

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 11 February, 1987

JOINT SITTING TO ELECT A SENATOR

The two Houses met in the Legislative Council Chamber at 4 o'clock, p.m., to elect a Senator in the place of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland, resigned.

Mr UNSWORTH: Mr Clerk, I move:

That the Hon. John Richard Johnson, President of the Legislative Council, do act as President of the Joint Sitting of the two Houses of the Legislature for the election of a Senator in place of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland and, that in the event of his absence the Hon. Lawrence Borthwick Kelly, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, do act in that capacity.

Mr GREINER: I second the motion.

Motion agreed to.

The PRESIDENT: I thank honourable members for the honour that they have done me in electing me to preside at this joint sitting of members.

The Hon. John Richard Johnson took the chair.

Mr UNSWORTH: I desire to bring up certain rules for the regulation of the proceedings at the joint sitting, which have been printed and circulated. I move:

That the proposed rules, as printed and circulated, be now adopted.

Mr GREINER: I second the motion.

Motion agreed to.

The PRESIDENT: I am now prepared to receive nominations with regard to a person to fill the vacant place in the senate caused by the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland.

Mr UNSWORTH: I propose Suzanne Margaret West to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland. I announce that the candidate is willing to hold the vacant place if chosen. I further announce that she is a member of the same political party as that of which the said Senator was, at the time he was chosen by the people of the State, publicly recognized by that party to be an endorsed candidate, and as that of which the said Senator, at that time, publicly represented himself to be an endorsed candidate.

The Hon. J. R. HALLAM: I second the proposal.

The PRESIDENT: Does any member desire to propose any other person to fill the vacancy? There being no other nomination, the question is:

That Suzanne Margaret West be chosen to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT: I declare that Suzanne Margaret West has been chosen to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland.

Mr UNSWORTH: I move:

That the President be requested to inform forthwith His Excellency the Governor that Suzanne Margaret West has been chosen to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland.

The Hon. J. R. HALLAM: I second the motion.

Motion agreed to.

The PRESIDENT: I now declare the joint sitting closed.

The joint sitting concluded at 4.6 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 11 February, 1987

The President took the chair at 3 p.m.

The President offered the Prayer.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Royal assent to the following bills reported:

Historic Houses (Amendment) Bill
Industrial Arbitration (Miscellaneous Provisions) Amendment Bill
Trade Union (Amendment) Bill
Miscellaneous Acts (Superannuation Appeals) Amendment Bill
Industrial Arbitration (Superannuation Appeals) Amendment Bill
Local Government (Residential Flat Buildings) Amendment Bill
Miscellaneous Acts (Residential Flat Buildings) Repeal and Amendment Bill
National Parks and Wildlife (Marine Mammals Protection) Amendment Bill
Land and Environment Court (Marine Mammals Protection) Amendment Bill
New South Wales Investment Corporation (Amendment) Bill
Public Works (Interest) Amendment Bill
University of New England (Amendment) Bill
State Transport (Co-ordination) Amendment Bill
Transport (Amendment) Bill
Transfer of Public Vehicles (Taxation) Amendment Bill
Timber Marketing (Amendment) Bill
Soil Conservation (Further Amendment) Bill

Water (Soil Conservation) Amendment Bill
 Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation (Soil Conservation) Amendment Bill
 Necropolis (Amendment) Bill
 Public Health (Necropolis) Amendment Bill
 Pastures Protection (Amendment) Bill
 Boy Scouts Association (Amendment) Bill
 Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments (Amendment) Bill
 Conveyancing (Plan Registration) Amendment Bill
 Strata Titles (Plan Registration) Amendment Bill
 Real Property (Plan Registration) Amendment Bill
 Local Government (Plan Registration) Amendment Bill
 Gaming and Betting (Poker Machines) Taxation (Further Amendment) Bill
 Registered Clubs (Further Amendment) Bill
 Government and Related Employees Appeal Tribunal (Amendment) Bill
 Local Government (Building Certificates) Amendment Bill
 Land and Environment Court (Building Certificates) Amendment Bill
 Local Government (General Revision) Amendment Bill
 Search Warrants (Local Government Inspectors) Amendment Bill
 Motor Traffic (Photographic Evidence) Amendment Bill
 Crimes (Photographic Evidence) Amendment Bill
 Pay-roll Tax (Further Amendment) Bill
 Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment Bill
 Business Franchise Licences (Tobacco) Further Amendment Bill
 Cigarettes (Labelling) Amendment and Repeal Bill
 Real Property (Caveats) Amendment Bill
 Stamp Duties (Share Transfer) Amendment Bill
 State Bank (Amendment) Bill
 Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground (Amendment) Bill
 Totalizator (Off-course Betting) Amendment Bill
 University and University Colleges (Amendment) Bill
 Valuation of Land (Amendment) Bill
 Wollongong Sportsground Bill
 Public Finance and Audit (Wollongong Sportsground) Amendment Bill
 Workers' Compensation (Further Amendment) Bill
 Workers' Compensation (Brucellosis) Revival and Amendment Bill
 Local Government (Rates and Charges) Bill
 Business Franchise Licences (Tobacco) Amendment Bill
 Business Franchise Licences (Tobacco) (Application and Enforcement) Amendment Bill
 Business Franchise Licences (Petroleum Products) (Application and Enforcement) Amendment Bill
 Commonwealth Powers (Family Law—Children) Bill
 Credit Union (Amendment) Bill
 Darling Harbour Authority (Amendment) Bill
 Industrial Arbitration (Employment Protection) Amendment Bill
 Land Tax Management (Further Amendment) Bill

