

regard only for the needs and aspirations of people who come to this strange land and hope to make a new life for themselves. Too many of these people have advantage taken of them by people whom the Minister represents.

We were asked for a recent case. There was a suggestion that no recent case existed so I felt I should bring this one to the notice of members. It is set out under date the 9th May, 1974, and concerns the Realty Development Corporation Pty. Limited. The member for Scarborough will be glad to know that not only the Landall company was involved. The letter commences—

Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to your application for sponsorship . . .

However, I'm afraid we've just received advice from the State Immigration Department that your nomination for assisted passage has been rejected, on the grounds of insufficient employment prospects.

Personally, we feel your employment prospects would be quite reasonable . . .

That was in May, 1974. How someone could honestly say that, with unemployment trends as they were developing, I cannot understand. I asked the people concerned with this case to give me an outline of what had occurred and it is set out as I am now stating the position. They went to RDC in reply to an advertisement, had an interview, and it was suggested by the interviewer that in his opinion they would not get an assisted passage and, if they did, they would be bound by capital requirements. The interviewer said that a certain sum of money would get them into an RDC home.

In fact, I should note here, after they had accepted the proposal and paid their fares they received advice from the Immigration Office in London to call at the department because they had been accepted for an assisted passage. These people had paid their fares after being advised by RDC that there was plenty of employment, and because they were anxious to start a new life in a new home.

When they arrived in Australia they were put into a holiday flat, and shown a house in Rockingham. They were told that nothing else could be offered in their price range. The RDC employment officer suggested one position for which they had already applied having seen it advertised in the paper.

Some argument arose with RDC as to whether they had applied to buy a home other than in Rockingham. They were then informed that they could not be put into a flat and that they would soon have to pay full rent for accommodation which was to be \$55 per week. They were told to look for alternative accommodation.

That prompted the people concerned to look for help because they were still unemployed, and they approached the State Immigration Department which gave them the new start which they needed.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—19

Mr Bateman	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bryce	Mr May
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr Davies	Mr A. R. Tonkin
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr J. T. Tonkin
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr Moller
Mr Hartrey	

(Teller)

Noes—25

Mr Blakie	Mr Nanovich
Mr David Brand	Mr O'Connor
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Neill
Mr Coyne	Mr Rushton
Mr Craig	Mr Shalders
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Dr Dadour	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grayden	Mr Stephens
Mr Grewar	Mr Thompson
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Watt
Mr Laurance	Mr Young
Mr Mensaros	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Barnett	Mr Charles Court
Mr Fletcher	Mr McPharlin
Mr Harman	Mr Ridge

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Moller.

House adjourned at 12.19 a.m.
(Wednesday).

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 14th August, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

ERMOLENKO, MR GEORGI

Political Asylum

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Will the Premier give an assurance that the State Police will enforce the lawful process of the State Supreme Court in the event of any warrant or other proceedings being issued which require State police intervention to prevent the young Russian violinist Georgi Ermolenko being removed from the jurisdiction of the court?

(2) Will the Premier give an assurance that the State police will execute any lawful warrant or other process directed against the Russian Embassy clerk Alexandrov, alleged to be a cultural attache?

(3) Will the Premier, as a matter of urgency, on behalf of the people of Western Australia, protest to the Prime Minister against the failure of the Foreign Affairs Department—

(a) to permit Ermolenko to have free access to his friends at the University, to whom he confided his wish to defect?

(b) to properly investigate the alleged change of mind by Ermolenko?

(c) to communicate with the Reverend Johnston and Mr Badger in order to make a proper assessment of Ermolenko's state of mind and intentions?

(d) to properly and independently explain to Ermolenko his rights under Australian law should he decide of his own volition, without coercion by the Russians, to apply to remain in this country?

(4) In the event of no adequate action being taken by the Prime Minister, will the Premier seek to have Ermolenko independently examined to ascertain his true state of mind and intentions?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

(1) If and when the State police are asked to assist in executing the process of the Supreme Court they will take what action their duty requires.

(2) No. Mr Alexandrov may be a diplomatic agent and, as such, entitled to immunity from the jurisdiction of the courts pursuant to Article 31 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which is now given the force of law in Australia by the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act, 1967, of the Commonwealth (s.7(1)). Should the police be asked to take any action against Mr Alexandrov they would first have to ascertain his status in this respect. In any event the police may not have any role in the execution of a warrant or order of the Supreme Court—basically it would be a matter for the Sheriff and his officers.

(3) Yes, as soon as the facts set out by the Member can be established.

(4) The State has no power to have Ermolenko independently examined, but will use its best offices to ensure a genuinely independent examination.

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

1. AIRPORTS

Local Authorities: Maintenance Cost

The Hon. G. W. BERRY, to the Minister for Health:

Referring to the article in *The West Australian* of the 13th August, 1974, regarding the handing over of the cost of aerodrome facilities on a 50-50 basis to local authorities, what will be the estimated cost of this move to the local authorities in the North and Lower North Provinces?

The Hon. N. McNeill, for the Hon. N. E. BAXTER, replied:

The costs to local authorities at current prices will be approximately as follows:—

	\$
Port Hedland Shire	25 000
West Kimberley Shire	22 500
Carnarvon Shire	19 500
Broome Shire	19 500
Geraldton Shire	17 500
West Pilbara Shire	16 000
Meekatharra Shire	15 000
Halls Creek Shire	5 000
East Pilbara Shire	2 750
Mt Magnet Shire	1 750
Cue Shire	750
Wyndham-East Kimberley Shire	4 000
Yalgoo Shire	500

I would point out that the Government has not yet determined its policy on the Commonwealth's proposal to further pursue its Local Ownership Scheme.

Hon. Members may like to know that of the 64 licensed aerodromes in Western Australia, 42 are already owned privately or by local authorities.

2. AIRPORTS

Local Authorities: Maintenance Cost

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Justice:

(1) With reference to the statements in *The West Australian* dated the 13th August, 1974, concerning the Federal Government's decision to hand over the control of airports to the local authorities on a 50-50 expense basis, has the Federal Government advised the Premier

that airport fiscal arrangements will be based on those proposed for Federal takeovers of State instrumentalities whereby State grants would be reduced by the amount of annual deficit on the instrumentality?

- (2) If the answer is "Yes" what annual grants to the States have been promised by the Federal Government to cover the deficits in aerodrome maintenance and control over and above the 50% contribution to the shire?
- (3) If the answer is "No" will the Premier ask the Prime Minister—
 - (a) why he has one fiscal rule for a Federal takeover and another fiscal rule for a forced local government takeover; and
 - (b) why his latter rule is designed to break down the air transport system in line with the communist manifesto?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) and (2) The Commonwealth Government has been pursuing its Aerodrome Local Ownership Scheme directly with local authorities, private individuals and corporations all over Australia.

The situation in Western Australia now is that it proposes to pursue the scheme with more vigour in respect to a further 19 Commonwealth-owned licensed aerodromes in Western Australia. As a result of the operation of the scheme in the past, local ownership already applies to 42 of the 64 licensed aerodromes in Western Australia.

Our understanding is that if the scheme is not accepted in respect of these 19 aerodromes, the Commonwealth is most likely to reduce its expenditure on them by at least fifty per cent. In some instances it may cease to maintain them at all. Without maintenance many will lose their licensed status fairly quickly.

- (3) The Government has not yet determined its policy with respect to the extension of the Local Ownership Scheme. The Government is very concerned about the Commonwealth's attitude to these aerodromes as the circumstances in most of the areas is extremely difficult for both the State Government and the local authority. The Government has not finalised the basis and form of its representations to the Commonwealth Government, but this should be completed in the near future.

3. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' HOUSING AUTHORITY

Programme

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) How many houses were approved for construction for the Government Employees' Housing Authority in the 1973-74 financial year in the following areas—
 - (a) Eastern Goldfields;
 - (b) Murchison-Eyre;
 - (c) North West; and
 - (d) Kimberley?
- (2) For which Government departments were they to be constructed?
- (3) How many—
 - (a) have been constructed; or
 - (b) are in the course of construction?
- (4) Have tenders been let for the remainder?
- (5) If not, why not?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) The programme, which included the purchase of completed houses was—
 - (a) 47,
 - (b) 6,
 - (c) 29,
 - (d) 29.
- (2) Public Works; Education; Agriculture; Crown Law; Mines; Community Welfare; Fisheries; Police; Public Health; Corrections.
- (3) (a) 70, including purchase of complete houses.
- (b) 22.
- (4) With the exception of six where suitable sites have yet to be arranged, tenders have been called, but contracts are not yet signed.
- (5) Answered by (4).

4. *This question was postponed.*

5. CARINE HIGH SCHOOL

Enrolments

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the present enrolment at Carine high school?
- (2) What has been the increase in enrolments since the beginning of the school year?
- (3) What is the expected enrolment in 1975?
- (4) What provision is being made for the increased enrolment at the school?

The Hon. N. McNeill, for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON, replied:

- (1) 643.
- (2) 15.
- (3) 1 133.
- (4) Stage 3 of the school's master plan is to be built.

6. PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Members' Guests

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN, to the Minister for Justice:

With regard to recent newspaper reports that police are aware of the name and occupation of a guest of a member or members at Parliament House, will the Minister ascertain—

- (a) whether the report is true;
- (b) if so, how were the police made aware of such information;
- (c) whether such information is kept on file;
- (d) what steps will be taken to ensure the civil liberty to invite, without prejudice, any guest the member chooses, subject to the rules of the House?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (a) and (b) Only Superintendent Daniels and Mr A. R. Tonkin, M.L.A., appear to have knowledge of this allegation and it is not clear from where the information was obtained.
- (c) No such information is kept on any official police file.
- (d) None, as it is considered that no civil liberties have been breached.

7. BALCATTIA HIGH SCHOOL

Enrolment and Classrooms

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the present enrolment at Balcatta high school?
- (2) What is the expected enrolment in 1975?
- (3) How many temporary classrooms are being used at the school?
- (4) How many additional temporary classrooms is it expected will be used at the school in 1975?

The Hon. N. McNeill, for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON, replied:

- (1) 1 466.
- (2) 1 508.
- (3) 11.
- (4) One.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Traffic Control in Country Areas

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

For the financial years ended the 30th June, 1972, 1973 and 1974, and for each of the local authorities where traffic is not under police control—

- (1) How many traffic inspectors were employed?
- (2) What was the income from—
 - (a) vehicle license fees;
 - (b) fines for traffic offences?
- (3) (a) What was the expenditure in maintaining traffic inspectors'—
 - (i) salaries;
 - (ii) overheads;
 - (iii) traffic control equipment; and
 - (iv) other expenses;
- (b) what was the capital expenditure incurred in purchasing traffic control equipment?
- (4) What is the income from shire rates?
- (5) What was the level of rate struck in each of those years?
- (6) What amounts from the authorities' own funds were spent on road maintenance and construction?
- (7) What was the total amount spent on roads within each of the local authorities' boundaries from all sources?

The Hon. N. McNeill, for the Hon. N. E. BAXTER, replied:

- (1) to (7) The information required is not readily available. Some answers will necessitate circularising councils, and others will require considerable research and compilation.

The Hon. Member will be advised, in due course, when the information has been collated if he so desires.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by the Hon. D. K. Dans, leave of absence for 12 consecutive sittings of the House granted to the Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs (South-East) on the ground of private business overseas.

PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

Ministerial Statement

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.48 p.m.]: I seek leave to make a statement to the House on behalf of the Premier relating to the Premiers' Conference.

The PRESIDENT: Leave is granted.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: In view of the importance of the matters discussed at the Premiers' Conference and the possible impact on our legislative and administrative programmes, the Premier felt it desirable to make a statement in Parliament at the first opportunity.

Members will recall there was great dissatisfaction on the part of the States following the 7th June Premiers' Conference when the Commonwealth said no assistance would be given beyond the formula. The States were told they would have to increase taxes and charges, and reduce expenditure so as to handle their budgetary problems within their own means.

As a result, the Western Australian Government has sought to do this.

Likewise, the States were unhappy about the loan fund allocations but, in our case, we were hopeful that, through close supervision of tendering and construction, and a careful assessment of priorities, we would be able to live within the available loan funds.

However, the inflationary situation has deteriorated further at a dramatic rate, and we now find that the rate of inflation in the civil engineering and construction field is even worse than that which prevails in the day-to-day consumer items and those directly concerned in the Consolidated Revenue items.

The States, prior to yesterday's meeting, made available to the Prime Minister the report of the State Under-Treasurers—working in conjunction with the Commonwealth Treasury representative—on the inflationary situation, and the courses open to State and Federal Governments under their respective constitutional powers.

The 10th July meeting of Premiers in Melbourne was a memorable one because of the unanimity reached amongst the six Premiers, including two Labor Premiers.

It was also significant that at that meeting one of the Premiers—that of Queensland—was a Country Party Premier, the Acting Premier of New South Wales was a Country Party member, the Acting Premier of Victoria was from the Liberal Party, and the Premiers of South Australia and Tasmania were both Labor Premiers.

In other words—including our Premier—there was, by coincidence, equal representation amongst the six Premiers and Acting Premiers from the three major political parties in Australia.

The Premiers were unanimous that they were prepared to co-operate with the Commonwealth to the maximum degree in seeking to pool the joint constitutional powers of State and Federal Governments on a co-operative basis to

achieve a national strategy to deal with the national crisis of inflation. This was not on a basis of ceding powers to the Commonwealth, but on a basis of a truly co-operative Federal system. In this regard, it was not intended that this co-operative use of powers would be confined necessarily to matters of incomes and prices.

It is regretted that there was such a long delay between the 10th July meeting and the conference which took place yesterday, but the Premier understands this was because of the parliamentary commitments of the Commonwealth Government, and this week was the first week when a Premiers' Conference was practicable with the Commonwealth participating through the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer.

Each State Premier presented his views in a frank manner.

For practical purposes, the main difference in their presentations largely surrounded their special budgetary problems in their own particular States. The underlying theme of all States was co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in the formation of a national strategy to deal with inflation.

On behalf of Western Australia, the Premier reported that we had done everything the Commonwealth Government had insisted we do at the 7th June conference. We had increased—by administrative action, or announced intention by legislative action—a wide range of increases in charges and taxes, to a point where we find it very disturbing. Almost without exception, these charges and taxes were inflationary and it seemed to be incongruous that, whilst the Commonwealth was preaching the need to curtail inflation, steps were being forced to increase the charges and taxes in highly inflationary areas.

Coincidentally with this, we had undertaken a further severe review of the State Government's 1974-75 expenditure and—even after making further projected cuts to a point where we are concerned about the practicability of retaining reasonable efficiency of service—we still have a deficit of at least \$20 million to face. Other States had similar stories to tell.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the States had acted in accordance with the Commonwealth's intentions at the 7th June, 1974 conference.

The Premier put the case to the Prime Minister that, together, the Commonwealth and the States could win the battle of inflation. To do so we have to convince the public, including trade unionists, of our sincerity of purpose—and we must act together.

We would arouse justifiable criticism if, on the one hand, we joined with the Commonwealth Government in a series of

legislative and administrative actions to curtail inflation through restraining wage and salary demands and, at the same time, came out with another dose of largely inflationary increases in charges and taxes.

It was the proposition of the States that the Commonwealth would make a very desirable contribution to inflation abatement—and also to the improvement of public understanding and morale—if it could make funds available to the States so as to at least prevent them increasing charges and taxes further.

For most of the day, the Commonwealth was adamant that there would be no assistance to the States; the States were expected to adjust their budgets within their own means, even if by raising additional charges and taxes. But the Commonwealth still expected the States to join with it in a number of anti-inflationary measures, particularly those related to achieving restraint in wage and salary increases.

It was not until the last few minutes of the conference that the Prime Minister agreed to submit the States' proposal to his Federal colleagues when they are undertaking their Budget reviews next week.

In the interests of expedition, and to show the goodwill of the States, it was arranged that, without delay, and without awaiting the Commonwealth's decision, working parties of Commonwealth and State officers would immediately proceed to examine what was necessary by way of State and Commonwealth legislative and administrative action under the following headings—

- (1) Clarification of wage indexation formula and application (including provision for anomalies that inevitably exist when a new system comes into operation).
- (2) The practicability of tax penalties under both State pay-roll tax and Commonwealth income tax for wage payments in excess of indexation and authorised anomaly payments.
- (3) State legislation to complement Commonwealth Prices Justification Tribunal legislation, including the extension of operations outside of corporations.
- (4) Disallowance by the Prices Justification Tribunal of wages incurred in excess of indexation and authorised anomaly payments. (In other words, these excess payments will not be claimable as a cost item when applications are considered by the tribunal. The first case of this has been announced by the tribunal, but it is felt there might have to be some fortification of this attitude on a Commonwealth-State basis.)
- (5) Joint application by the Commonwealth and States to wage and salary tribunals to limit increases to an indexed amount, plus authorised anomaly corrections.
- (6) Review of the multiplicity of wage and salary tribunals with a view to reducing the number and thus remove some of the present inconsistencies and pressures.
- (7) Review of the Government tendering procedures and results in view of the current unsatisfactory tenders being received in the present inflationary situation and the consequent inadequacy of loan funds available.

Members will appreciate that the present inflationary position helps to resolve the Commonwealth's budgetary problems because of the inflated income tax it receives. At the same time, the State Budgets are destroyed by the very same inflation.

The Premier believes the States put forward a powerful case in a constructive way, and he is hopeful the Commonwealth will change its attitude in the interests of having the maximum co-operation and unity of effort and purpose.

The arrangements under consideration, of course, are only intended to prevail for the period of the emergency.

It was the view of all Premiers that the situation is so serious that some party political ideologies on both sides might have to be temporarily set aside.

The interesting point was that the Commonwealth has now conceded that the crisis is not so much one of demand pressures—even if that were the case back in June. It is one of "cost push".

Already we are seeing the signs of nation-wide unemployment generating at a disturbing rate, with the Federal Minister for Labour saying that more is to follow before a decline will commence. At the same time, we are not likely to see any abatement of the "cost pressures" unless Commonwealth-State action can be taken in co-operation.

The Premier felt it desirable to indicate the wide range of legislative and administrative action which might be necessary, assuming that the working parties are able to get to grips quickly with the practical problems. He emphasised at the conference that the public is looking for quick action at the national level, and is wanting action taken which is clear-cut and simple so that it will be universally understood.

The Premier believes we can reasonably expect general support for this type of approach, even though there will inevitably

be some of the minority militant forces which will seek to embarrass the overall effort for restraint.

Employers will certainly be discouraged from granting increases outside of the limits agreed within the Commonwealth and State policies, if they know they will not get any acknowledgment for these higher payments from the prices tribunal, and they will be subject to penalty taxation both in terms of pay-roll tax and company income tax.

The Premier appreciates the fact that the Deputy Premier was able to accompany him, in view of the very important and wide range of legislative and administrative policy matters involved.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 13th August, on the following motion by the Hon. J. C. Tozer—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

May it please Your Excellency:

We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

THE HON. Lyla ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [4.57 p.m.]: Mr President, tradition dictates that I should stand here and support the motion before the Chair, which contains the words "and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament". I wonder whether His Excellency was pleased to deliver that Speech to Parliament. In fact, I believe the Government placed him in an embarrassing position by providing him with a speech of that kind.

In the Governor's Speech one normally expects to see outlined a pretty full programme of legislation which it is proposed will be introduced by the Government of the day, but on this occasion in an eight-page speech there were no less than 15 derogatory references to the Commonwealth Government.

Brief reference was made in the Speech to the takeover by the Commonwealth of Aboriginal affairs but we did not see any concrete proposals for the advancement of the Aboriginal people. I looked up the policy statement of the Premier, made prior to the recent State election. The section headed "Helping Aboriginal People" included these words—

It has not been easy for Aborigines to absorb the impact of our civilisation on their ancient culture.

They must be free to make their adjustment at a pace that suits each individual as a person.

We want our Aboriginal people to experience in our community the same self-reliance and self-respect they had before White settlement began.

Those are fine words. They are not new words; they have been said many times previously. But, when uttered by the Premier, what is the meaning of such words as "self-reliance" and "self-respect"?

To have self-reliance and self-respect one must have some sort of economic security or base upon which to build. The Aboriginal people once derived their self-reliance and self-respect from the land, which provided not only their food but the basis of their religion and their culture; it was the most important factor in the type of existence they led. I am sure there is no need for me to remind members of what happened to the Aboriginal people once the land was taken from them. As a result of being pushed further and further back and becoming a dispossessed people their self-reliance and self-respect were destroyed. Instead of living off the land as proud, independent people with their own strong laws and cultures, they became beggars, exploited, abused, and ridiculed by the whites who took over their land. It is no wonder they lost pride and confidence in themselves and in their race.

