

problem is evident and we as legislators know it is evident, if not in the short term, then certainly in the long term, the council and the Town Planning Department continue to plan a residential area west of Forrestfield and towards the marshalling yards. We are fully aware, and the Shire of Kalamunda is fully aware, that problems will be experienced by persons buying residential properties in this area when it is developed. The development of this area should cease forthwith because there will be problems and the council knows it and the Town Planning Department knows it.

With proper planning this area could be zoned either "rural" or "industrial". Certainly, under no circumstances, should it be zoned "residential". The Kalamunda Shire Council complains of noise from the airport in the Forrestfield area, and yet it is to continue with its development proposals which include further areas in Forrestfield. Plans for the airport have been known for a long time and the Commonwealth has proceeded to take up additional land.

It is really criminal to allow town planning schemes to proceed when it is known a problem will be experienced in the future.

In my opinion, those points are the two most vexatious problems confronting my electorate.

I refer briefly to the Governor's Speech and, in particular, to his comments relating to trade unions. Everybody in the State is aware of the problems facing the State Government. Western Australia has the second worst employment record in Australia, so there is very little left for the Government to do but to turn its attention to unions. The Government has been doing this for some time and members will be aware of its intentions with regard to preference clauses in awards.

Some very good letters relating to the preference clause to unionists have been published in the Press, and a particularly good one appeared in yesterday's *The West Australian*. It referred to the Government's legislating to try to prevent preference being given to unionists as being tantamount to requiring that income tax should not be a compulsory contribution.

During my time here the Government has attempted continually to pass legislation to hamstring the unions. The Government has double standards because it continues to support the industrial arbitration system and yet it wants to legislate to take away the powers of the arbitration body. Surely the Industrial Commission is the best equipped body to decide whether preference ought to be given to unionists.

A service is being provided through our industrial arbitration system for the people in the community.

At one end of the spectrum the unions are expected to try to ensure that proper wages and conditions are obtained, and yet the Government is legislating to provide that not all people need to contribute towards that particular service. I am sure when that legislation is introduced into the House, we will hear some stirring debate. However, I felt I could not let the opportunity of this debate pass without stating my view that it is grossly unjust for the Government to expect unions to abide by the conditions set out in the Industrial Arbitration Act and then say there are certain things the unions cannot do and so allow people a free ride.

The majority of people who do not want to belong to a union base their decision on the cost involved. We had a very good system operating; people who had a real conscientious objection to joining a union were granted exemption and their fees were paid into the Industrial Commission. This meant that most of the objectors joined the union, and the people with a genuine conscientious objection did not do so.

The more the Government attempts to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act, the bigger the mess it gets into. We are no closer to resolving this State's industrial problems through legislative changes than we ever were. The industrial situation seems to be getting worse rather than better.

With those few words I support the motion before the Chair.

THE HON. GARRY KELLY (South Metropolitan) [8.03 p.m.]: I would like to place on record my thanks to the Hon. Fred McKenzie for the remarks with which he commenced his contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate. I would like also to take this opportunity to thank the electors of the South Metropolitan Province for the confidence they have shown in the Australian Labor Party, and to a lesser extent the confidence they showed in me on 13 March. On that date the vote in the three local by-elections represented a clear repudiation of the bilge water than has been pumped out as policy by the Liberal Party over the past eight years. If one considers the results of those by-elections in conjunction with the result of the Lowe by-election on the same day, it is easy to see that the bell is tolling also for the Fraser Government.

The Western Australian people and the Australian people generally are waking up to the giant confidence trick which has been perpetrated

by the conservative forces over the past decade. The Liberal Party's endorsement of Milton Friedman's monetarist policies means those policies are having the same effect here as they are having in England and America—they are producing a deepening recession, evidenced by rising unemployment, increasing inflation rates, and of course, the *piece de resistance*, skyrocketing interest rates.

Another fraud that is being seen for what it is, is the so-called new federalism policy. New federalism was a much vaunted policy of the Liberal Party just before it came to power in 1975, and it is nothing more than a device by which the Fraser Government can abdicate its responsibility to the States in many fields. It is forcing the States to take up the slack, so to speak, but the rub comes when the Federal Government does not supply the finance necessary to carry out the functions involved.

