

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 26 August, 1976

Questions without Notice—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply (Third Day's Debate)
—Adjournment (F-6 Expressway)—Printing Committee (First Report).

Mr Speaker (The Hon. Lawrence Borthwick Kelly) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PRICES OF BASIC COMMODITIES

Sir ERIC WILLIS: I ask the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies whether he has often professed concern for the plight of consumers, constantly afflicted by rising prices. Did the Premier in his recent policy speech say that if elected his Government was determined to reduce prices of basic commodities? Are bread and petrol the only two commodities whose maximum prices are currently controlled by the Prices Commissioner? Have certain trade unions declared that they will not deliver petrol or bread to retailers who sell these commodities below such maximum prices? If so, will the Minister, in the interests of consumers and the cost of living generally, introduce legislation to prohibit a trade union or any other organization or individual from making such threats or acting in restraint of trade in respect of retailers prepared to sell their goods below the fixed maximum prices?

Mr EINFELD: There has never been another government in the history of New South Wales so interested in the affairs of the common people, and the Wran Labor Government and its leader have declared on many occasions, and will continue to demonstrate, that we are interested in the ordinary people and their affairs in a way that has never been exceeded by any other government. We are now in the process of introducing legislation to set up a prices commission, which will deal with investigations of all sorts. I am completely confident that the ordinary people will benefit from the legislation that will come from this side of the House. It will be introduced by a government that is aware of the many problems facing ordinary people and the infringements in the areas of prices, particularly those caused by inflation. Indeed, the activities of the present federal Government will perpetuate these rises, for the budget presented by the federal Treasurer will increase inflation and unemployment, making the plight of the people of Australia much worse than ever before. The Leader of the Opposition may rest assured that the Government will take whatever action it can to protect the people of New South Wales and to ensure that the prices of all staple commodities are kept as low as possible.

ROBSON V. ROBSON

Mr PETERSEN: Has the attention of the Attorney-General been invited to allegations made by me in this House on 18th March last that the file of papers in what is known as the *Robson v. Robson* divorce case was illegally removed from the

divorce registry and was no longer held there? Will he advise me whether the papers have since mysteriously returned to the registry and, if not, what has happened to them?

Mr F. J. WALKER: At the time the allegations were made I was working in Queanbeyan, to great effect I might add. I have no information that I can give the honourable member at this stage, but I shall have my department investigate what he has to say and I shall report to the House in due course.

IRRIGATION WATER CHARGES

Mrs MEILLON: I address a question without notice to the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources. Did the Minister indicate in May that irrigators would benefit under a Labor government to the extent of a 40 per cent discount on their water bills? After 100 days in government, and with the southern Riverina facing a drought crisis, has the Minister now restored water charges to the level of the 1975-76 season base? Does this mean, for instance, in the Berriquin district an increase of 73 per cent on the 1974-75 season's base charges?

Mr GORDON: It is surprising to hear the honourable member for Murray at last taking some interest in the matter of water charges. Prior to the last elections the Labor Party undertook to give irrigators throughout the State—and not just in my electorate of Murrumbidgee, as was suggested—a 40 per cent rebate on their water charges. The government of the day said that this could not be done. It has been done. It was promised for the one irrigating season, and the promise has been honoured. Members of the Country Party who laid wagers that it could not be done have settled their bets, with the exception of one or two, and I am still hopeful that they will settle also. The position is that water charges for the present season, 1976-77, have been returned to the level set by the Liberal-Country party Government three years ago. In other words, we are holding charges at the figure determined at that stage. If honourable members can tell me of any other charge that has not been increased in that time, I shall be pleased to hear of it. I might add that we are well aware of the plight of the irrigators in New South Wales.

Mr Punch: It was nothing more than a flagrant election bribe.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Country Party to order for the first time.

BARTON GROUP OF COMPANIES

Mr WHELAN: I address a question without notice to the Attorney-General. What action has been taken by the Corporate Affairs Commission and the Government against persons adversely named in the fourth interim report of the Corporate Affairs Commission on the Barton group of companies? What action does the Government intend to take to prevent company directors conspiring to cheat and defraud shareholders—

Mr Jackett: On a point of order. The standing orders make it clear that there must be no argumentative matter in a question. The honourable member for Ashfield is being most argumentative in the way he is framing his question, and I ask that you rule it out of order on that ground.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No point of order is involved.

Mr WHELAN: What action does the Government intend to take to prevent company directors conspiring to cheat and defraud shareholders using the techniques described in the report?

Mr F. J. WALKER: I thank the honourable member for Ashfield for this most important question. I should point out that only seven persons were named adversely in the fourth interim report of the Corporate Affairs Commission, which I tabled yesterday. So far as criminal behaviour is concerned they were Bela Csidei, Mark Bernard Francis, Alexander Barton and Thomas Barton, and so far as negligent behaviour was concerned, Malcolm Llewellyn-Dance and Warwick David Bates.

It is important that I inform the House that many people who are named in inspectors' reports, including those that I intend to table over the forthcoming months, are mentioned favourably either as acting with integrity and acting properly or as being of considerable assistance to the inspectors in formulating their reports and making their investigations. For example, in fairness, Sir Peter Abeles gave valuable evidence to the inspectors.

Mr Mason: You are trying to square off.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Dubbo to order for the first time.

Mr F. J. WALKER: I was saying that, by way of example, in fairness, Sir Peter Abeles gave valuable evidence to the inspectors who prepared the fourth interim report. Honourable members who have read the report—and I trust the Opposition has got round to doing that—will realize that Sir Peter had no connection with the companies involved in the report or the dishonest transactions that occurred. Nevertheless, he was able to assist the inspectors by giving them background information that led them to launch prosecutions against the seven people whom I named. It is important that such contributions receive full recognition. I was asked what action was taken. It is important that the House be informed that no less than forty prosecutions were laid against those persons named in the report and, I might add, as a result of most serious criminal offences.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr F. J. WALKER: I have no intention of speaking while the hyenas opposite are cackling. If they want to waste time they can. Mr Csidei was fined \$7,500 with professional costs of \$800; Mr Fawcus was fined \$3,100 with professional costs of \$700 and Mr Francis was fined \$3,100 with professional costs of \$700, totalling \$13,700 in fines with professional costs of \$2,200. These gentlemen were dealt with as a result of the recommendations in the report. The reason that persuaded me to table the report, which is the most important report that has ever been prepared by the Corporate Affairs Commission, was that it contained some important recommendations for changes in the law that the commission felt imperative to be made if the corporate criminals in this State were to be brought to justice. These recommendations for changes were not acted upon by this cover-up Opposition.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Vaucluse to order for the first time.

Mr F. J. WALKER: I shall read the following recommendations, which are quite short, Mr Speaker, so that the House will be aware of them:

It would appear that the various shades of conduct which may be involved in offences under Section 124 of the Act and indeed also Section 67 of the Act, could be of such a serious nature as to render inappropriate the present penalties prescribed for offences under these Sections.

It is therefore recommended that the Attorney-General give consideration to the desirability of increasing the maximum penalties prescribed for offences under these Sections. If the maximum penalties prescribed under the Sections are increased to a significant degree, then the offences will become punishable on indictment and therefore not subject to the three year time limit presently imposed by Section 381 (2) of the Companies Act, 1961, as amended. I also consider the removal of this three year time limit would be a desirable modification of the existing provisions of the Companies Act, 1961, as amended, in relation to offences under Sections 67 and 124.

The former Government did nothing about those recommendations, because it wanted to protect corporate criminals. These men now in opposition avoided their responsibility to the people of New South Wales. In what they considered to be the public interest they were willing to protect their friends, their supporters, and to allow the shareholders of New South Wales to lose tens of millions of dollars, and to ignore the reports of their own Corporate Affairs Commission, those responsible officers to whom they turned a blind eye. They should bow their heads in shame. I trust that later in the year when the federal Minister has had discussions with Attorneys-General from the States he will decide to enter the field and accept the amendments that have been recommended in this report so that corporate criminals can be brought to justice in New South Wales.

BUILDING INDUSTRY DECLINE

Mr PUNCH: I direct my question without notice to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Minister for Ports and Minister for Housing. Earlier this week did he refer to the building industry in New South Wales as being in its worst state since the depression? Did the previous Government greatly assist the building industry by the letting of many jobs on a build now, pay later basis, and did it also considerably help the architectural profession with major contractual and financial assistance? Is the main reason for the downturn the result of the militant Builders Labourers Federation action in recent years with its green bans? Is it due also to the high level of industrial unrest on many major projects, for instance The Rocks, at Waterloo, the Institute of Technology, the State Office Block, at Rawson Place and elsewhere, all of which would now be well under way or finished had it not been for continuous stoppages? Will the Minister consider continuing and expanding these forms of assistance, and will he use his influence with former union colleagues to reduce industrial unrest?

