5) The study undertaken by the commission was based on substitution of natural gas for liquid petroleum fuels for direct use within the minerals processing facilities of mining companies located near to Kalgoorlie and did not consider that natural gas would substitute for power supply to the Kalgoorlie region through the transmission line now under construction, as this would not be an economic proposition.

EDUCATION: PRIMARY SCHOOL

Canning Vale

1028. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What sites are being investigated as possible alternative locations for the Canning Vale primary school?
- (2) When is it anticipated that a final decision on the alternative site will be made?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) A site in East Canning Vale has been identified as the possible location for a school for the Canning Vale children.
- (2) Negotiations are still in progress.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES

Members of Parliament: Requests for Information

1029. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Works:

What instructions (written or verbal) has he, the Premier or any other Minister given to officers of the Public Works Department, Main Roads Department or any other department under his ministerial supervision on what information, advice or assistance that they (the officers) should supply to members of Parliament seeking information from those departments?

Mr McIVER replied:

None. However, I would expect departmental officers to observe the long standing convention that comments on issues of Government policy should be conveyed to members through the appropriate Minister.

With regard to the member's reference to the Main Roads Department, I would advise that this particular authority comes within the ambit of responsibility of my colleague, the Minister for Transport.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

3 per cent Levy

1030. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Could the Minister explain to me how the statutory levy of 3 per cent in 1981-82 totalling \$9 342 966 paid to the State Government by the State Energy Commission on electricity sales of \$346 517 784 and gas sales of \$27 243 849 was arrived at?

Mr BRYCE replied:

In accordance with the Public Authorities (Contributions) Act 1974.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Metropolitan Transport Trust: Staff

1031. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Transport:

What staff ceilings currently apply to the employment of personnel by the Metropolitan Transport Trust?

Mr GRILL replied:

The current establishment of the MTT is 2 107.

1032 to 1034 *These questions were postponed.*

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Primary School: Appointments

1035. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What percentage of 1982 primary school graduate teachers have received teaching appointments this year?
- (2) Does the department envisage appointing the balance of graduates this year?
- (3) Will unplaced graduates take precedence over 1983 graduates for appointment in 1984?
- (4) If not, how does the department intend to utilise the balance of 1982 graduates who still have not received teaching appointments?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) 60.2 per cent of the 1982 and mid-year 1983 primary school graduate teachers have received teaching appointments to 14 September 1983.
- (2) No.
- (3) No.
- (4) The appointment of graduate teachers is based on merit ranking. The 1982 graduates who have not received teaching appointments will be ranked with the 1983 graduates.

EDUCATION: TECHNICAL

Colleges: Fees

1036. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What was the cost to the Education Department of advice to pre-enrolled technical college students that fees for the third term of their courses had increased?

- (2) How many pre-enrolled students did not continue their courses?
- (3) Why was the increase in course fees not included as an education Budget item?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Approximately \$100.
- (2) Not known, enrolment still in process.
- (3) The increase was an outcome of a Government review of revenue and expenditure as part of the Budget process.

HOSPITAL: WANNEROO

Medical Practitioners: Number

1037. Dr DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many medical staff are employed at Wanneroo Hospital?
- (2) What is their seniority and how much are they paid?
- (3) Who accepts responsibility for the medical staff?
- (4) Who pays their insurance?
- (5) For how long are they rostered at Wanneroo Hospital?
- (6) (a) How many patients did they see in July; and
(b) what was the cost?
- (7) (a) What medical backup is there;
(b) where is/are he/they stationed;
(c) for how many hours per week is/are he/they available?
- (8) What is the availability of—
(a) X-rays;
(b) laboratory;
(c) ambulance;
(d) anaesthetics?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Three medical officers employed by Sir Charles Gairdner, Fremantle and Royal Perth Hospitals are seconded to Wanneroo Hospital.
- (2) Senior resident medical officer—(3rd Year) \$26 012 to (4th Year) \$27 069.
- (3) Area Medical Superintendent.
- (4) All resident medical officers are responsible for payment of their own insurance for medical liability.
- (5) The Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital resident is rostered permanently at Wanneroo and the other officers are ro-

stered for periods varying between four weeks and three months.