Prisoners (Interstate Transfer) Amendment Bill
 Prisons (Further Amendment) Bill
 Crimes (Remissions) Further Amendment Bill
 Roman Catholic Church Trust Property (Amendment) Bill
 Roman Catholic Church Communities' Lands (Amendment) Bill
 Soccer Football Pools (Amendment) Bill
 Stamp Duties (Further Amendment) Bill
 Uranium Mining and Nuclear Facilities (Prohibition) Bill
 Water Administration Bill
 Water (Amendment) Bill
 Wentworth Irrigation (Amendment) Bill
 Hay Irrigation (Amendment) Bill
 Irrigation (Amendment) Bill
 Broken Hill Water and Sewerage (Amendment) Bill
 Drainage (Amendment) Bill
 Rivers and Foreshores Improvement (Amendment) Bill
 Cobar Water Supply (Amendment) Bill
 Water Administration (Transfer of Functions) Bill
 Miscellaneous Acts (Water Administration) Amendment Bill
 Industrial Arbitration (Industrial Tribunals) Amendment Bill
 Director of Public Prosecutions Bill
 Crown Prosecutors Bill
 Criminal Procedure Bill
 District Court (Amendment) Bill
 Criminal Appeal (Amendment) Bill
 Miscellaneous Acts (Public Prosecutions) Amendment Bill
 Gas Bill
 Gas and Electricity (Gas Repeal) Amendment Bill
 Miscellaneous Acts (Gas) Amendment Bill
 Search Warrants (Gas) Amendment Bill
 New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music (Amendment) Bill
 Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) (No. 2) Bill
 Strata Titles (Leasehold) Bill
 Miscellaneous Acts (Leasehold Strata Schemes) Amendment Bill

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

The President reported the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor informing the House that consequent on the Governor of New South Wales, Sir James Anthony Rowland, assuming the administration of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia in the absence of the Governor-General overseas, on 14th January, 1987, he had assumed the administration of the Government of the State.

The President reported a message from His Excellency the Governor informing the House that after relinquishing the administration of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, he had re-assumed the administration of the Government of the State on 21st January, 1987.

SENATE VACANCY

Resignation of Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland

The President reported the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor conveying a copy of a dispatch from the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia dated 23rd January, 1987, notifying that a vacancy has happened in the representation of the State of New South Wales in the Senate of the Commonwealth, through the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland, which occurred on 23rd January, 1987.

Motion

Motion by the **Hon. J. R. Hallam** agreed to:

That the message be taken into consideration on receipt by this House of a message from the Legislative Assembly dealing with the same subject.

PETITIONS

Abortion

The Hon. Marie Bignold, the **Hon. Virginia Chadwick**, the **Hon. J. J. Doohan** and the **Hon. E. P. Prickering** presented petitions expressing concern over abortion and requesting the Government to enforce the Crimes Act, 1900, and close down abortion clinics.

Petitions received on motions by the **Hon. Marie Bignold**, the **Hon. Virginia Chadwick**, the **Hon. J. J. Doohan** and the **Hon. E. P. Pickering**.

Pambula, Merimbula, and Tura Beach Ambulance Services

The Hon. R. T. M. Bull presented a petition expressing concern about ambulance services at Pambula, Merimbula, and Tura Beach.

Petition received on motion by the **Hon. R. T. M. Bull**.

SENATE VACANCY

Election of Senator

The PRESIDENT: I report the receipt of the following message from the Legislative Assembly:

Mr President—

The Legislative Assembly, having resolved to meet the Legislative Council for the purpose of sitting and voting together to choose a person to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland, requests the Legislative Council to name the place and hour for such meeting.

Legislative Assembly Chamber,
Sydney, 11 February, 1987.