New federalism, which was recently plagiarised by that great statesman called Ronald Reagan, who resides in the White House, also seeks to dismantle uniform taxation, which has been a tenet of the Australian Federal structure since 1942 when it was introduced under the defence power and upheld subsequently by the High Court, by letting the States back into the income tax field. The States are now in a position to impose their own income taxes to make up the shortfall in Federal Government funding. Allowing the States back into the income tax field will be an absolute disaster for States like Western Australia with its very small tax base.

Looking back over the history of new federalism, one of its strongest supporters—indeed, a gentleman who said he was one of its architects—was none other than the former Premier of this State, Sir Charles Court.

When the Federal Government started squeezing the States by cutting back on funds, who squealed the loudest? Sir Charles Court and the Western Australian Government. We were told that the evil people in Canberra were starving the States of funds and so State charges would have to be raised. It is a well-used ploy of State Liberal parties to remove themselves one stage from their colleagues in Canberra when the Federal Government is going bad. However, that will not work any more. We have a Liberal Government in Canberra and a Liberal Government in Western Australia, and those Governments pursue Liberal policies. It is no good the Liberal Party in Perth saying that it does not like what the Liberal Party in Canberra is doing and that it will not have anything to do with it. They all belong to the one party and the Western

Australian Government must take the blame when the Australian electorate decides that it will disavow the outrageous policy that the Federal Government is following. The Western Australian electorate will not be fooled any more by this ping-pong buck-passing between Western Australia and Canberra. People will not distinguish between the Federal and the State Governments.

Liberal Governments are the authors of the outrageous and record high State Government charges and they will take the electoral consequences. State and Federal Liberals are all part of the same system, and they are responsible for the mess that has been created. In 1983 the electors will reject also the hypocrisy of this Government and the Federal Government.

The conservatives are forever imploring organised labour to accept the umpire's verdict and the Hon. Fred McKenzie has alluded already to this matter at the conclusion of his remarks. The conservatives implore unionists to accept the umpire's decision, yet when the umpire makes a decision that the Government does not like, what does the conservative Administration do, Federal or State? If it is running true to form, it changes the rules, and changes them retrospectively, what is more.

As an illustration of that fact, I ask members to cast their minds back to 1980 when the nurses in Government hospitals received a five per cent wage increase. What did the Government do in that case? It threatened that a certain number of nurses would be sacked to offset the increase. If any tactic displayed the Government's arrogance and real contempt for the industrial process in general, that tactic certainly did. It shows what the Government really thinks of the independence of the Industrial Commission. Surely by threatening to sack the nurses the Government was trying to influence the commission not to award the increase. It is no good saying the unions must abide by the umpire's decisions when Governments will not abide by them. It is a case of Governments in glass houses throwing stones.

In a related move the Government also persuaded the hospitals to embark on a cost-cutting expedition to save some arbitrary amount of money to help balance the State Budget. As far as the hospitals dispute was concerned, the hospital workers in general—nurses and other workers in hospitals—copped the cuts that were made. They copped them sweet and the Government pretty well did what it wanted to do.

When 1981 rolled around, the Government was looking for other areas in which to cut costs and it

picked on education. The game became a lot tougher in this area. I was very closely involved with the education dispute last year when the "Little Sir Echo Razor Gang" decided that the education vote was ripe for pruning. It recommended these cuts to the education vote in pursuit of this Holy Grail of a balanced Budget, this magical concept of a balanced Budget. Why a balanced Budget is necessarily good, I do not know. Perhaps it has some aesthetic appeal to this Liberal Government. The teachers were expected to cop the cuts sweet also.

To be fair to the Government, if the Teachers' Union had acted on past performances, the chances are that the teachers would have copped it sweet. However, the Government was in for a shock. The Teachers' Union stood up for its principles and together with massive parental support—mainly from parents' action groups which were formed for this fight rather than the parents and citizen's groups which are lame duck organisations really—the education vote was substantially maintained. When the Budget was brought down, the education vote was much as it had been. The Government had to prove that it was big and strong and really in charge of the place, so it then turned its guns on the ancillary staff in schools—the least well-defended members of the school staff.