The reason I raise this subject today is that I read in *The Australian* of the 3rd August an article which said that a recent decision of the State Cabinet was to rescind the previous Labor Government's policy of allowing Aborigines to benefit directly from mineral leases and royalties derived from Aboriginal reserves in this State. The article made reference to the fact that Mr Ken Colbung threatened to take the land rights issue to the International Court of Justice.

When the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act was debated in this Chamber in 1972 I dealt at length with the land rights of indigenous peoples in other countries, and particularly of the Red Indians in North America and the Maoris of New Zealand. At that time I pointed out that not only did the Indians own their reservations, but they derived substantial mineral and timber rights from them, and they gained profits from businesses which had been set up on them. This had a tremendous impact on the Indians. By having an economic base upon which to work and by a revival of Indian culture these people have been able to regain their identity or—if one likes to put it another way—their self-respect and self-reliance.

So I appeal to the Government not to repeal section 28 of the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act. I believe the Aboriginal people are entitled to any money derived from this source.

The other matter I wish to raise, whilst on the topic of Aboriginal affairs, is the housing of vagrants. I recently accompanied a community health sister on her rounds through the bush in a Perth suburb as she looked for her regulars who were in need of medical attention. These people have no homes; they live under bridges, in shanties, and under any shelter they can find in the bush.

Firstly I would like to pay a sincere tribute to the wonderful work done by these community health sisters who are dedicated and compassionate; and who offer not only medical attention to the Aborigines, but also friendship and a helping hand.

The Aborigines about whom I am speaking are those who may be deemed social cripples and who are just not able to cope with our society or with living in a normal, conventional suburban house. I met a number of these people. They were sick people; they were suffering from illnesses such as diabetes, ulcers, ear infections, bronchial trouble, poor nutrition, and alcoholism. Some were middle aged, and some were old. They all needed shelter and proper care in the form of regular nourishment and medical attention.

I ask the Government, through the Minister for Community Welfare and the Minister for Housing, to take urgent steps to provide a centre appropriate to the needs of these people. They need a specially designed hostel where they may be warm and dry on these cold winter nights, and where they may receive regular meals. I imagine such a centre would be similar to the one run by the Little Sisters of the Poor in Kalgoorlie. If they were housed in such a centre these Aborigines would also be more accessible to the community health sisters, who at the moment must trudge through the bush looking for them. I feel sure if a well-designed project were submitted to the Commonwealth Government financial assistance would be forthcoming.

I now wish to deal with the question of child health and the need for greater attention to be paid to preventive health services. Many factors determine what kind of adults children will grow into. These include whether or not the child is wanted in the first place, the type of parental care and affection it receives, its environment, whether it is physically or mentally handicapped, and the quality of health care and education it receives. Those are some of the factors which influence the child and determine what sort of adult it will grow into.

If we are concerned with the type of society we are moulding—and I am sure we all are—then I believe greater attention and resources must be devoted to the care of our children. To begin with, to reduce the number of unwanted and unplanned pregnancies, much more sex education should be provided both in schools and in the community. I hope to see this State

join the growing list of countries which have repealed their harsh abortion laws so that any woman who wants to terminate an unwanted pregnancy may do so legally and with dignity.

I would also like to see a great deal more done to educate our young people in the responsibilities and problems of parenthood. Child rearing is probably one of the most important and complex roles that any person can undertake, and yet I think it is probably one of the most neglected so far as preparation for the task is concerned.

It has been established by pediatricians that the period from one to four years of age is the period when a child is most vulnerable. It is during those years that there is the greatest danger of poor nutrition and the contracting of diseases; and in this period they are also most accident prone. During that time, too, the pattern of a child's intellectual and emotional development is being established. It is also possible at this stage to detect remediable disorders before they become serious. Yet despite all this it is this age group which is most neglected so far as health checks are concerned.

Child health centres cater for the first year or so of a baby's life, and they are well patronised by mothers. The sisters from these centres make visits to the home. However, there is then a gap until the child commences school, and in many children poor health or some other disability may not be detected until they are examined by the school health service doctor or nurse.

If we are to have meaningful preventive health services we must develop, in addition to the infant and school health services, a comprehensive pre-school health service to reach those children in need of attention who are at present missing out.

There are at work in the community a number of Government departments which are concerned with the welfare of children, whether it be health, education, or general welfare; and each in its own way is doing an excellent job. But one wonders whether better liaison and co-ordination between the departments concerned would improve this service. For example, under the heading of "health" we have child health, school health, mental health, and community health. We have the Community Welfare Department, the Education Department, the Health Education Council, the Pre-School Education Board, and so on.

In February of 1972 the Victorian Government appointed a Consultative Council on Pre-school Child Development—and I quote part of its terms of reference—to "carry out a detailed examination of the present health education and welfare services for children in the under six years old group and to recommend whether and, if so, how the present services available

to that group can be improved, expanded or re-organised to give greatest benefit to the community." The terms of reference were much wider than that, but that was the essence of the task of the council.

The council brought down a very comprehensive report in November, 1973, containing some excellent recommendations. One of those recommendations was in regard to the appointment of a standing committee to co-ordinate the services of those departments involved in the welfare of the pre-school child.

I believe we could well follow the suggestion of that council; and I would ask the Government to consider establishing such a standing committee in this State composed of top level representatives of the Health, Education, and Community Welfare Departments, and the Pre-School Education Board, for the purpose of co-ordinating the activities of those bodies.

I support the motion.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Minister for Education) [5.12 p.m.]: Mr President, may I join with other members in congratulating you on your election as President; and may I also congratulate all the members who attained admission to this Chamber or to positions of preferment within it. It is always something of a red letter day when one wins a seat in Parliament; and, of course, it should be a special day when one is elected to such an august Chamber as this; and then when one achieves rank within this Chamber one is in a very special position indeed. I join with all other members in offering my congratulations.

I rise today to take the opportunity to speak to members on several aspects of the Government's policy in the field of education. The number of questions which have been asked, both in this Council and in the Lower House, indicates there is a great deal of interest at present, especially in three or four key issues.

I refer, of course, to proposals that concern schooling for children in their fifth year; to the transfer of children in their twelfth year into high schools; to the separation of senior and junior portions of high schools; and to our policy to encourage greater community participation in school affairs.

Let me say at the outset that the implementation of all of these matters will be done in a responsible, gradual, professional manner. Nothing will be pushed where it is obvious that insuperable difficulties or great inconvenience will be encountered, or where professional advice is convincingly opposed to it. There has been quite a lot of misunderstanding of our proposals. This is partly excus-

able because there are inevitably a lot of details to fill in after a broad, general policy has been enunciated.

The more radical a proposal happens to be, the less likely it is that it can be implemented immediately and in a series of clear-cut straightforward steps. We have to—and we want to—work from a well-informed appreciation of how the system already functions. No useful purpose is served by the rude rejection of long-standing traditions, or a failure to appreciate that the present system is achieving very creditably what it was designed to achieve.

Nevertheless, where we have developed policies and objectives that we believe will have long-term benefits—and which were part of our election platform—then we have a responsibility to proceed with them and to deal as best we can with opposition which we judge to be sincere but misinformed.

The policy which has attracted most interest, and on which we happen to be best organised at this stage, concerns the provision of school-kindergartens for children one year younger than those who start at the present formal entry age.

This programme has been given many incorrect labels. It is obviously not simply a programme for five-year-olds, because most five-year-olds already enter grade one in primary schools.

Under the present system, children commence school in the year they turn six, so that in the February of that year eleven-twelfths of the children are still five.

The new programme is for children in the year they turn five. Attendance will be at the discretion of parents. There will be no compulsion below the present legal requirements. It is very close to the programme now being offered by voluntary bodies and under the authority of the Pre-School Education Board of Western Australia which was established in 1973.

The essential difference is that, with the direct participation of the Education Department, this provision will ultimately be available, in some form, without cost to parents, to children in all parts of the State, however few or isolated the children may be.

I must emphasise that the planning of this programme is proceeding along very sound lines, with the best advice that is procurable. It is not in competition with the Pre-School Education Board. Persons working with that authority are also on the advisory committee which is planning the new programme.

The two authorities will continue for some years to work side by side. As the new programme of school-kindergartens becomes widely established the board will

be able to co-ordinate voluntary and subsidised programmes for children who are younger still.

There is no suggestion that children are being pushed into formal schooling earlier. The emphasis will be on the provision of the best experience possible, in terms of the needs and readiness of the children.

It is quite probable the proximity of programmes designed for pre-school children will be of assistance to schools where there are very young school-age children who would benefit by a continuation of some pre-school activities.

In the long term, when nearly all children are able to benefit from the school-kindergarten programmes, there is likely to be some reorientation of the programmes in grades 1 and 2—that is the current grades 1 and 2. However, there is no need to dwell on this, because professional teachers will continue, we trust, to adapt their teaching to the abilities and needs of the children in their care. There will be a wide variety of children in classes then just as there is now.

A final and very important point is that in all respects the standards of the Australian Pre-School Association are our guide with regard to equipment, staff, size of groups, involvement of parents, time of attendance and so on.

At this stage it is planned to have five or six pilot school-kindergartens operating in 1975. A great deal of work has yet to be done in determining the staffing, financing and organising of school-kindergartens, but I am confident that the planning is in good hands.

As I have said already, we will not rush in, but will ensure a workmanlike approach at each step of the way.

The second topic I mentioned and the one which seems to have attracted the second largest number of questions, concerns the proposal to start children in high schools in the year they turn 12—that is, a year earlier than at present.

All sorts of worries have been expressed about the dangers of throwing 11-year-old children into the hectic, impersonal, relatively grown-up world of the secondary schools. If there are genuine grounds for concern, then, as I said before, we will take notice of them as befits responsible, professional educators. Again, we will hasten slowly.

However, let us look at some of the positive aspects of this move. One of the most obvious differences between primary and secondary schools is that a great deal more money is spent in secondary schools on equipment, especially in the science, manual arts, and foreign language areas.

This is appropriate because primary schooling can be accomplished with more emphasis on homely objects, improvised

equipment and things the children themselves provide from among their treasures and possessions. Now, many primary grade seven children are ready for a little more specialisation and the learning of more advanced skills than can be learnt with the facilities commonly provided in primary schools.

Clearly, it is economically and logistically more feasible, in the long run, to allow younger children to have access to high school facilities than to fit primary schools with specialist equipment and teachers that only the top grade would be sufficiently mature to benefit from.

Another important difference between primary and many secondary schools is the relative impersonality of the high schools and this is sometimes cited by opponents of the proposal. However we would prefer to look at this as an opportunity to reduce some of the formality—the lack of personal interaction between teachers and students, among students in grade eight, or what is currently the first year of high school.

The point I am making is that we will be better able to consider secondary schooling as consisting of three two-year phases, rather than a three plus two year system.

The first two years can thus take on something like a middle school function, being less highly organised and specialised than later years, yet allowing younger children to benefit from high school facilities. A single year is not sufficient to be regarded as a complete and integrated phase of the school programme.

Combining the two years—that is, the top of the primary school and the beginning of the high school—will provide an opportunity to use the best attributes of both programmes and provide a more gradual and slightly delayed transition to the big wide world of the larger high school.

Detailed planning has not proceeded very far. All parties will be consulted and the secondary division of the Education Department is formulating plans for the overall approach.

The only thing I can say at this stage is that one obvious place to test the ideas in this proposal is the district high school, where children of primary and secondary levels are on the same campus and under the same authority.

The third matter I will speak about briefly is related to the second—the separation of fifth and sixth year students from the others in high schools. Some people have been confused by the idea of having a sixth year, thinking that students will be a year older when they leave. This is not so, of course, if we remember that children would be starting high school a year earlier.

As I mentioned earlier, having six years in secondary school makes it much easier to think of three two-year units. Although

there is really no change to these final two years, they will stand in greater contrast to earlier years when there is an intake of younger children.

The separation of the older students will alleviate the worries of those who see dangers in putting the younger children into high schools.

There is a lot of sense in looking at secondary schooling as the three phases. There will be a distinct two-year group separating the youngest from the oldest students, whereas at present the youngest first-year students can feel part of a unit in which there are some very grown-up students.

There have been some very specific questions regarding building sites, costs and so on which reflected mistaken notions regarding the implementation of this scheme.

We are not attempting the impossible. Where the buildings on a single school site lend themselves to it, we will encourage the administrative separation of the upper two years. Where there are high schools in relatively close proximity it may be possible to reorganise them so that one becomes the senior high school, or junior college or whatever they turn out to be named.

Where there are completely new developments there should be no serious problems as far as buildings are concerned. There should be no serious problems so far as financing is concerned, either. If 400 children of high school age need to be housed then it makes little or no difference whether the high school is built on the old pattern to take years one to five or whether the high school is built on the new pattern to take fifth or sixth year students, and if the children to fill them are taken from adjacent schools that would relieve the accommodation in the existing schools. I repeat, there have been a lot of mistaken ideas with regard to overall financing.

But the particular expression of the policy may depend on total numbers of students, or other local considerations which would have to be taken into account. We have policies which guide our thinking and we will implement them with due regard to the practical consequences involved.

The final point in our policy on which I will comment here concerns our desire to encourage greater interest in schools on the part of parents.

There has been no particular action on this subject, except that we have undertaken to support pilot projects where parents and staff together agree to try a modification of present relationships.

We are faced with the fact that the role of parents in Government schools has not changed officially since 1921. Many other things in our community have changed drastically in that time, and consequently

parents now have much less direct influence over their children, having handed this function over to the school and to the television stations.

For this reason, in particular, it seems essential that parents should have much more direct influence over their schools.

A more recent development which has tended to confuse the role of parents in schools is the fact that Governments are financing many of the things that previously occupied the efforts and interests of parents. If the school is not to become completely separate from the home, and enlarge even more the generation gap and other gaps that dissect our society, then parents need to have new reasons for personal interest in the work of the schools.

Another aspect of school organisation which is closely related is that of the role of students in the running of schools. It seems to me that it is futile, and less than genuine, to urge that parents take more interest in schools if relations between teachers and students are cold, authoritarian and wholly organisational.

A sense of community can only extend beyond the school if it simultaneously thrives within the school. Of all the policies which I have spoken about on this occasion this is perhaps the least tangible and the most difficult to spell out in organisational terms. Yet it is perhaps the most urgent in terms of its long term significance for the quality of life within our schools.

We have no magic formulas. We will create no upheavals, but we will urge teachers, parents, students and administrators to work out better ways of making our schools living, thriving, happy and efficient centres of community life and growth.

When moving around the country and speaking to different groups I have been appalled at the occasions—thankfully the rare occasions—when one is asked the sort of questions which betray a totally negative attitude. I am not one who has ever believed that Governments automatically secure a clear and open mandate proved purely by the fact that they have won an election.

I have seen Governments, which I am convinced have won their place in the sun despite their policies, being returned to office. However, that particular situation does not apply to the Liberal Party, but I have seen this happening. Nevertheless, once a Government takes office it automatically has an obligation to pursue its policies.

When it comes to dealing with matters affecting children and their welfare, it seems to me that the attitude which ought to prevail is this: Let us examine the situation in the light of goodwill on all sides, and with an earnest desire to get the best out of the situation in the best interests of the children.

I have said that I had been alarmed occasionally to find an attitude of an almost stonewalling effect; yet the heartening side, and there is always a heartening side to every story, is that the majority of the people fall into the group which is genuinely concerned with the rendering of assistance, and is genuinely prepared to examine proposals with goodwill and with a desire to offer constructive assistance.

I believe this is the sort of constructive assistance and forward-looking approach which accepts that the children of today will have a tremendous future. If the world is to have any tremendous future, then we must pray that the children of today will have the ability to cope with the future which we hope for them. It is our duty to ensure that the best of an educational process, allied to all the technical developments which we can place at their disposal and by which we can improve the educative process, is made available. It is only by this means that we can ensure that their world will be a happier one than ours has been for at least most of the time.

With those remarks I support the motion.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan) [5.32 p.m.]: Mr President, I join with other members of this Chamber in offering you my congratulations and best wishes for the future on your elevation to the very important role of President of this Chamber. As Mr Medcalf has assured the House, you have had a very distinguished career as a back-bencher, and as a Minister for 12 years. I feel more than certain—as you have already demonstrated—you will conduct your office as President with dignity and impartiality.

I offer my congratulations to the Hon. Neil McNeill on his elevation to the position of Leader of the Government in this House and Minister for Justice. Similarly I extend my congratulations to the Hon. Norman Baxter and the Hon. Graham MacKinnon.

I also extend my congratulations to the Hon. Ron Thompson on his elevation to the position of Leader of the Opposition; and I would like to congratulate Mr Jack Heitman sincerely on his attaining the office of Chairman of Committees.

Not only in this country but, indeed, in all the western countries of the world—which is the part we know most about—the people live in very troubled times. We have a number of institutions and a number of traditions which, by and large, the majority of the population supports and hopes will endure.

I was particularly disappointed in the Governor's Speech delivered on the opening day of Parliament when, for the first time in my limited experience in this Parliament, a note of political bias was introduced. I have no quarrel with members of this Chamber; I realise it is their job to criticise and to reflect on any matter that

they may deem to be important; but I think that to use the Governor in this manner is to denigrate his position as a direct representative of Her Majesty the Queen. Perhaps this does not affect us in this Chamber as much as it does the people outside, because we realise that the Speech was written for the Governor. Unfortunately the people abroad and outside know very little about what takes place under the procedures of Parliament.

A number of people to whom I have spoken mentioned that they thought the Governor was a little out of order in delivering that Speech; with that I would have to agree. However, I have done my best to assure them that the words uttered by the Governor were not words of his own choosing. I would be happy if such an exercise is not repeated in the future.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: Did you listen to the Speech delivered by Her Majesty the Queen at the opening of the Federal Parliament?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: No, I did not; so I cannot comment.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: I would advise you to read it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not think Her Majesty was talking about State rights. I am now addressing my remarks through the Chair in relation to the opening of this Parliament at which I was present.

We have now entered a very difficult stage not only in respect of the manner in which we provide finance to run the State, but also in respect of the very important question of providing leadership and giving a lead to the unity of the Australian people. I get very upset when, for political motives only, the word "centralism" is bandied around with gay abandon. This reminds me of the number of times the word has been used, particularly by the Premier (Sir Charles Court). It is like a person leading a troop of rocking-horse cavalry, galloping like mad, waving a banner with the word "centralism" appearing on it, and shouting about the misdemeanours of the Australian Government. People get nowhere by pursuing such a course of action. They will only get as far as the rocking horse cares to take them. Phrase mongering, cymbal banging, and the shouting of slogans are no effective substitutes for constitutional Government.

The Government of the day has been elected to carry out a function. This is a difficult function, and I realise the difficulties. However, I wish to give the Government members some advice which was tendered to our members by a certain gentleman who, during the term of the previous Government, used to sit where Mr Ron Thompson now sits. I thought

it was good advice; it was that we get on with the job and carry out the job to the best of our ability with the wherewithal on hand. I think that is what the people are looking for.

If people keep on using the term "centralism" and all the other things that go with it, they create a kind of atmosphere and forget the more important aspects of Government. A great deal has been said about the result of the last State election. I would point out that different factors arose in the State election. I am one of those who do not reflect on election results; a party either wins an election or loses it.

Let us examine the result of the last Federal election in Western Australia, because that is nearer to the core of centralism. In this State the Labor Party won the new seat of Tangney, and went within 12 votes of regaining the electorate of Stirling.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What about the remarks of Mr Collard on the seat of Kalgoorlie?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have no intention of getting a crystal ball and gazing into it, in the manner that Mr Collard has perhaps gazed at one. There is a long way to go yet, but Mr Collard could well be right.

What is happening in Australia arises from the obstructionist tactics adopted by the Opposition parties in the Senate. Experts who have examined this situation tell us there is a pre-revolutionary mood starting to grow up in Australia. This is not the kind of mood which some members opposite would like to see arising. It is a mood of utter frustration, and of disgust of the Opposition parties in the Australian Parliament for their refusal to concede that they have lost the Federal election.

These are the matters which should be considered by all responsible people in public life. Let us see what is happening. The Parliaments of the Commonwealth are becoming denigrated in the eyes of the people. We are all aware of the industrial problems that exist; the inflationary difficulties in our midst; and the likelihood of unemployment rising, as well as all the other factors which go with those problems. I say that it would be in the best interests of the people of Australia if all levels of Government got on with their job.