L. B. KELLY
Speaker

Motion by the **Hon. J. R. Hallam** agreed to:

That this House agrees to meet the Legislative Assembly for the purpose of sitting and voting together to choose a person to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland, in this Chamber today, Wednesday, 11 February, 1987, at 4 p.m., sharp.

Motion by the **Hon. J. R. Hallam** agreed to:

That the following message be forwarded to the Legislative Assembly:

Mr Speaker—

The Legislative Council having taken into consideration the Legislative Assembly's message dated 11 February, 1987, agrees to meet the Assembly for the purpose of sitting and voting together to choose a person to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland, in the Legislative Council Chamber today, Wednesday, 11 February, 1987, at 4 p.m., sharp.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now leave the chair. The business of the House will be suspended during the joint sitting. The House will resume upon the ringing of the bells.

[The President left the chair at 3.14 p.m. The House resumed at 4.9 p.m.]

PARLIAMENT HOUSE SECURITY

The PRESIDENT: As honourable members would no doubt be aware, on the night of Saturday, 4th January, 1987, the precincts of this Parliament were trespassed upon and subsequently broken into. The rooms of several members of Parliament were entered. The Manager, Parliamentary Building Services, was asked to furnish an urgent report on the incident. This report has been furnished and action taken in response to it. Members may be aware also of the deplorable incident that occurred today when, in the course of duty, the Assistant Principal Parliamentary Attendant of the other House was injured by demonstrators, two of whom have been charged in regard to the offence. It is pleasing to report that Mr O'Keefe has been discharged from Sydney Hospital and is convalescing at home.

Though the Speaker and I are conscious of the rights of citizens to have free access to the New South Wales Parliament, we are also very much concerned to ensure that honourable members and staff are absolutely secure within the parliamentary establishment. New security measures will be formulated after discussion with the appropriate persons and brought into effect as soon as possible so that the incidents I have referred to will not be repeated.

SENATE VACANCY

The PRESIDENT: Order! I announce that at the joint sittings of the two Houses held this day to choose a person to hold a place in the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia, rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland, Suzanne Margaret West was chosen to take that place. I bring up the minutes of the proceedings of the joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament and lay them upon the table.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Motion by the **Hon. J. R. Hallam** agreed to:

That this House at its rising today do adjourn until Tuesday, 24th February, 1987.

ADJOURNMENT

Child Abuse

The Hon. J. R. HALLAM (Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands, Minister for Forests, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) [4.14]: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

The Hon. VIRGINIA CHADWICK [4.14]: I raise a most disturbing case of alleged sexual and physical assault that has extended for more than a period of twenty years upon children, some of whom have been foster placements of the Department of Youth and Community Services. I use the word "alleged" fairly loosely to try to be fair, because the man concerned, whom I shall refer to as Mr X, has admitted at least some of the offences. His wife also has admitted that some of the children have been abused. I refer to this matter today in the hope that some avenue can be found to bring the matter before a court and to protect the foster children still in the care of the alleged abuser.

My concern is that on 7th November, 1986, the Attorney General filed a no bill even though Mr X had been committed for trial in February 1986. For all intents and purposes the matter is closed despite the allegations of sexual and physical abuse of a number of children, said to be children of Mr X and foster placements of the Department of Youth and Community Services over a period of twenty years. I am not a lawyer but if that is the law, the law is an ass. Discussions with one of the children have revealed that other children were sexually abused and physically assaulted. However, the court charges related to the abuse of two children only, two daughters who are now adults. Fear, shame, repression and intimidation are but some of the reasons for the delay in the laying of charges. We find that fear that the evidence is stale was given as the reason for the no bill being filed.

So what about fresh evidence? Placed with the family now is a teenage girl, a foster child from the Department of Youth and Community Services. The alleged offences against that child are even more outrageous when it is acknowledged that she has a serious and life-threatening medical complaint. It is the opinion of medical officers, a representative of the sexual assault unit, and social workers, that the girl has been sexually abused. On several occasions she has been rushed to hospital suffering severe abdominal pain for which no organic cause can be found. She is fearful and withdrawn. Although she denies that abuses have occurred, she speaks of fear for her foster father's going to gaol and the family splitting up. To me this suggests intimidation. The matters I have referred to, together with the alleged history of the foster father and the opinion of a variety of experts, suggests that abuse of this young girl has occurred.

It seems that stale evidence is not sufficient and is deserving of the filing of a no bill. Also, fresh evidence of further abuse is not worthy of charges being laid. I am not endeavouring to be the judge and jury. However, it is important that something be done to test these matters in the courts. It is important for the older members of the family, some of whom have been psychologically scarred by their experiences during the years and who now feel strong enough to see that justice is done by coming forward. It is important also for the younger children, particularly the teenage girl who is at present placed as a foster child with this family by the Department of Youth and Community Services. Of overriding importance is the countless other victims of sexual and physical

abuse in our community who will witness this situation and decide that it is not worth speaking out. It seems to me that if one is intimidated and shamed when one is young, charges will not be laid. Similarly, if one waits until one is older and stronger, the evidence is deemed to be stale. I repeat: if this is the law, the law is an ass and grossly unjust.