- (6) (a) 321;
(b) approximately \$6 500;
- (7) (a) to (c)
General practitioners have indicated that they will be available to support the residents and are available from varying locations and at various times.
- (8) (a) on 24-hour call availability;
(b) on 24-hour call availability;
(c) on 24-hour call availability;
(d) local anaesthetics are performed by resident medical officers. If emergency procedures requiring general anaesthetics cannot be dealt with by the specialists and general practitioners who normally attend the hospital, they are directed to teaching hospitals.

RAILWAYS

Accidents: Deaths

1038. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many people have been killed in railway accidents involving Westrail trains in 1983?
- (2) Will he introduce stricter safety procedures to lower Westrail's accident rate?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Seven: two as a result of level crossing collisions, five involving pedestrians.
- (2) Improved safety measures are continually pursued, but I am advised that the existing safety standards for level and pedestrian crossings are the best that can be reasonably attained and are considered equal or superior to those of other railways.

BOATS

Registration Fees

1039. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How much money is raised from registration fees levied by the Department of Marine and Harbours on pleasure boats?
- (2) Where is this money spent?

- (3) What expenditure from State Government funds can be classed as benefiting pleasure boating?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) Roundly \$709 00 was collected during 1982-83.
- (2) Marine and harbour revenue, including private boat registration fees, is paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund.
- (3) State Government funds are directed towards a wide range of recreational boating activities, including boat safety education, control of boating, sea search and rescue, attendance at aquatic events, together with capital expenditure on recreational boating facilities such as navigation aids and non-commercial jetties.

For 1982-83 operating expenditure by the Department of Marine and Harbours on recreational boating was roundly \$862 000 and capital expenditure was roundly \$382 000.

Other Government departments and agencies would also incur expenditure of benefit to pleasure boating, such as the National Safety Council in promoting boating safety and the Police Department in sea search and rescue.

WATER RESOURCES: CATCHMENT AREA

Lower Helena

1040. Mr THOMPSON, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What percentage of all land contained within the Lower Helena pipehead dam catchment area was alienated prior to the catchment being gazetted?
- (2) Since that date, has any more Crown land been alienated and, if so, how much?
- (3) How many parcels of privately owned land in the catchment, other than land zoned urban, has been subdivided since it was reserved for water supply purposes?
- (4) Has any such subdivision been as a result of Town Planning Board approval?
- (5) Is it not a fact that almost all, if not all, subdivision has occurred because of appeal either to the Minister for Town Planning, or a court?
- (6) What is, or will be the impact on the quality of water harvested from the

catchment because of subdivisions and how much greater is that impact likely to be than would have been the case if no subdivision occurred?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) About 27 per cent of the 11 300 hectare Lower Helena catchment area was alienated prior to the catchment being gazetted.
- (2) to (5) Precise information on these issues is not available to me. However, I can advise that—
- (a) Only relatively small areas of Crown land have been alienated since the catchment was gazetted. A recent example was the release in 1980 of six lots in the Pickering Brook townsite involving an area of 3.6 hectares.
- (b) In the last four years approximately six parcels of privately owned land in the catchment, other than land zoned urban, have been subdivided.
- (c) Few subdivisions have been approved by Town Planning Board and since 1980 no appeals have been upheld by the Town Planning Appeal Tribunal. The tribunal in the same period dismissed four appeals while others were withdrawn.

Most of the subdivisions in the catchment occurred as the result of appeals to the Minister for Town Planning.

- (6) It is impossible to quantify the impact of subdivisions on the quality of water harvested from the catchment. However, as there is a clear correlation between development and the deterioration in water quality, the water authority has formulated a policy to limit actions which encourage closer development, such as re-zoning subdivision and alienation of Crown land.

LAND: AGRICULTURAL

Salinity

1041. Mr THOMPSON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the annual rate at which agricultural land in Western Australia is being rendered useless because of soil being affected by salt?

- (2) How does that rate compare with the rate—
 (a) five years ago;
 (b) ten years ago?
- (3) What action is intended by the Government to combat salt encroachment?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) Surveys of salt-affected land have been conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1955, 1962, 1974 and 1979.

The rate of increase in the period 1974 to 1979—9.5 per cent per annum.

The rate of increase in the period 1955 to 1979—5.5 per cent per annum.

The next survey is due in 1984.