The Government reduced the hours of such people as laboratory assistants, library aides, and clerical assistants. Much heartbreak was caused to the people affected and schools were disrupted, but the amount of money saved was a drop in the budgetary ocean. The people concerned are amongst the lower paid workers in the education system, and so cuts to their hours of work saved virtually no money at all.

The Government's whole approach to health and education was wrong. The Government was saying that a State as wealthy as Western Australia cannot afford a health system to look after the sick nor a decent education system to educate the young. That is just arrant nonsense. The money is there; it is just a matter of reordering priorities.

We are not an impoverished third-world nation; we are a wealthy nation by world standards. Surely education and health should be "first cabs off the rank" when we are allocating funds. What in the world is a Government in power for if it cannot meet these basic needs of a civilised society? Certainly the health of our people and the education of our children deserve a high priority.

What was the Government's reaction to the teachers' stand on the proposed cuts? That is a rhetorical question. The Government's approach to the teachers was the same as its approach to anyone who disagrees with it; it embarked on a campaign to try to blacken the character of people involved and to impugn their motives. The teachers were charged with being subversive, disrupting the education system, and poisoning the minds of the students with their radical talk. The then Minister for Education even accused the executive of the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia of being a bunch of Marxists.

Anyone who knows the history of the Teachers' Union would know that remark is just laughable. In fact, it shows how out of touch the Minister of the day was. As a group, teachers could hardly be described as militant. Generally they are rather conservative and, in my opinion, too accepting of higher authority. The executive of the Teachers' Union reflects its membership. When the teachers got steamed up about the proposed cuts in the education vote, they must have taken the matter rather seriously. As I said earlier, teachers as a group are rather conservative, but in the broad membership of the Teachers' Union there was wide support for the action taken by the union to try to maintain the education system at the level at which it had been working previously.

Taking a wider look at industrial relations generally, a situation has existed for some time where normally quiescent Government workers have increasingly come into dispute with their employer. It is clear the Government must be doing something wrong. Nurses, teachers, public servants, and firemen—there have even been mutterings of discontent from the Police Union—have been involved in industrial disputes. Surely all of them cannot be out of step while the Government is the only one in step. There must be something wrong with the attitude of the Government.

Since the Tonkin Government was defeated in 1974, Western Australian Cabinets—the present one is no exception—have behaved as if they had a mortgage on all the wisdom and common sense available. They believe that anyone who disagrees with them must be wrong or misguided, a subversive, a fifth columnist, or perhaps a dash of all of those.

I have two dogs called Ketch and Beau. They are pure bred "biters". I am sure either Ketch or Beau would have more common sense than all the members of the new Cabinet. Acting together this canine combination would be a brain's trust compared with the gaggle of Ministers in the present Cabinet.

The one point which is obvious from the Government's attitude to opposition and its reaction to criticism is that it has forgotten—if it ever knew—that we have a pluralist society in this country. Democracy is a dynamic thing. It is more than just going to the polling booth every three years or, in the Federal sphere, if Malcolm Fraser calls for a double dissolution, every 2½ years or every five minutes! Democracy is groups and individuals interacting with each other and with government.

If a group of workers take industrial action, they cannot be described as fifth columnists trying to destroy the fabric of society. They are ordinary Australians with a grievance, protecting their rights. Usually industrial disputes arise after protracted negotiations have broken down for some reason. Sometimes it is the fault of the union; I am not saying unions are never to blame. However, a great deal of the time—and this is never published in the Press—it is the fault of management and the employers.

The one-sided treatment accorded industrial disputes in the Press depicts the unions as the bad guys all the time. In fact, that is not the case. It takes two to make an argument and, more often than not, it is the intransigence of the employer which causes industrial disputes. It should be borne in mind also that conservative Governments are likely to stir up disputes, especially if there is an election in the air. Conservative Governments believe it is worth while kicking the unions prior to an election, in the hope that they will get more votes or get the people to tar the Labor Party with some industrial dispute the Government has cooked up itself.