The Hon. J. R. HALLAM (Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands, Minister for Forests and Vice-President of the Executive Council) [4.18], in reply: The Hon. Virginia Chadwick has raised a matter that I will certainly have investigated and referred to my colleagues the Attorney General and the Minister for Youth and Community Services to determine the degree of fact, political innuendo and political opportunism.

The Hon. Virginia Chadwick: On a point of order. I find it grossly offensive, given the nature of the matters that I have raised today of sexual and physical abuse of at least a dozen people for more than twenty years, for the Leader of the House to suggest that to raise such matters in this House smacks of political motivation and opportunism. I ask that his remarks be withdrawn.

The Hon. J. R. Hallam: I was moved to make my comments and place a question mark upon the matters raised on the basis of the Hon. Virginia Chadwick's previous record. I shall have the matters investigated.

The Hon. Virginia Chadwick: Will the Leader of the House withdraw his remarks?

The PRESIDENT: I ask the Leader of the House to repeat what he has just said concerning the point of order raised by the Hon. Virginia Chadwick.

The Hon. J. R. HALLAM: The Hon. Virginia Chadwick has taken offence to my comments. I was merely saying that, based on her record, one could be forgiven for being somewhat curious about her real motive. I certainly will have the facts checked.

The Hon. Virginia Chadwick: Further to the point of order. My understanding of the standing orders of this House is that if a member takes exception to comments made—which in this instance impinge upon my character and motivation—a member may demand, virtually, that those remarks be withdrawn. I have said that I find the Minister's remarks offensive, grossly offensive indeed, and I ask that the Minister withdraw them.

The Hon. J. R. Hallam: On the basis of the honourable member's sensitivity and her insistence that the remarks be withdrawn, I shall withdraw them.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at 4.20 p.m. until Tuesday, 24th February, 1987.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following questions upon notice and answers were circulated in *Questions and Answers* this day.

INTERNAL POLICE SECURITY UNIT

The Hon. E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands, and Minister for Forests** representing the **Minister for Police and Emergency Services**—

(1) Has the new Internal Police Security Unit been using heavy handed entrapment procedures in an endeavour to compromise senior police officers?

(2) If so, can the Minister indicate whether he supports this method of internal control?

Answer—

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

POLICE FIREARMS

The Hon. E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries**, representing the **Minister for Police and Emergency Services**—

(1) Has the Police Department declined to provide each member of the force with a security container in which to keep his service pistol at home whilst off-duty?

(2) Is this decision consistent with the Government's policy to impose stringent duties of safe-keeping on persons with firearms in their possession?

Answer—

(1) Yes. The proposal made to the Commissioner by the Police Association would have involved the installation of built-in security containers in all police accommodation, both temporary and permanent. This proposal was closely examined but was rejected by the Commissioner on the grounds of impracticality.

(2) Yes. The Firearms and Dangerous Weapons Act 1973 requires that "all reasonable precautions" be taken for the safekeeping of firearms. Police Officers are made fully aware of this requirement through Police Instruction 22 which reinforces the need for the careful safekeeping of service weapons.

TOW-TRUCK ACT

The Hon. VIRGINIA CHADWICK asked the **Minister for Health and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport**—

(1) In the last 5 years how many persons have been charged with offences under the Tow-truck Act 1967?

(2) Are all sections of the Tow-truck Act actively enforced?

(3) If not, what sections are not effectively enforced and why is this the situation?

Answer—

(1) Figures have not been maintained for the majority of the abovementioned period, except for the period commencing January 1985. From 1 January 1985 to 30 June 1986, 277 breaches of the Tow-truck Act have been recorded by Police.

(2) I have been advised by the Assistant Commissioner (Traffic) that action will continue to ensure that all sections of the Tow-truck Act are being actively enforced.

(3) Not applicable.

TOXIC WASTE DISPOSAL

The Hon. ELISABETH KIRKBY asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands, and Minister for Forests—**

In reference to the Minister's reply to questions without notice that I asked of him during the previous Session about the disposal of toxic waste from the Tomago Aluminium Smelter, is the Minister:

(1) Suggesting that the relevant government authorities, the State Pollution Control Commission and the Metropolitan Waste Disposal Authority are unaware of the fact that in 1976 the American Congress introduced the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act?

(2) Are the authorities also unaware that this Act directs the E.P.A. to regulate hazardous wastes; require them to be tracked and handled from creation to disposal at licensed and inspected facilities that have plans and money for safe closure and years of monitoring?