Mr FERGUSON: Yes, the previous Government did make a contribution by way of deferred payments to help the building industry to continue in New South Wales, and this Government proposes to continue that policy. The Leader of the Country Party has put forward a simple explanation of the reason for the big slump in the building industry in New South Wales—indeed throughout Australia. It behoves the Leader of the Country Party to sheet responsibility for this where it belongs, that is to the policies of his colleagues in Canberra, particularly the Rt Hon. J. M. Fraser and the Rt Hon. J. D. Anthony, who have made a deliberate attempt to cut back on financial assistance to the public sector of the building industry. That is the reason for the present situation in which the building industry is placed. It is logical that, if the public sector of the building industry in this State is deprived of financial assistance, it must create a slump in that industry.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the back of the Chamber. The Minister has the call, and all honourable members should give him proper attention.

Mr FERGUSON: Recently I had in my office representatives of a civil engineering organization in this State who advised me that **80** per cent of their work was based on either semi-government or government contracts. If the federal Government is pursuing a policy that is deliberately designed to cut back public sector building work by private enterprise, firms like that will cease to exist. The building industry in this State—indeed throughout Australia—cannot be revived unless the federal Government embarks on a policy of channelling money into the public sector so as to provide opportunities for building contractors to tender for work and thus give employment to **building** workers. I request the Leader of the Country Party, in the councils of his organization, to stand up to the feds and tell them that the building industry in New South Wales requires an infusion of funds, particularly into the public sector of the industry.

NURSING HOMES SUBSIDIES

Mr KEARNS: I ask the Minister for Health whether recent increases in nursing home fees are placing a severe financial burden on pensioner patients and their families. Can this burden be relieved by an increase in the subsidy paid by the Commonwealth Government? Has the Fraser Government intimated its intention to increase this subsidy? If not, will the Minister urge the federal Government to give urgent and sympathetic consideration to the need for an increase?

Mr STEWART: The honourable member for Bankstown has drawn attention to a serious problem that is affecting not only pensioners who are in nursing homes in New South Wales but also their relatives. Many people are being forced to subsidize elderly relatives who are in nursing homes in this State. Generally the system that was initiated in **1970** by the former Liberal Party and Country Party Government was the wrong one to introduce because it injected funds into private enterprise. I feel that is not a correct system for the care of the aged. A person on the single pension receives weekly **\$46.25** plus a Commonwealth ordinary benefit of **\$24.50** and an additional supplementary benefit from the Commonwealth or from a health fund of **\$39.90** making a grand total of **\$110.65** with which to meet the charge for accommodation in a private nursing home. No doubt all honourable members have been receiving letters of complaint from constituents in relation to the inability of a pensioner patient in a private nursing home to exist on the pension and the current Commonwealth subsidy. I am being inundated with such complaints and I am forwarding them on to Mr Ralph Hunt, for the responsibility really lies with his Government. The honourable member for Bankstown is correct when he says that the subsidy is paltry when related to the inflationary spiral in Australia. I shall certainly take the matter up once more with the federal Government, with a view to having it exercise some compassion in this field by increasing the subsidy available to pensioner patients in private nursing homes.

MEDIBANK STRIKE

Mr VINEY: I address my question without notice to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Was the Minister in Brisbane attending the conference of the Australian Transport Advisory Council on Friday, 9th July, the Friday prior to

the Medibank strike? On that day did the Minister give instructions that the New South Wales police force was not to carry out its statutory duties in initiating emergency traffic control procedures on the day of the Medibank strike? Was this the Minister's own decision or was he directed by the Premier to adopt that stance?

Mr COX: I did not give any directions to the Commissioner of Police. It is not my responsibility to do that.

PARKING OF HEAVY VEHICLES

Mr FACE: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Has the parking of heavy vehicles in the suburban streets of the metropolises of Sydney and Newcastle increased dramatically in recent years and has it become a major problem? Is this sort of parking extremely dangerous? Will the Minister undertake to investigate this matter and to confer with the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Planning about this ever-increasing problem? Will the Minister investigate the possibility of establishing truck-parking villages?

Mr COX: I thank the honourable member for Charlestown for his important question about a matter that has created a serious problem in the Charlestown area and in most other municipalities. The Motor Traffic Regulations prohibit the standing of heavy motor lorries on residential streets except when they are engaged in the picking up or setting down of goods or when the driver is having a meal break or has a permit that has been issued by the police. In many municipalities a problem is posed by the parking of trucks in built up areas while they are being serviced. The honourable member for Charlestown raised, also, the possibility of establishing special areas for the parking of these vehicles. That is a sensible approach to the problem. In New South Wales some oil companies are already providing that type of area. This matter should be referred to the New South Wales Traffic Authority, on which the department of Local Government is represented. I shall request the authority to look into the matter and to determine whether municipal and shire councils might be encouraged to establish parking areas for heavy trucks. As I have said, the problem is increasing and causing people more and more difficulty.

SALE OF HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES

Mr ROZZOLI: My question without notice is directed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Minister for Ports and Minister for Housing. Is it a fact that applications for Housing Commission homes are often delayed? Is it a fact, also, that the Government has announced a policy of not selling Housing Commission homes? Have many applicants been disappointed and disadvantaged by this decision? Will the Deputy Premier consider reopening negotiations where applications were received more than ninety days before the announcement?

Mr FERGUSON: It is true that as Minister for Housing I have decided to stop the sale of Housing Commission homes. My decision is an interim one until the Parliamentary party, to which I shall be making a submission, has the opportunity to consider the general philosophy of selling homes, particularly in the inner city. When that decision is made the Parliament and tenants of the Housing Commission will be advised. I can understand the anxiety of certain people who lodged a claim prior to the ninety days. I will consider the matter and give a detailed answer later.

DANGEROUS TOYS

Mr RYAN: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies. Is the Minister aware that presently being sold in shops in my electorate of Hurstville and in other shops in New South Wales is this alleged toy, which I produce for inspection by members? It can easily be converted for use in the administration of drugs. It is sold for \$2.25 and so is obviously within the reach of the pockets of schoolchildren. Is the Minister aware that the article is manufactured overseas and imported into Australia? I ask the Minister what action can be taken to protect schoolchildren in this State from this sick, alleged toy which, in its selling paraphernalia is described as being good for a million laughs?

Sir Eric Willis: On a point of order. The question asked by the honourable member for Hurstville is an important one and I hope he will be permitted to ask it. But, with great respect, Mr Speaker, I would direct your attention to the fact that in the past couple of days you have called members of the Opposition to order several times when in your opinion their questions contained comment or a statement rather than a question. I submit that the question asked by the honourable member for Hurstville contains a lengthy statement concerning this alleged toy and contains also some choice descriptive adjectives. In the circumstances I ask you, in accordance with the high traditions of the office you hold, to direct Government members, as you have directed members of the **Opposition**, to frame their questions carefully.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has raised a number of points on questions but I am willing to extend to the new member for Hurstville some leniency in respect of the first question he has asked in this House.

Mr EINFELD: Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I commend the honourable member for Hurstville for bringing to the attention of this Parliament and the people of New South Wales this serious situation. Someone is importing, and stores are selling this most iniquitous article, which is calculated to convert children to the idea that using a hypodermic needle is as safe as playing with a toy. Indeed, this device which the honourable member for Hurstville has so commendably brought to the notice of the public, could be injurious and harmful. It is manufactured in Chicago by a firm called H. Fishlove. It is being imported and sold freely in shops in this State, apparently without the shopkeepers realizing the possible repercussions. My department and I feel that it is most dangerous to encourage children to believe that this article which, as the honourable member for Hurstville says, is described as being capable of giving a million laughs, is only a toy when in reality it is an instrument that can not only psychologically prepare children for the use of hypodermic needles at a time when the misuse of drugs is looked upon as a matter of most serious concern, but also——

Sir Eric Willis: I am glad that you have——

Mr EINFELD: I think the Leader of the Opposition is sick or perhaps he had an injection before he came into the House. If he continues to carry on as he did earlier today he will get a million laughs, too. I should inform the House that this matter has been brought to my attention and I have asked my departmental officers to discover who is the importer, to interview that person and to try to bring upon him some moral suasion in order to make him realize how injurious this alleged toy can be. He will be requested not to continue with its sale. Also, I am asking shopkeepers who have these articles in stock to return them to the importer and not to continue selling them. However, there are some difficulties to be overcome.