- (3) The Government is supporting research on all aspects of control of saline encroachment which includes—
 (i) manipulation of the landscape water balance by agronomic methods;
 (ii) agroforestry;
 (iii) reforestation;
 (iv) surface drainage;
 (v) deep drainage;
 (vi) waterlogging interactions;
 (vii) saltland agronomy.

MINING: IRON ORE

Japan: Sales

1042. Mr THOMPSON, to the Minister for Economic Development and Technology:

- (1) Has the Minister discussed with the appropriate authorities proposed tonnage of Western Australian iron ore that Japan will take for—
 (a) the balance of this fiscal year;
 (b) the next full year?
- (2) What is the expected income from the sale of iron ore for each of those two periods and how does that income compare with previous sales performances?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) (a) and (b).

The Western Australian Government has been kept informed by representatives of the Japanese steel mills, trading companies, and the iron ore producers themselves regarding anticipated steel production in Japan. Australia's share of

the Japanese iron ore market is expected to be in the range of 48-50 percent.

- (2) In 1983-84 the revenue in Australian dollars from iron ore sales is expected to remain the same as in the previous fiscal year. The revenue for fiscal 1984-85 will depend on price negotiations next year, exchange rate fluctuations, and the rate of growth in Japanese steel production. Indications are that the industry can look forward to a significantly improved result in 1984-85.

HOSPITAL

Kalamunda District Community

1043. Mr THOMPSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In view of the very high bed occupancy at the Kalamunda District Community Hospital, as detailed in response to question 943, has he plans to increase the capacity of the hospital?
- (2) If so, will he give details?
- (3) If no provision has been made to cater for the rising demand for beds, will he detail the action proposed to cater for an overflow situation?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The occupancy rates for the hospital are on average 1981-82—78.5 per cent and 1982-83—80.7 per cent. All hospitals reach periods of peak occupancy just as there can occur periods of low utilisation.

The member has already been informed in the answer to parliamentary question 943, that temporary additional facilities were made available to deal with the situation when bed capacity had been reached.

HEALTH: DENTAL

Fluoridation of Water Supplies: Towns

1044. Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Would he list those towns in Western Australia that have a town water supply that is not—
 (a) fluoridated; and/or
 (b) chlorinated?

(2) What towns have had their water supplies—

(a) fluoridated;

(b) chlorinated,

and in what year since 1970?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) and (2) The engineering reports and statistics published in conjunction with the Public Works Department annual report list all towns with departmental water supplies.

Those which were fluoridated, with the year of commissioning shown in brackets, include—

all towns connected to the Great Southern Towns Water Supply Scheme (1968);

Albany (1969);

Geraldton (1969);

Manjimup (1969);

Esperance (1971);

Broome (1979);

Exmouth (1980);

Derby (1981).

The only town supplies not chlorinated are—

Binningup

Boyanup

Capel

Coomberdale

Dandaragan

Dardanup

Donnybrook

Eaton

Guilderton

Hopetoun

Jurien

Lancelin

Ledge Point

Moora

Myalup

Mullalyup

Muntadgin

Nabawa

Peppermint Grove

Pingaring

Quinns Rock

Sandstone

Seabird

WATER RESOURCES

Prevelly Park

1045. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Water Resources:

(1) Has a survey been carried out to investigate a water supply for Prevelly Park?

(2) What was the projected cost of the project?

(3) How many services were under consideration?

(4) What was the—

(a) average;

(b) maximum daily;

(c) yearly,

amount of water required to service the area?

(5) What were the areas of supply that were under consideration?

Mr TONKIN replied:

(1) A preliminary review has been made of the alternative options which could be developed to provide a water supply for Prevelly Park townsite.

(2) The estimated cost of the supply is between \$400 000 and \$530 000 depending on whether a suitable groundwater source can be located or an extension from the Margaret River town water supply is required.

(3) The review was based on there being 61 potential services.

(4) (a) 150 cubic metres per day;

(b) 530 cubic metres per day;

(c) 55 000 cubic metres.

(5) The supply was considered for all the existing 140 lots in the townsite.

STATE FORESTS

Diseases Regulations

1046. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Forests:

(1) How many breaches of the Forest Diseases Regulations were identified in the years—

(a) 1980;

(b) 1981;

(c) 1982?