(3) Do these authorities realize that the R.C.R. Act includes provisions for monitoring for ground water pollution; and that the E.P.A. using the Super Fund (established in 1980) has fully purged 12 landfill sites—containing toxic waste—because these sites were polluting ground-water nearby?

(4) Will the Minister confirm that the E.P.A. in the U.S.A. started this work nearly ten years ago because of the Love Canal tragedy and the fact that some towns in the U.S.A. have had to be permanently evacuated; and the meeting held on 22 November 1985, with overseas industrial experts and the relevant authorities in New South Wales discussed in detail the workings of the American Resource and Recovery Act, the Super Fund; also the bacterial conversion treatment used to eliminate cyanide at the Homestate Mining Company Plant at Whitewood Creek in South Dakota—a process that has been practically implemented by that American Company under the guidance of microbiologist, James Whitlock?

(5) If not, why not?

Answer—

(1) No. The United States Resource Conservation and Recovery Act was one of several relevant pieces of legislation reviewed by the State Pollution Control Commission so that it could advise on the form of the Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Bill.

(2) The authorities are aware of the content of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) in some detail. The N.S.W. Waste Disposal Act which predates the RCRA has similar provisions and the Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act reinforces those provisions.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes, in relation to all matter except the last. I am advised the visiting United States experts indicated that bacterial conversion treatment was potentially very interesting but the process required further development before widespread application would be practicable. There are limitations in using the bacterial conversion treatment. The cyanide detoxification enzymes can be used effectively at low concentrations of soluble cyanides but are not effective at higher concentrations or for metal-cyanide complexes.

(5) See (1)-(4) above.

ELECTRICITY COMMISSION GAS TURBINES

The Hon. J. H. JOBLING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands, and Minister for Forests and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Minister for Industry and Small Business and Minister for Energy and Technology**—

(1) What was the date, cost and number of gas turbines purchased by the Electricity Commission as emergency generating plants?

(2) Where are these units now located?

(3) Have any of these units ever been used for emergency generating purposes?

(4) If so, where and for how long?

(5) What is the expected fuel consumption per hour and the expected running costs of each unit?

Answer—

(1) Twelve gas turbines were purchased by the Electricity Commission of New South Wales in 1982 to assist in meeting demand during the electrical energy crisis in that year resulting from the failure of alternator windings in three generating units at Liddell Power Station. The units were connected to the State network in April, May and June, 1982. Total capital cost was \$89 million.

(2) Two units are located at Bunnerong, two at Port Kembla, four at Eraring and four at Koolkhan near Grafton.

Action is in hand to relocate the Bunnerong units in the Upper Hunter district to provide "black start" capability for Liddell and Bayswater Power Stations, and it is proposed to relocate the Port Kembla units at Broken Hill as emergency standby supply in case of any failure in the transmission system.

(3) and (4) As a result of the Liddell alternator winding failures, all gas turbines were used during the energy crisis in the period April to September, 1982. Operating times totalled approximately 5 000 unit hours, 85 per cent of the energy being generated using natural gas at Bunnerong and Port Kembla.

During autumn, 1983, the natural gas turbines at Bunnerong and Port Kembla were operated due to reduced water storages in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme as a result of a prolonged drought. Operating hours totalled approximately 1 700 unit hours.

In addition, gas turbines have been operated for brief periods, as follows:

Koolkhan to assist with a local supply problem in April, 1984.

Bunnerong and Port Kembla to assist the State Electricity Commission of Victoria following plant failures in that State.

At all locations on one day in March, 1983, as a result of loss of thermal generating plant due to switchboard flashovers.

At all locations for three days during February, 1986, during the coal-miners' strike.

For one hour each month as a test on performance.

It should be appreciated that, while it is advisable to have available generating units capable of being quickly started and run-up, such emergency units should only have to be operated infrequently.

(5) For statistical and costing purposes a fuel consumption of 8.3 tonnes of distillate per hour is an average value recorded for each gas turbine when operating at full load. The gas turbines at Bunnerong and Port Kembla use natural gas as fuel and for these units the gas consumption is 15.0 MJ/GWh.

Supplies of distillate fuel have not been replenished since 1982 when the cost of distillate was \$267 to \$310 per tonne. These values have been used to calculate a distillate fuel cost of \$88 per MWh. If current replacement fuel costs were considered then distillate costs of \$472 per tonne would increase the cost to approximately \$155 per MWh.

Under the current gas contract, fuel cost when burning natural gas is \$84 per MWh for units at Bunnerong and Port Kembla.

The cost of running a gas turbine at full load (25 MW) for one hour is:

(a) natural gas fuel—

\$2,100 on current gas price.