If unions are involved in industrial disputes, it does not mean they are trying to undermine or subvert the State or destroy society. They are protecting their rights. They have a grievance and, surely, in a democratic society which prides itself on being open, it is their right to take such action.

When the conservative forces—and I am talking about Ministers for Labour and Industry in Liberal Administrations—talk about “responsible unions” and “responsible union leaders”, they really mean tame cat unions and “Uncle Tom” union leaders. They believe unions should be an extension of the State apparatus or controlled strictly as they are in the USSR, Eastern Europe, South Africa, and other dictatorships like El Salvador—which recently had an election, so perhaps it must be democracy—Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Singapore, just to name a few. There are no strikes in those countries. One does not have a

strike in El Salvador or Brazil; but the economies of such countries are not healthy and neither are their societies. They are closed societies.

When the free trade union, Solidarity, was formed in Poland, leaders of conservative Governments around the world—the Government here included—praised it. President Reagan was involved in a world-wide television extravaganza, “Let Poland be Poland”; but he will not let El Salvador be El Salvador. Conservative Governments around the world praised Solidarity and the steps it was taking on behalf of the people of Poland. However, those Governments forgot one issue: The sorts of things Solidarity is seeking for the workers and people of Poland are exactly the same sorts of things the union movement in Australia has fought for in the past and is fighting to maintain right now. Action speaks louder than words.

In order to look at the industrial front, I shall consider a dispute which recently caused a good deal of annoyance to the Government in this State. The Government got a lot of Press out of the dispute and a great deal of the discussion was rather emotive. I refer to the hospital laundry dispute.

The Government adopted a paramilitary approach to that dispute. That was evident in the way it talked to the Press, in its contingency plans, and the employment of volunteer workers. In the final analysis, to crush the strike, the Government used police power to manhandle women and to bring in scab labour. The Government referred to them as “volunteers”, but that is a new concept when one considers they were paid \$100 a day.

However, if that paramilitary response to the hospital laundry dispute is any guide to the Government's attitude, the Minister for Labour and Industry and the Government have more in common with General Jaruzelski and the martial law authorities in Poland than with Lech Walesa and the Solidarity trade union movement. Conservatives have to realise that part of the price of genuine free trade unions in a relatively open, pluralistic, and democratic society is a certain level of industrial disputes. If we have free trade unions which are not under the control of the Government, disputes will occur, not because they are caused by the unions, but because there is a free interchange of ideas and, when confrontations occur, unions may react. If employers do something unions do not like, they may react in a way which obviously may lead to a dispute.

In a free, open, and pluralist society which calls itself democratic, with genuine free trade unions, there will always be a certain level of industrial disputation. The alternative to that, where there are no industrial disputes, and where the unions and union leaders do what they are told, is not a democracy. One has only to look at what is happening in El Salvador, Argentina, and Brazil where people disappear and are never heard of again, and where people are put in prison and the key is thrown away, to see what I am putting forward is correct. Those are the sorts of societies where the trade union movement is under the heel of the Government. In Russia people are sometimes thrown into psychiatric hospitals to keep them quiet.

I should like to turn now to a matter which is paramount in this State; that is, electoral and parliamentary reforms. Parliamentary democracy in Western Australia reminds me of a Hollywood western film set viewed from Main Street. With apologies to Gary Cooper, in "High Noon" it looks okay. Everything is there including the general store, the saloon, the sheriff's office, and the livery stable. However, if, for example, one ventures into the saloon, one finds it has only one wall and that is the front wall. It, like all the other buildings, is a facade.

Democracy in this State is just like Main Street on the movie set. We have all the trappings of democracy—a Parliament, electors, regular elections, ballot papers, poll clerks, and returning officers—however, it is really the shadow; it is not the substance at all. The whole box and dice is a sham and a fraud. The elections are pretend elections and the Parliament is a toy parliament elected on rigged and gerrymandered boundaries.