- (2) In each of those years—
 (a) in how many cases were legal proceedings instituted;
 (b) how many were successful; and
 (c) what was the nature of the penalties imposed?
- (3) Can he indicate the general nature of infringements and whether they were committed by industry personnel, the public or otherwise?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) (a) 1980—29;
 (b) 1981—22;
 (c) 1982—19.
- (2) (a) 1980—10;
 1981—13;
 1982—6.
 (b) 1980—9;
 1981—12;
 1982—4.
 (c) 1980—\$510 fines \$221 costs;
 1981—\$870 fines \$508.60 costs;
 1982—\$275 fines \$168.80 costs.
- (3) Unauthorised entry by the public.

LAND

National Park: Jarrah Park

1047. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) Is he aware the Campaign to save Native Forests (WA) is organising a "Jarrah Forest Festival" to be held near Dwellingup on 15 and 16 October to demonstrate public support for a 100 000 ha reserve in the northern jarrah forest?
- (2) Does the Government intend to create a reserve of approximately 100 000 ha in the northern jarrah forest?
- (3) What is the expected impact upon each of the timber mills in this area should the reserve be created?
- (4) What loss of employment is expected to result from the creation of the reserve?
- (5) Is it intended to have much use of this forest area, including authorised timber milling?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The question of reserves in the northern jarrah forest is under active consideration.
- (3) The impact, if any, will of necessity be dependent on the size and nature of the reserves.
- (4) and (5) Answered by (3) above.

LIQUOR: LICENSED PREMISES

Adulteration of Drinks

1048. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many actions have been taken by the Public Health Department against proprietors of licensed premises for adulteration of any form of drink during each of the last five years?
- (2) Is there a regular section of the Public Health Department which constantly monitors this problem in licensed premises?

- (3) How many personnel are employed in this section of the Public Health Department?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 1979—0; 1980—2; 1981—3; 1982—1; 1983—1 to date.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Normally there are two health surveyors employed by the Public Health Department full time on routine testing and inspections under supervision of a senior officer associated with other duties. Occasionally additional officers are utilised in conjunction with other duties.

1049. *This question was postponed.*

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PORTS

Charges

233. Mr WATT, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What are the wharfage charges on grain at the—
 - (a) Fremantle Port Authority,
 - (b) Albany Port Authority,
 - (c) Bunbury Port Authority,
 - (d) Esperance Port Authority, and
 - (e) Geraldton Port Authority?
- (2) Is the Minister able to say whether any increases are planned, and if so, at which ports, and by how much?
- (3) Are the planned increases recommended by the port authority concerned?
- (4) Is it likely that increases at any particular port will result in cargo such as grain being directed to another port?

Mr GRILL replied:

I thank the member for some notice of his question. The answer is as follows—

- (1) The grain rate at the Fremantle Port Authority is 70 cents, and this applies also at Bunbury, Esperance, and Geraldton. I understand that the nub of the question involves the Albany Port Authority. The grain rate was to be 70 cents for two months and was then to rise to 90 cents, as announced. However, we were most concerned about the financial viability of the Albany port, and because of that concern I set up a committee headed by the Co-ordinator General of Transport to inquire into the economics of that port. He has made a recommendation to me on the grain rate, but that recommendation has yet to go to Cabinet, so I cannot indicate to the member the exact rate recommended. It is somewhat lower than 90 cents. I will be announcing the rate as soon as the recommendation is accepted by Cabinet.
- (2) I think this has been answered by my previous answer.
- (3) This also has been answered.

- (4) The fourth question deals with the likelihood of grain being diverted from Albany. I indicate that there is no economic reason that grain should be diverted from Albany or from any other port. An extra wharfage charge of, say, 15 cents is trifling compared with the cost of diverting grain to Kwinana, because the cost of carting grain to Kwinana from Albany is \$12 a tonne. The economic advantages are in favour of having the grain delivered to Albany. I hope the Albany Port Authority and all the people of Albany who are concerned about the viability of the port very much support the decision of the Government in due course, because it is being made with the aim and hope that the Port of Albany, which has gone through hard times recently, will be viable next season and for many seasons to come.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Pecuniary Interests

234. Mr D. L. SMITH, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he seen a report on page 14 of today's *Daily News* which states that 65 per cent of Australians say that parliamentarians in Australia should be required by law to disclose details of their personal assets, and that 56 per cent of Liberal-National Country Party voters say the same?
- (2) What action does the Government intend to take on disclosure of personal assets by members of Parliament?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Government intends to bring a Bill before this House as soon as possible for disclosure of members' financial interests.