(b) distillate fuel—

\$2,200 on 1982 fuel price.

\$3,875 on 1986 replacement fuel price.

ELECTRICITY COMMISSION GAS TURBINES

The Hon. J. H. JOBLING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Minister for Forests and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Minister for Industry and Small Business and Minister for Energy and Technology**—

(1) When was each Electricity Commission gas turbine unit test run during the last 12 months?

(2) For how long was each unit run and at what cost per hour?

(3) What is the annual maintenance cost on each unit?

(4) How many Commission staff are employed to maintain these units?

(5) Is each unit fully maintained and operational?

(6) What future use is proposed for each unit and where?

(7) Does the Commission propose to sell as surplus any of these units during the next 12 months?

Answer—

(1) and (2) As a check on availability and maximum load capacity, the Electricity Commission's practice is to:

- (i) check each gas turbine once a month under black start conditions (without any external electrical supply) and then run the unit under full load conditions for one hour.
- (ii) test run each gas turbine, once every six months, at full load for two hours.

The cost of testing a gas turbine at full load (25 MW) for one hour is:

- (a) natural gas fuel—\$2,100 on current gas price
- (b) distillate fuel—\$2,200 on 1982 fuel price
—\$3,875 on 1986 replacement fuel price.

(3) Maintenance costs are not recorded for each individual gas turbine. Current average annual maintenance costs are \$3,200 per unit.

(4) The service hours of the gas turbines have not necessitated any major preventative maintenance programme and the labour content of maintenance charges has been quite small. In general, monthly inspections, including adjustments to remote control equipment, require four man-days per gas turbine per month.

(5) All 12 gas turbines are regularly inspected and test run for a short period each month. The availability of these units is high and all are operational for use under any system emergency condition.

(6) Gas turbines are ideal emergency supply sources as they can be generating at full load within 12 minutes of the start-up command.

The gas turbines now play an important role in the power systems by providing a reserve power generating capacity which can be quickly brought into service and also providing emergency restart power to restore the State's power grid in the event of a total electrical power system failure, as occurred in New South Wales in 1964 and in New York in 1965 and again in 1977.

A review has been undertaken of the need to retain the gas turbine units. Present forecasts of load growth indicate that there could be a need for the installation of additional combustion turbines towards the middle of the 1990's and at this stage it has been decided not to sell any of the gas turbine units.

Action is in hand to relocate the Bunnerong units in the Upper Hunter district to provide "black start" capability for Liddell and Bayswater Power Stations, and it is proposed to relocate the Port Kembla units at Broken Hill as emergency standby supply in case of any failure in the transmission system.

The units installed at Koolkhan have allowed deferment of some 330 kV transmission line projects in the area north of Armidale with resultant cost savings of about \$2 million.

(7) The benefit to the Commission of relocating gas turbines on the State grid would far outweigh the return obtained by selling this plant.

ORGANIZED CRIME SQUAD

The Hon. E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Minister for Police and Emergency Services**—

- (1) Was an organized Crime Squad created within the New South Wales Police Force?
- (2) Was this Squad disbanded?
- (3) If so, when did these actions take place and why was the Squad disbanded?

Answer—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.

RAILWAY TRACK SIGNALLING

The Hon. E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport**—

- (1) Was a goods train misdirected by a mistaken manual switching between lines at Helensburgh recently?
- (2) Did the goods train pass onto the wrong track upon which a passenger train was approaching from the opposite direction?
- (3) Was a disastrous collision averted because the goods train driver, realising that a mistake had been made, caused his train to stop and be reversed prior to the passenger train arriving?
- (4) If so, what steps will be taken by the State Rail Authority to ensure that this type of mistake caused by a manual switching of tracks, does not occur again?

Answer—

- (1) The train in question was a Sydney to Nowra passenger service which proceeded over the points due to improper procedure adopted by staff on duty.
- (2) The train was stopped by a signalman who exhibited a "Stop" hand signal. The other service was standing at Helensburgh platform 600 metres from the crossover.
- (3) The State Rail Authority advises that there was no risk of a collision as the two trains were well separated from each other. It was necessary for the train to set back a short distance to enable the points to be set correctly and secured for the movement.
- (4) This instance was an isolated case when the normal signalling arrangements had been temporarily replaced by hand signalmen to enable a new bi-directional signalling system to be commissioned. The incident was viewed most seriously by the State Rail Authority and strong disciplinary action was taken with the staff responsible.