Let us consider what transpires after such turmoils occur; and what has been experienced in other parts of the world. It has been predicted that constitutional government in Britain will not last another five years. What can we come up with to cope with the situation—some kind of Fascist dictatorship to the left, or some kind of Fascist dictatorship to the right? I sincerely hope that will not be the case.

I would like to recite two small quotations which mark the essence of the days when Australia was reaching Federation. A gentleman by the name of Sir Henry Parkes had this to say—

One people

One destiny.

I consider Sir Henry Parkes to be one of the patriots of Australia. Another gentleman had this to say—

For the first time in the world's history, there will be a nation for a continent, and a continent for a nation.

That was said by the Hon. Edmund Barton.

We should bear these matters in mind. Although we belong to different political groupings, I am sure every member of this Chamber is dedicated to furthering the welfare and the future of this country. People should bear that in mind, because in my opinion those who, by foolish acts, sow the seeds of disunity and destruction in the community are criminals. Once we start on a course in a certain direction it is very hard for us to stop or deviate from it.

We have a democratic system of Government, and we have a democratic system of elections. When those processes are complied with we are able to proceed. In my view there is a need for us to upgrade parliamentary procedure so as to fit in with the modern concepts of a modern society. This is a responsibility which rests on all political parties. It seems to me that we ought to dispense with the lengthy, and at some stages dreary, debate on the Address-in-Reply motion; that is, after Mr Clive Griffiths has spoken! It seems to me that this procedure is time-wasting and time-consuming.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It will not be dreary, but it will be time-consuming.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: There is a whole range of matters to which this Parliament should be giving attention. This session has been in progress for two or three weeks, and still we seem to be waffling on. It seems that all members like to get into the act, so as not to be upstaged. There are other processes which could be adopted, without interfering in any way with the traditions and practices of Parliament; and Parliament could get off its tail and start to adopt procedures in a modern and streamlined manner. It is not for me to say how these procedures could be put into operation. I contend these matters should be pondered by people in this place and in other places.

Today we hear a great deal about the immense problems caused by inflation, and we would be foolish if we think that such problems do not exist.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: Mrs Whitlam said there were no problems.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If I want Mrs Whitlam or Mr Whitlam to make my speech I would ask one of them to do so. Until such time as I do that I shall make my own speech. Mrs Whitlam has every right in the world to make remarks, either extemporaneously or in a prepared speech. I am not her keeper.

I was very interested in the remarks of the Hon. N. McNeill when he was reporting the observations of the Premier on the Premiers' conference with the Prime Minister. I agree that the inflationary situation in this country has taken a turn to the "push-me-pull-me" kind of economic disaster which we are facing. I will not be quite as harsh as was Mr Mick Gayfer—I have always known him to be a happy person—when he remarked—in Damon Runyon's Sorrowful Jones style—that the world would end in three months' time. It would end not only for the ordinary people, but for the farmers also!

Surely we should take stock of the situation. We should look around the world to see what is happening. I have fears that events are happening with which we are not quite *au fait*. For instance, I do not believe that inflation is a political phenomenon—and I am not being original in saying this. Inflation is an economic phenomenon. It has been created by us; the people.

We have been able to advance our technology at a velocity never before experienced by man since the end of the World War. We have been able to build machines which are able to knock down, in one day, a forest which has taken a thousand years to grow. We pollute rivers and pollute the air, and do all manner of things. We have created a man-made shipping hazard in Cockburn Sound with a pile of gypsum. I do not know the extent of that hazard but people have told me that the sea grass in Cockburn Sound is dying. A contributing factor is the discharge of treated sewage into Cockburn Sound. Be that as it may.

We are able to fly to London in a matter of hours; we have photocopying machines; we can send a man to the moon and bring him back; but we cannot handle our money. That is the reason that the western world has the problems which it faces today.

I was very interested in the leading article which appeared in *The Australian* on the 30th July, 1974. The editorial was headed "Big banking collapse feared in UK" and was from Warren Beeby, London Office. It read, in part, as follows—

Scare talk of this nature breaks out with monotonous regularity in these days of tight money and international uncertainty.

But the collapse last month of the German Herstatt Bank, which caught one of Britain's most respected mer-

chant bankers, Hill Samuel, for a potential £9 million (\$A14.4 million), has added both strength and plausibility to the jitters.

The fall of the U.S. Franklin National Bank to the tune of about \$US86 million (\$A57.6 million) due to foreign exchange losses, and the closure of the Israel-British Bank for similar reasons, completes the scenario of disillusionment in the banking system—for the moment.

I do not want to sound anti-Semitic, but when the Israel-British Bank collapses something is really going bad. The article goes on to predict the fall of the biggest financial institution in the United Kingdom. The reference was to the United Dominions Trust, Britain's biggest finance house; that is the company at which the rumours were aimed.

I do not want to go further into that aspect, but simply point out that these are some of the things with which we have to cope and to which we have to adjust. I am certain of one point: given the right kind of co-operation, and the right kind of leadership, we can at least bring inflation down. It is important to remember that our major partner has an inflation rate of from 22 to 28 per cent.

Inflation will not be solved by political slogans. The advisers who advised Mr Snedden are now advising the present Government, and the results are no different. The reason is that the advisers are using establishment economics to deal with a problem which they do not entirely understand, when they should be taking some notice of anti-establishment economics in search of a different answer.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Does the honourable member believe there is room for political judgment in any determination of that advice?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is exactly what I am saying; I am not trying to be partisan in this. I am saying that the same people advised both Governments and I agree it is the job of a politician to make a political assessment or a political judgment. If we do not we should simply hand over to the bureaucrats and allow them to run the country themselves.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: In other words, we need statesmen.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: They are very few and far between, and I will tell the honourable member about them later.

I was very pleased to hear this morning—in fact, I read it first—that there seems to be a glimmer of understanding of industrial arbitration. While reading the Premier's statement the Hon. N. McNeill said that there should be some shortening down of the number of industrial tribunals which operate in this country. Members who were present in this Chamber during

the last session, or perhaps it was the previous session, will recall that I pointed out this problem. It could have been during an Address-in-Reply debate. I said that this is one area over which the Commonwealth should have sole control. I used as an example the fact that we have uniform railway gauges and uniform divorce laws, but when we come to wage fixing by industrial tribunals the situation is that there are literally hundreds in operation.

It is very difficult for any arbitrator or judge, or a commissioner or a chairman of a wage-fixing board, to arrive at a consensus judgment because people who work in these areas—the same as those who work in other areas—are all human. I will give an example of what sometimes happens.

A commissioner in Northern Queensland can give a decision in a certain field. His opposite number in Brisbane takes it before another commissioner where the various points are picked out so that a better case is presented to the next commissioner. The person who improves on the first decision can then claim that he is not a bad kind of bloke. The process is continued until, finally, it is handed to a commissioner in this State where another decision is given. It then bounces its way back across Australia.

If we get into the situation of looking at indexation there must be one central authority which brings all the various States together. I would not want to see anybody sacked; it would not be a bad idea to transfer personnel from this State to Northern Queensland. Personalities should not be involved. I have heard references such as, "So and so is quite good but we will not get far if we go before Joe Blow". It has been claimed that if the judge has a headache, a case receives a bad decision, but if he is to play golf he will get the case over with and it will be a better decision. That is only speculation and I do not think we should speculate.

There should be one central authority and it is the only way wage indexation will work. Such a system will not disfranchise the trade union movement; it will bring great stability, particularly in areas where trade unions are weak. No sensible trade union leader—and I am sure I am safe in saying this, at least as far as the waterfront is concerned—has ever advocated getting rid of the arbitration system. It is possible to have collective agreements within the ambit of the present Commonwealth arbitration system, although I must admit I am not up with what happens in the State sphere.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is why the seamen and the wharflies do not have strikes any more.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is really correct. On looking at these particularly difficult areas we then have to do something which is germane to the whole situation of industrial peace: we must see that

people are getting a fair deal. Mr Withers and Mr Tozer spoke very genuinely about the north-west. However, the north-west will never be developed sufficiently for it to stand on its own feet unless the people in the area are given the same facilities and amenities as those which exist in the south of the State, and at a comparable price.

I do not think that people should have to carry some kind of yoke simply because they live in what is basically a developmental area. In 1915 the Scaddan Labor Government started the State Shipping Service as a developmental organisation. It was never intended to be a profit-making service, and I think the role of the State Shipping Service is equally important today. I pay tribute to the people of that era, and the members of Parliament who had great foresight and very little money. I pay an even greater tribute to those in the field of transport because when gold was discovered in Western Australia, and a little money started to roll in, the executive, and those in Parliament at the time, saw fit to extend the rail system throughout the State. Perhaps it was because in those days there was a spirit of adventure; they were prepared to take a punt. I think it will be agreed that the rail system introduced by those far-sighted ancestors of ours helped develop our State to the stage it has reached today.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I would agree with that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: We now have the situation of looking to the north. I have listened to stories about the north-west for many years and the complaint has always been with regard to transport and the high cost of carting goods. I have previously mentioned that a razor blade in the north can cost three times its price in the south but if one were to challenge the store-keeper he would claim that the increase in price was the result of transport costs. However, one could take, in two pockets, enough razor blades to last all those living in the north-west for at least a year.

Despite the fact that the State Shipping Service has done a terrific job over the years, and continues to do that job, the people in the north are still being penalised. I believe the northern part of our State should be subsidised by the Australian Government, with the support and co-operation of the State. The area could then be declared a developmental area.

I am not too sure that we should continue to subsidise freights. I am not so sure that the freights are subsidised to the same extent that they were previously. The people in the north should be given cash grants and, at the same time, an efficient and effective consumer protection official should be stationed in the north-west to see that the people are not exploited.

There is a whole field which has never been examined in respect of getting goods and services to the north-west. We think only in terms of shipping, which is dear to operate, and in terms of trucking, which is even dearer to operate.

It is significant that The Australian National Line has been called upon on a number of occasions to operate this service. It would not be an intrastate service—the Constitution prevents this—but a service from Fremantle to Darwin. However, The Australian National Line would not provide the service because it makes a profit at present and if it operated on the north-west coast that profit would turn into a loss.

It is significant that no private ship-owner will operate this run. It must be borne in mind also that the State Shipping Service carries cargoes which private ship-owners would not agree to carry. In my own experience I know that many small packages are carried by the State Shipping Service, perhaps two straw brooms or items in this category. A private operator would not entertain the idea of accepting cargo of this nature.

We have heard about the increases in freight charges, and I feel I must make some comments for the record. I wish to quote from the *SSS Journal*, volume 7, No. 2, of July, 1974. On page 2, under the heading "Freight rate increase was unavoidable" it says—

Since freight rates were last increased in 1971, the State Shipping Service, together with the shipping industry as a whole, has been subjected to severe increases in operating costs, including those for labour and fuel oil.

Steep increases in wages and improved conditions for seagoing staffs, waterside workers, and all other shore-side personnel have added substantially to our out goings.

The increases became effective from the second week in July.

All classes of ships' stores have risen steeply in price as well as the cost of the many services provided by contractors.

It is no longer possible to absorb the mounting costs and as a result, the State Government approved an increase of 30 per cent in the freight charges and cargoes shipped to and from North West ports and Darwin.

The article then gives some examples of the effect of the freight charges on a number of staple commodities. Perhaps Mr Withers or Mr Tozer will check on these figures for me when they are in the north-west. I hope the retailers will abide by the recommendations. The article goes on to give approximate increases. It says—

This is what the new freight increases should mean in additional costs to the ultimate consumer:

Flour up 4/5 cent per kilogram (about 1/3 cent per lb.).

Sugar up 9/10 cent per kilogram (about 2/5 cent per lb.).

Butter up 1-3/10 cent per kilogram (about 3/5 cent per lb.).

Tea up 2-7/10 cent per kilogram (about 1-1/4 cent per lb.).

Powdered milk (3lb.) up 2-1/5 cents per tin.

Jam (24 oz.) up 3/5 cent per tin.

Canned Fruit (30 oz.) up 1 cent per tin.

Bottled Beer up 1-3/5 cents per bottle 740 ml (26 oz.).

Canned Beer up 1/2 cent per can 370 ml (13 oz.).

The Hon. W. R. Withers: If I may say so, I suggest this was prepared by a departmental officer who did not take into account such matters as dunnage, road transport from ship to destination, and package rates. The figures would be much higher if these things had been taken into consideration.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The State Shipping Service has very competent officers with no axe to grind in any direction. I believe these figures do take into account those matters just mentioned. However, I will give the honourable member the benefit of the doubt and suggest that perhaps they do not take them into account. *Sitting suspended from 6.04 to 7.30 p.m.*

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Prior to the suspension of the sitting I was talking about transport to the north-west and I had quoted some figures prepared by the State Shipping Service accountants as to the extent prices should rise on some basic commodities. I think Mr Withers said that other factors were involved but I should make the point that the other factors he mentioned have always been taken into account. Mr Withers said to me privately, "Do you know that a tin of jam is round?" I do know that. I know a little about the cubic measurements of cargo in ships and shipping by space or weight, and I know that the shipping companies always charge above whichever is the greater. There is some history relevant to that matter, but I will not dwell on that point this evening.

By way of interjection, someone mentioned something about road transport. Road transport is a very efficient means of transporting goods, but unfortunately tonight I do not have a speech prepared by Sir Peter Abeles or Ken Thomas pointing out that once a road transport operation goes over a distance of 1 000 miles it becomes extremely expensive and of very little advantage to the person transporting goods in this manner. The newspapers report that there may be a need to withdraw one of the State Shipping Service vessels from the north-west run. The report does not

say that a ship will be removed; only that this may happen. Coupled with that news is the fact that road transport should take over as far as the Pilbara. I would hate to see the day that practice was put into operation, because even though the State Shipping Service may cost us some money to run, it is similar to almost every other form of transport operated by the Government and is expected to run at a loss. At least it operates as a suppressant on the rates which would be charged by the road transport operators if they were to go it alone.

Let me give some examples of this. I have a paper prepared for me by a friend in the business relating to road freight rates to Pilbara destinations. It states—

There appears to have been some settling of road rates into the Pilbara since the introduction of the latest 18% increase.

The official W.A. Road Transport Association charge (1 tonne rate) for all destinations from Onslow to Port Hedland is \$95.45.

However, we know that the actual rates used for most movements of any volume (say for the iron ore companies) is always a matter for negotiation and each contract is a separate deal. Nevertheless they have all risen substantially and a fairly firm guide for Port Hedland is about \$75.00 and for Roebourne/Dampier \$70.00.

There is no doubt that the "small man" (corner storekeepers and private individuals) are paying well over these special contract rates.

In Port Hedland recently a local bakery ran out of flour and one of the leading cartage contractors in this State charged \$92 per tonne, or more than twice the base rate which normally operates for the transportation of flour landed in Port Hedland by the State Shipping Service. The number of fly-by-night owner-drivers operating in the north apparently has continued to shrink and it seems that we can anticipate a continual firming of overland rates in the future around those applied by the larger companies. As a matter of interest, the new rate charged for transporting goods to Derby is \$155 per tonne, over three times the base rate charged by the State Shipping Service.

I have no doubt that the road operators are charging the rates they must charge in order to cover their operating costs, but one could easily imagine that if the State Shipping Service were removed from this area of operations, it would be only natural that freight rates would rise. I find it pretty hard to reconcile this point with the suggestion that the Government is even contemplating taking one of the ships off this run, because on Tuesday, the 29th January, Sir Charles Court, the then Leader of the Opposition addressed a meeting in Carnarvon attended by 50 to 70

people. Among other things, in answer to a question, he said that he could not understand why the present Government had opted out of the LASH concept so quickly.

I might add that the previous Liberal Government was proceeding very cautiously as it should have been, with an untried concept such as the LASH vessels. The term "LASH" stands for "Lighter Aboard Ship", the idea being that the mother vessel would carry a number of barges and drop them off at various ports. At that time, I think only one vessel of this type was operating elsewhere, the *Arcadia Forest* of some 45 000 tons, running to Brest in Europe and, of course, in that instance, the barges were using the extensive canal systems which apply in Europe. However, the system had never been tried with such a low rate of tonnage as that required here. I understand the ships were to be some 7 000 to 8 000 tons. I know that the unions met with the Commonwealth and ship owners and agreed on the accommodation of the vessels and on the minimum manning requirements. However, the Government resisted the move into this area.

The Labor Government was returned to office at the 1971 election and when it took up consideration of implementing the LASH vessel system which, by the way, is designed by a firm in New Orleans, it was found when tenders were called that there was a world shortage of shipping—I believe there still is—and the price had risen to \$13 million per vessel. It was just out of the question to implement the LASH system with the finances available at the time. As I understand it, that \$13 million was not a firm price and may have escalated even further because the shipyards were full. Sir Charles Court did say that if his party were returned to Government, it would re-examine the LASH concept. I agree with him that it is a good idea. However, he made the amazing statement that he would open a port at Carnarvon.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Impossible.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Well, it is not exactly impossible, because the river could be opened up and the barges could be taken right down into Carnarvon. However, such short-haul shipping is not the answer. We must bear in mind the opinions expressed by Mr Tozer and Mr Withers—that we are trying to adjust by the provision of a streamlined transport system. I must reiterate that it would be folly to remove one or more vessels from the State Shipping Service run to the Pilbara because if at present high transport rates apply, it is only natural that rates would increase even further should the road transport operators be given a monopoly. This has been the experience in other parts of the world and around Australia.

One of the factors contributing to high road transport costs is the continuing appearance of owner-drivers in the Bankruptcy Court. The evasion of road maintenance tax arises simply because they are not controlled. I do not like the word "controlled" any better than other members in this Chamber. However, I have examined this situation and there would be a way out of this which would at least set the pattern for some organised transport movement into the Pilbara. What happens now is that the small operator goes along until he gets desperate and then tenders for a job at an uneconomic price. He goes north, blows a tyre or breaks a differential or some other part of his truck and before he knows where he is, he is in trouble. His next move is to try to get out of the situation in which he finds himself by evading road maintenance tax. I would make a suggestion to the Government in the following terms: We should try to put into operation a system similar to the one which I believe operates in North America under which the Government issues licenses to the operators. The Government itself sets the minimum economic rate.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I will not argue with you about that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Government would also set the minimum performance of the truck. This is nothing new; it happens all over Europe because they do not like trucks going up inclines at one mile an hour.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It happens here in Western Australia.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Such a move would provide some viability to the people in this business. I know that Thomas Nationwide Transport, which is a company I have had a fair bit to do with, and the principals of which I am very friendly with, has made a fortune in the exploitation—if I may use that term—of owner-drivers and of the Government transport system. This company uses the Government system and owner-drivers as main-line operators and itself operates from the terminals. I am not cast iron on that point but it is something that bears examination because on the one hand we have a system under which people go to the Bankruptcy Court, along with builders and others, and on the other hand we have people evading all kinds of road maintenance taxes. This has been a problem for all Governments and will continue to be a problem.

When I say the Government will set the minimum rate to be charged, I refer to a rate that will not get them into trouble and will at the same time erode the profitability and viability of the large operators, who know what costing is all about. Such

a scheme would also allow the State Shipping Service to operate and transport cargoes to the north where the people are paying for these services.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I am not going to interject because I am not allowed to.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not think it is against the Standing Orders to have an original idea in Parliament, although sometimes in some areas of forward endeavour I feel it is an embarrassment to have a spark of originality.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is not original.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I have heard that story before.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Where?

The Hon. J. Heitman: I told it in this place two years ago.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am sorry; I did not hear the honourable member tell it then. These are factors which operate in other parts of the world where private enterprise is highly developed and this system operates there for the specific reasons I have been talking about. Perhaps nothing will come of it, but it is worth looking at because the whole idea of this exercise is to try to reduce costs of transporting goods to the north-west.

Another area of transport which has not been discussed in this debate and which has not been provided to any degree in country areas or indeed in a whole host of countries is the effective use of air transport. I do not know of one civil aeroplane that has been developed purely for the transportation of goods, except by the modification of military aircraft or passenger aircraft or something of that nature. Probably, this is an area where the Australian Government could play a part which would help to reduce the high mark-up on goods by merchants, engineering companies, retailers or anybody else in out-of-the-way places who must order in quantity, place their goods on the shelf and hope that someone will come in and buy them.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: There would be nowhere for them to land if the Commonwealth had its way.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is another story. Perhaps the honourable member may touch on that point during his speech and tell us all about it.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I do not know anything about it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Knowing the honourable member as I do both inside and outside this Chamber, I am sure he will do a very good job in explaining this situation. I will be pleased to listen to him and I will not interject on him.