The federal Government ought to be taking action through the Customs Department to stop the entry of these things into the country. One would expect the federal Government, which is supposed to be a government with a conscience but is not, and the Minister in charge of Customs—he is also the federal Minister for Consumer Affairs—would take action as soon as a matter like this was brought to public notice to ensure that no more of these devices were allowed into the country.

The Minister in charge of customs matters was once the campaign director of the president of the local Liberal Party council, which the Leader of the Opposition represents in this Parliament. He would have great influence upon it, one would think. In any case, I do not have the power at this stage to ban the sale of this article. I have asked the department to arrange an immediate meeting of the project safety committee and when that committee meets I shall advertise that it is proposed to ban the sale of this commodity to try to prevent misguided and ridiculous people who seek to make a profit out of anything. I propose to do everything that can be done to prevent the continuing sale of this and other things that can be psychologically injurious to children.

UNION AMALGAMATIONS

Mr COWAN: My question is directed to the Premier. It was announced this morning in the press that two large unions in Australia were considering amalgamation. Was the reason that was stated for this that they are concerned about industrial unrest and the incidence of left wing and communist activity in the unions? In view of the grave concern of a large number of unionists and the people of this State, will the Premier state his public attitude towards the move?

Mr Sheahan: On a point of order. The question clearly asks the Premier for an opinion on an alleged proposal reported in a newspaper.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think the Premier can answer the question.

Mr WRAN: The honourable member for Oxley has demonstrated beyond doubt that he reads the morning newspaper. Beyond that, there can hardly be anything in the question that is relevant to this Government or its general attitude. I say that because, if the honourable member for Oxley were as keen on reading the industrial laws as he obviously is on reading the morning newspapers, he would know that both the industrial organizations involved in this contemplated amalgamation are federal organizations and the amalgamation will be effected under the federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

Sir Eric Willis: They are also State-registered.

Mr WRAN: The Leader of the Opposition, in that usually helpful way that he has of endeavouring to mislead people, says that the unions are also State-registered. Several years ago there was a case in the federal industrial court, *Moore v. Doyle*, which pointed to the dichotomy between federal and State organizations. The trade union movement of Australia sought from the coalition Government that the Leader of the Opposition recently led to defeat its co-operation to make it easier for trade unions to operate, not under two systems but under one, particularly with a view to facilitating amalgamations. The former Government put every possible obstruction in the way of an amalgamation such as that which the ironworkers and the engineers are now seeking to effect. I do not, of course, place any responsibility for this at the door of the honourable member for Oxley, who we all know is more concerned with the union of bovine creatures than the amalgamation of trade unions. The

amalgamation is one that is viewed favourably by the present Government of New South Wales, especially if that amalgamation leads to greater stability in industrial relations.

HOSPITAL FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Mr DURICK: I direct my question without notice to the Minister for Health. Will he inform the House whether hospital accommodation is urgently needed for children who are severely handicapped intellectually and physically? Will he say whether a project to provide hospital accommodation for such children is being planned in Wahroonga? Is it a fact that the Ku-ring-gai Municipal Council is opposing an application by the Health Commission to establish this hospital? If these are facts, will the Minister make representations to his colleague, the Vice-President of the Executive Council and Minister for Planning and Environment, seeking his intervention in this matter?

Mr STEWART: It is a fact that accommodation for children suffering physical disability or mental retardation is urgently needed in the metropolitan area. The Health Commission of New South Wales has an on-going policy which had the support of my predecessor in office. The commission is in process of acquiring a 53-square residence at Woonona Avenue, Wahroonga. It is planned that the residence will provide minimum accommodation for about eighteen intellectually and physically handicapped children, and that this accommodation will later be extended to provide for approximately thirty-two children. The residence is sited on a 1-acre allotment and plans for its redevelopment were submitted to Ku-ring-gai council as early as March this year. Officers of the commission and the regional director of the area have made persistent inquiries of the council in an attempt to expedite the approval, but all to no avail. The regional director of health personally interviewed the mayor of Ku-ring-gai in order to answer the council's objections, but got nowhere in the matter.

The Health Commission has complied with every one of council's requests and objections in the matter. It has complied with every aspect of site utilization requirements and ordinances. Last night on the adjournment the honourable member for Gordon made a plea for a school for under-privileged children in his electorate. I am informed by the Health Commission that not one of the local members in that area has raised his voice in support of the development of this site to provide accommodation for these children. Not one word has been heard from the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai, in whose electorate it is, from the honourable member for Northcott, or from the honourable member for Gordon, who in this House last night expressed grave concern for these children. We are in the process of trying to provide accommodation for intellectually and physically handicapped children, but our attempts are being deliberately aborted by Ku-ring-gai council. I inform the honourable member for Lakemba and the House that I have approved a recommendation from the Health Commission of New South Wales for an approach to be made to the Vice-President of the Executive Council and Minister for Planning and Environment with a view to his suspending the area and approving the development of this site.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Mr HEALEY: I address my question without notice to the Minister for Health. Up till now has it been the practice for the Commonwealth Government to fund directly community-based health organizations for capital costs and maintenance costs? Has the Commonwealth this year altered this tied grant arrangement to payment of a block amount to the State Government, which now has the power to determine the body

that will be funded and the amount of funding? In view of the many complaints received by the Health Commission about abortion clinics and the Family Planning Association from individuals and groups such as the Association of Women Medical Officers which has made a detailed report, will he examine the practices and performances of these organizations before releasing to them funds from the Treasury?

Mr STEWART: It is a fact that the funding arrangements for all community health centres have been altered and the State Government will now receive a block grant. In future no grants will be paid to individual groups or centres. This has raised a huge problem, but not the one inherent in the honourable member's question. Under the former federal Government these centres, refuges and crisis centres were funded on a 100 per cent basis. Under the new arrangements they must provide 25 per cent of capital cost and 10 per cent of staffing and maintenance funds, and they are finding it impossible to do so. I have been inundated with requests from all these organizations that the State Government take up the leeway of the 25 per cent and 10 per cent requirements. At the moment I am arranging for a Cabinet subcommittee consisting of the Treasurer, the Minister for Youth and Community Services and myself to be set up in an endeavour to resolve the situation.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Mr MAHER: I ask the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services whether clerks and secretaries employed in solicitors' offices are excluded from appointment as justices of the peace. Will the Minister reconsider this policy and remove this form of discrimination against this class of employees?

Mr MULOCK: I am sure that the matter raised by the honourable member for Drummoyne has exercised the minds of many honourable members. A specific representation from the honourable member for Drummoyne is before me at the moment, and on the file is a considered opinion that was given by a former Chief Justice of New South Wales. The basis upon which decisions have for a long time been made by my predecessors in office has been that a special relationship is created between an employer solicitor and an employee in his office in relation to documents which might be required to be witnessed by such an employee. It is felt that there should be no undue pressure applied by an employer upon his employee in these circumstances. Honourable members will be aware that certain statutes of this State provide that documents prepared in the office of a solicitor may not be witnessed by an employee in the same office.

The position has been reviewed from time to time, and the file discloses that the present Chief Justice adheres to the opinion that was given by one of his predecessors. My own opinion is that it casts a blight upon employees differently placed from other employees in that they are not employed in a legal office. Also, it places a blight on employers, who are also responsible persons of good character, acting as officers of the court by virtue of their being members of the legal profession. I give to the honourable member for Drummoyne my undertaking that this matter will be resolved in the near future. I am sure that other honourable members share with him and myself some concern that this practice may well have outlived its usefulness.

LOGGING ON LEVER'S PLATEAU

Mr DUNCAN: I ask the Premier whether he intervened in the Forestry Commission's policy by placing a moratorium! over logging on Lever's plateau, an area within the suggested Border Ranges national park. Is the employment of many

hundreds of workers dependent upon the continuation of the commission's policy? Is it also important to the economy of the Richmond-Tweed region? Is it a fact that forests are for all people, not merely for the timber industry or the over-zealous conservationists? Has the Forestry Commission's policy, and the facilities it provides, attracted to these forests many thousands of people who would not normally visit them? If these are facts, will the Minister take action to stop the Government's procrastination on this important matter and give the commission an opportunity to manage these forests in the interests of all the people?