The one point that makes Western Australia a "shamocracy" and not a democracy is that 50 per cent plus one of the electors voting together cannot change the political complexion of this House or the other place. In all elections held since 1890, the conservative forces have never lost, despite the Labor Party having had a majority in the Legislative Assembly and being able to form a Government for roughly half the time since the turn of the century. If the Legislative Council were a racehorse, the stewards would have been called in long ago! Judging by the penalties they have handed down recently, the penalties handed down in this case would be pretty severe!

The distortion in representation between city and country electors in both Houses is grotesque. The whole basis on which the Parliament is constituted makes a mockery of democratic principles. As I said earlier, it is a toy parliament

and a toy parliament cannot have any moral force.

To paraphrase a well-known statement, democracy must not only be said to be done, but it must also be seen to be done. Democracy can be seen to be done only if all electors are equal before the electoral laws of the State. That can be achieved only by repealing the Electoral Districts Act and enacting legislation to enshrine the principle of one-vote-one-value.

The people of this State will not accept electors in one area getting two, three, five, or, in some cases, 15 ballot papers while electors in another part of the State get only one ballot paper. The Liberal Government hides behind the notion of an independent Electoral Commission. I am not disputing the fact that the commissioners are independent, because they are independent; but they are hamstrung by the restrictive regulations of the Electoral Districts Act which were not written by independent commissioners. They were written by this Parliament—by conservative Governments. The Act itself was not written by independent commissioners and, therefore, it is a very political document.

Let us look at the Parliament itself. The Liberal Party says this Chamber is a House of Review. In fact, it is a rubber stamp for Liberal Governments and a brick wall for Labor Governments. In the eight years of the Court-O'Connor Liberal Administration, this House has not rejected one Bill. However, in the three years of the Tonkin Labor Administration, it rejected 21 Bills. The figures speak for themselves.

This Chamber represents entrenched power and privilege. It has more power than the Australian Senate, and that has more than enough. There is no deadlock-solving mechanism. As members opposite know only too well, this House can reject any Bill, including money Bills, or the whole Budget for that matter. This House can force the Government in the Legislative Assembly to repeated elections without having to face the people itself.

Surely in the name of justice and political decency it is time to end the constitutional inviolability of this Chamber. If this House is to be truly a House of Review, it must divest itself of the power to do more than delay legislation for a set period of time, say six months. The basis of its election should be changed to proportional representation with the State as a single electorate. These reforms, coupled with a more extensive committee system, would result in this House playing a positive role in the genuine review of Government legislation. If the Liberal

Party is a believer in democratic principles, it could have no serious objections to the reforms I have proposed. I call on the Government to establish an all-party joint committee to draw up legislation to enable these long overdue reforms to be considered at a referendum.

I turn now to an area of vital interest to people living in the metropolitan area—public transport. An issue of public transport which has exercised the minds of many people living in the South Metropolitan Province is the closure of the Perth-Fremantle railway line. The incoming Labor Government of 1983 will reopen that line; but it is absolutely incredible that the line was closed in the first place. We need more and better public transport, not less.

One of the arguments in support of closing the line was that the patronage had fallen off. The Friends of the Railway dispute the figures the Government put out at the time of the closure, but if we accept for the time being that on face value the Government's figures were correct, we must ask why the patronage of that line fell off. Possibly one reason relates to the old rolling stock. I believe some of the bogies were made in 1885, and many of the old cabins had not been modernised, or had not been maintained for quite some period. The rolling stock did not look attractive—it was old-fashioned—and I am sure that deterred many people from travelling on the line.

Perhaps the service was not advertised sufficiently. Many people who saw a train using that line may not have thought of catching a train to their destination or, in particular, to and from work.

Perhaps the drop off in patronage was as a result of the activities of the MTT. It administers suburban rail services, and at the time the Perth-Fremantle railway line was open, the MTT competed with that line instead of complementing it. If the MTT provided a feeder service to that line instead of operating buses alongside it, the railway line could be viable. The MTT could take passengers to the railway stations between either Perth and Fremantle and in that way increase the patronage.