The PRESIDENT: In the meantime, will the honourable member address the Chair.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Yes, Mr President, I apologise for my slight deviation in protocol. Surely air transport is an area which could be examined. A central warehouse could be established at Port Hedland. Subsidies would need to be provided for its establishment and large quantities of certain categories of goods could be stored there and freighted to the various towns so that the initial cost of the goods to the retailer would not be as high. This may or may not be an original idea, but it is worth repeating. The entire key to the question of the north-west is to make living conditions there, both in relation to cost and amenities, as close as possible to those that apply in the city.

Parts of Texas have a similar climate to that of the north-west. Entire areas of, say, Galveston are air-conditioned. They have no problems in obtaining goods and that city provides a normal kind of life-style for the people living in the area. I agree that this could not be done on State finances alone.

I repeat that the people who enter these areas should be subsidised with cash grants or some other type of assistance, and every encouragement should be given to them to develop these particular areas. It is a sad fact that, by and large, there is a large turnover of people in the company towns in the north-west. I do not think anyone likes the concept of a company town, but we all know that if we were to wait for the State Housing Commission to build towns in those areas—I am sure Mr Clive Griffiths will agree with me on this—we would still be waiting. Therefore, the concept of the company town just had to eventuate.

In the future, however, I hope that people will take a long-range view of this at the Australian Government level to see what can be done for the people in the north or other designated developing areas. There is a future in the north, although I am one of those who believe that all our future is not in the iron ore or metal industry. I am still silly enough to believe that we are mainly a primary producing country and will remain that way for some time to come. If one would care to look up the figures or the returns relating to the rural industry they will prove me to be correct.

It is a sad fact that the New South Wales Government obtains more money in royalties from the poker machines than we get from the royalties on iron ore. This shows what kind of society we have.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: It is a different sort of metal, is it not?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Minister drew that conclusion before I did, and I will accept it. Quite frankly, the way has to be found to grant subsidies to those operating in the transport field. However, it will not be done by withdrawing one section of transport and leaving another

to operate in a monopoly situation. If we did this in the field of rail transport in some areas we would soon have an awkward situation. We should make every effort to keep costs down, but at the same time ensure that the people engaged in the transport industry gain a reasonable return. I am now talking of those who are prepared to take the risk, but not those people who, with no knowledge whatsoever, get into trouble because they do not know how to go about handling the situation.

As a result we get a backlash, because no matter what action we take in our community, in the long run it is the people who pay. I do not wish to dwell any longer on that particular subject.

I now wish to deal with the hoary old chestnut—decentralisation. Every member of this Chamber will agree that decentralisation is both desirable and necessary, but there is some history associated with the development of our country which makes it extremely difficult to decentralise without the expenditure of massive sums of Government money. We have to go back in history to see how other countries have developed. If we take as examples Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, it will be found that they grew up based on a rural economy and hundreds of small towns dotted around the countryside, but at the turn of the industrial revolution these towns were able to expand.

In Australia, however, we came into being on the eve of the industrial revolution and our population settled on the seaboard, before people travelled inland. Unfortunately, or fortunately, for us, before these cities were able to develop the gold rushes occurred and people flocked to various centres in the search for gold. As a consequence we had few people living on the hinterland in Australia, and 80 per cent of our population resided on the seaboard. That situation still exists today, particularly on the eastern seaboard. There are some exceptions. Queensland has some regional centres; there are a few in New South Wales, and fewer still in Victoria and South Australia, with practically none in Western Australia.

The greatest enemies of decentralisation are Governments of all political colours. I will give only one example, because I do not want to weary the House. I refer to the question of railway maintenance. When we were talking of decentralisation to a considerable degree, the Railways Department constructed its large depot at Forrestfield or Kewdale and it then went around the country closing down fitting shops, railway depots, and other railway establishments at various centres. Together with a host of others, Bunbury was one centre that was practically destroyed. I am not speaking in a political sense, but the Railways Department has done

nothing to assist decentralisation, and, as I have said, this applies to all Governments.

I believe that the naval base in Cockburn Sound was the greatest act of vandalism ever perpetrated on the Australian people so far as decentralisation is concerned. First of all, we had Mr Gorton saying that he would build a naval base in Cockburn Sound, and then the present Prime Minister said that if he were elected he would construct a larger base, together with naval support facilities.

In my opinion the myth of fixed naval bases was exploded with the destruction of the American fleet at Pearl Harbour, and the destruction and easy capture of the naval base at Singapore. Of course, in a situation such as this, where there is a naval base with a support facility the Navy wants still more water in which to swing its ships. This is causing considerable worry to the commercial people in Cockburn Sound, because of the insufficient sea room made available for commercial vessels.

This is becoming a problem, because the vessels are limited in regard to draught and prevailing weather conditions and as a result, the position is becoming worse. What I am leading up to is that if the base had had the status that was mentioned by Mr Abbey we would have pushed very firmly for this naval facility to be built in Albany. That would have been a real act of decentralisation. It would have been far better from the point of view of logistics and for other reasons such as establishing industry in Albany, having engineering shops in the area, and a host of other establishments. Therefore, I maintain that if the naval base had been built in Albany we would have had—

- (a) a naval base,
- (b) decentralisation, and
- (c) the economy of Albany boosted.

The Hon. R. Thompson: And the construction of the base would have been much cheaper.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: When we consider that exercise, I am sure it would have been quite simple, because during the war we had a submarine base not only in Fremantle, but also in Albany. I mention these matters because we know that Bunbury has been designated as an area to be developed. We also know that the Albury-Wodonga area is being developed, but there are areas in this State that could be developed.

We have to encourage people to the north-west to provide a labour force; an essential ingredient of decentralisation. We should have a policy by which we encourage companies to develop various areas of the State. I believe that the Government of the United States—one committed to free enterprise—directs com-

panies, and, by way of Government subsidies, orders them to establish themselves in places where there is an army of unemployed and other associated factors in existence. It is a fact of life that under the American system of development there has to be a profit motive and at this moment of our development and for many years to come the success or failure of a business will depend on its profitability.

If we wish to talk about decentralisation we should first of all start with our own Government instrumentalities. I think it was a shame that the Railways Department was allowed to proceed in the manner it was, because it robbed many of the country districts of a host of skilled workers and a great deal of money that was circulating in various country centres. It certainly has not gone ahead since that time. This is a different kind of situation to that which operates in the north-west; but basically it is the same.

I was extremely interested the other evening when an honourable member—he is not in the House at present—made some remarks concerning the Minister for Social Security (Mr W. Hayden). I do not recall the member's exact words but they all added up to the fact that he considered Mr Hayden to be a dill. Some people would think that but I do not. As a result I was most interested to read an article published in an issue of the *Time* magazine dated the 15th July, 1974. That article reads—

150 Faces for the Future.

While the lack of leadership is everywhere felt and deplored, there are a great many leaders, both actual and potential, round the world, . . .

In regard to our big country with a small population, the magazine quotes two people. The first is Robert Hawke. I would not disagree with the magazine in regard to that. The second one it quotes is William Hayden. That article refers to William Hayden as being a potential leader of this country, and therefore I do not think it coincides with the opinion of the honourable member I have just mentioned who more or less referred to Mr William Hayden as a dill. In any event, that is the way I interpret his remarks. I mention that matter because I think it important I should.

Tonight I heard the Minister for Justice (the Hon. N. McNeill) making a statement which emanated from the Premier, Sir Charles Court. From the Minister's speech I gained the interpretation that the Government may find it difficult—I am not being smart in saying this—to carry out some of its election promises. After all is said and done, if money is not available those promises cannot be fulfilled. In order that there may be no misunderstanding, and in view of what I have said earlier in my speech, I

would like the Minister for Justice, when replying to the debate, to clarify the situation instead of having members continuing to throw brickbats at one another; because I can assure members that the people in this State and in other places are becoming sick of what I may term confrontation politics.

I have been looking through various *Hansards* and I have come to realise that I could select a whole host of speeches that were made from this side of the House during last session, and if I closed my eyes and delivered them from this side of the House to people on the other side during this session they would be just as effective as they were previously. In this day and age we cannot regard members of the public as being complete fools, particularly when every minute detail is being recorded by the media in some form or another.

Therefore, I would like the Leader of the House, when he is replying to this debate, or at some appropriate time, to let us know whether there are in fact some areas of policy that cannot be carried out by the Government. His answer may be that there are no areas of policy the Government cannot carry out and I will be obliged to accept that statement. However, if there are some areas where the Government's policy cannot be carried out then, in the light of such a statement being made, I would like to hear about those areas, because I do not think we should continue to throw brickbats at one another whilst the people remain ignorant of such facts. We should be completely honest and take the people into our confidence and say, "This is the way we should proceed". I do not think such matters should become a political football—this is the concern of every member of every party—and the longer this situation continues the more downgraded a member of Parliament becomes in the eyes of the people.

When I was a member of the Seamen's Union I was placed in a different situation. One week, one-half of the union members would love me and the other half would hate me, but in the following week the reverse would be the case. However, now the members of that union seem to join forces and when they see me they say, "Here comes that so-and-so; when is he going to get another salary increase for doing nothing?" I support the motion before the House and I thank you, Mr President, and members for the attention that has been given to me.

THE HON. R. J. L. WILLIAMS (Metropolitan) [8.00 p.m.]: Like other speakers before me, I would like to offer to you, Sir, personally my congratulations on your election to the office you now hold. I will have something more to say about that

office later in my speech and, as I have said before in 1973 at another place in another State, I know you will take what I say in the spirit in which it is said. However, I think it is fitting that after all your experience in Parliament you should have been elected to that Chair because what is needed in that Chair is experience. I know that you personally will miss the floor of the House and the cut and thrust of debate which you enjoyed for many years. You were the unanimous choice of those on this side of the House with gratitude, and you were the unanimous choice of those on the other side of the House, also with gratitude. Because you were such a formidable opponent they were glad to get rid of you, if being promoted is being got rid of.

To the Leader of the Government in this House (Mr McNeill) I offer my heartiest congratulations. I know we will have some inspired leadership from him. I also congratulate Mr MacKinnon, the Minister for Education, and Mr Baxter, the Minister for Health. My congratulations go also to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Thompson) for his election to that office and to his deputy (Mr Dellar).

To the newly elected members and re-elected members go my congratulations on their election and re-election. I hope that they find this House not just a place of work, but a place where they can really contribute to the welfare of the State of Western Australia and its people, because it is the people who elect them to this Chamber. People have elected those members to represent them, not to start to destroy the House.

I listened to a large number of speeches on both the Address-in-Reply debate and the debate on the Supply Bill and I found as usual that one can always learn. The standard of speeches delivered by all members was of an exceptionally high order, being both thought-provoking and stimulating. It would be wrong to pick out any one speech as being outstanding or one as being any better than another. They all contributed something to Parliament and all members did what Parliament was established for; that is, to represent the people.

The speeches of the various members reflected how they feel and, what is more important, how their electors feel. We do not come here to represent ourselves, but to represent our constituents. We may be in the Government or we may be in the Opposition, but primarily we are parliamentarians and we in this House are in the privileged position of being in a House of Review. Therefore there is nothing wrong in the Hon. Des Dans talking about the north-west or the Hon. John Tozer talking about the metropolitan area. In this House we are concerned about the

State as a whole and I hope we will continue to rise above the parochial issues of electorate matters only. We should concern ourselves with the State.

While listening to Mr Dans I was reminded of one or two points which I will mention in passing. The only time a Government gets a mandate—and I have said this before—is on a referendum. A Government is elected on its policies and is entitled to prosecute those policies to the best of its ability in the dual House system. It has no mandate or blank cheque. I never dwell on election figures, and neither does Mr Dans; but it is passing strange that although the non-Labor parties in the last Federal election gained 52 per cent of the votes, the Labor Party gained 60 per cent of the seats.

As instanced by the Hon. H. W. Gayfer, the Hon. Des Dans, and my learned colleague (the Hon. I. G. Medcalf), the situation in the country is serious and no thinking person in this House would believe otherwise. Cures are extremely difficult in inflationary ills. No-one has really come to grips with the situation in the world at the moment and although it may be economically caused it can be politically prolonged. Were any nation to have bullets and bombs poured into it then it would understand that action as a declaration of war; and inflation is economic warfare and it is a warfare which is extremely difficult to understand.

If some lead had been given or some statesmanship shown when the Premiers went to Canberra with high hopes in their hearts, is it beyond the bounds of possibility that however abhorrent in a time of emergency and crisis such as we face now, there could have been at the Federal level a coalition of the best brains from both parties combining together to stop Australia sinking further into the quicksands of inflation? As she is sinking, she is being battered about the head by internal feuds on all sides. Perhaps that is an oversimplification or too simple an answer.

If one reads history one finds that it is remarkable that when a country does face a crisis of the magnitude we are now facing, the ranks tend to pull together, and no matter what the politics, and although an active Opposition may be held, the best of both political parties get together and put the country on a safe and sure footing once again.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: An active constructive Opposition.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Yes. I thank Mr Dans for his interjection because it reminds me of what Sir Winston Churchill said. He stood up in Parliament and thanked one of the most hated men of British politics at one stage for keeping a token Opposition going during war-

time. He said that that was essential to preserve the democratic and undoubted rights of Parliament.

If we are to keep our democratic and undoubted rights of Parliament we must consider our parliamentary institution, and I wish to be particular about this one and refer to these Houses of Parliament. I do not know whether it is a fault of the educational system, but it is true that the people within Australia fail to appreciate what Parliament is all about and how it operates. I disagree with the Hon. Des Dans—which is nothing unusual—when he says that the Address-in-Reply debate is a waste of time.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: While Rome is burning it is.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: At the moment Rome is not burning.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Mr Gayfer gave us three months, including the farmers.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I will give us five. I feel that when new members come into the House and are not *au fait* with procedures; when they do not know the ins and outs of parliamentary life; and when it is still a chilly experience—as I still find it—to stand on one's feet and become coherent and try to make a speech, it is then, I think, that the Address-in-Reply debate is a wonderful breaking-in time. I believe that our founding fathers may have thought just this. As far as I am concerned it is terrifying to have to make a speech.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are no orphan.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It does not seem to terrify me.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I think that some members who have been in the House for years still feel apprehensive about speaking. We must have some charity in our House and help the new members to get off the ground. I do not believe they should be thrown off the deep end, as it were, into a Bill which they may not have understood properly.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There is still one thing I agree with. I still do not understand them.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Be that as it may; that is the honourable member's prerogative.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: In 1973 I had the honour to attend a conference held by the CPA in Melbourne and I was extremely impressed at the way in which the delegates from the various sovereign Parliaments went out of their way to explain the workings of their own Parliaments to those who had just established Parliaments and who had just come into the CPA. These people literally hung onto the ideas and took them back to their own countries.

Perhaps the greatest speech I heard there was not made by a parliamentarian, but by the then Chief Justice of Victoria (Sir Henry Winneke) who has now become the Governor of Victoria. Sir Henry made a speech which he entitled "Parliament and the Rule of Law". It is in the public conference booklet, 12th Australasian Area Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. I will not read it all, but I would like to quote from certain sections. In the speech, Sir Henry said—

My subject, "Parliament and the Rule of Law," is of far-reaching importance, not only for those who are entrusted with having a part in the government of their countries but also for those who collectively might be loosely called "the governed." . . .

By "Parliament" I understand the body in which the ultimate lawmaking power resides. . . .

On occasions such as this those of us who have inherited a system which originated and developed in Great Britain should be ready to acknowledge the debt we owe in that regard. Under this system we live not only in what we call a Parliamentary democracy but also under a constitutional monarchy.

I do not apologise for this because Sir Henry took us back to what I consider to be the basics of what Parliament is all about. It was very refreshing, even to members with some 35 and 40 years' experience in Parliament to have those basic principles restated. To continue—

A Parliamentary democratic system broadly involves the division of powers between the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. In the broadest of terms, the legislative province is to make the laws, the province of the executive is to initiate and administer the laws so made, and the province of the judiciary is to interpret those laws and apply them in the individual cases before the courts. Within that broad framework the doctrine of Parliamentary sovereignty or supremacy has emerged. The doctrine was not one of fixed, arbitrary or sudden origin, but was the result of struggle and gradual development over the ages. There is little need for me to remind this audience of the struggle over the centuries which resulted in the shift of sovereign power from the Crown to the Parliament. Suffice it to say that the sovereignty of Parliament is now firmly established by two leading principles: Firstly, Parliament has the right to make or unmake any law; and secondly, no person or body is recognized by law as having a right to overrule or set aside the legislation of

Parliament. The doctrine of Parliamentary supremacy rests on those two broad principles.

That is what I call returning to basics. So many people in so many countries have forgotten these basics. The supremacy of Parliament is all-important, and one could be forgiven if at times one thought this was going a little awry.

I listened with interest to certain people in this House who have a great deal of expertise in particular fields, but I listened with probably greater attention when the Hon. D. W. Cooley made his speech. He is extremely well versed in trade unionism and I think he said he had worked within trade union principles for at least two decades. In certain parts of his speech I detected—and I am sure he will forgive me if I am wrong—a thought that all members on this side of the House or of my political persuasion were anti-unionist or conservative. I wish to assure him—and I can speak only for myself—that is far from the truth.

Trade unions are an integral part of modern society, and it was the Tolpuddle martyrs which gave them their genesis. However, certain sections of the trade union movement do not appear to support the broad principles of parliamentary democracy.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Your party has never shown any affection towards the trade union movement—not by deed, anyhow.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I will come to that later. I, too, have had a great deal of experience with trade unions in other parts of the world, and I will make one or two observations on that in a moment. I appeal to the Hon. D. W. Cooley to think about some of the observations which I will read—they are not mine. They could lead to a greater understanding between all sections of the community—those who are in trade unions and those who are in management. As I have said in previous speeches in this House, I do not point the bone at either section. There are good managers and bad managers; there are good trade unionists and bad trade unionists. That will always be so as long as the human race exists, because we cannot achieve perfection in either sphere.

As exhorted to do by the Hon. Grace Vaughan—although I did not need any exhortation—I repaired to the Parliamentary Library the other day in order to do a little research. We have endeavoured to make the library a better place in which to do research, and I congratulate the Parliamentary Library Committee on the work it has begun. I hope it continues and that we will continue to get better service.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And more people in it.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: It will be difficult to get more people in it because so many members have now departed to offices outside the House.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I meant staff.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The library is a bit cramped for space.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: However, our researchers in the library do a very good job. My knowledge of trade unions—gained from reading and from word of mouth passed on by my father—goes back to 1901. I am sure the Hon. D. W. Cooley will remember one of the most famous trade union cases in history—the Taff Vale Railway case in 1901. The judgment in that case was later rescinded. I will not bore the House with the details of the case. Suffice it to say that for the first time a court ruled against picketing and against unions which persuaded black-legs or scabs—whatever one calls them—to break their contract. The High Court of England ruled that such action was illegal. The judgment was upset in 1906.

When one reads *The History of British Trade Unionism* by Beatrice and Sydney Webb—I have read it and I know the authors—one cannot but be amazed at the fairness of their approach to the trade union movement, albeit they were of the political persuasion that gave trade unionism its genesis. The reason that conflicts occur and trade unions and management appear to be in a little bother from time to time is that we are still thinking in Victorian terms—and I do not mean the State of Victoria but the era of Queen Victoria. This has occurred because of four conditions. I would ask Mr Cooley to mull over these four conditions to see whether there is perhaps a grain of truth in them.

There is no doubt that the British Parliament gave to trade unions the greatest power that has ever been known in any democracy. In point of fact, a considerable number of Royal Commissions looked into trade unionism in the United Kingdom. After the 1903 commission, of which Sydney Webb was a member, the Webbs said this—

An extraordinary and unlimited immunity, however great may be the damage caused and however unwarranted the act, is something which most lawyers as well as employers regard as nothing less than monstrous. It makes a trade union a privileged body exempted from the ordinary law of the land. No such privileged body has ever before been deliberately created by an English Parliament.

I do not believe, and I do not think there is a member of this House who could possibly believe, that organised labour should be a community within a community which is above the law. None of us sitting in this place tonight is above the law. In my opinion, to throw torts

out of the window is the wrong way to tackle the situation. Throughout this world there are many examples of very responsible trade union leadership. Unfortunately, it is only the bad ones which are brought to our notice; and they are brought to our notice because of the four points which I now wish to enumerate.