Mr WRAN: More than once in his question the honourable member for Lismore hit upon the most central and critical feature of forest management in Australia; that is, that forests are for all the people, and not merely for the loggers, conservationists or other individual groups. The purpose of my Government's policy is to ensure that the forests of New South Wales, which in the past have not been husbanded as well as they might well have been, are not so managed either for this or for future generations as to be diminished in their capacity to fulfil what I perceive to be the honourable member's objective—namely, that those forests shall be available for all the people.

One thing should be said at the very outset in reply to the honourable member's question. As a result of the Government's forestry policy no job is imperilled in the honourable member's electorate, in the electorate of Casino, or in any part of northern New South Wales. Prior to the elections I took the trouble—as I imagine the honourable member for Lismore has—of actually tramping through the Wiangarie state forest and looking at Lever's plateau. I discussed the commission's management policy which not only officers of the Forestry Commission but also workers employed by loggers and millers in the vicinity. I discussed the projected management of the forest with them, as well as with the dedicated people who are concerned to ensure that the forests are there for all the people. Within days of the declaration of the poll for the last elections on 1st May, when it was obvious that the outgoing Government had lost the day, and when it was imperative by any standards of decency, convention and parliamentary practice—

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Upper Hunter to order for the first time.

Mr WRAN: When it was imperative by any standards of decency, convention and parliamentary practice that no decision should be taken by the former Minister for Lands—because he was virtually gasping out his dying breath in the last days of the fallen Government—the honourable member for Upper Hunter, who was then the Minister for Lands, had the temerity and the insensitivity to announce that a new logging road should be constructed into Lever's plateau.

Mr Fisher: That is a lie, and you know it.

Mr WRAN: The honourable member for Upper Hunter can say that it is a lie as much as he wishes, but in due course I shall give him an opportunity to prove the veracity of what he has just asserted. The documents will be produced to the Parliament, as they will be produced throughout New South Wales in these important electorates. The honourable member for Upper Hunter took a step that was totally unjustifiable when he was Minister in name only. He had no right at all to interfere in this area, which is historical and important to the State and, indeed, to Australia. After the former Minister had taken this unprecedented and unconscionable step and we came to office it was found that the road that he wanted to construct into the only

temperate rainforest in the southern hemisphere, on Lever's plateau, was a road that was not needed for at least a decade to maintain the level of timber production or employment in that area.

That fact having been established beyond arguable doubt, the Government has taken the sensible course of establishing an interdepartmental committee, the prime purpose of which will be to devise a rational management policy for the Border Ranges consistent with the expression of the honourable member for Lismore—that forests should be for all people. On that note, I conclude and thank the honourable member for Lismore for his question, because it has been my wish to make clear the Government's position and the perfidy of the former Minister.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY

Third Day's Debate

Debate resumed (from **25th** August, *vide* page **170**) on motion by Mr Wilde:

That the following Address in Reply to the Speech which His Excellency the Governor has addressed to both Houses of Parliament on opening this Session of the Parliament of New South Wales be now adopted by this House:

To His Excellency Sir Arthur Roden Cutler, upon whom has been conferred the decoration of the Victoria Cross, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Knight of the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem, Governor of the State of New South Wales and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May It Please Your Excellency—

We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our thanks for Your Excellency's Speech, and to assure you of our unfeigned attachment to Her Most Gracious Majesty's Throne and Person.

2. We beg to assure Your Excellency that our earnest consideration will be given to the measures to be submitted to us, and that the necessary provision for the Public Services will be made in due course.

3. We join Your Excellency in the hope that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, our labours may be so directed as to advance the best interests of all sections of the community.

Sir **ERIC WILLIS** (Earlwood), Leader of the Opposition [**I 1.201**: I commend those new honourable members who have already made their maiden speeches in this debate. Over the years that I have been in this Parliament the standard of debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor has steadily improved, and this year is no exception, not only in respect of what honourable members say, but indeed of the way they say it. It has been most impressive. In particular, I commend the honourable member for Parramatta who moved the motion. However, he did so on a false premise, making the mistake of copying the words used in motions for the adoption of the Address in Reply in previous years—traditionally, in fact. He committed an error which, though not unpardonable, is quite interesting. The last paragraph of his motion is in the following terms:

We join Your Excellency in the hope that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, our labours may be so directed as to advance the best interests of all sections of the community.

That is the same paragraph that has appeared in these motions for many years, **and** that form of words has been used because as a rule the final sentence of His Excellency's Speech has been:

I now leave to you the discharge of your important duties, with the earnest prayer that, under Divine guidance, your labours may **conduce** to the welfare and happiness of all sections of the community.

I repeat, because the final part of His Excellency's Speech traditionally has **been** couched in 'that language, similar terms have been used in framing the **motion** for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I must point out for the benefit of the honourable member who made the error, and for the benefit of the honourable member for Illawarra, that this time the Governor did not conclude his Speech in the usual manner. In the pre-humanist days His Excellency, speaking on behalf of the Government, referred to Divine guidance, but those days have ended. We all know that the Premier prepares the Speech for the Governor and that in the past it was understood that the Premier used the traditional closure because he was a God-fearing **man**. We now find that His Excellency's Speech concludes with the words:

I now leave you to the important duties entrusted to you by the people of New South Wales.

There is no reference to Divine guidance. I invite attention to this fact, for apparently the honourable member for Parramatta was not aware of it, and perhaps other honourable members also have not noticed it. What has been done here is part and parcel of the quiet revolution, if I may borrow that term from Dr Cairns, which is going on in the State under the Wran Government. Though quiet, it is a revolution nevertheless, just as the Premier himself changed from being a Christian to being an atheist in the course of the month from April to May of this year. At a meeting of the Council of Churches the Premier, in answer to a question asked by the learned members of the council, said that he was the first Protestant ever to lead the Australian Labor Party in this State. We all know that Protestants are Christians, that they believe in God and that they take oaths on the Bible.

On 25th May, just after the Premier assumed that office, he was one of only two honourable members to make an **affirmation**, as opposed to taking an oath. So, in the course of one month the Premier, who was able to look a dozen clergymen in the eye and say he was a Protestant, was seen doing something that no Protestant would ever do, and that is renounce the Bible, and by making an affirmation indicate that he is an atheist. I do not mind what the Premier does personally. That is his business, but it is a matter of importance to the people of this State when the Premier can look people in the eye and tell them things that are deceptive in the hope that he will gain their support for a specific purpose. I felt compelled to tell the God-fearing member for Parramatta why he was in error in framing the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply in this manner.

While I am on the subject of the Governor, I refer to the Premier's unbelievable denunciation of the Queen's representative at the federal level in Australia. I have no doubt that this denigration of the high office of Governor-General is part and parcel of a long-term campaign, originated by the federal leader of the Labor Party and now carried on by his minions in the various States of Australia, including the Premier of New South Wales and other Ministers who follow the same line. The Premier has not hesitated, however, to use the vice-regal office when it has been to his advantage and has suited his purpose. On the first page of the Speech prepared by the Premier and delivered by His Excellency the words "my Government" appear no fewer than ten

times. I tired of counting them after that. The fact that the Premier should have included the word "my" in that context was **an** effort to seek the imprimatur of respectability from a vice-regal personage for the Wran administration. The good citizens of this State, who believe in the importance of the vice-regal office, would then be induced to think that the Wran Government had the approval of Sir Roden Cutler.

We all know, or at least should know, that the Queen and her representatives **are** above party politics. They are above the storm: they have no party politics. It is an extraordinary thing that a man who, on the same day as he denounces the Governor-General, should put words into the mouth of another vice-regal personage with the object of seeking approbation. That is hypocritical. The Premier is reported in the press as saying that he wants to have as the next Governor a person who will, without question, do whatever the Premier wants, implying that even if the Premier **wants** something done that is wrong or illegal the Governor should do it. The Leader of the federal Labor Party has said the same thing in respect of the **Governor-General**.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise and conversation in the House.

Sir ERIC WILLIS: It is obvious that these people, though contemptuous of vice-regal office, will seek to get the benefits of that office when it suits them. They simply cannot knock the vice-regal office all the time, denigrating the institution, and then put words into the mouth of the Governor implying that in the view of His Excellency the Wran Government is the greatest ever.