If any members visited the Fremantle Railway Station when the Perth-Fremantle service was in operation, they would have realised that if someone wanted to catch a bus at Fremantle he had to walk a mile up town to change over. If the bus terminal had been located near the station people could have easily changed over from a train to a bus, or vice versa, without the necessity for a long walk.

The MTT seems to favour buses over trains. Perhaps that is a misapprehension on my part, but it certainly seems to be the case. If the MTT does favour buses over trains, it does so instead of attempting to operate an integrated transport system.

On the broader question of public transport versus private transport I will make the following observations: I expect most of us own a motorcar and it is safe to say that at least for the foreseeable future the private car is here to stay. No-one will deny the convenience of a motorcar; however, for commuting to and from work in the metropolitan area it has serious limitations. As a society we will spend more and more money on freeways. We will build these freeways to move people, but I am sure that if someone surveyed the number of people conveyed along either the Mitchell Freeway or the Kwinana Freeway he would find a predominance of one person to a car—the driver. Our freeways are built to transport only drivers from point A to point B. During the morning and afternoon peak periods our so-called freeways certainly are not freeways. Between 8.30 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. or 4.30 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. it is better to call these roadways "clogways", because traffic clogs all sections of them.

To discourage people from using private vehicles to commute between home and work will be difficult, but unless we do, this city of ours will be strangled by a spaghetti junction of flyovers, crossovers, and on-ramps and off-ramps—we will end up planning solely for the car instead of for our people.

People will not be weaned off cars if the alternative is waiting 10 minutes to half-an-hour for a bus. People need a fast, efficient and integrated public transport system to encourage them not to use their private vehicles.

Such public transport systems do not come cheap, but the cost can be weighed against the cost of a freeway. I do not know the cost of the Mitchell Freeway or the Kwinana Freeway, but I daresay they were not cheap. The Kwinana Freeway now has another lane and will be extended further south, and that extension will cost a great deal. If we do not do something about encouraging people to use public transport we will have to spend more and more money on freeways.

I welcomed the statement of the Leader of the Opposition when he referred to the present situation regarding Servetus Street and the north-south freeway. The incoming Labor Government in 1983 will have a fresh look at that freeway, particularly in regard to the Servetus Street

section of it. We should face the fact that this freeway may not be necessary.

Building freeways to cater for projected traffic density increases is a self-fulfilling prophecy. If we build more freeways, more people will use them; but if a proper public transport system is provided the necessity for more freeways could disappear.

In terms of rational urban planning we have a tiger by the tail. If ever we are to let go in time we must start to rethink the question of public transport versus freeways, and we must do so now.

I will relate a personal experience from which I will draw some points. Thursday, 15 April 1982, will mark the second anniversary of what I have termed the beginning of the rest of my life. On 15 April 1980 after spending most of the day in the sun at an interschool swimming carnival I collapsed and fell heavily in the science staff room of the Applecross Senior High School. I fractured my skull and was admitted to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital where I underwent emergency surgery the same evening. I was in a coma and remained in that coma under intensive care for the following three weeks, during which time I came very close to death.

During the early part of my recovery I was confined to a wheelchair; I could not keep my balance and had to learn to walk all over again. I am very lucky to be standing here delivering this maiden speech.

I survived largely unscathed—I have a limp and a few scars—because of the skill and dedication of the doctors and staff of Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and ward 1 of the Shenton Park Rehabilitation Hospital.

No small part was played in my recovery by my wife Cheryl. I owe her a great deal for her love, her strength and her courage, and above all her tolerance in very traumatic and difficult circumstances. I must thank also two very close friends, Dick and Kath Gallop, and the families of my wife and I, for the support they gave Cheryl during that time.

I related that piece of personal history as a means of drawing attention to a growing problem in our community. I was lucky; my number was not up—modern technology did the trick. However, in many cases the story does not end as happily, and patients are discharged from hospital with quite serious handicaps as a result of severe brain damage. The families of such people must somehow cope with the situation, but precious little help and advice is given to them in order to get them over the crisis.