We talk about the old trade unionist, with his right to form a union, to make agreements, and to work. There are four factors which have changed the whole structure and which neither management, the trade union movement, nor government has caught up with.

The first factor is that there has been an expansion of trade unionism in terms of membership and, far more importantly, in terms of political power. Of the last 28 Governments in the United Kingdom, 12 were Labour Governments which were supported by the trade unions. When the main support for a principal political party comes from the trade unions, is it not a fact that those trade unions have some influence upon the political thought and methods of working of a Government of that political party?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The main support for the Liberals comes from the employers.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Rubbish!

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Consequently, there is increased integration in modern industry and society so that some firms, and the community as a whole, have become extremely dependent upon a few groups of well organised workers. A break in the supply of electricity in these days gives us—the ordinary people—a great deal of discomfort and inconvenience. Those organised electricity supplies did not exist to that extent in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century. There were not so many domestic implements which depended wholly and solely on electricity. It must be very difficult for old people who live in high rise developments when there is an electricity cut. I am very thankful that hospitals have provided standby emergency power for dialysis machines. It should not be necessary to do so, but it is necessary. For invalids and for old aged people a cut in electricity supplies could be a matter of life or death.

The third point is that there is a change in the nature of the capitalist system, although this is not generally recognised. Through insurance policies and occupational pension schemes millions of people now have an indirect stake in private industry. This is from where private industry draws its capital. The typical employer in a large company these days is himself a salaried employee who is paid according to the value of his technical expertise.

However, one of the things—and this is the fourth point—which alarms the community is the fact—and we have heard it before and we will hear it again—that many unionists perhaps do not wish to go out on strike. The strike is the most terrifying weapon that has come to the notice of this modern civilisation. Strikes are not necessary, because they solve nothing; eventually both aggrieved parties will meet and talk. It is to be hoped that with a few talks like that both management and unions will take a long, close, hard look at themselves and the way in which they operate. God forbid—although Mr Munday did give a warning—that in Australia a scandal similar to the ETU scandal in the United Kingdom in 1956 should rear its head.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I thought you would be too intelligent to take notice of Mr Munday.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I do not think intelligence comes into it. I was merely passing an observation. Mr Munday made a statement which was published—and I think fairly published—and I would say that I think the good sense of the Australian workers would lead them to do something about not only refuting his claims but making sure that such claims are never again made.

I pass from that to the sovereignty of Parliament: something a little closer to home. At that same Melbourne conference I made an appeal that Presiding Officers of Parliament should be given the dignity and stature which it is sometimes necessary for the public to recognise in the functions of Parliament. At that conference I went into detail, and I do not propose to go into it tonight; but I would say this: You, Sir, now wear the mantle of President of this Legislative Council. I equate you with the Speaker of the House of Commons (the Right Hon. Selwyn Lloyd, Q.C.) who is a man of great distinction and who has served his country almost as its leader and as its Foreign Secretary. He broke tradition by being appointed to the position of Speaker. The position traditionally was reserved for one who had not been a Minister of the Crown.

In our Parliament at this stage of our development we cannot afford that luxury. We cannot afford to say that the Presiding Officer in either House should be elected unanimously and that he should ensure the continuity of Parliament by becoming the member for Parliament Hill; and that he should resign his seat and his political office and that another member be elected to fill the vacancy thus created on the floor of the House.

The motivation of that thought is not original, but it was certainly heightened during the last three years of Government when virtually the Speaker in another place was the Government. That is an abrogation of parliamentary democracy. It

was forced upon us because of our system. It is unfortunate that we do not have—and who knows, in years to come we might have—the sort of person who would do nothing else in his life but be a Presiding Officer of Parliament, being himself elected to Parliament and having a great deal of experience. I am sure you would agree, Sir, that the amount of work parliamentary Presiding Officers are called upon to perform goes unheralded and unsung in this Parliament.

I think their salary and privileges should be equal to those of any Cabinet Minister. To uphold the dignity of office of Presiding Officers of Parliament residences should be provided for them where they may entertain overseas guests, instead of having to take them to some hotel, or leaving it to some local governmental body to do the welcoming, or taking them to the Cabinet dining room of this Parliament House. I think the dignity of the Presiding Officers does more for the parliamentarians than the parliamentarians think it does.

I can recall reading about the Speakers of the House of Commons. There are now 630 members of that House, but no more than about 350 can be accommodated at any one time on the floor of the House. As you will be aware, Sir, members there if they wish to attend the Budget speech must commence queueing up outside the Chamber at 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning in order to obtain a seat. In point of fact those members of Parliament are so busy that sometimes they have no time to go to the floor of the House; because they have what is called a committee system. I recall reading that a late night sitting was in progress in that Parliament and the Deputy Speaker was in the Chair. The House was in uproar and by some means known only to the Deputy Speaker, the Speaker was summoned. It was said that the rustle of Mr Speaker's gown as he came down the corridor was sufficient to calm the House for the rest of that night. Such was the dignity of the Speaker.

If we cannot have that sort of system, there is one system we can have in this House. I appeal to the Government, as other parliamentarians have appealed to successive Governments, to do something to enable us as parliamentarians to practise our duties in a proper and efficient manner. I appeal to the Minister for Justice to see if he cannot persuade his colleagues in Cabinet to institute in this House a standing committee on subordinate legislation. I know this will not find favour with all.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I will agree with you over that.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: We have 81 members of Parliament, and these Houses of Parliament have a staff of 85. That figure has been verified and checked. Yet I find it singularly odd that we are relatively uninformed, particularly in regard to subordinate legislation. I wonder

if the members representing the North Province know that the Lake Argyle Inn on the Ord River Dam at Kununurra has just been created a two-star hotel, or that the Continental Hotel at Broome has three stars, and so have the hotels at Karratha and Wickham. I wonder what is wrong with the Lake Argyle Inn that it has only two stars.

I wonder if the members in this House who represent the City of Fremantle know that the appointment of Mr E. Gray-Spence as Health Surveyor to the City of Fremantle has been confirmed. Of course, that is only a small item. I wonder if the members who represent Brookton—and those members who know Brookton—know of and agree to the fact that His Excellency the Governor in Council has, pursuant to section 119 of the Health Act, 1911-1973, approved of the use of a site for the disposal of rubbish by the Shire of Brookton, all that area being Reserve No. 24588 situated at Brookton?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: This member does.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Well, the Minister signed it, so he should know about it. I wonder if the members representing the Town of Canning know that that town, having adopted the Model By-laws Series "A" as reprinted in the *Government Gazette* on the 17th July, 1963, "doth hereby resolve and determine that the aforesaid amendment published in the *Government Gazette* on 21st December, 1973, shall be adopted without modification."

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is another centralist act!

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Probably everyone knows that apart from the members who represent the Town of Canning.

I wonder if the members who represent Geraldton know that—

By-law 11 sub-bylaw 2 (c) is amended by adding the words "Alternatively a metal bin of not less than 25 cu m (182 litres), fitted with a close fitting lid which is both weather proof and fly proof may be provided."

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Mr Clive Griffiths knows all about that!

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: No, he does not, because I checked with him and he was talking about bigger ones than those.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Have you just discovered that you can read these things in the *Government Gazette*?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: No, I discovered that two years ago. I had a whole drawer full of reprinted regulations from the *Government Gazette*. I give these as an example. They were included in last week's gazette.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Please don't give us this week's.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I would not read out all of them because that would be a waste of time. However, if members are not interested in that, I tell them that many regulations are published in the *Government Gazette* which must firstly lay on the Table of this House for 14 days, and it is the responsibility of members to ensure that nothing in those regulations will cause discomfort of any sort to any of their constituents.

We have had debates in this place as a result of a constituent complaining; and we have come in here and rushed to look for the regulations. In this day and age it is impossible for a member to keep up with every regulation, by-law, and ordinance published in the *Government Gazette*; and what is more, apart from the fact that the Crown Law Department attaches a certificate to say that the regulation is not *ultra vires* the Act, nothing more is known about it.

What does "Section 2 of by-law 27 of 1904 is hereby deleted" mean? One must do the research to find out; and in this day and age Mrs Grace Vaughan will say she has 90 000 constituents to look after.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: 91 000.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Mr Griffiths has been at work again checking the figures. When one must look after remote areas, what chance does one have to check up on these things? I was most interested to read in the *Government Gazette* that under section 34(5) of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act certain motor vehicles commonly known by the model designations set forth in a schedule appearing in the gazette are exempted from the provisions of subsection (1) of that section. I do not know what that refers to, but the gazette goes into great detail to tell us what models are exempt. They range from A.C.'s, Armstrong Siddeleys, and Aston Martins, through to Rolls Royces and Sunbeams. I do not know whether that means that motor vehicle dealers will be exempt from any act of theirs when such cars are being offered for sale.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Would you like to read those out again?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I would like to comply with Mr Dans' request, because he is always extremely courteous to me. However, knowing that he would be interested I brought a second copy to the Chamber with me. I will pass it to one of the attendants who, I am sure, will pass it on to Mr Dans so that he may peruse it.

It is not my intention to be obstructive, but I make an earnest plea to the Government—to any Government—to establish a Standing Committee of this House

which could look at this type of subordinate legislation—though the term “subordinate legislation” would tend to downgrade it.

This could be extremely important and I hope the Government will see the necessity to appoint such a committee, which could come into this House and say it had considered the regulations laid on the Table of the House by the Minister and that it had found them to be in order, or not in order, as the case may be.

I thank you, Mr President, and members for your attention and I have great pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE HON. CLIVE GRIFFITHS (South-East Metropolitan) [8.46 p.m.]: It is also my intention to support the motion before the House. I have already offered to you, Sir, the congratulations which you deserve on attaining your high office. I have similarly congratulated the new Ministers of the Crown and other officers who have been elected for the first time during this Parliament.

Unfortunately, however, I did neglect to extend my congratulations to Mr Dellar on his appointment as Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and in particular to Mr Ron Thompson for his having been elected Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber. I am glad to have this opportunity to rectify that omission. It is very pleasant indeed to see Mr Thompson in this position, and I hope it is one he will retain for many years to come. I am sorry I forgot to congratulate the honourable member when I was speaking the other day.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: We will forgive you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: When I was speaking on the Supply Bill I commented on the contributions that have been made in this House by members who were elected at the last State election. Having heard them speak for the first time I said I felt sure that the standard of debate in this Chamber would continue on the same high plain as in the past. The subsequent contributions made by the newly-elected members has served to reinforce my belief that the high standard of debate will be maintained.

I would indicate to the newly-elected members that when initial speeches are made it is traditional for members to refrain from interjecting; and I would add that I hope they will bear in mind the fact that I am a pretty sensitive type of individual and I trust they will extend this courtesy to me while I am speaking!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: And you reckoned I made your heart bleed last week.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is right. Many comments have been made during this debate on the Address-in-Reply which certainly deserve to be answered, but there are so many of them that it is

not my intention to try to cover all the areas in question tonight. But there are one or two matters about which I feel I ought to say something.

Early tonight Mr Dans referred to the debate on the Address-in-Reply and said how tedious it was; he suggested we could streamline things. He added it was an outmoded state of affairs that we could well do without. I would disagree with him on that point.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I said, at this time.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Without trying to argue the point, I simply say that I disagree with the honourable member on this matter, because I believe—as the Hon. R. J. L. Williams mentioned a moment ago—it provides a newly-elected member an opportunity to speak without interruption at a time when he is nervous, as most of us are when making our initial speech in this Chamber. Indeed, I would agree with what somebody said in passing and by way of interjection, that some members continue to be nervous, anyway; and I am certainly one of them. I have been here for a number of years and I still have this feeling of butterflies in the pit of my stomach. It is because I am so sensitive that I have suggested to members that they refrain from interjecting while I am speaking.

Apart from this aspect to which I have referred, the Address-in-Reply debate provides members with the very important opportunity to bring to the attention of the Government those small pinpricking problems which people experience in their various electorates; those problems that are not nation shattering, but which though small, concern one or two people living in an area about which nobody seems to be remotely interested, perhaps because they do not amount to very much seeing that there are only one or two people involved.

It appears to me that it is the small people who suffer these injustices—I will use the word “injustices” for the want of a better word—and even though members of Parliament or somebody else may endeavour to overcome the problem confronting the person concerned they are not always successful, because the bureaucrats who make the decisions for the Government of the day cannot be bothered. Accordingly the last resort is for the member of Parliament to come here and take advantage of the opportunity presented by the debate on the Address-in-Reply to raise the matter in question; and, even if nothing else is achieved, at least he is able to vent his wrath on the Government by virtue of the fact that the Ministers must sit and listen to what he has to say.

So it will be seen that the debate on the Address-in-Reply at least provides an opportunity for injustices to be aired on behalf of the people from the various electorates; those who are unable to speak for

themselves or to press their cases. In all the years I have been here it seems to me that it does not matter what type of Government we have in office—whether it be the present Government or a Labor Government—because the people to whom I refer are in such a minority, nobody seems to worry about them at all; and since the debate on the Address-in-Reply affords us an opportunity to discuss such problems as may arise I would oppose any suggestion that such debate should be discontinued.

During the course of the speeches made some of the old songs have been resung over again by the same old singers, and some of the newly-elected members have taken up the same old tune. I refer in particular to the election results as they apply to this House.

Like Mr Dans I am one of those who believes that at the end of an election one has either won it or lost it. We have statisticians and experts telling us that such-and-such a seat will be convincingly won by 1 292 votes; that we cannot possibly fail to win some other seat; and that a third seat is an absolute moral—that we would have to win it. But while we find at the end of the election these people are occasionally right, they certainly have never been right in their estimates of wins and losses. The hard cold fact is that when an election is completed it is either won or lost; and it does not matter very much whether one person receives 57.53 per cent of the votes while the other receives 42.47 per cent. What does matter is that the people—particularly as this relates to the electoral laws that apply to this Chamber—democratically elect the person whom they want to represent them at the time. All the other hogwash about gerrymandering and so on does not impress me at all. It is the people who have elected those of us who are here. They did so knowing what they were doing and, as a result, for the time being we occupy our seats in this House.

Last year, prior to the proroguing of Parliament, I was speaking on another Bill and I made an estimate—similar to the estimates about which I have been talking—and I said at the time, no doubt after being provoked by someone from the Australian Labor Party, that so far as I could estimate the situation as it applied then, the only reason the Australian Labor Party would have four members in this Chamber after the State election was the fact that it had four members who would not come up for election.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think I provoked you into that outrageous statement.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: In company with those other experts about whom I spoke a few moments ago, I was wrong in my estimate, and indeed the Australian Labor Party finished with nine members and not four. However, it occurs to me

that perhaps the number of seats that I predicted was not wrong but maybe the year was wrong—it is on the time element that I went wrong.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have plenty of time in which to put things right.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I think I can justify that comment by considering two or three electorates at random. For example, let us consider the Lower North Province, or the South-East Province, or, perhaps, the North-East Metropolitan Province—let us consider these so that we may have a variation and a cross-section of provinces.

I do not know how far off I was in my predictions. Let us take as examples the provinces I have mentioned. I do not know what is the significance of this, but since the last State election I have noticed Miss Elliott touching up her typing from time to time! Mr Dellar has been walking around the corridors studying a copy of the Local Government Act; and I understand Mr Leeson was recently seen in the city looking at the display window of a men's clothing store.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I suggest you renew your contractor's license for electrical work!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Apparently Mr Leeson was trying to decide on whether to buy a boiler suit, or a bib and brace overall! I do not know what is the significance of that, but it would seem there is at least reason for my belief that my prediction last year on the number of members to be returned was incorrect only as to the year. I said the year was 1974, when perhaps I ought to have said 1977.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It depends on whether you put things right.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Time will tell.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have the ball in your court.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What is your prediction in respect of your own province? You have given your prediction in respect of the other provinces.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The honourable member will be delighted to know that I do not make rash predictions in relation to this sort of thing.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Certainly not based on anything sensible.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member should not listen to the interjections.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Not being a statistician, and though it would appear that the last time I went up for election I trebled my majority, I would not be so rash as to say that I will treble

my majority on the next occasion. However, I can assure the honourable member that my majority will be increased.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: If it will help your prediction, I only won by four votes. Ten electors in my province have died, so I could be six votes down already.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Thank goodness you have left Mr Thompson and me out.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I did intend to point out that Mr Dans has been seen putting in an application for a refresher course on splicing.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I have a job in tying my shoelaces up!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Mr Dans spoke earlier in this debate and mentioned something which prompts me to raise the matter again. This is in regard to a proposal to do something about the high cost of transport to the north. I share with him his concern for the people of the north who are disadvantaged by the high freight costs. However, I was interested in his suggestion that perhaps the Government ought to take over the licensing of road transport operations so that only those who hold licenses will be allowed to transport goods under a minimum price structure. He suggested—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That it should be looked at.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Yes. I interjected and said that proposal was currently being put into effect in Western Australia. My interjection was not designed to imply that I was being critical of Mr Dans, in that it was a new approach. What I was attempting to get across to him was that this was not a new approach, and that type of proposal was being implemented in Western Australia.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Whereabouts?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: It is currently operating in respect of transport as far as Carnarvon.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It should be, but it is not.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: It is currently operating as far as Carnarvon, but the scheme is in such a shemuzzle that everybody is confused. As far as I am concerned it is a complete waste of time. More importantly, it is operating in respect of freezer goods to places north of Carnarvon. This is a subject on which I have spoken in this Chamber previously. If that is an example of what Mr Dans is suggesting—that is, where there are two contractors licensed by the Government and given the sole right to transport freezer goods to places north of Carnarvon—we should implement, then I will not have a bar of it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That was not what I had in mind. Neither would I have a bar of that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The people of the north are being exploited by the current license holders. I did approach the Minister in the previous Government, and I have approached the Minister in the present Government, but quite frankly I have not got anywhere. I believe these are licenses conferring the right to black-mail, and I would not have a bar of them under any circumstances.

The people of the north are being held to ransom by these licensees. As far as I am concerned I would revoke the licenses within five seconds, if I had the power. Woe betide them if the day arrived that I became the Minister for Transport—even for an hour.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Surely you would not depart from a signed agreement made with the Government!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not like the system. I think the people of the north are being exploited, and I say that without any fear of contradiction. The other evening when I was speaking in the debate on the Supply Bill I mentioned a criticism that appeared in a report in the *Daily News*. This related to a petition which was laid on the Table of the House on the opening day of this Parliament by myself on behalf of some of my constituents. I suggest it would be a sorry state of affairs if members of Parliament were not permitted to present petitions on behalf of their constituents who desire that course of action to be taken.

The complaint against the petition which I presented on their behalf related to the use of certain words by the petitioners. The suggestion was that residents in the area were concerned about the description used in the petition, and Mr Cloughton made some comment on that. However, he would not permit me to interject sufficiently to put him on the right track or to enlighten him on the matter.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: There was a considerable number of interjections.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: For that reason I shall explain the position to the honourable member now. The complaint was that the petition contained the words "a potential slum area". The petition was prepared and presented by the residents of Langford, and the member of Parliament for the district presented it on their behalf. Anyone who says that the residents of Langford objected to the term "a potential slum area" is tantamount to saying that those residents object to the term which they themselves have used in their petition. That was the position which Mr Cloughton could not understand the other night.

Since then there has been a further development. It will be recalled that I said I had arranged for a deputation of these

residents to meet the Minister for Housing and the Acting General Manager of the State Housing Commission, to ascertain whether or not the proposal which was unacceptable to the district of Langford would be proceeded with.

I took the deputation to the gentlemen mentioned. I was somewhat astounded by the response that we received, because the Minister for Housing and the Acting General Manager of the SHC agreed that the proposed development was an unsatisfactory proposition, and they put forward a couple of alternatives to the residents of Langford from which to choose. One of these alternatives was a very acceptable proposition, which would result in a considerable reduction in the density of living in that district. It would involve additional expenditure because of the necessity to redirect some sewage mains and roadways.

As far as I was concerned it was refreshing to reach a situation where, finally, after all the years that I have been a member of this House, and being critical of the commission—because of its lack of co-operation in any suggestions I made—the Minister for Housing and the acting general manager were agreeable to a suggestion that a proposed development was not in the best interests of the community.