The traditional purpose of the Address-in-Reply debate has been to provide the Government with an opportunity to outline its programme and to provide the Opposition with an opportunity to comment or to criticize it. By coincidence this session of Parliament—and that means this debate—began just after **the** first 100 days in office of the Wran Government. The Government has had time to settle in. It has had a rather lengthy honeymoon with the news media—and the Premier has had a personal honeymoon as well, though that is a different story. I assure honourable members that just as the Premier's personal honeymoon is over, so too is the Government's honeymoon. Let us now get back to the kitchen; let us get back to the realities of the washing up. Let us get back to the facts of life. Let us recall the extravagant promises made during the election campaign and examine what has come of those promises. Let honourable members look at the achievements of the Government to date and at its programme for the current session.

Earlier in this debate my colleague the honourable member for Pittwater said that items which were put into the mouth of the Governor in his Speech were grossly misleading. No credit whatsoever is due to the Government for many of these things. For example—and this is the matter to which my colleague referred—the Governor said that his Ministers had seen wisdom in amalgamating the Department of Planning with the Department of Environment. However, what he did not say, what presumably was crossed out from the draft speech, was that the same Ministers had been so stupid as to separate those departments. The Government was taking credit for putting the departments together but was not admitting to the foolishness of having separated them.

All the Government was doing was restoring what the Liberal-Country party coalition Government had established a long time ago, because there was common sense and great merit in having it that way. As soon as **Labor** came to power it divided these two departments but later put them together again. It made no reference **to** the division and took all the credit for having put them together. In fact, the

Government got the Governor to say so in the belief that that gives it an added air of respectability and is an extra pat on the back for those people who were so stupid as to separate those departments in the first place.

That brings me to what I like to call project piracy, of which we have seen much in the past three and a half months. When first elected, the Premier did not have a clue about how to run a government. For example, when Labor had its first caucus meeting to elect Ministers, the members did not even know there had to be a Minister in the upper House until someone tapped them on the shoulder and drew their attention to the provisions of the Constitution Act. At one stage they were planning not to have any Ministers in the upper House. However, they decided that perhaps they should follow the Constitution Act and they appointed a Minister in the Legislative Council. Having chosen only one, both the Premier and the Minister have regretted it ever since.

In many ways the new Government has been finding responsibilities of government much more difficult than they seemed to be from the Opposition benches. A few days ago in a moment of honesty the Premier admitted this. After he had been in office for a couple of weeks he asked his Ministers to seek publicity. He asked them to create the impression of being busy and doing things even if they were doing nothing. This was the kind of request that suited the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies down to the ground. No one is more skilful than he when it comes to waffling; we had an example of that during question time today. Nobody is less scrupulous than he when it comes to taking credit for things other people have done.

Within sixteen days of the new Government's being sworn in we heard a big announcement in the name of the Minister for Consumer Affairs, and I produce this photostat of an article in the Sun-Herald of 30th May, which, under the heading "New South Wales Government appoints supremo" reads:

Tough new laws to be announced tomorrow will create a new car industry "supremo" in N.S.W.—the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs

The Minister for Consumer Affairs, Mr Syd Einfeld, will announce full details of the legislation at a special press conference tomorrow morning

"We've had a look at car-buyer protection around the world, and we are convinced that our scheme will be more comprehensive than any other scheme, anywhere."

Those words are in quotation marks; they are what the Minister said, not a journalist's opinion. He referred to "our" legislation, and said, "We have decided these things." I wondered whether I had missed something. I could not remember the Parliament, on the one sitting day since the May elections, dealing with any such legislation at all. In fact, the only legislation I could recall was that which the Liberal-Country party Government had initiated about twenty months earlier, which allowed a long time for implementation so that the motor industry might prepare for it. When the Minister for Consumer Affairs made his statement I thought it was something new but in fact it was the same legislation that the former Government had passed through this Parliament twenty months ago.

The new Minister did not give the former Government any credit for it nor did he mention in any way that it was anyone's legislation but his own. Knowing what an honest man he is and knowing how he is a stickler for the truth on all occasions, for days and days afterwards I searched the newspapers looking for a retraction, looking for a correction or a statement from the newspapers saying that the Minister had been

misquoted. I looked in vain because there was nothing of the sort to be found. It became apparent that the new Government had embarked upon a **patern** of project piracy, which was soon taken up by all the other Ministers.

The Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Minister for Ports and Minister for Housing today admitted that the build now and pay later scheme which the former Government initiated last year was in fact our idea, though a couple of months ago when he announced that he intended to do it he did not offer any suggestion that it was anyone else's idea but his own.

The Minister for Health has been announcing new hospital building projects to be built all over the place. He has referred to Maitland hospital, the United Dental hospital, Wyong hospital and a new hospital at Mt Druitt—I could go on and on. However, every one of those projects was in the pipeline when **Labor** came to government. Every one of them had been announced by the previous Minister for Health or the previous Minister for Public Works.

On 9th June the Minister for Industrial Relations—that is, the first Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon. D. P. Landa—with a great fanfare of trumpets announced cuts of approximately 20 per cent in workers' compensation insurance premiums. He referred to this as being a big saving to employers, as though the Government was worried about the plight of employers. But, as the bottom of the story, in what might be said to have been small print, it was mentioned that these new annual rates were recommended by the insurance premiums committee under legislation that had been introduced by the coalition Government last year.

That announcement was rather cleverly worded. Since then I have been all over the State and everywhere I have gone I have had people say to me how good it was of the Wran Government, immediately upon getting into office, to reduce insurance premium rates, and I was told that employers were most appreciative. Of course, I had to point out to them that that was not so and they asked incredulously, "Why did not **Mr Landa** say that?" I invited them to guess. It is obvious that the Government wants to take all the kudos and does not want to give credit to anyone else.

The Minister for Youth and Community Services—that was the most extraordinary appointment of all times and we are still blinking with amazement at it—proudly announced that he would bring in new legislation to cover the rights of children born out of wedlock, or as they are now called, ex-nuptials. The Minister, in his own modest way, accepted all the praise the media showered upon him for his progressive approach. He overlooked any need to mention that all of this had been decided by my Government four or five months earlier and announced by the previous Minister, the former member for Monaro. The media came out with unctuous praise of the humanitarian new Minister for **Youth** and Community Services. Obviously he was **surprising** them not only with the attitude that he adopted but also with the innovative ideas with which he was coming forward. It was just a slip of his memory that he forgot to tell them that it was not really his idea at all.

The Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism told us about the \$250,000 that was to be provided for the Surf Lifesaving Association but he did not mention that that plan had been initiated last year by the honourable member for Bligh and was being financed out of the soccer pools that the Liberal-Country party Government had begun. He told us about using army land in Moore Park Road for cricket ground patrons but he did not mention that that was the idea of the honourable member for Mosman who was formerly the Minister administering that portfolio. The new Minister for Tourism proposed the use of the overseas terminal at West Circular Quay as a convention centre but also forgot to mention that this had been considered and publicly discussed by our Government.

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Then along came the Attorney-General who announced on 23rd July that a comprehensive review of the legal profession would be carried out. This announcement came as no surprise to members of the legal profession; they knew that the Attorney-General in my Government had been planning such an inquiry and that his intention was to include members of the legal profession in the working party.

On 30th July the new Attorney-General announced that new laws covering rape offences would probably come into effect in New South Wales next year. But by a strange coincidence, on 19th March, 1976—four months earlier—the *Sydney Morning Herald* had reported that the State Government—that is my Government---had authorized a special study of rapes and assaults on women in New South Wales as part of International Women's Year. The newspaper report went on to state that it was expected that recommendations would be made to the Attorney-General later this year.

But the grand-daddy of them all—the best copycat, if I can use that childlike expression—is the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services who outdid the rest of the Cabinet put together. On 11th July he announced that women prisoners would soon enjoy the same weekend privileges as men prisoners. However, the former Chief Secretary, the honourable member for Fuller, had made the same announcement on 27th April. On 11th July the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services announced that women would be allowed to take part in a home work release scheme, but he overlooked the fact that the former Chief Secretary had made the same announcement some time before.

On 25th June the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services announced that a new pension fund would be available to more than 87 000 workers in local government areas and public hospitals and it was hoped that the scheme would start on 1st April, 1977. However, on 6th November, 1975, the Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer, the honourable member for Fuller, said that the Government **hoped** that a scheme offering the opportunity for greatly improved retirement benefits **could** be introduced by 1st April, 1977—almost identical words to those used by the present Minister.