(9)

A group trying to fill the gap is the Head Injured Society of Western Australia. It was formed only two years ago—about the time I was in Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital—and already has purchased premises at Alfred Cove. Recently HIS completed a \$17 000 extension to its property which is called "Head Injured House". The house provides hostel care, and some therapy for a few patients.

As members would appreciate, the house originally was a suburban dwelling and does not have adequate space for more than a few patients. Head Injured House also provides accommodation for families of country patients during the critical days immediately after head injuries are suffered by these patients.

HIS has produced a pamphlet which I will quote. The pamphlet sets out the society's arguments and objectives and is entitled, "Every week approx 30 Western Australians are admitted to metropolitan hospitals with head injuries". Inside the cover it states—

Each year in Western Australia alone more than 6 000 people on average are admitted to hospital with head injuries* 1 500 of these will have injuries severe enough to require treatment in a rehabilitation hospital—that's 30 new cases each week. Fifty per cent of the injured will be between the ages of 15 and 34, most of them are admitted following motor accidents.

(*FROM HOSPITAL MORTALITY/MORBIDITY DATA 1977: INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF DISEASES)

The increasing incidence of head injuries, particularly amongst the young, is part of the price it seems we must pay for the way we live today. But it is often only when the patient returns home that the full social implications of his condition become apparent. The Head Injured Society was constituted to provide support for both the injured and their families.

H.I.S. and what it stands for

The Head Injured Society of W.A. (H.I.S.) was established in 1980 by a group of representatives from patient's families and professionals working in the rehabilitation of head injured patients. The Society aims to:

ASSIST families of head injured patients through advice, discussion and counselling during the acute, long-term and post-discharge phases of patient care.

INCREASE community awareness of the particular problems faced by the patient and his family.

IMPROVE community after-care facilities for the patient during the post-discharge period.

EDUCATE families of head injured patients and the general public at meetings by involving guest speakers employed in neurosurgical rehabilitation.

The Head Injured Society sees as its major goal the establishment of a modern, self-contained centre which would provide permanent accommodation, day care and counselling facilities.

H.I.S. sees the establishment of this centre as a matter of urgency.

Why a centre is necessary

Today more than 50 head injured patients with severe physical and intellectual impairment are located in nursing homes throughout the State. Generally speaking, they have no regular access to specialist treatment within these nursing homes. Any re-assessment of these patients' requirements can only be undertaken at one of the rehabilitation hospitals. This poses particular problems for country patients who comprise 40 per cent of the total.

Patients who return home and their families often face considerable adjustment difficulties. Many of the patients are young and as a result of the injuries and the current economic climate face employment difficulties. A specialist centre could provide a support link for patients and families and could additionally provide employment opportunities as an integral part of the centre.

The problems of the head injured are a serious consequence of living in the modern world... need for a specialist centre for post medical rehabilitation is clear. You can help.

I think this Parliament can help.

The centre described obviously is needed for patient rehabilitation and equally needed for patients' families. Families caring long-term for head-injured patients need a break every once in a while, otherwise the stress involved can impair their own health and put strains on family relationships. The head injuries sometimes result in permanent disability, which means that the families will be involved in care for the patient for the rest of their lives, and perhaps the patient will need care after his or her parents have passed on.

During my earlier remarks on public transport I left for mention until now that putting more cars on the road will mean more accidents, and most serious head injuries are caused by motor vehicle accidents. When I was in hospital I was asked by anyone who came by, "Did you have a car accident?" People were quite astounded to hear that I fell and hit my head on a floor.

It is a fact that most head injuries are caused by motor vehicle accidents. As we build more freeways we encourage more people to drive their own vehicles, and that will cause more trauma on the roads and many more head injuries. The pamphlet mentioned the age group of 15 to 34 years. The people of that age group are most likely to suffer because they are the people we are encouraging to use our freeways. Modern technology will keep them alive if they are involved in an accident and suffer injury, and we must accept that because of their youth and strength, and health in the rest of their bodies, they will live for a long time and will need care during that time.