More particularly, it vindicated completely the action of the petitioners who prepared and presented the petition which was subsequently laid on the Table of this House. Mr Deputy President (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) you will know that as a result of the criticism that I have levelled at the State Housing Commission from time to time, what the commission has done on this occasion is not the type of action that I would have expected of it. It is therefore pleasing that on this occasion I can say something nice about the commission, although I will also have something not so nice to say about it. I never cease to be amazed at how a person's ability to assess a problem seems to vary according to the position he holds.

One could show something to an ordinary member of Parliament and ask him to have a look at it, and he would say, "My goodness, that is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. You should be able to do something about it." On the next day that ordinary member of Parliament may well be a Minister of the Crown and if one were to show him the same problem he would look at it but he would not have an opinion at all. He would find somebody in the department who would have an opinion but it would happen to be identical with the opinion which the previous Minister of the Crown held a fortnight earlier.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The honourable member is going to put things right, is he not?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am endeavouring to do so and I take advantage of this opportunity to speak during the Address-in-Reply.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Has the honourable member ever had any knowledge of adjusting anything?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I made representations. I do not know whether I am over sympathetic, or whether I have a different reaction when somebody comes to me with a problem. I think I am an ordinary individual and I do not think I over react. I thought I was able to size up a situation reasonably well.

I had an example early this year, certainly before the change of Government, when a constituent of mine came to me for some assistance. He needed the assistance badly. He was a young fellow who had a young wife and a tiny baby but he had nowhere to live. He was a very nice young fellow and although I do not know the circumstances—because I did not want to embarrass him—I discovered he could neither read nor write. He was over the age of 21 years and he was big and strong, and willing and able to work.

He finally got himself a job which did not require him to read or write. Because he could not read nor write he was unable to obtain a driver's license and, therefore, there were certain restrictions on his ability to look after his wife and little baby. He was concerned that his marriage was going to disintegrate because of the appalling conditions under which he had to live with someone else.

The job which he was able to obtain returned him, in spite of his disability, \$75 a week. I do not know whether or not \$75 is a reasonable wage but he was perfectly happy with the job, and the wage he received permitted him to live happily with his wife and baby. It was enough to permit him to pay some weekly amount towards a few items of furniture, of which he had none previously.

He got the job because it happened to be very close to the place where he was staying, in his adverse situation. He came to me in an endeavour to get some help from the State Housing Commission. I presented his case to the State Housing Commission and gave the department all the details. I pointed out that the young fellow was on the verge of a marriage breakdown and that he had finally got himself a job. I mentioned that he had limitations in not being able to read nor write, and not being able to drive a motor-car. I would think those were quite drastic limitations for any person to have in this day and age; practically crippling limitations on the ability of the young fellow to look after his little family. I mentioned to the State Housing Commission that because of those circumstances I would like the department to look at the situation and help him to get a house.

There is one other point I forgot to mention. The job necessitated his working shifts; one shift started at 3.00 p.m. and finished at midnight, and the other shift started at 6.00 a.m. and finished at 3.00 p.m. We had the situation where he was as happy as Larry in the job and was receiving enough money to suit his circumstances at the time. So, I asked the State Housing Commission to help him.

The State Housing Commission, in the sympathetic and generous attitude which it always adopts towards these cases, promised to provide a house. Now the job was in Redcliffe, so where do members think he was offered a house? He was offered a house at Maniana. As the crow flies it is probably not very far from Maniana to Redcliffe but for a person who cannot read nor write, and who cannot drive a motor-car, it is a hell of a long way.

The PRESIDENT: It is a long way!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, a long way. More particularly is it a long way when one shift commences at 6.00 a.m. and the other shift finishes at midnight.

I thought the officers of the State Housing Commission had misunderstood the circumstances, even though I had received a one-page letter from the General Manager of the State Housing Commission explaining there was no way in the world he could provide any further help for the young fellow if he knocked back the house at Maniana.

I immediately spoke to the then Minister for Housing (Mr Bickerton) and he said my case sounded reasonable and he asked me to give him the details. I sent the information to the Minister and I received a letter in reply to the effect that the Minister was away in the north working on the election. Fair enough, it was election time. The letter was to the effect that the State Housing Commission would look into the matter as quickly as possible.

The 30th March arrived and we all know what happened; the Minister (Mr Bickerton) found himself out of a job. I had to readdress my appeal to the new Minister, the current Minister for Housing. However, I received back an almost identical letter to the one I received on the first occasion. So I wrote back to the Minister to the effect that it appeared to me—and I said it in a very nice way, I thought—that the Minister had not looked at the file even though he claimed he had looked at it. It was blatantly obvious to me that he had not seen the file. The Minister wrote back to me, just as politely, and said, in effect, "I did". The young fellow still has not got a house.

I ask members of this Chamber to consider how ridiculous it was to offer the young fellow a house in Maniana. If I could not find half a dozen Housing Commission houses in Redcliffe I would walk back to Perth. However, the young fellow

did not get a house and there was no way in the world in which the State Housing Commission would be prepared to admit that the young fellow was handicapped in any way at all.

On the last occasion that the Minister replied to me he said he had studied my further letter of appeal. I do not know how many appeals I can make but I think I have about reached my limit. The Minister said he had noted my remarks concerning the young fellow at Belmont, and also my remarks suggesting that he had not taken into account the personal aspects involved which should cause my constituent to receive top priority and immediate assistance close to his place of employment. The Minister assured me that he had done so. The letter is available to any member who would like to read it. The Minister said that the young fellow's case was a minimal three unit family, and that he was in full employment and earning a reasonable wage despite his inability to read or write.

Of course the young fellow was in a good position and he was as happy as Larry in the job but he could not keep the job unless he could get to his place of employment. This is what the Minister and the department have failed to understand. The young fellow could only hold the job while living in close proximity to his place of employment because he had to start at 6.00 a.m. on one shift and knock off at 12.00 midnight on the other shift. However, to be given a house 10 miles away from his work involved him in catching three buses, which do not run to Maniana at midnight, and which certainly do not leave at 6.00 a.m. That is the situation which the Minister and the officers of the department are apparently unable to take into consideration. The Minister has wiped off the applicant because he is in full employment and earning a reasonable wage.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That fellow would be quite justified in giving up his job and drawing social service.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Of course he would but he is a nice young bloke and wants to do the right thing by his family.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: A responsible fellow.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Yes. Goodness gracious, we are crucifying him and I cannot understand why! He is only a small minority so it seems we do not worry about him.

It is debates such as this on the Address-in-Reply which permit me to bring these cases to Parliament, and allow me the opportunity to let members know that this sort of injustice occurs. It did not matter which Government was in office because I got the same treatment from both Governments. I am not blaming

this Government or the previous Government; the fact of the matter is that the people in the State Housing Commission do not have one iota of sympathy in their hearts. I do not like them at all!

The Hon. R. Thompson: It is strange that you should say that; I was wondering.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: There are several other matters I intend to speak about tonight. I want to ask the Minister for Justice if he will put to the Government, at the first available opportunity, the suggestion that it give consideration to extending the travel concession to branch members of the Australian Pensioners League when they hire buses, once a year, to go on annual picnics or to functions. Each branch has an annual picnic or function. Currently, pensioners are allowed to ride on buses in the metropolitan area free of charge. Being pensioners they are not very well off.

The pensioners save up all the year, and because they have 150 or 200 members, they have to hire buses for their annual function. It takes the whole year's accumulated funds to pay for these buses. It seems to me it would be a very nice gesture for the Government to provide this service at a concessional rate—not as a free service, but at a reduced rate—when these branches of the Pensioners League wish to hire buses for their annual outing.

I wish to speak of another matter about which I have spoken before. However, I wish to reaffirm to the new Government that I hold the same view that I have always held on this subject. A little while ago the announcement was made that finally the route for the extension of the Kwinana Freeway had been determined. Since I have been in this House, several such plans have been brought forward. On each occasion people affected by the plan have indicated quite strongly that they are opposed to the plan when their homes are to be resumed. The same situation prevailed in this case—some people are quite hostile to the scheme.

I am not an expert and I do not know what would be the best route for this extension. I can presume that the engineers and experts from the Main Roads Department—or wherever else they come from—have decided that it is the best route. What I am concerned about—and my comments apply equally to the Canning Vale district—is that a Government can come in, and with a sweep of the pen take away from people their whole life's work—their home. A person may have worked all his life building up, adding to, altering, and making comfortable the place in which he lives. He does all this because he plans to live there for the rest of his life. He does not want to go through the trauma of re-establishing his

family somewhere else. Then the Government comes along and with one wild sweep it can all be taken from him, with the generous consideration of market value plus 10 per cent for his home.

At this point of time I state that there is not enough money in the world to buy the house I am currently living in—I want to live there. I do not believe that someone should come along to me and say, "Because George Smith sold his place for \$4 000 or \$5 000"—this is the value of the sort of place I live in—"then you will have to sell us your house for that sum." The value of my property, and the value of everyone's property, is the value of it to its owner—not the amount for which the next-door neighbour sold his house. This neighbour may have wanted to leave the State; his creditors may have been after him and so he made a hasty sale to leave the area. However, that sale establishes the market value for all times as far as the Public Works Department is concerned.

These people are to be uprooted from their homes after years of work. Most of them are to be dislodged at the time of life when they ought to be able to settle back, comfortable in the knowledge that they own their property.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I was making these speeches 10 years ago on behalf of the people callously put out of the Kwinana area.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I know, and I did not support that action then. It is for this reason that I wish to reaffirm to this Government that my views have not altered.

The same situation applies to Canning Vale. The department bought a few properties indiscriminately around the area when no-one knew what was happening. It then says it has established the value of that land. The land is frozen and the price is established. The people who sold the land did not know what was happening.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Do you think it would be fairer to take the taxation value of the property?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not know about that, but I do know it is unfair to expect people to re-establish themselves in different areas. The lifetime of work that has gone into these properties is not assessable. Only the owner is competent to put a value on that.

It is my belief that we must amend the Local Government Act to allow for huge increases in the compensation payable when the Government wishes to resume land on behalf of all the people. I know the extension to the freeway is necessary and that thousands of people will benefit from it. However, in my opinion, those thousands of people will have to pay for

it. The same sort of situation applies to the few hotels and buildings which we want to maintain around Perth. I am not opposed to maintaining them, but if people want to keep the Palace Hotel, the Peninsula Hotel, and other buildings, it is my belief that they must be prepared to pay for them. These buildings belong to someone else, and we must expect to reimburse that someone else for what is his. This is the same situation that applies to land and houses to be resumed to make way for freeways. The Government sits back nonchalantly and says, "We will give you the market value plus 10 per cent." I do not go along with this proposition at all.

Recently, my mind was exercised by two Press articles. One appeared in the *Daily News* of the 24th July, 1974, and another very similar article appeared in *The West Australian* of the 26th July. The articles used words to the effect that the Minister for Transport had been informed that taxis had been carting parcels instead of people. Somebody took exception to this practice—indeed, I think it was the Transport Workers' Union—and the suggestion was made that such practices should be stopped. This reminded me of one of my constituents who has been callously persecuted by the Taxi Control Board, and I am referring to the man who owns the reception house in Nicholson Road known as The White House.

Here we have an extraordinary situation. This gentleman caters for wedding receptions and the like, and it happens that he also owns two white Mercedes motorcars. Being an enterprising young fellow, he and his wife worked hard to build up their business and to provide a service to the district. In order to provide something more than the service provided by his competitors, he decided that he would say to his prospective customers, "Included in the charge for your wedding reception is the free use of my two cars for the wedding party if you desire it." Members will be aware that reception houses provide lists which say for \$5 per head the guests will be given this and that, and for \$4.50 a head they will get something else.

As free enterprise people, the members of my party would not oppose the efforts of anyone to provide a better service than his competitors. This turned out to be an excellent idea and some people accepted it but others did not. I suppose some brides have always wanted big black taxis for their wedding day, and for this or some other reason, the offer was not always accepted. The price of the reception was the same whether the cars were used or not.

Do members know what we have permitted to occur? Instigated by some puerile individual in one of the Government departments, we have permitted inspectors to harass these people from daylight until

dark. These cars are followed everywhere they go. When the mother drives the children to school she is followed by Taxi Control Board inspectors, and sometimes behind the inspectors is a police car. What an unsavoury state of affairs! Fancy these people having the hide to suggest that someone could ride free in their motorcars! Apparently they are breaking the law.

It seems to me that if the Taxi Control Board has nothing better to do than to follow this lady and her children wherever they go, whether they happen to be taking someone to a wedding reception or not, the manager of the board should read the Press articles to which I referred. This is an area which ought to be investigated—taxis carrying parcels instead of passengers! I do not care whether they cart parcels, passengers, or anything else. I have no argument with the Transport Workers' Union about its views—no argument with anyone except the people who are persecuting the owner of The White House.

I looked around for a parallel situation, and it occurred to me that when I was able to afford to purchase a new motorcar, I would take it down to be serviced, and people at the motor company would be ready to offer me a free ride to wherever I wanted to go, and a free ride back again when it was time to pick up my motorcar. So I talked to the manager of the Taxi Control Board and I said, "If this man is breaking the law with his cars, although he is not charging anything, why should not these large motor companies also be persecuted for breaking the law—they are doing exactly the same thing?"

I took a step further. I made some inquiries of funeral directors to find out how their price structure worked. There is no extra charge whether one rides in the funeral car or not. Are those people breaking the law? There is no law associated with being a funeral director and hiring cars. But no, the department singles out this one individual.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There is an extra charge if you are in the hearse.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: There is an extra charge if a person hires extra motorcars at a funeral but if he has the standard arrangements no extra charge applies.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is for only one passenger.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The glaring example of this anomalous situation is the courtesy car service provided by motor dealers. Every day when we walk along St. George's Terrace we see courtesy cars running backwards and forwards driving customers in and out of town. But no, it is the small businessman endeavouring to be a bit enterprising who is singled out for persecution by these individuals. When we introduced this legislation, I for one as one of the legislators never intended

that people in this category should be breaking the law when they provided a service such as this for their customers. So, I would ask the Government to have a close look at this situation. I have asked the Minister about the matter but he said there was nothing he could do about it.

There are many other areas which I could discuss, but time is getting on and I do not want to keep the members unnecessarily. However, I am not going to be hastened into closing the debate simply for the sake of an hour or two. There is another problem that has exercised my mind for a long time. Frankly, no-one quite knows what to do about it. It is a terribly frequent problem which is directed to me. When the problem is presented to me, I worry about it and somehow or other it solves itself and I move on to the next job and forget about it.

It involves a woman who is living with her husband who constantly beats her. He is a brutal sort of individual. Over the years, I have had quite a few of these instances brought to my attention. It is a terrible state of affairs and should not be allowed to exist in the community, particularly as the woman invariably is very reluctant to tell people that her husband is beating her up. Frequently, she is frightened; nearly always, she has several small children and always she is penniless. Week after week, month after month and year after year she is faced with this problem, knowing that when there is a full moon or a Friday night or a pay day or some other particular pattern which her husband happens to follow, she is likely to get belted up; and, of course, there is nowhere for her to go.

The Hon. R. Thompson: My word there is!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Wait a minute. I know where she can go. I have it all written down here. However, there is nowhere for her to go with any degree of permanency. She cannot take her children and maintain herself without subsequently having to return to her husband. There are two or three places but they have a limited capacity. There is the Werwee Hostel in Fremantle which accommodates five women plus children; there is the Graceville Salvation Army hostel which has just been expanded to house 30 people including children; and, the Daughters of Charity have a place with a total capacity of 15 people. However, these people can stay for only a limited amount of time.

The Hon. R. Thompson: But she does not even have to go to these places for assistance.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Wait a minute, I am telling the story.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are robbing this coach and you can get on with it.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is right. It is all very well to say that a person can go to the Community Welfare Department or go to the police but in practice that is not always possible. I am interested in what happens to the lady tonight, at 11.30, when there is nowhere for her to go. These places are always full and for some reason or other the police are always busy. There is nowhere she can go with her children and maintain her dignity, because above all else, I believe that the woman should be allowed to retain her dignity.

That is where the problem lies. Some members may say, "Some women go back time and time again and they deserve it." Perhaps that is true, but the women I am talking about are the ones who have nowhere to go and no alternative but to stay where they are. There is insufficient accommodation in this community to house them. As I said, there is a place in Fremantle which houses a total of five people. They are doing a good job—all of them are—but there is not enough emphasis placed on this area of need and distress in the community so that a person who is being bashed can leave with her children knowing that she will receive sanctuary and will not have to return, possibly to be subjected to more of these bashings.

I have been making a bit of a study of this issue and I came across an organisation called the Womens Centre Action Group. It is providing the required service voluntarily. It has a house at Mt. Lawley which it is manning with volunteers 24 hours a day. I believe these women have made a submission to the Government for some guidance and financial assistance. I commend this group of volunteer ladies but I point out that this situation needs something permanent, where people do not have to do the job for nothing. We should not have to rely on the time and services given by goodhearted women who devote their spare time to this sort of welfare work. Some Government assistance should be provided to put into effect the plans and aspirations of the Womens Centre Action Group because this would go a long way towards solving the problem and assisting those other places which currently are operating in overcoming these very distressing circumstances.

The Hon. R. Thompson: In my speech the other day, I said that welfare is a person's right and it should be made available as a right but that in this community and in Government departments there are a lot of people who think that welfare is a dirty word.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, it is not, but we must remember that people must be able to retain their dignity. These women are frightened and have been subjected to these bashings over the years.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: People do not like charity.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is right. I have some newspaper cuttings here about Jack Munday, some about a member of Parliament warning of a Western Australian Watergate affair and others. I suppose I could spend half an hour on each of these cuttings. I have an offer and acceptance form, because a situation has been brought to my notice which astounds me; I am astounded that this situation could occur and that people could buy houses in such a manner. However, I will not go into all that now. I have copies of the last three Governor's Speeches at the opening of Parliaments from which I could read some interesting extracts, none of which I am going to do because it is now 9.55 p.m. and I am conscious that I have kept the House for some time. I am pleased to say that members have shown extreme interest in all the points I have raised. I am equally sure that the Government will take action in regard to all these matters and that when I rise to speak on a future occasion I will be able to compliment the Leader of the House for the quick and effective remedy he has brought about in regard to all these things. I support the motion.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [9.56 p.m.]: In supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply so ably moved by the Hon. John Tozer, I wish to refer to a few matters mentioned by members in their speeches on the Address-in-Reply. I shall commence with the Leader of the Opposition (the Hon. R. Thompson) who referred to a question that was asked in this House concerning increases in welfare benefits to wards. The question was answered very simply and I should like to quote from *Hansard* the question and the answer. They appear at page 19 on the 30th July. The Leader of the Opposition asked the following question—

In view of the increased cost of living and continuing inflation, will the Government make an immediate increase to the disadvantaged recipients of Community Welfare assistance, namely wards, foster parents, group homes, institutions and missions, to restore their purchasing power to the level granted by the Tonkin Government in 1973?

I replied in this manner—

As the Hon. Member would know, the Government will shortly be presenting a Budget and these matters will be dealt with at that time.

During his speech, the honourable member referred to his question and stated—

Of course, that is not a sufficient answer, for the simple reason that the most disadvantaged people in Western Australia are those who must rely on welfare payments from the Department of Community Welfare.

That statement rather intrigued me because going back and having a look at the records and the figures relating to community welfare payments over the last few years, I could see that that was not the case. The honourable member went on to say—

I know that during the last Budget, the Tonkin Government was possibly the most generous Government Western Australia has ever known in respect of trying to do everything it was possible for it to do. We did not do all we wanted to do. We had to live within a deficit that was projected at the time.

The honourable member went on to quote the increases granted by his Government in 1973. If we have a look at the figures, we see that as at December 1970, foster parents received \$7 a week for each child. The Tonkin Government came into office in 1971.

In December, 1971, the payment for a foster home was still \$7 a week. Twelve months later in 1972 it had risen \$1 to \$8 a week; then in 1973 there was a rise, to which the honourable member referred, from \$8 to \$13 a week.

A similar pattern prevails in the payments to group homes. In January, 1971, the amount was \$10 a week, as it was in December, 1971. At the end of December, 1972, there was a rise of \$1 a week and in 1973 another rise of \$3 a week. That is for pre-school and primary school age children.

For high school children in January, 1971, the amount was \$12, while in December, 1971, it was still \$12. By December, 1972, it had risen \$1 and in December, 1973, it had risen by \$3 to \$16.

In private institutions and missions in 1970 the amount was \$8.50 as it was in 1971. By 1972 there had been a rise of \$1, to \$9.50 and in 1973 the amount was \$12.50. These amounts included \$1 a week from the lotteries.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are only quoting the figures I quoted.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Leader of the Opposition did not quote all the figures. From 1970 to 1972 there was a rise of only \$1 a week in all those instances.