Mr Laurance: It will require a constitutional majority.

Mr Spriggs: They will have to learn to count.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I have heard it said that a day is a long time in politics, and I guess that is true. I can remember the present Opposition when in Government being in a similar position under similar

circumstances. Members opposite must remember that he who laughs last laughs loudest.

I note that, although he has not seen the legislation, the Leader of the Opposition has indicated he does not support our proposals.

ACTS AMENDMENT (CONSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL) BILL

Defeat: Early Poll

235. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) I refer him to an article in *The West Australian* of 27 August 1983 referring to the electoral reform and the comment, "Burke warns of early poll if Liberals block legislation". In view of the fact that he did not get sufficient support from his own members, will he carry out that threat, or was it a bluff?
- (2) Does he agree with his remarks reported in the same newspaper that failure to support the legislation would show contempt of the electors?
- (3) If so, will he advise what action he now contemplates.

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (3) In answer to what I suppose we all understand to be a fairly frivolous question, let me say that if the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues cannot understand that anyone can make an honest mistake—

Mr O'Connor: You said it was mismanagement when we did it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: —as has been made on this occasion by the Minister for Transport, there is something amiss in the understanding of the Opposition. I can understand the politics of the situation that causes the Opposition to cavort in its pleasure at this time.

Mr Clarko: Does the Whip have responsibility?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Someone who has not made a mistake probably does not sit in this Chamber, and from the Government's point of view the legislation that would reform the Legislative Council continues to have a very high priority. That legislation will be reintroduced into this Parliament as soon as possible. Then we will have the opportunity to again debate the matter, if that is the wont of the

Opposition. Members opposite will then have the opportunity to vote in which way they will. It is regrettable and a cause of concern to the Government, a major disappointment to the Government, that through an honest mistake by the Minister for Transport, the legislation has been lost.

Mr O'Connor: Mismanagement.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The legislation continues to have a very high priority for the Government and it will be reintroduced as early as possible.

HEALTH: NURSES

Night Shift

236. Mr I. F. TAYLOR, to the Minister for Health:

What steps has the Minister taken to fulfil the election undertaking to provide extra nursing staff in order to implement the new night shift roster requested by the Royal Australian Nursing Federation and refused by the former Liberal Government?

Mr HODGE replied:

Immediately upon gaining office I took steps to settle a long-running industrial dispute in train between the Royal Australian Nursing Federation and the previous Government. The present Government agreed to the nurses' claim that they should have a reasonable break between working night shift and resuming work the next morning. We took immediate action to invite the staff of those hospitals that wanted the new roster arrangements to talk with us, and we agreed to implement the new arrangements. I am pleased to tell the House that so far 155 full-time equivalent positions for extra nurses have been approved by me in 38 hospitals throughout the State. All this has been done since the election. If further hospitals wish to implement the new roster arrangements, they can do so, and they will be able to have the extra staff required. I stress the fact that 38 hospitals have availed themselves of the Government's offer, and so far 155 extra nurses have been employed in this State since this Government has been in office.

HEALTH: MENTAL*Inquiry*

237. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it a fact that an inquiry into the care of the intellectually handicapped was carried out last year by the former Deputy Vice Chancellor of Murdoch University, Professor Arthur Beacham?
- (2) If so, will he table the report of the inquiry?
- (3) Does the recently announced proposed inquiry into mental health duplicate the work of the Beacham inquiry?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) to (3) Yes, an inquiry was ordered by the previous Government into the possible separation of the division of the intellectually handicapped from Mental Health Services. The results of the inquiry were not accepted by the previous Government and were not released.

Mr MacKinnon: Were they rejected by the previous Government?

Mr HODGE: Yes. My predecessor went ahead and ordered a further inquiry under Mr Peter Caban, a hospital consultant. He was brought to the State to conduct a further inquiry into the same matter.

Mr O'Connor: Will you have an inquiry into the inquiry into the inquiry?