PREMIER'S PRESS SECRETARY

The Hon. VIRGINIA CHADWICK asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Premier, Minister for State Development and Minister for Ethnic Affairs—**

- (1) What is the total salary of the Premier's press secretary, Mr Jim Carroll?
- (2) Is it true that Mr Carroll's total salary amounts to approximately \$62,000?
- (3) Is Mr Carroll not a member of the Australian Journalists' Association?
- (4) If so, in view of the Premier's trade union background, and support for trade union membership, why is a person employed who is not a member of the relevant union?
- (5) What is the extent of Mr Carroll's previous journalistic experience?

Answer—

- (1) Mr J. Carroll's salary is made up as follows:

	\$
Base salary	43,163
Expense allowance	2,285
Special Incidents allowance	15,989

- (2) Yes.
- (3) Mr Carroll is a member of the Australian Journalists Association.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Mr Carroll is an economist with approximately seven years' experience in print and electronic journalism in Australia and overseas.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT EMPLOYEES

The Hon. J. H. JOBLING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport—**

- (1) What are the total number of staff members employed by—
 - (a) the State Rail Authority; and
 - (b) the Urban Transit Authority?
- (2) What were the total number of sick days taken in 1984 and 1985 by employees of—
 - (a) the State Rail Authority; and
 - (b) the Urban Transit Authority?
- (3) What percentage of staff are required to work on public holidays by—
 - (a) the State Rail Authority; and
 - (b) the Urban Transit Authority?
- (4) What is the average overtime payment in—
 - (a) dollars;
 - (b) man hours;

paid to those employees required to work overtime by—

- (a) the State Rail Authority; and
- (b) the Urban Transit Authority?

(5) What is the extra cost of each public holiday for staff incurred by—

- (a) the State Rail Authority; and
- (b) the Urban Transit Authority?

Answer—

(1) (a) 40 274

(b) 6 546.

(2) (a) 1984—440 061

1985—479 626

(b) 1984—96 096

1985—96 085.

(3) (a) and (b) This percentage varies and it is not possible to precisely quantify requirements.

(4) (a) 1985-86—\$1,698 per employee

1985-86—104 hours per employee.

(b) 1985-86—\$1,693 per employee

96 hours per employee.

(5) (a) and (b) As per question 3.

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

The Hon E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Minister for Police and Emergency Services—**

(1) Has the New South Wales Board of Fire Commissioners recently decided to purchase \$2.5 million worth of computer equipment for the New South Wales Fire Brigade system from Mayne Nickless Limited, who are to supply Digital Computer Corporation equipment?

(2) Has the New South Wales Police Department decided to buy a computing network for the State's police force from Wang Computer Pty Limited?

(3) In making their decision, did the New South Wales Board of Fire Commissioners examine the desirability, both in an operational and costing sense, of having computer equipment compatible with the police system?

(4) If not, will the Minister have the decision reviewed, taking these matters into consideration?

Answer—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes. The Board of Fire Commissioners considered a number of factors in determining the most cost effective information system appropriate to its needs.

(4) Not applicable.

STARTING PRICE BETTING SLIPS

The Hon. E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Minister for Police and Emergency Services**—

- (1) Have starting price bookmakers operating within the organised crime syndicate controlling this area of crime, begun using betting slips manufactured from paper capable of being dissolved in water?
- (2) Does this enable incriminating evidence to be quickly disposed of in the event of a police raid on a S.P. operation?
- (3) Is the only importer in New South Wales of this material a Mr George Freeman?

Answer—

- (1) The Commissioner of Police has advised that the Gaming Squad has detected the use of water soluble paper in illegal betting operations.
- (2) The use of this paper is intended to enable illegal SP operators to dispose of evidence.
- (3) No.

CARGO SECURITY

The Hon. E. P. PICKERING asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Minister for Police and Emergency Services**—

- (1) In view of the much vaunted Federal and State drug offensive, why has the State Government virtually ignored the crucial recommendations made in October 1984 by the joint Commonwealth–New South Wales Government Task Force on Security of Wharves and Containers?
- (2) Was the response of the Premier of New South Wales to those recommendations to set up a further committee twelve months later, in October 1985, and that that committee has met on only three or four occasions?
- (3) Does the Government intend to continue to avoid these serious recommendations that would effectively help to combat the criminal activities of major drug importers and the enormous cargo theft from New South Wales wharves?
- (4) Did I first address this question as a question without notice to the Minister on 10 April 1986?
- (5) Have I not as yet received a reply to this question?

Answer—

The Cargo Security Committee was established on 4 October 1985 by my colleague the Minister for Public Works, Ports and Roads to report on the implementation of various recommendations contained in the Joint Commonwealth–New South Wales Task Force on the Security of Wharves and Containers.

The Committee has operated now for twelve months and has made substantial progress toward implementation. It is nonsense therefore to suggest that no action has been taken.