On 27th May the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services said that he would be considering amendments to the fire regulations and would make recommendations to Cabinet as a matter of the utmost urgency, particularly in respect of theatres and public halls. However, on 11th March, the Chief Secretary announced that amendments to the Theatres and Public Halls Act were being prepared to bring other areas where entertainment takes place within the scope of the fire safety regulations covered by the Act.

On 23rd June the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services said that non-government schools and pre-school kindergartens may now buy through the Government Stores **Department** a wide range of school needs at cut prices. He went on to say:

At present non-government schools have access only to equipment that is **held** in stock by government stores. That was the previous policy.

However, the Minister did not say that it was the policy in force prior to the announcement made on 13th April by the Chief Secretary, who then said:

At present independent **schools** have access to equipment which is held in stock by the Government Stores Department. I have **decided** to widen this scheme so that private and denominational schools and pre-schools will be able to place orders for equipment and buy it at lower rates.

Having had so many things copied from my Government, I was not at all surprised when I listened to the Governor's Speech. When I read a printed copy of it I counted up about thirty-five to forty proposals, more than half of which were either initiated or announced by us when we were in government. So the Wran Government, which has been praised by the media for some weeks for being original and innovative, is not as original or innovative as it pretends to be.

Even the subject claimed by the Premier when I appeared with him on a "This Day Tonight" programme on Channel 2 the other night is not original. On that occasion the Premier was asked by the interviewer for an example of what his Government had done that was innovative. Just before that I had said that the Wran Government had copied my Government. The Premier gave as an example the selection of a beach for nudists. I suppose the Wran Government's great contribution to history will be the finding of a beach where people can swim in the nude. But even that is not original; we were doing the same thing when we were in Government. The only achievement that the Premier could mention when he was asked the question before the television camera was not original—and that is the bare fact.

I turn now to the economy which, according to the Premier, is the most important problem. For once, I agree with him—it is the most important. I fear what is happening to the economy of my beloved State of New South Wales. I remember that during the election campaign the Labor Party used the slogan: "Let's put the State in better shape." The slogan implied that the State was already in poor shape and it ought to be improved. I propose to show what has happened since this Government—which was elected to put the State into better shape—came to office.

First, I propose to look at the position in regard to unemployment—I mention unemployment because the Premier has seized upon that as being the most important issue. I agree with him that it is very important. In January this year the number of unemployed in New South Wales totalled 135 478. In February the number had fallen to 122 469, and by March it was down to 111 892. If one expresses those figures as a percentage of the work force, in January this year 5.97 per cent of the work force were unemployed; by February the percentage had dropped to 5.39 per cent and by March it had fallen to 4.93 per cent. So that during my first two months as Premier the number of unemployed in this State had dropped by 24 000, and I was wanting to see it drop further—and it did drop further. In April the number of unemployed in this State had dropped to 109 016 or 4.8 per cent of the workforce. In May, soon after I had gone out of office, the number of unemployed in New South Wales had dropped to 105 331 or 4.64 per cent of the work force.

When Labor came to office the position altered. In June the number of unemployed in New South Wales had risen to 111 127 or 4.9 per cent of the work force. In July the number had increased to 115 997 or 5.1 per cent of the work force. To put the position in another way, in the first two months that the Wran Government was in office the number of unemployed in this State had increased by 10 666. Putting it in other words, every day of those two months 175 more people were out of work than on the previous day.

When I said recently that in a large measure this position was attributable to the Wran Government I was taken to task by various government supporters, including one honourable member last night. I was even taken to task by that noted economist John Laws, who writes a column for one of the daily newspapers. The claim was made that it was ridiculous to suggest that the Wran Government was responsible for the rise that had occurred in the number of unemployed after it came to office. The suggestion was that it was the fault of somebody else—probably the federal Government which seems to be the whipping boy for all of these things.

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Why did that increase in the number of unemployed happen only in New **South Wales** and South Australia, the other Labor-governed State? I propose to examine the position in New South Wales and our neighbouring States in the two months between 31st May and 31st July—and these are the latest figures on the matter. In that period the number of unemployed in New South Wales rose by 10 666 or 10.1 per cent of the work force. In South Australia unemployment in the same period increased by 6.8 per cent.

In Victoria, which has a Liberal Party government, the number of unemployed fell by 1 575 to 2.4 per cent. In Queensland, with a Country-Liberal party government, the number of unemployed fell by 1 058 or 2.7 per cent. So that in the two States that adjoin New South Wales and have governments of the same persuasion as my Government, unemployment fell. In real terms and percentages in those two months the number of unemployed dropped in those States. However, in two Labor-governed States, New South Wales and South Australia, unemployment increased in the same period.

One can draw only one conclusion from those figures. In his policy speech, notwithstanding all his talk about the subject now, the Premier did not even **make** one reference to unemployment. I have examined all the policy speeches made by the Premier, and I had to go right back to his budget speech last year before I could find a reference to unemployment. In that speech the new Premier said:

At this time probably the greatest responsibility of a State government is to alleviate unemployment.

He did not say it was the greatest responsibility of the federal Government; he said it was the greatest responsibility of a State Government, meaning every State government.

What has the Wran Government done to alleviate unemployment in New **South Wales** since it came to office? He and his colleagues, particularly the Attorney-General and more particularly the Deputy **Premier**, have been encouraging industrial lawlessness to such an extent that New South Wales now has a reputation throughout Australia and the world for industrial lawlessness. It has a reputation for strikes, demarcation disputes and disruptions of one kind or another.

That has not only helped to push up the cost of living but has also deterred investors and would-be employers from expanding or developing. The announcement was made that work would **stop** on the eastern suburbs railway, on Botany Bay development and on various dams as well as at the State Dockyard in Newcastle. The Government has been talking depression and gloom and putting off its own **employees**. It has been cutting **down** on the public service. Is that the kind of encouragement that should be given or the example that should be set?

If one were to accept what the former Leader of the Opposition said, a State government has a responsibility to improve the employment situation. Above all, the socialist policies of the present Government have caused considerable apprehension in business circles. There was a classic example of that in the House today when the Attorney-General, as the spokesman of this business-bashing Government, indicated that he would wage a vendetta against corporations and businesses so that they will be hounded out of New South Wales. He will discourage them from having anything to do with the State. In future no one will have the courage to chance his hand or capital in this State. They will be frightened away from New South Wales. If perchance people lose the capital that they have been foolish enough to invest, or cause someone to lose it, the Attorney-General will brand them as **criminals**. They will be hounded into the gaols of the State.

Is that the **kind** of encouragement that should be given to private enterprise? No. The Premier has said on more than one occasion that he wants to co-operate with businessmen. He wants businessmen to show confidence in him. He has said on many occasions that he is a moderate man. Like hell his Government is moderate. The members of the Government are **business-bashers** who have driven business out of the State. When businessmen have left this State no doubt the members of the Government will start blaming everyone except themselves. Is it any wonder that already businessmen in this State are deferring plans for expansion or other **employment-making** opportunities? Is it surprising that factories that are big employers of labour are moving to other States and are moving overseas? Investors are investing in other States and not in New South Wales. In the circumstances, one could not blame them.

I might be asked what would I do in the same circumstances, apart from the obvious opposite to what I have been saying—encouraging people to come here and making them feel welcome. People should be shown that this is a State in which private enterprise is encouraged and fostered. That would create employment for people and get the economy moving again. Apart from that I should be doing something about State taxation. Despite the propaganda in the election campaign about the high level of State tax in New South Wales, promises made by the new Premier and his colleagues during the election campaign that taxation would be reduced, and assertions that the tax level imposed by the former State Government was scandalous—that was the word used—the only reference in the Governor's Speech at the opening of this session of Parliament to tax reductions concerned death duties.

We knew that that was to happen, because both parties had said they wanted it. There was no mention of reduction of land taxes. No mention was made of reduction of payroll tax. No encouragement was given by way of State taxation reduction of any **kind**. The former Government had promised that it would reduce taxes.

The business people of this State saw the rejection of our policies which would have encouraged **them** to create jobs and provide employment **opportunities**. Following the rejection of that policy and the election of the present Government and now that businessmen have seen the programme of the Government, as outlined in the Governor's Speech, it is no wonder that New South Wales is losing out to other States. I predict that New South Wales will trail the economic field again just as it did between 1945 and 1965. I remember back in the early 1960's looking at the statistics and seeing how, with **one** or two exceptions, the other States of Australia, the big competing States, were booming in economy as compared to New South Wales. I fear that that will happen again because this Government will force businessmen away from the State.