Mr HODGE: I studied the Beacham report and the Caban report. I agree with the principle contained in the Beacham report. Caban's report was more one designed to actually set the nuts and bolts in place and to show how a separate commission could be established. It did not deal with the philosophy of the treatment of intellectually handicapped persons. There was a fair bit of dissatisfaction about both reports among voluntary groups and other people interested in this area. There was no obvious consensus about the implementation of either of the reports. I accept in principle the findings of the Beacham report. One reason I have set up the working committee to investigate the separation of the division of the intellectually handicapped from Mental Health Services is to receive a recommendation on how the philosophy of the Beacham report can be implemented in a practical

way. I will give consideration to the member's request that the Beacham report be released to him, although my predecessor did not make it public.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS*Small Claims Tribunal: Maximum Claim*

238. Mr READ, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) When was the maximum claim of \$1 000 set for the Small Claims Tribunal?
- (2) Has the Government given consideration to increasing the maximum claim to provide for more adequate protection and compensation to consumers with legitimate claims?

Mr TONKIN replied:

- (1) The maximum claim of \$1 000 was set on 12 August 1977.
- (2) Yes, it is proposed to increase the amount to \$2 000 in the near future when a number of other amendments to the Small Claims Tribunals Act will also be dealt with.

TELEVISION*Community Licence*

239. MR HASSELL, to the Minister for the Arts:

- (1) Does he know whether the group which he has promised to support in its application for a community television licence is yet incorporated? It was reported as having been incorporated, but my investigations indicate it is not.
- (2) Has he taken advice from the Crown Law Department or any competent legal authority about whether the proposed grant to that body can lawfully be made in terms of the provisions of the Lotteries (Control) Act relating to the dispersal of moneys gained from instant lotteries?

Mr DAVIES replied:

- (1) and (2) I do not know whether the body is incorporated. It has been in operation for several years and needs the money to finalise its inquiry. It has money from several other sources as well as from Government sources. In my view and the view of those I consulted, it would have

been a pity to see this group lose all the work it has done because of a shortage of funds to finish the work. The amount is something like \$33 000. The Lotteries (Control) Act gives the Minister sole control over the distribution of the money in any way he likes.

I am not aware of any requirements other than for cultural purposes. Members might remember this was argued widely in the House when the Bill was debated, but I might say that whatever is the amount of money, I have made some inquiries of very competent people—not like the previous Minister who seemed to give it out for political purposes.

Mr Hassell: It must be used for the arts. You had better have a look at it.

ELECTORAL

Reform: Church Support

240. Mrs HENDERSON, to the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform:

Does the document *Changing Australia* produced recently by the Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, the Australian Council of Churches, and the Commission on Social Responsibility of the Uniting Church support the electoral reform and the fundamental principle of equally valued votes?

Mr TONKIN replied:

There can be no mistake about the beliefs of the joint sponsors of the document *Changing Australia* when it comes to questions of the intrinsic worth of each person in our society.

On page 17 the authors say—

All people share the essential dignity of our common humanity and yet are unique persons—individuals with cultures, personal histories and skills. Reconciliation in Australian Society must be founded on this conviction. It requires the acceptance of the worth of others.

On page 18 under the general heading "SHARE POWER" the following appears

... Governments must become more representative and more accountable. One area for reform is in electoral laws. All views are not rep-

resented in the Parliaments because of the electoral systems.

Mr Thompson: They are disappointed by the lack of education.

Mr TONKIN: To continue the quote—

There are inequalities in electorates so as to favour one voter over another. Electoral boundaries are often drawn so as to favour one party over another. The present systems of election funding enable the parties with the most resources to place their views most forcefully before the electorate. Electoral reforms enacted or proposed in some States are steps towards more representative government.

I repeat that this document was produced by the Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, the Australian Council of Churches, and the Commission on Social Responsibility of the Uniting Church.

Mr O'Connor: You read that out before.

MEAT: LAMB

Marketing Board: Boycotting

241. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

I understand that the Minister now has the information that I sought from him in a question I asked yesterday. I repeat my question—

- (1) Is Mr Goodchild, who has been identified with the boycotting of lamb in WA, a deputy member of the Lamb Marketing Board?
- (2) Does the Minister intend to have him replaced?