Let us have a look at the great generosity to which the Leader of the Opposition referred and see when it occurred in 1973. It occurred after the Budget was introduced on the 3rd October, 1973, but the rises did not come into force until the 14th November of that year.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is right.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That was 4½ months before election day. So the generosity of the Tonkin Government extended from the 14th November to the 30th March and our Government was generous enough

to carry this increase along until we introduce our Budget and decide how much the rise will be to meet inflationary costs.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are adding to my argument. In the last few months inflation has galloped away and these are still the disadvantaged people. I think they should have assistance now. You are agreeing with my argument.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Not at all. At no time did the Tonkin Government introduce increases until after it had introduced its Budgets. The Leader of the Opposition said my answer was not sufficient because the Government was not prepared to introduce increases until the Budget. This is normally done as the Leader of the Opposition very well knows.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You have put up so many rates and taxes and charges since you have been in Government for a short period of time that I do not know how these people live even with that amount of money.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: At the present time rates and taxes have not gone up. I think the first one will apply on the 1st September, which is the date on which the hospital charges will rise. However, those charges will be covered by an increase in funds from hospital benefit organisations. Consequently they will not create a great impact on the cost of living of the people affected.

The fact is that we have been in Government for only a few months and we have been asked to do something which was not done by the previous Government even in its first year because it did not increase the payments to these people by even \$1—there was no increase at all. It was two years before they were given even \$1 rise and there was an inflationary trend beyond the \$1 limit in evidence even then.

The statement by the Leader of the Opposition that the reply to the question was not sufficient was not factually based. That is all my reply is to the Leader of the Opposition.

I now come to Mr Dellar who had quite a lot to say about a doctor at Meekatharra, and a certain petition. As he told the House, a petition was presented to me by the honourable member.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: And what did I say when I gave it to you?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have forgotten the exact words.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I said, "It's a bit rough, isn't it, but still I will give it to you."

The ACTING PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): Order!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Admittedly, the honourable member said it was a bit rough, and he was quite right. It was a

bit rough. I believe it was so rough that it was an affront to me and to the honourable member to ask him to present it to me.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I can assure you that it was not an affront to me.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I feel it was, because it was so rough. It was rough in the way it was prepared. It had been done piecemeal. On the first three pages in typing was an explanation of what the petition was all about.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There is a simple explanation for that, you know. They did not think they would get so many names.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Is this my argument or that of the Leader of the Opposition?

The Hon. R. Thompson: Everyone flocked to sign it.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Leader of the Opposition has his simple side of the argument, and I have mine.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are quoted as saying it has about a dozen.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): Order! I ask the Minister to direct his remarks to the Chair.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I meant that three only had the typed statement as to what the petition was about. The honourable member can read that in or out of context.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I admitted that there were only two or three pages with the explanation.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: There were about a dozen pages in the petition, but we are not arguing about that. The point was that of the dozen or so pages in the petition, only three stated what it was about and from what Mr Parsons, who was the person who was supposed to have got up the petition and who contacted the newspapers about it before it got to me, admitted himself, the petition was done piecemeal. Pieces of paper were taken and the word "petition" was written on the top of them and these were placed on notice boards and taken to football matches with nothing on them to indicate what they were all about. These were the pages which people signed.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: To which football matches were they taken?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: According to what I was told they were taken to football matches or something like that up there.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: They don't play football at Meekatharra.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Don't they play anything at all?

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: They play a few things.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That was how the petition was prepared—piecemeal. Then it was put together and sent down

as a petition. Another point I wish to make is that five different names were written by the one person. There is no doubt about that because I had it checked.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Didn't Mr Parsons admit that in the Press?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not think so.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He admitted something along those lines.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Anyway, that is by the by. These tactics do not get a doctor to a country centre.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What do you mean by "tactics"?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I will tell the honourable member what I mean by "tactics". I have here an article from the *Daily News* of the 12th August this year. I received a telegram from Mr Parsons who was supposed to have got up this petition.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He was the secretary of the organisation which organised it.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: He was the secretary of the organisation. He was the driving force, I know that.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He was the person who got it up, not the person who was "supposed" to have got it up. That is what you do not understand.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The honourable member knows that he was the driving force behind it. I received a telegram from this same Mr Parsons, but about an hour before I received it I was informed by a newspaper reporter that the telegram was on the way. These are the sort of tactics he uses as a correspondent to the newspaper. He rings the newspaper up and gives it the news item and then sends a telegram to the Minister. I have never seen those tactics used before. Apparently Mr Parsons is a correspondent for one of the newspapers and he uses this method. I think from that everyone will realise the kind of tactics he is adopting.

With regard to the appointment of a doctor at Meekatharra, I have informed Mr Parsons, the Press, and everyone else about the exact position. I have indicated how difficult it is to get doctors—very difficult indeed. We have advertised and done all sorts of things. When we do get replies to the advertisements and we screen the applicants, we whittle the number down to a very small one. We then ask a doctor to go to one of the places where we have to send them, and he will not go. I think the honourable member knows this.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I think we talked about that as well.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have here an article from the *Daily News* of the 12th August. The heading is "Meeka not attractive, says doctor", and it refers to a

doctor who, with his wife, spent a month in Meekatharra. This was arranged with the department. The article states—

"I don't think the people of Meekatharra could do anything to attract doctors—or tradesmen for that matter—other than change the town," says a doctor who worked there.

Dr Val Turner spent a month working in Meekatharra with his wife, Dr Patricia Shalala, early this year.

"It's no worse than any other country town of its size—the people are good, and by and large make much more reasonable patients than those in the city," Dr Turner said.

"The problem is one of isolation—social and professional—and you are dealing with people who don't take kindly to working in isolation.

I think he is referring to the doctors who have to go there, not the people of Meekatharra. The doctors find they are working in isolation and they do not take very kindly to it. As the honourable member and other members know, Meekatharra is pretty isolated. The article continues—

"The doctor is by himself—he has to worry about patients all by himself, and carry the can for anything that happens," he said.

"The work is not demanding, as far as the number of patients goes.

"But the doctor is on call 24 hours a day and must deal with a constant stream of people, trickling in day and night. Of course, this is a strain.

"I don't think the work is enough to support two doctors."

Dr Turner said the town as being "at a halfway stage."

"It's big enough to need facilities like a doctor permanently on call—even one person is enough to warrant this—but it's not big enough to attract people," he said.

"There is no answer to the problem.

"It's very easy to criticise, but the problem is multiple."

Dr Turner said the medical service in Meekatharra was "far from the philosophical ideal," but the day-to-day medical service was quite adequate.

"Really, they get a pretty good deal," he said. "The matron at Meekatharra District Hospital is very highly trained and has incredible ability.

"He decides which patients must be referred to Perth and which should be treated at the hospital, with the help of the Royal Flying Doctor Service doctor or a Medical Department doctor."

The town's plane can get accident victims to hospitals in Perth and top line treatment within four hours.

I quoted this article only to show that Meekatharra and other such places are not very attractive to medicos.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: But that article concerned a person who went there for only a month in the first place.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes. The doctor gave his impressions without any malice. They are his impressions of the time he spent in Meekatharra.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: When I first went to Carnarvon I didn't think much of it, but it grew on me.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The doctor and his wife agreed to go up to help the department and the people of Meekatharra by spending a month there. They were pursuing their studies at Royal Perth Hospital which is one reason they did not stay. They wanted to come back to Perth. They did not have anything against Meekatharra, although they said it was not very attractive to stay there.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: They only went up there for a month in the first place.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I know they did.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Then why turn around and say now that they wanted to pursue their studies and that is why they left?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The agreement was they would stay for a month only, because they wished to come back to Perth to pursue their studies. Does that make sense?

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: When you say it like that it does.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That is what I tried to say previously but the honourable member took me out of context. I make those statements to clarify the matter in the honourable member's mind. We are trying to do everything possible to get doctors for country areas.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It was quite clear in my mind. It was the attitude expressed in your letter that disturbed me.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: My attitude was quite right, and I have been applauded for it. I have received letters applauding my attitude in regard to it.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: From whom?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Quite a number of doctors.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I wonder whether Mr Dellar has looked at the history of Meekatharra since Dr Wolzinski's day.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: At no time did I reject a plea for a doctor in Meekatharra. All I did was criticise a petition which was not prepared in a proper

manner. The honourable member, as the representative of the area, was only asked to present the petition to me.

I will leave that matter and pass on to Mr Leeson's plea for the people in the Kalgoorlie area and eastwards who find it necessary to come to the metropolitan area for medical treatment. The honourable member previously asked a question in relation to travel concessions for people in isolated areas and I gave him a fairly long reply on page 399 of *Hansard* of Thursday, the 8th August. Apparently I did not make clear enough to the honourable member the concessions that are available to people in areas such as the north-west and other parts of the State.

If a person is in adverse circumstances, no matter what part of the State he lives in—perhaps a mother has to bring a child to the metropolitan area, or something of that nature, and her pocket is affected to such a degree that she may not have enough money to live on—the Department for Community Welfare is not very stringent about the means test. It is very reasonable in this regard and will help out. It has only limited funds to do this, but to my knowledge nobody has been refused financial assistance to come to Perth for treatment if it is necessary for him or his child to see a specialist.

We are helping people out all the time. We helped a woman from Gnowangerup who had to bring her child to the city fairly regularly. This applies in the goldfields and elsewhere. If the Medical Department cannot help because the person has not been referred by a doctor and the circumstances are such that the Medical Department's conditions do not apply, people can always put their case to the Department for Community Welfare, and in most instances they will receive help. There are no worries about that.

If the honourable member knows of people in these circumstances in isolated areas he should let the Department for Community Welfare know about it. We will not apply a strict means test. All we want to know is the degree to which it will create hardship, and we will assist them to come to Perth and return.

With those words, I support the motion.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [10.20 p.m.]: Honourable members will appreciate that in speaking to the Address-in-Reply, and particularly in closing the debate, it is customary for the Leader of the House to make a summary speech. On this occasion I wish to indicate that the speeches which have been made have been duly noted, and it is not my intention to embark upon an examination of all the points that have been raised.

However, I make particular mention of my speaking on this occasion because we have been debating a motion which is before the House, and it is therefore always available to the member who moved the motion to close the debate. But, as is customary, the Leader of the House when replying in effect also closes the debate.

The debate has covered an enormous number of subjects. When I have finished speaking, there will have been 26 speakers to the Address-in-Reply. Needless to say, there are good reasons why the remaining four members have not made contributions; they are not in a position to do so at the moment. However, the members who have spoken have, I believe, made very useful contributions to the debate.

Mr Dans expressed some doubts as to the value of the time spent on the Address-in-Reply. I think the very fact that 26 speakers have raised a tremendous number of subjects—I have not in fact noted the number of subjects—illustrates that this debate affords an opportunity which is appreciated by members and which I believe will be particularly appreciated by the people whom the members represent. After all, the purpose of the Parliament and members of Parliament is to represent the views, wishes, and aspirations of the electors. I therefore think the Address-in-Reply certainly serves a very useful function.

The aspect of the address given to Parliament by His Excellency which I am sure brought a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction to all members and to all Western Australians is that it was delivered by a Western Australian in every sense in his capacity of Governor of the State declaring this session of Parliament open.

The Leader of the Opposition and other members of the Opposition have in the course of their remarks drawn attention to the address which His Excellency gave when opening Parliament. The Leader of the Opposition and one or two other speakers made reference to the fact that they took exception to the use of that occasion to express criticism of the Commonwealth Government, and they considered this opportunity should not have been used for that purpose. I presume they regarded it as a political speech in that it conveyed criticism of the Commonwealth Government.

Let me say that the Governor's Speech to the Parliament is a declaration of the policy and attitude of the Government. I have again read through the Governor's Speech—I have read it several times—to see whether I could crystallise the 15 items to which exception has been taken. I would like to make further reference to them and put them in their proper perspective.

The first reference to which I presume members of the Opposition took exception is where the Governor said—

While some of our economic difficulties are due to international pressures, they have been greatly aggravated by the inflationary policies pursued by the Commonwealth Government since 1972.

Is that a matter which is open to conflict and debate? In the Government's view, that is the situation. The next one I can locate is—

The State sought to resist major increases in taxes and charges such as payroll tax, freights, fares, hospital and water charges. The Commonwealth Government was insistent that State Governments should increase their revenue from these, and other sources.

Is there any untruth in that statement? It has been referred to a number of times, and I referred to it again today when making a statement, by leave, in this House. I do not believe it can be disputed; therefore it was justifiably included in His Excellency's Speech. I read further from the Speech—

As a result, increases have been announced, and more are to follow unless the Commonwealth Government is prepared to change its attitude to State financial needs.

Can anyone dispute that?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I could debate it with you.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I could debate all of it if I had the opportunity to do so.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is the purpose of the debate on the Address-in-Reply and I think members have had ample opportunity to debate those very matters. That is not the question. The matter in dispute is whether the Governor's Speech should contain references of that kind.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I bet you do not do it again, though.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Let me say to the Leader of the Opposition that if there is justification for doing so, I believe there is every reason why those references should be included in the Governor's Speech.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think the Governor would put the pencil through them the next time.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I could go on and draw attention to other parts of the Speech which I assume were the subject of comment by the members of the Opposition. However, from the interjections, I gather those I have quoted were some of the points referred to. I hold to my belief that they were quite rightly included in the Speech of His Excellency.

In view of the fact that criticism has been made of some of the points contained in the Governor's Speech, I think it should be stated, for the benefit of new members in the House and for the benefit of the general reading public, that it is a speech which is made, in the traditional manner, upon the recommendation of the Government and the Ministers, who are the Governor's advisers.

I seem to recall that a correspondent of one of the daily newspapers suggested the Governor should pen his own Speech for the official opening of Parliament. The comment may have been made in a jocular manner, but, to take it seriously, I think it is necessary to refer to the acknowledged authority of Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, which states in the second part of the first chapter—

The Parliament of the United Kingdom is composed of the Sovereign, the House of Lords and the House of Commons; these several powers collectively form the legislature; and, as distinct members of the constitution, they exercise functions and enjoy privileges peculiar to each.

At page 266, Erskine May says—

The Speaker, with the House, immediately goes up to the bar of the House of Peers; upon which the Queen reads her speech to both Houses of Parliament, from a printed copy, which is delivered into her hands by the Lord Chancellor. . .

It is obviously understood that Her Majesty does not in fact write her own Speech.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We all understand that but the general public does not.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: For the record, I believe it was necessary to read those extracts in view of the criticism that has been made.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I did not suggest the Governor should write his own Speech.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I at no stage suggested that the Leader of the Opposition had. I prefaced my remark by saying I believed I recalled that a correspondent in the Press made an observation of that nature. However, I think I should make an additional comment; and this is of course in relation to the criticisms that have been made of the content of that Speech. I believe His Excellency is at liberty to touch on anything in his Speech which his Government desires when sitting as a constituent part of this Parliament. Likewise, as we are all aware, members themselves are enabled during the debate, which I am now in the process of closing, to speak on any matter at all of their own choosing, and to make all the criticisms they choose to make of the Government or of anyone else. The Leader

of the Opposition in particular made what I would describe as fairly trenchant criticisms, and I had a few words prepared in reply to and in comment upon his criticisms.

This is a tradition that is followed by the British and the Australian Parliaments; in fact it is a tradition in all British countries which adhere to the system of constitutional monarchy. It has been stated previously during this debate—and I do no more than state it again; it is perhaps not a justification, but it is certainly an illustration that it does happen elsewhere—that the Commonwealth Government, since it came into office in December, 1972, has not endeavoured to spare the blushes of the Governor-General in the preparation and presentation of his Speeches in the Commonwealth Parliament. Whilst that may not be a justification, it certainly is the situation as we have come to recognise it.

I turn now to the comments of those who spoke during the debate, and I would like to indicate again that it is not my intention to embark at great length on a discussion of the matters which were raised. It is my purpose and intention to make some passing observations on some of the matters raised by some of the members, but as I have indicated their speeches are being circulated to the appropriate Ministers and they will receive due attention. The members concerned will receive some considered replies and explanations of the matters they raised.

In the first instance we had the motion moved by the Hon. J. C. Tozer. I would like to add my compliments to those of other members in regard to the manner in which he moved the motion on opening day. I will go one step further and say that in extending a welcome to Mr Tozer from the North Province we recognise, and I hope we will receive the advantage of, his very great experience in his official capacity in that area prior to his entering the Parliament. I believe it is of great value to the Parliament to have this type of experience from which we can all benefit. Mr Tozer listed a number of disabilities suffered by those in the north. They have been referred to the Minister for North-West, and it is hoped information will be forthcoming and will be forwarded directly to him in respect of the matters he raised.

The Leader of the Opposition, amongst other things, referred to the National Alliance electoral agreement—I think it was by way of criticism. The Deputy Premier has supplied me with some comments in which he states that he believes this criticism arose from a misunderstanding of the position. He indicates that it was quite clearly stated at the outset that the Country Party and the Democratic Labor Party had entered into an electoral agreement for the purpose of contesting

the State elections, and if the results proved successful to give consideration to the formation of a new party. I go no further than that; I merely convey those views to the House as the considered comment of the Deputy Premier.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think we are all aware of that. We all know what an alliance is; that was my criticism.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Possibly further explanation may be forthcoming in regard to that and, if so, it will certainly be conveyed to the Leader of the Opposition. The honourable member also made some reference to the improvement in both the standard and the mobility of the Police Force. The Minister for Police has indicated to me that he acknowledges those remarks. He said that it is the intention of the Government to maintain this control in respect of law and order. Certainly the Government believes it is necessary to make some improvement, and no exception is taken to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition in that respect.

During the course of his remarks the Leader of the Opposition also referred to the matter of budgetary difficulties faced by the Government. He made some criticism, as did other members, of the increased charges—such as freight rates, and so on—which in fact have been announced by the Government. He also seemed to indicate to the House that the reason these taxes and charges were increased could be related directly to the election promises of the Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The extravagant election promises.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I have had the matter further examined, and I am advised that it is a fact that on the 22nd March, 1974—just eight days before the election—the then Premier had before him a minute from the Treasury setting out what is described as the parlous state of the finances of the State, and the serious outlook for the financial year 1974-75. On that minute was endorsed in Mr Tonkin's own handwriting the following note—

Under-Treasurer,

Noted, thank you, the position is certainly of the greatest possible concern.

Several members have spoken of the problems of inflation. Need I say more than that the Treasury emphasised in the minute presented to the former Premier that the expected deficit did not include any provision for the election promises made by either of the major parties; that is, the Labor Party or the Liberal Party.

I mention this because I believe it gives the lie to the suggestion that the present budgetary problems are due to the election promises of the Liberal-Country Party

coalition Government, or that the increased charges—as may be suggested or implied—were announced to finance the election promises of the Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think you might have lost the import of what I said. I said we did not make any extravagant promises. Ours was virtually a stay-put policy because we were aware of the financial situation.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is true. I appreciate that was the nature of the comment made by the Leader of the Opposition, but he also went a deal further in referring to the election promises of the present Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I referred to the extravagant promises. Our promises were costed; yours were not.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I will give you a detailed report of that after I do a feasibility study.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I pass now to the contribution of the Hon. G. E. Masters. I construed his contribution as presenting the West Province, which he represents, as an expanding larder for the metropolitan area. I think the House appreciated the description he gave of the expansions in his province. With regard to the marketing of produce, the Minister for Agriculture in noting the comments made by the honourable member emphasised that it is essential that producers do not lose confidence in marketing. Mr Masters placed a good deal of emphasis on this question and it is one which is recognised by the Government. It was part of the policy statement of the Government that we would endeavour to do something of real purpose in the whole question of the marketing of agricultural produce.

Members will know that the Government has sent a team of sheep meat experts to the Arabian Gulf countries to study the possibilities of furthering trade in that area. We hope we will find a considerable demand for our sheep meat. Representatives from the various other primary products marketing boards have been seeking, and will continue to seek, overseas markets.

Mr Masters referred to a number of issues arising from urban development, and we have the assurance that areas other than those at Lake Joondalup are being looked at by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and that within the financial resources of the Government additional lands will be brought back into public ownership for the purposes of recreation and conservation. The Minister added that he agreed a better mix of development including the State Housing Commission and the private developers would be an advantage, and more ways are being sought to achieve this.