As you are aware, 51 recommendations were made of which only 15 were solely directed to N.S.W. Government organisations. The other matters require negotiation with private bodies involved in the shipping and transport industries and also Federal Government agencies. The N.S.W. Government has, in fact, initiated most of those talks.

Whilst implementation is continuing, interim measures have been taken by the Commissioner of Police to enhance wharf and container security.

Superintendents in the relevant Police Districts have been directed to arrange for increased patrols at wharf and container terminals as well as where container depots and warehouses are located. Following talks with the shipping and insurance industries there has also been a substantial increase in the reporting of cargo thefts.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPUTER UNITS

The Hon. J. H. JOBLING asked the **Minister for Consumer Affairs and Assistant Minister for Health**, representing the **Minister for Education**—

- (1) Has the Singleton High School Parents and Citizens' Association been unable to obtain replies to letters of 28 April and 30 June 1986 sent to Mr Winder, Director General of Secondary Education?
- (2) Why has the Director General not replied to these letters?
- (3) Has the Parents and Citizens' Association raised \$30,000 towards the purchase of computers for this school?
- (4) Does the Department's current planning programme for high schools accept and incorporate the needs for computer rooms in new high schools?
- (5) Does this mean that existing high schools without computer rooms are to be disadvantaged by the current policy?
- (6) Will the Minister state if the computer room facility for Singleton High School is on a priority list?
- (7) If so, where is it on the priority list and when is it expected to be completed?
- (8) If not, will the Minister state why not?

Answer—

- (1) No. Singleton High School Parents and Citizens Association sent the same letter to Mr E. J. Fitzgibbon, M.P., who made representations on their behalf to my colleague, the Minister for Education.
- (2) The Director-General has not replied because the Minister has already responded to the same letter on 29 July 1986.
- (3) Singleton High School has over the past twelve months raised \$35,000 for the purchase of computers. The school has also received a grant under the New South Wales government schools hardware programme. This programme has already provided \$2.3 million to government schools and will provide a further \$2.7 million over the next two years.
- (4) A computer room is now incorporated in the design of all new high schools. The facility consists of a 60 square metre fully serviced computer classroom outfitted with ergonomic furniture, a 9 square metre storeroom and a 9 square metre printer room.

(5), (6), (7) and (8) Where major additions are approved to existing high schools a computer unit is incorporated. An annual programme for converting existing spaces into computer classrooms within the confines of existing structures was established last year. Over \$500,000 has been provided this financial year for the conversion of space in existing high schools. Such conversions will be carried out in accordance with priorities established by each education region.

SOUTH MUSWELLBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Hon. J. H. JOBLING asked the **Minister for Consumer Affairs and Assistant Minister for Health**, representing the **Minister for Education**—

- (1) What is the current pupil enrolment at South Muswellbrook Primary School?
- (2) When were the existing staff facilities built and what was the enrolment at that time?
- (3) Are the existing administration facilities and staffing facilities at South Muswellbrook Primary School now considered to be totally inadequate?
- (4) When will the upgrading of these facilities take place?

Answer—

- (1) 629.
- (2) The existing staff facilities were built in stages as follows:
1967 Administration Block—enrolment 283
1973 Infants Administration Unit—enrolment 490.
- (3) No.
- (4) When the school has the necessary priority and funds are available.

LOCHINVAR PUBLIC SCHOOL

The Hon. J. H. JOBLING asked the **Minister for Consumer Affairs and Assistant Minister for Health**, representing the **Minister for Education**—

- (1) How long has the Lochinvar Public School been waiting for a library building?
- (2) Was a demountable building promised to this school for a Library Block last year?
- (3) Will the Minister say when this promised building will now arrive?
- (4) Is urgent maintenance required at Lochinvar Public School in many areas?
- (5) When is the proposed multi-purpose building to be constructed?
- (6) When will inadequate staffing facilities be upgraded at this school?

Answer—

- (1) Class 3 schools are not entitled to the provision of library facilities.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Cyclic maintenance was undertaken in 1978–79. The school is in reasonable condition and it has not been nominated for inclusion in the current maintenance program.

(5) There is no such proposal.

(6) Staff facilities at the school are in keeping with code requirements for a class 3 school.

VIDEO PORNOGRAPHY

The Hon. JUDITH JAKINS asked the **Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Lands, Minister for Forests and Vice-President of the Executive Council**, representing the **Attorney General and Minister Assisting the Premier**—

What evidence can the Minister provide to show that the Film and Video Tape Classification Act 1984 and associated Acts have been successful in the control of video pornography in the State?

Answer—

The only evidence that can be provided to show whether the legislation has been successful in controlling video pornography in this State is in the way of statistics on breaches found and convictions recorded.

The Police are responsible for enforcing the punitive provisions of the legislation and the honourable member has quite rightly directed her questions along those lines to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.