Mr EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) As I indicated to the member for Stirling yesterday, I have ascertained the detail which he sought. Mr Goodchild is deputy to the board member who is appointed to the WA Lamb Marketing Board as a person engaged in the slaughter, distribution or sale of lamb. He is appointed until December 1984. If Mr Goodchild feels that his acknowledged stated bypassing of the Lamb Marketing Board in the conduct of his business represents a conflict of interests, the moral responsibility to rectify that situation must rest with him at this time.

HOUSING: INTEREST RATES

Reduction

242. Mrs BEGGS, to the Minister for Housing:

While appreciating the recently announced reductions in building society interest rates on new home loans, can he say what is the situation with regard to rates on existing loans and what action the Government has taken to bring about a reduction in these rates?

Mr O'Connor: They will be reduced as well.

Mr Hassell: Temporarily.

Mr O'Connor: I have spoken to them.

Mr WILSON replied:

Of course the Government has welcomed the decrease in rates for new home loans, not only because of the relief that it provides for those people, but also because it is an additional boost to the home building industry which, as a result of incentives provided by the Federal and State Governments since coming to power earlier this year, has begun to lift in recent months.

On Monday at one of my scheduled regular meetings with building society representatives I expressed my concern that the benefits of decreased rates should extend also to existing home occupiers.

I put to them that they should be prepared to give further consideration to the need to work towards parity between existing loans and new loans.

I am pleased to be able to say that this afternoon I have been informed that one Western Australian permanent building society has already responded positively to my request.

Mr Hassell: Good.

Mr O'Connor: They were all going to do it, anyway.

Mr WILSON: I am advised that Home Building Society intends to reduce the interest rate on existing loan accounts for most borrowers by .75 per cent.

Government members: Hear, hear.

Mr WILSON: To assist the recovery in the home building and real estate markets the rate for new loan applications will be set at .5 per cent less than the new standard society rates.

This will establish a new prime rate of 13.75 per cent for new loans. This rate

will be available to owner occupiers seeking loans up to \$35 000. The lower rate for new loans will be reviewed from time to time in the light of conditions in the housing industry.

In making the announcement the Chairman of Home Building Society, Sir Frederick Chaney, said that this was the lowest building society home loan rate so far announced in the present round of reductions.

Home Building Society is the first society to reduce existing as well as new loan rates.

The saving for the society's average borrower with a loan of \$32 000 is \$20 a month.

Some 70 per cent of home buyers will receive the reduction of .75 per cent. Larger owner occupied home loans and loans for blocks of land and other purposes will generally receive .5 per cent reduction.

The Government recognises this response by the Home Building Society and looks to other building societies to follow the lead that this society has given in reducing the rates of existing loans.

Government members: Hear, hear!

NATURAL DISASTER

Drought: Loans

243. Mr OLD, to the Minister for Agriculture:

I apologise for not being able to give any notice of my question, which refers to the answer today to question 976. In view of this answer I am seeking advice from the Minister on the consideration of drought relief loans for farmers declared drought-affected on 27 June and backdated to 1 April 1983. I ask—

(1) Is the Government considering funding these loans from rural adjustments funds?

(2) If so, will the interest rates be comparable with drought-loan rates?

Mr EVANS replied:

(1) and (2) I regret that I cannot give a definite, finite answer to that question. I am probably as anxious as the member to have the matter cleared up. I have the matter under consideration with Treasury and as soon as I have some in-

formation I will pass it on to the member.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

Bunbury Visits

244. Mr D. L. SMITH, to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Regional Development and the North West with special responsibility for "Bunbury 2000":

- (1) How often has the Minister been to Bunbury in the last two weeks?
- (1) What was the purpose of each visit?
- (2) What progress has been made in the appointment of the advisory committee to advise the south-west development authority and when would he expect to announce the names of the members?
- (4) What progress has been made in achieving the objectives of "Bunbury 2000"?

Mr P. V. Jones: And (5), "When is his next visit"?

Mr Blaikie: He was there this afternoon!

Mr GRILL replied:

I thank the member for Bunbury for some notice of the question. I was not in Bunbury this afternoon, but I wish that I was.

Mr Clarko: That was later this afternoon.