What is the Government doing to the public service? It is certainly not doing what the Hon. E. G. Whitlam and his colleagues did in Canberra by way of encouraging **the** public service to expand and be the pace-setter for wage increases and conditions of work. The Government has decided that it will do the opposite. I have always found public servants to be loyal and dedicated employees of the State irrespective of the political complexion of the government they served. Now those public servants are being subjected to a campaign of fear verging almost on intimidation. In fairness I point out that not all Ministers are doing that. To their credit, some who have prior experience as Ministers are treating the public servants properly. The Premier, however, and some other Ministers are acting as if every public servant employed in a department under a Liberal Party Minister or a Country Party Minister must have been either a member of that party or one of its stooges.

The Premier has embarked on a calculated campaign from which he can proceed to use his knife where he desires. There were the **sackings** of the ministerial press secretaries, most of whom were temporary public servants. That was a case of clear

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political victimization. Others have been humiliated and demeaned by subsequent appointments which have constituted personal insults. The *Financial Review* of 18th June quotes the Premier as saying that he aims to reduce the public service by between 5 and 8 per cent over the next year. That would embrace 6 000 persons employed under **the** Public Service Act. That is how the Premier is assisting employment. He **will** sack 6 000 public servants over the next year. Lest it be thought that he was implying that it would be achieved by the normal wastage of employees, let me point out that that is not so. He went on to say:

A reduction of this magnitude would not be achieved by resignation and retirement, but would require some positive action on the Government's part.

What sort of warning was that to the public service? That will boost morale—I don't think. The Premier then set about establishing false grounds for wholesale dismissal. This came out in the *National Times* of 16th August. To prepare the way for it he started to peddle what can be described as only a lie. He said that there had been no inquiry into the machinery of government in New South Wales for fifty years. The press did not contradict him, no doubt because he was still going through his honeymoon period. He assumes that the public and members of the public service have forgotten the extensive and intensive review of all departments by the previous Government in the period from 1974 to 1976.

What amazes me is that the public service unions were silent on the matter. Imagine how they would have been screaming if the present Opposition when in government had said the same sort of thing. I am sure that the unions will start screaming when the **sackings** to which the Premier referred a couple of months ago take place. The reality is that the Premier will have to do that in order to save money to pay for the promises he has made.

Let me deal with some of the promises made by the Premier during the election campaign. He was most extravagant in his promises. There is no doubt that he was the most promising leader of any political party within living memory: he promised anything to anybody and everything to everybody. All one had to do was ask for it and he promised it. It was obvious to any bookkeeper or **thoughtful** citizen that the promises made by the Premier would cost far in excess of the capacity of the State to pay for them. When I warned of that the Premier, in his policy speech, said, "We will fulfil every commitment we have made." He knows as well as I know that that is impossible and already he has broken a number of his promises.

I shall take as an example the nurses, a group of people who gained the sympathy and support of a large section of the community, including myself. The Premier said in his policy speech, "We will honour our commitment to the nurses." What was his commitment to the nurses? It was to increase nurses' wages by \$9 a week, not by decision of the courts but by a stroke of the pen immediately he came into government. Further, on 16th March, he moved an urgency motion in this House on that very matter. Also, he gave an unequivocal assurance to nurses demonstrating outside the Parliament that the moment he was Premier—even if it were the very next day—they would get their \$9 a week, by stroke of his pen. As he believed the nurses deserved a pay rise, he would bypass the conciliation and arbitration system and give them this increase as an administrative act of a new government.

At the time we said that for our part we had to adhere to the conciliation and arbitration system but we were willing to do everything in our power to expedite the **hearing** of the nurses' work-value case. This work-value case was not concluded when the election came round. The days went by after the Wran Government was sworn in but there was no mention in the newspapers about the \$9 a week. The weeks went

by and ultimately the court handed down a decision that granted the nurses more than \$9 a week—in fact the average rise was \$12 a week. Immediately the Minister for Industrial Relations said on behalf of the Government that the court's action in giving the nurses more than the \$9 a week had vindicated the promise made by the Premier. We knew, and so did the Hon. N. K. Wran, that the nurses would get more than \$9 a week from the **court**, but he had made a promise in which he had made it quite clear to **all** the nurses, and those who supported them, that irrespective of what they received from the **court** he would give them an extra \$9 a week the day after he became Premier. I know, members know, the people of this State know and the nurses in particular know that he has broken his word. They will never trust him again.

I turn now to education. During the election campaign a great deal was heard about the employing of an additional 3 000 teachers, with a consequent massive reduction in class sizes. In this way the teachers were cajoled into believing that their conditions would be greatly improved and parents thought it would be good for education. However, Labor Party supporters glossed over the fact that 3 000 more classrooms would be needed in which to put those extra teachers. As everybody knows, classrooms cannot be built overnight, particularly when the money for the work is not available. The fact remains that we were told that another 3 000 teachers would be employed. These convenient lies made for good election advertising but what happened after the election? The days and the weeks went by until ultimately the Minister for Education announced that he had some difficulty in filling fourteen vacancies for teachers in the Department of Education. Where were the 3 000 unemployed teachers who allegedly were kept out of work because we—in **some** way the enemies of education --did **not** want to take them on? I do not know what happened to them. They must have all disappeared into thin air, together with some of the other promises that the Wran Party had made.

After a couple of months, and following appeals made for unemployed teachers to come forward, only 654 teachers had offered their service—to go not to schools anywhere in the State but to schools in at least two administrative areas of the Department of Education. I was even impressed with that. Then I saw in the *Daily Telegraph* of 4th August the following statement:

Mr Bedford said last night a survey carried out last month disproved claims that thousands of teachers were unemployed.

I blinked when I saw it. Who had made the claims? They were made by the Premier, the Teachers Federation, the Hon. E. L. Bedford and the **Labor** Party. The Hon. E. L. Bedford had carried out a survey to disprove his own claims. In other words, what the report was saying in corrected English was, "Mr Bedford said last night, 'We were a bunch of liars during the election campaign.' "

The newspaper report then went on to say that those teachers who refused jobs in one region would be offered employment in an adjoining region. I interpreted that as meaning that a teacher who lived on the North Shore, for example, would be able to teach either in the northern metropolitan area or in, say, the central metropolitan area; if he did not like an appointment in one area he could go to the other. I have had teachers coming to me and saying that is exactly their situation but they are not being appointed. I instance a young teacher in rather distressing circumstances who told me the other day, "I live on the lower North Shore and I am willing to teach in the northern metropolitan area or the central metropolitan area but I was told by the Education Department that the only possible appointment that could be given me was at Mount Druitt", which, of course, is in the western metropolitan area. As the lady in question had a small baby, obviously she could not take the appointment. So one observes that even now they are not appointing these people.

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First, there were not 3 000 unemployed teachers. That was a lie. Second, the Government did not employ the 654 let alone all the others it claimed were hanging round looking for jobs. I can repeat only what many teachers and parents throughout the State are saying: it was another of the Labor Party's promises to win votes without any genuine intention of honouring it. The other day when I was at a school some teachers asked me, "When are all our extra teachers coming here?" You will forgive me when I say I gave them a horse laugh and replied, "You go and ask Mr Bedford that because he is the man who said he could find them." I said also to the teachers, "May I ask you a question in return? Where are the classrooms in which to put the extra teachers?" They said they did not have any spare classrooms. This is the kind of short-term hocus-pocus that the Labor Party put forward before the election. Now there are a lot of disillusioned teachers, members of parents and citizens' associations and other citizens throughout the State who do not like being fooled and hoodwinked.

Before the election Labor Party supporters were going to restore without delay the outpatients departments of public hospitals. This was another carrot hung in front of the voters, another broken pledge. We all know that no outpatients departments that were previously closed have been reopened.

Milk was another beauty. Most honourable members will recall advertisements like the one I have here that appeared in the *Radical*, the official publication of the Australian Labor Party, which stated that milk is much cheaper in Melbourne than it is in Sydney. One may overlook the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of that sort of thing, but let us take that statement for what it is worth. The Premier said in his policy speech, "Let us get prices down, the basic necessities like milk and bread." These were his words and he was cheered to the rafters when he said it.