Questions involving public transport relate not only to moving people around, but also to the number of road accidents our society must bear. If road accidents were regarded as a disease I am sure there would be public outcry for something to be done about this epidemic that is causing so much trauma and death. Our road toll, the number of people killed, is merely the tip of the iceberg in terms of the amount of suffering caused by road accidents. People injured badly and perhaps debilitated for the rest of their lives are a long-term problem with which society must cope.

As a civilised community we must provide for these people. We need facilities for head-injured patients. It is one of the many priority areas and the need for facilities will increase; it should be looked at now.

For further background on this subject, I recommend that honourable members read an article which was first published in the *Washington Post* and was published in *The West Australian* on Monday 29 March 1982 on page 63. The title of the article is "Little Hope for Coma Victims". It is about a 14-year-old boy who had an accident and has been in a coma for 33 weeks. The article is also about the problems being faced in the United States with head-injury victims. In America 700 000 people receive head injuries each year.

In conclusion I shall quote from a speech delivered at a seminar in November last year. It was delivered by a Mr Kelvin Buchanan who is the Chairman of the Head Injured Society of

Western Australia and whose son is one of the victims. Under the title "OF" it reads—

Ten minutes is insufficient time to cover a speech of this situation so I have confined my talk to headings prefixed by OF. You will appreciate that any one of these headings could be discussed at great length.

HEAD INJURED PATIENT IN THE NURSING HOME

OF.

1. The heartache OF being told your son has failed to improve sufficiently to remain in a closed intensive nursing situation such as Ward I.
2. OF the feeling of utter despair when seeking suitable C Class hospitalisation and the realisation that none of them is what he needs.
3. OF steeling yourself finally to select one against all your feelings.
4. OF placing him in there and the distress in doing so.
5. OF visiting him in this situation and the guilt one feels.
6. OF knowing he is not getting enough specialist treatment such as physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, Nursing (to qualify the nursing aspect, the C Class hospital nurses do a wonderful job and we know they love our people, but we feel neuro-nursing is a special field of nursing and they are entitled to that.)
7. OF the intense joy of bringing him home.
8. OF the heartache of taking him back.
9. OF the devotion of his mother and the wonderful way only she can handle him.
10. OF your other children's acceptance of him and their love and understanding.
11. OF the love you feel for the other children when you watch one wipe his mouth or cuddle him or tend to him in any way.
12. OF the pride you feel when he reacts unfavourably to any of his brothers or sisters and how even though this hurts them terribly they return love.
13. OF the realisation of knowing against your heartfelt feelings that we couldn't cope with him at home all the time.
14. OF the never-ending feeling of loss and sorrow.
15. OF watching his friends drop away and finally stop visiting him.
16. OF the hurt you feel for him when this happens.
17. OF attending his friends' engagements and weddings and the realisation that this will never be his.
18. OF knowing he is very aware but can't communicate.
19. OF being advised to low-key your attention to him and get on with life and the other children (our response to that is—you try it!)
20. OF being told after 18 months' hospitalisation that he needs 32 fillings and there is little chance of saving his teeth.
21. OF the worry of what happens when we have gone.
22. OF watching him waste away and the constant battle to maintain weight and some form of muscle tone.
23. OF being unable to alter the situation and the remembrance of him as a little boy saying "fix it, Dad" and knowing this time you can't.
24. OF having to look him in the eyes and tell him so.
25. OF watching his mother visit every day not because she has to but because she wants to.
26. OF the joy of any gain however small, like November 8th when his finger found his mouth.
27. In summation these have been a few of the problems, situations and feelings of the parents of a head injured son in a nursing home. There are many more and we fervently hope very soon this will all change, as indeed it must for it is an intolerable situation.

With those comments I conclude my remarks in this Address-in-Reply debate and support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. P. H. Lockyer.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [8.50 p.m.]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Rental Housing: Relocation Assistance

THE HON. ROBERT HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [8.51 p.m.]: I wish to make reference to a problem in my electorate, which the Hon. Fred McKenzie faces in his electorate, which others may have, and which has not been satisfactorily answered by the Chief Secretary representing the Minister for Housing. I asked two questions, one on Wednesday and one today,