Mr GRILL: My answer is as follows—

- (1) and (2) I have been to Bunbury twice in the last two weeks, firstly on Tuesday 30 August, when, in company with the Commissioner of Railways, I inspected Westrail facilities and met with Westrail personnel in Bunbury, Collie, Busselton, Boyup Brook, Picton and Capel. I inspected three possible alternate sites for a new Bunbury railway station, and inspected a possible route for passenger services into Bunbury through Glen Iris.

On Thursday 8 September, I—

- (i) Met with the director of the south west development authority to discuss and plan progress of implementation of "Bunbury 2000" policy.
- (ii) Met with Bunbury and districts planning committee and outlined Government's proposals for the greater Bunbury region, and received input from this committee regarding proposals for relocating Westrail's activities from Bunbury to Picton.

(3) Applications closed on 31 August. A substantial field of applications was received and a short list has been prepared for my consideration.

(4) A great deal has already been done. I expect to make a comprehensive statement to the House in a few weeks' time.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS: DISPUTE

Pilbara: Government Intervention

245. Mr O'CONNOR, to the Deputy Premier:

I direct this question to the Deputy Premier because the Government seems to have lost its direction. I ask—

- (1) Is he aware of the article in today's *Daily News* in which the Minister for Industrial Relations (Mr Dans) said, in relation to the Pilbara dispute, that the Government had not attempted to stand on the sidelines as had previous Liberal Governments?
- (2) If so, does he agree with his ministerial colleague's suggestion that previous Liberal Governments stood on the sidelines during disputes, or does he stand by what he said yesterday that the intervention by previous Liberal Governments is the cause of the current dispute?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) I indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that this afternoon I have been so busy attending to the affairs of State that I have not had the opportunity of reading that worthy journal.

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Training Courses

246. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

It is reported in the *Western Teacher* of 9 September 1983 that he advised the recent State School Teachers' Union conference that the Government had decided to allow teachers time off to attend Trade Union Training Association (TUTA) courses. I therefore ask him—

- (1) Which teachers are to be given time off, and under what conditions? Specifically, what is the maximum time to be allowed each teacher in a given year?

- (2) Will such teachers be replaced by a similarly qualified teacher while at such courses?
- (3) What is the estimated cost per annum of this arrangement?
- (4) Why should not teachers who enjoy 11 weeks' holiday per annum undertake these courses during their holidays?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (4) It is a rather detailed question, but I think I can answer it in satisfactory terms. The situation is that the Government has reviewed a whole range of ways in which teachers are released from schools for a variety of purposes. As a former Minister, he will be aware, for example, that during his brief occupancy of that office—

Mr J. F. Taylor: He would have forgotten by now.

Mr PEARCE: —many teachers were released from classrooms on a leave-without-pay basis to attend various sporting functions. The present Government has extended the allowances which have been made to various sporting personnel to apply also to those involved in courses which are more to do with their profession and associated activities as teachers. We have expanded this to the area of local government where the former Minister, I gather has some present personal interest in this. I have agreed to allow the Deputy President of the Wanneroo Shire Council to attend an important local government seminar in the Eastern States on a leave-without-pay basis. The same situation applies to certain teachers undertaking union training if courses cannot be held, or are

not held, during school holiday periods. It is the Government's preference that school teachers attend courses that are held during school holiday time, but where that is not possible, certain teachers have been allowed to attend trade union training authority courses on a leave-without-pay basis. The member asks what this costs. In fact, the Government makes a profit out of that arrangement because the teachers who are released are replaced by teachers on a relief basis who are paid at a lesser rate—that is the relief rate—than the teachers who have been released without pay, so the Government actually saves money from that arrangement.

Mr Tonkin: Send them all away!

Mr PEARCE: It does not incur any cost at all. What we might call in the jargon the "downside" of that arrangement is of course that any teacher who goes out of a school for a day or a week for any purpose does cause some slight disruption to the educational programme of those students. So, the Government is insistent that teachers who are given leave without pay for any reason—that is, for their particular union training or purposes relating to local government purposes or for any purposes—make proper and adequate arrangements in advance for the programmes of the classes they are leaving. On that basis I am satisfied that the arrangement is cost-effective in Government terms. People are released only for worthwhile purposes and the classes that are with a different teacher for a short time are adequately looked after because the Government insists that the teachers adequately prepare for their classes.