I turn now to the comments of the Hon. A. A. Lewis. He touched on several subjects, including education, which I will leave to my colleague, the Minister for Education, for comment. He also touched on the subject of the marketing of potatoes. He made—and I am sure other members will recall this—some remarks about the Australian assistance plan; but as this is not within my ministerial responsibilities I will make no observation upon it.

The Hon. R. Thompson: He didn't know much about it.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Nor did anybody else, including the Minister who introduced it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: It was my understanding of the situation that Mr Lewis knew as much about it as—if not more than—almost any other person with whom I have spoken.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: He also touched on the arts council.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is quite right. However, the Minister for Agriculture comments that in relation to the marketing of potatoes—and bear in mind that Mr Lewis drew attention to the situation of the markets in the Eastern States; and those markets are not subject to the control of the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board—it is reasonable for consumers in Western Australia to expect to continue to receive potatoes at moderate prices, during periods when supplies are short in the Eastern States, if they have contributed to the maintenance of a satisfactory return to growers during periods when gluts and depressed prices have been experienced in other States.

In making that comment, I fully appreciate that Mr Lewis referred to the disadvantageous position of the producers in Western Australia as a consequence of the fluctuating market prices in the Eastern States; and I think it was his view that there should be a better price in Western Australia to enable the producers to gain a better return. However, I have more complete notes and observations on this subject and these will be directed to the honourable member in due course.

Mr Lewis also referred to the Bridgetown railway depot. It will be recalled that the Premier made a promise during the election campaign to defer for two years the transfer of that depot, and that promise is being honoured. The Minister for Transport is at present arranging for an independent committee to be constituted to examine the matter.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is two things he has gained.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I pass now to the speech of the Hon. Grace Vaughan, who spoke on a considerable number of subjects. Several of these were dealt with by her at some length. Some concerned

my colleague, the Minister for Health, and I think they have already been the subject of some observations by him.

However, I refer to one matter raised by the honourable member; that is, her suggestion that metropolitan water charges were being increased to alleviate the charges being made on country residents. That is not correct, as is clearly explained in the report I have received from the Minister for Works and Water Supplies. She also spoke of the traditional role of the Legislative Council and I am sure we are all pleased to see that we have more ladies in the Legislative Council. They seem to be imbued with the objective—with certain exceptions—of taking some action—

The Hon. R. Thompson: To make it democratic.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Not only that; if I recall correctly, imbued with the objective of abolishing it altogether. It is with some significance that in the recent period of time we have heard strong allegations made, both inside and outside this House, concerning the activities and functions of the Legislative Council. However, to a large extent, as a consequence of that campaign we have seen the number of Liberal Party members in this House considerably increased, and that is not without significance.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There could come a time when the whole House could be composed of women.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Many other members referred to the affair in Forrest Place. It is not my intention now to make any detailed observations on that incident. However, it is worthy of note that contrary to the opinions held by certain other members, the Hon. Grace Vaughan considered that the demonstration was in fact an expression of an unanswerable right of protest. I seem to recall that she did not object to the way that demonstration was conducted and she thought it was quite appropriate that the protest should be exercised in that fashion.

The matter of redistribution was also referred to by the honourable member and other members have likewise made observations on that subject, as I myself have. I do not intend to cover the subject at any great length because I believe the matter has been adequately dealt with.

The next honourable member to whom I make some reference is my colleague in the Lower West Province, the Hon. I. G. Pratt, who referred to the effect of inflation on local government finance. He also raised the matter of an integrated housing scheme, as did the Hon. G. E. Masters. If I may elaborate just a little on the question of local government finance, the remarks made by Mr Pratt are quite apt and

timely in view of the financial situation local authorities are passing through at present.

This question is a matter of some criticism by the State Government against the Commonwealth Government which I believe is quite appropriate in the circumstances. The Government acknowledges that local authorities are placed in a most difficult situation.

On the comments made on integrated housing schemes I am advised that the Housing Commission is endeavouring to establish integrated communities and has successfully sought private sector participation through the release of developed sites to private developers who build for other than Housing Commission applicants. I have a report from the Acting General Manager of the Housing Commission which has been forwarded to the Minister and this will be conveyed to Messrs Pratt and Masters in due course.

I think Mr Williams has already made mention of what I am now about to say. I am sure that all members would have appreciated the speech made by the Hon. D. W. Cooley to this House. It is acknowledged that he brings with him into this House considerable experience and knowledge of trade union organisations and industrial matters. Whilst I do not agree with his views in all instances, surely we are prepared to accept the fact that he does bring this experience and knowledge to this House and once again I am sure he will give full expression of such knowledge in this House in future debates. Also I hope he will benefit from the views and observations made by other members, which views do not, perhaps, coincide with his own.

Mr Cooley did give an outline of current industrial relations as compared with the situation which existed at the time of the introduction of the Industrial Arbitration Act. That honourable member also projected his thoughts on price and profit control and wage restraint. I have referred his speech to the Minister for Labour and I hope that in the near future he will receive considerable comment on the matters that were raised by him.

I think it was important to the House that Mr Cooley not only gave us the benefit of his views, but also established in the minds of the members of this Chamber a philosophy relating to industrial matters. I think therefore, as is the case with all other members in this House when making speeches of this nature, that an atmosphere is created by which the members concerned will become known and generally acknowledged on matters which will be of concern to them. Therefore, once again I say that the remarks they make in this House must be of value to other members.

The Hon. T. Knight gave us an exposition on matters affecting economic and regional development, particularly in ref-

erence to decentralisation. His observations and comments have been referred to the Premier who is also the Minister Co-ordinating Economic and Regional Development. The comments made by the Minister on his observations will be conveyed to the honourable member in due course.

From Mr Tom Perry we heard a number of observations on various subjects. He dealt with the question of the wool industry. He also defended the Country Party—his own political party—against the charge that it is a racist organisation of people in industrial development affairs. The honourable member also referred to matters concerning reserves of coal at Collie, a matter on which we have heard him express some views previously. He, likewise, made some observations on the Forrest Place demonstration. I think it will be recalled that he put certain views into perspective by his comments about the speakers on that occasion, even including the Prime Minister, and his comment on the view of the then Premier in regard to the visit by the Prime Minister during that period. We heard what I thought was a very good speech.

I think all members will share the view that we welcome to this Chamber Miss Margaret McAleer, another lady member. She gave us what I thought was a completely nonpolitical speech. She is concerned about the problems facing primary producers, particularly those in her province, and about the economic and regional development, and the ways by which this development could proceed, more particularly in relation to those areas which she felt needed some early improvement and rectification.

I think we all look forward to further contributions of that nature from Miss Margaret McAleer which will be of great benefit to members of this House and also to those in her own province.

Mr Ferry made some reference to a matter which, of course, is causing concern to a considerable number of people, including the Government and local authorities. I refer to beach front erosion. This has been given considerable publicity in the Busselton and Mandurah areas in particular, and in points further north.

I refer to the policy introduced by the Government of the \$3 for \$1 sharing scheme which, in the view of the Government, is quite generous in the circumstances. It is felt that local authorities have a responsibility in respect of beach erosion principally because the financial involvement in rectifying the problem will encourage local authorities to look carefully at proposed development on foreshore areas.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Some of the local authorities will not agree to that, though.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is right. I am well aware that some of the local authorities—in fact one of them is the local authority at Mandurah, which is in my province—are not prepared to accept this proposition. However, the Government in recent weeks has given notice of its intention to increase the proportion of its contribution to \$3 to \$1. I repeat once again that I have a full appreciation of the difficulties that have arisen over a period of years in that area, but more particularly at the present time. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that there is also a responsibility on local authorities in regard to their foreshore development. As I have said, one of the views held by the Government is that if there is participation by local authorities it will serve, at least in part, to place some direct control over foreshore development.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Another lesson to be learnt from this is that steps should be taken to ensure that beach front subdivisions are sufficiently set back.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: In the comments I have made, this was one of the steps implied.

Mr Dellar also covered many subjects. He referred particularly to the shortage of doctors, which subject has been dealt with by my colleague, the Minister for Health. The honourable member also referred to industrial development under the Brand Government. He took us back to the time when the embargo was lifted on the export of iron ore. I think he described that as the commencement of the pipeline which afforded opportunity to the Brand Government in the 1960s to develop the iron ore deposits in the Pilbara district. I think I should make the observation—which you will appreciate, Mr President, in view of the position you held at that time—that more was needed than merely the lifting of the embargo on the export of iron ore in order to get that development off the ground. The lifting of the embargo was certainly necessary, but let me add that, while one cannot condone the previous policies of the Commonwealth Government in imposing that embargo, it will be recalled there was not sufficient knowledge of the extent of the iron ore reserves available in Western Australia, or even in Australia, at that time. That knowledge was only obtained at a subsequent period when full advantage could be taken to develop these reserves.

I am one of those people who believe that we are still a long way off achieving the optimum from those iron ore reserves. There was more to the question than just development, although that was certainly a contributing factor. This I can relate to the comments made by Mr D. W. Cooley. I think, by interjection, he made the comment that we on this side of the House

did create the impression that we had little sympathy with the trade union movement and with the workers. I think the House should be reminded that it was during the period in question that the wage earners of the State and the trade unionists had their financial position improved in terms of increases in their weekly wage. The wage in this State was improved from the second lowest in Australia to a wage which was close to that of the highest in Australia.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Nothing could be done until the embargo was lifted.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I would not condone the policies of the Commonwealth Government of the day, just as I would not condone the policies and actions of the Commonwealth Government at the present time. Although I was a member of the Federal Parliament for a short time I still acknowledge that certain functions and rights should rest with the State, and these are areas over which the State should accept the responsibility. I believe the matter I mentioned covers one of these areas.

Coming back to the observations made by Mr Cooley, I say clearly there is sympathy and understanding of, and there is no antipathy to, the trade union movement and the workers of the State on the part of Government members.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The Liberal Party did not improve the conditions; on not one occasion did it support an increase in wages and conditions.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: We can recall what took place when the Liberal Government was in power during the 12-year period when the improvements were effected. If the workers and the trade union movement at that time were able to improve their conditions, as a consequence of these developments and the initiatives taken by the Government of the day, surely that was in the interests of the workers and the trade union movement.

Of course this is one of the factors which bring about great support of the Liberal Party by many trade unionists. I think it would be true to say—although I cannot substantiate this by statistics—the wage earners and the trade union movement do support the Liberal Party. If the Liberal Party does not have a great deal of support from that quarter, it is doubtful whether the Liberal Party would be in a position to govern.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It is not now governing in its own right.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: One of these days I would like to make an analysis of the cost to the individual person arising from the great leap forward.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am sure the honourable member will avail himself of the opportunity to undertake that study.

I now turn to the remarks of the Hon. H. W. Gayfer. It will be appreciated by members that he has made, and will continue to make some very valuable contributions to the debates of this House.

I am sure members listened with great interest when he spoke, firstly, in terms of very high esteem of the former President of this Chamber. In proposing a top priority for a further stage of the comprehensive water supply scheme the honourable member gave the House an historical review of the scheme from its inception, and pressed for continued representations to the Federal Government for its financial support of an extension of the scheme.

Advice to hand from the Minister for Works and Water Supplies would indicate that the priorities desired by the honourable member for the York-Greenhills and Corrigin-Bullaring areas need to be considered as related to other areas with potential for greatly increased production, if water is available, and where farmers in the area are unable to provide on-farm water supplies. Some further explanations in relation to that matter are also to be forwarded to Mr Gayfer.

We had a contribution from Mr Cloughton in which he also embarked on a number of subjects. He referred to the conditions in the Anglican homes; to the basis of election to the Legislative Council; to the campaign principles of the present coalition Government; to the Forrest Place disturbance; and to some matters affecting the interests of his particular province. On the subjects on which I am able to obtain information, that information likewise will be referred to the honourable member in due course.

In this debate the Hon. W. R. Withers made reference to a number of matters. Firstly, he referred to competitive freight rates for Queensland bananas. He also spoke of the work value for unemployment relief, and of the problems at Kununurra. The honourable member made mention of the promotion of hydroponics in remote areas; and on this matters I have some information to hand, and this will be forwarded to him in due course.

However, for the benefit of other members I would like to convey the following information relating to this topic—

Hydroponics has not been excluded from future consideration and the Government would be interested in any proposal that can demonstrate a long term cost saving in the supply of fresh vegetables to the communities in the north through the use of hydroponics.

That information is from the Minister for Agriculture. I shall forward the balance of the information to Mr Withers in the near future.

We had what I consider to be a very timely contribution from Mr Medcalf. He spoke on a subject of which he has considerable professional knowledge and experience; that is, a review of the Constitutional Convention. He referred to some speeches and addresses made in this House by the Hon. Frank Wise and the late Sir Keith Watson. I also recall the remarks made by Mr Frank Wise on more than one occasion when he exhorted members to take a greater interest in constitutional matters. He foresaw the situation arising where there would be a great need for members in this House to have close and detailed knowledge of constitutional matters. I think we have certainly seen that need at the present time. I am sure that the address presented by Mr Medcalf will be of considerable benefit to members in the better understanding of constitutional review.

In making my contribution it will not be possible for me to make reference to the later speeches. I am sure some of them will pass with little acknowledgment. However, the same situation will apply, and I will have their remarks noted and handed on.

I do want to refer to some of the subjects raised by the Hon. J. Heitman. I have not done this before, but at this stage I wish to convey to him my congratulations on his appointment as Chairman of Committees. He, likewise, has served a number of years in this House. I am sure that his election to the responsible office of Chairman of Committees will bring great satisfaction to him, and at the same time satisfaction to other members.

Mr Heitman referred to the serious problem which is being experienced at the present time of decreased income from primary production. This is a matter of very great concern to the Government, and has some relevance to certain action the Government has in mind dealing with agricultural marketing.

The honourable member also referred to currency manipulations; taxes and charges for services; and not surprisingly to the Forrest Place disturbance. I am sure that his views and observations on that disturbance will help to put the matter in its proper perspective. Mr Heitman also made reference to the extension of the country water supply scheme in saline areas, and to the indiscriminate use of land by the Housing Commission. These matters will be the subject of further examination, and the honourable member will be acquainted in due course.

We then had a contribution from Miss Elliott who likewise made some comments on the Governor's Speech. I shall not make any reference to that aspect at this

stage, because I believe the observations I have already made cover the contribution made by Miss Elliott.

Likewise, Miss Lyla Elliott's comments on Aboriginal welfare and child welfare matters will be examined by my colleague, the Minister for Health.

Mr Dans, whom I have already mentioned, made some reference to the general content of the Governor's Speech. He addressed himself to the subject of centralism and, quite frankly, I cannot see that I have any objection or see anything particularly wrong with the words used by the Premier, or anybody else, in the charges against the Commonwealth Government or the previous Labor Government in relation to the question of centralism. It is a policy and a system to which I am opposed and it is a policy and a system to which the Government is opposed.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not deny that, but it is no substitute for Government.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: It is no substitute for Government, but by the same token if the exercise of centralism has a deleterious effect or a damaging effect on the operation of the State Government—and we in this Parliament are surely concerned with that—it justifiably can be the cause of the type of criticism and comment we make.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I have no objection to the Minister making it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Mr Dans also gave a simple example of transport costs and once again presented to the House some knowledge, particularly with regard to seafaring, which I am sure was appreciated. The remarks of Mr Dans have been noted and observations on those comments will be conveyed to him.

The Hon. John Williams made particular reference to the matter of the committee to examine subordinate legislation, and that matter has been the subject of some discussion in the Parliament.

I would like to remind the honourable member—although perhaps I do not need to—that members of the Opposition have made numerous references to the Liberal Party policy statement for the last election. I think I am perhaps justified in making a reference, from this side of the House, to that same document. The booklet refers to the subject which the Hon. John Williams has raised. I will quote from a page of the policy, headed "Guarding Civil Liberties". It reads—

We will set up an independent body to be watchdog for the public to see that laws and regulations don't trespass unduly on personal rights and liberties. It will also see the public is better informed on By-laws, Regulations, reports and documents tabled in State Parliament.

That is not strictly in conformity with the proposed committee for the examination of subordinate legislation, perhaps, as the Hon. John Williams described it. I believe it may even be more effective and certainly would have the function that when regulations and papers were laid on the Table of the House the general public would know that they had undergone some examination. Therefore, the public as well as members of Parliament would have some confidence that their liberties were, in fact, not unduly threatened by regulations.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Is that the intention of that policy, because if it is it will be all right? This is something we can develop further.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: We will set up an independent body to be a watchdog for the public.

The Hon. R. Thompson: A watchdog for the public. Is this where the people will be able to take their complaints? How would the independent watchdogs know about the complaints?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Had I been permitted to continue I was about to say that this is a matter which is presently in hand. In other words, some progress is at present being made on this very question. I am not in a position to indicate in any greater detail how that body will function but certainly it is another of the elements of the policy which is, in fact, being undertaken at this present time.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Considering that we all represent people, and all have an interest which is not political, will we have a chance to comment before the body is set up?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Perhaps I could defer my comment on that interjection until later. When I am in the position to make a statement in some detail it will, perhaps, answer the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. George Berry made some reference to Federal funds for the damming of the Gascoyne River. Of course, we are not unaccustomed to this subject. I seem to recall, very early in my experience in this House, that I also entered into a debate on this very subject with the Hon. Frank Wise and the Hon. Harry Strickland—those two very formidable opponents.

The Hon. R. Thompson: If I remember correctly they boxed your ears a little.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: It was a most intelligent debate which I enjoyed, and I think those two members did also.

The Hon. George Berry raised again the question concerning Federal election matters in the division of Kalgoorlie. At the time I indicated I had not received any information. While it is appreciated that this is a Commonwealth matter I offered to ascertain the position from the Commonwealth Electoral Office and I am advised that after the closure of nominations on

the 29th April, 1974, and the printing of the ballot papers, these were despatched to the honourable member's area on the 2nd May, as a first priority. That is the advice which I have. There seems to be some discrepancy of time as to when the papers were received in the area, but that is the only advice I am able to give in reply to the question directed to me by the Hon. George Berry. He also referred, of course, to education and health.

I will now refer to the comments of the Hon. Clive Griffiths who said he was an extremely sensitive person. We note his sensitivities are not changed by the fact that a Government of his own party is back in the Parliament. The honourable member continues, of course, to take the role—or play the part—which he has always done of handling questions of particular electoral value to him and to his people.

I am not in a position to comment at all on the subject he has raised in the House tonight but, once again, the procedure will be that I will certainly have the matter raised for him and I will have the information conveyed to him as soon as possible.

The honourable member also made some reference to licenses for road transport in the north and I thought, as is not uncommon, that he used some very strong expressions such as "blackmail" and "people being exploited". As I understand the situation, one of the purposes of issuing licenses was to ensure that people were not exploited or disadvantaged as a consequence of the system. However, I accept that the honourable member has other views and they certainly will be the subject of some examination.

In closing, I appreciate the co-operation extended by members in dealing with the Address-in-Reply debate. There have been 26 speakers and we are at the point of concluding the debate within our third week of sitting.

I must express to all speakers my appreciation for their co-operation in coming forward with their speeches to enable us to get the debate over and done with.

It has been a very useful debate from the point of view of the information that has been conveyed to the Parliament, and I hope the information will be duly noted by the Government. Where there are opportunities for improvement, and where criticism has been justifiably directed, the Government may be able to take some action.

New members will have gained experience from speaking to the Address-in-Reply. I think it is a worth-while debate. We had a considerable number of speakers, as we did on the Supply Bill, and, bearing in mind that there is a considerable legislative programme to be proceeded with, I hope members will not sit back but will continue to make similar contributions which are of equal value.

I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

Presentation to Governor

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [11.21 p.m.]: I move—

That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [11.22 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 20th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.22 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 14th August, 1974

The **SPEAKER** (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

Statement by Premier

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [4.33 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to make a statement relating to the Premiers' Conference which was held in Canberra yesterday.

The **SPEAKER**: The Premier seeks leave to make a statement. I would advise members that leave can be granted only if there is no dissentient voice. Is there a dissentient voice? There being none, leave is granted.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I feel it desirable, in view of the importance of the matters discussed at the Premiers' Conference yesterday and the possible impact on our legislative and administrative programme, to make a statement in this Parliament at the first opportunity.

Members will recall there was great dissatisfaction on the part of the States following the 7th June Premiers' Conference when the Commonwealth said no assistance would be given beyond the formula. The States were told they would have to increase taxes and charges, and reduce expenditure so as to handle their budgetary problems within their own means.

As a result, the Western Australian Government has sought to do this. Likewise, the States were unhappy about the loan