The House will note that he did not say he would maintain prices at their present levels, merely that he would get them down. However, after the election the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries said that he intended to clamp a freeze on the price of milk. Who said that the price of milk was to rise? To my knowledge the Minister was the only person ever to suggest that it would. He created a phony item like this; he would stop the price of milk from rising. That is not what the Labor Party promised; it promised to get the price down. Of course we are still waiting for it to come down. All members know—certainly housewives do—that foodstuffs have continued to increase in price notwithstanding the blustering from Ministers who occupy the Government benches. For the first time in history eggs have gone through the \$1 a dozen barrier, but that is another story. Labor supporters are now in government and that is all that matters.

I could go on, giving examples but the ones I have given will indicate that the public are already aware of the fact that they were conned into giving support to Labor. Accordingly they will deal with the Government at the first opportunity, and that will be at The Hills by-election.

One thing in particular the Premier has learned from his mentor, Gough Whitlam; it is that if you have too difficult a problem to resolve the public cannot be fobbed off with any sort of answer, so the best way to fob them off, at least for a time, is by conducting an inquiry and thus deferring action. The Hon. E. G. Whitlam, in his 3-year term as Prime Minister, set up about 100 inquiries of all types before he was thrown out of office. Those inquiries cost millions of dollars and they produced very little in the way of positive results. The Premier has started off in exactly the same way. Though not quite as fast as his mentor he is heading in the same direction. Already rumours are going round this House that as many as five parliamentary select committees will be established for the dual purpose of deferring decisions and keeping backbenchers happy—bearing in mind that they will receive committee fees.

Even before the House began to sit the Government had initiated a number of inquiries, some of which I will now mention. On 22nd May, the Hon. D. P. Landa, asked the Apprenticeship Council of New South Wales to investigate the situation of apprentices in this State and to suggest what initiatives the Government might take to stimulate career opportunities for apprentices. As though the Apprenticeship Council would not know the answers to that sort of problem already. But, if you keep considering a problem long enough, perhaps it will resolve itself.

On 28th May the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services said that a special committee had been established to review the operation of the Summary Offences Act. That was a real laugh, because in the Premier's policy speech the Premier had said, "We will repeal the iniquitous Summary Offences Act." Apparently the Premier has had second thoughts consequent upon all the recent mob violence, encouraged by Labor's policy. Perhaps instead of repealing the Summary Offences Act the Government will ask a committee to examine it.

Mr Mulock: Who said that?

Sir ERIC WILLIS: You did, on 28th May. On 1st June, the Premier announced the appointment of Mr S. H. Simblist, *Q.C.*, to conduct an inquiry into Botany Bay. What a laugh that was. Already there have been so many inquiries into the environmental aspects of Botany Bay that I could almost write the report this afternoon in my spare time. But the real purpose of the inquiry is to cause delay in order, once more, to fool some of the people some of the time.

On 18th June the Minister for Lands and Minister for Environment announced that he had ordered a complete review of caravan parks in New South Wales. This is a difficult question and for years the conflicting views on it have been known to the department, but the holding of an inquiry will put it aside for a while. On 24th June the same Minister called for a full report on the preservation of wildlife generally within New South Wales. Goodness gracious me, what is the wildlife service for? It was established about ten years ago for this very purpose.

On 29th June the Government announced a three-man board of review to report in three months time on the eastern suburbs railway. The terms of reference were whether it should go on, whether it should be abandoned or whether there should be some modified scheme. I know the Government has to save money, but it is no coincidence that this report will not be submitted to the Government until just after the Budget has been introduced and the Loan Estimates have been put before the Parliament. What an amazing coincidence. In this way the Government will be able to defer for one year all expenditure on the eastern suburbs railway because it has the beautiful excuse that it is waiting on the submission of that report.

On 2nd July the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Planning told the Local Government Association that alterations to local government boundaries will be the subject of a full and open inquiry with the widest possible participation from councils and the community. What is the Local Government Boundaries Commission for, which was established years ago by Act of Parliament? I know that is a curly one, because the Labor Party realizes that its official policy is in conflict with local opinion in most areas.

On 20th July the Attorney-General asked the Law Reform Commission to inquire into the laws and practices of the New South Wales legal profession. I offer no criticism of that idea because we intended to do it, but it would have been nice to have had an acknowledgement of that fact. Also on 20th July an inquiry was started—

incidentally a public service board inquiry—into why bail was granted to Phillip Western. There are many doubts about the bona fides of that inquiry. Why was it a public service board inquiry when neither the police nor the courts come under the Public Service Act? No satisfactory explanation has yet been given for that decision.

I noticed in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 9th August, 1976, advertisements for "an interdepartmental committee established to consider a proposal to introduce legislation to regulate the activities of funeral funds which offer cash payments or the provision of a funeral service". Perhaps those activities do require investigation, but why was there no announcement, only the placing of advertisements?

On 10th August the Minister for Education announced the appointment of a nine-man working party to investigate all aspects of a proposal that the State education system be brought under the control of the proposed education commission. The chairman of this inquiry is Professor J. S. Hagan of the University of Wollongong, a former member of the Teachers Federation and very much a fellow traveller of that organization. The working party includes two representatives from the departments concerned, four nominees of the Teachers Federation and two representatives of parent bodies. One of them has very definite sympathies towards the viewpoint of the Teachers Federation. This will be one of the most extraordinary committees ever. Of one thing you can be certain, the four representatives of the Teachers Federation will speak with one voice. They will be directed by the federation what to say and do; they will get their instructions before and after each meeting. With Professor Hagan and one of the parent bodies very much inclined in a certain direction there is little doubt about what this committee of inquiry will produce. The Minister for Education, who has shown that he is nothing more than the poodle of the Teachers Federation, will rue the day when he made himself so subservient to its every wish and whim. In the July report of the Teachers Federation, a document in which the federation reports what is happening each month to the members of the council of the federation, this statement appears:

Council indicates its willingness to participate in a nine person committee designed to advise the Minister and the Government on all matters relating to the establishment of an Education Commission, providing Federation is represented by the following elected representatives: Mr B. Manefield—Primary; Mr C. Rennie—Secondary; Mr G. Marler—Technical Education; Dr E. Pearson—C.A.E.

Of the 42 000 teachers in this State about 32 000 belong to the Teachers Federation. How extraordinary that the Teachers Federation should be able to announce, "Those are the four people who will be on this committee or we will not co-operate," and by an amazing coincidence the Minister should choose those same four people as being the ones most suited in the whole of this State for appointment. What does that fact signify? It signifies that before very much longer the Hon. E. L. Bedford will look much older and much more haggard than he now does. He is being wheeled round by the Teachers Federation all over the place and they will give him a report on this commission, the like of which I have not yet seen.

An advertisement has been placed for applicants to fill the position of the present Director-General of Education. My information is that few applicants have come in, because the word has got round throughout Australia, and for that matter probably overseas, that no one with any integrity, capacity or status in education will be bothered applying for the position because the incumbent will be a puppet on the end of a string manipulated by the left-wing Teachers Federation in this State with whom the Minister for Education holds weekly conferences without benefit of the presence of departmental officers. Once a week the Minister for Education receives instructions

in his office from the left-wing Teachers Federation. He was told who he was to put on the committee of inquiry, and this is why I predict that the Hon. E. L. Bedford will look ten years older in ten months' time.

On 4th August, the Premier announced that Cabinet had decided to appoint an interdepartmental committee to draft a future management policy for the border ranges. I know there are difficult problems due to telling different people different things at different times, so the Government hopes that this inquiry will come up with an answer and solve the problems for it. I have not given an exhaustive list of inquiries being undertaken. Probably there are others of which I have not heard but which have been established. They all constitute a good excuse for inactivity or the deferring of promises that the Government made and now finds it cannot fulfil. Of course, the Government interfered with two other inquiries. One was the milk inquiry. Among other things, it was aimed at trying to keep down the price of milk to city consumers. This Government, because it knew all the answers on milk, abolished that inquiry as soon as it came to office. It will be interesting to see what it will do to satisfy the dairyfarmers and the consumers at the same time. The other inquiry that the Government interfered with was the Royal commission into prisons. The Government sacked two of the commissioners, eminent men though they were, and immediately gave prisoners preferential treatment in legal representation over that available to prison officers and other people.

I believe I have already shown in a number of ways that the new Government of New South Wales simply cannot be trusted. A number of surreptitious and clandestine moves are being made to change the whole system of administration, not only in terms of the machinery of government but also in the very basics of the Government itself. Almost every member of the Cabinet from the Premier down has attempted in one way or another to fool the people of this State into believing that various announcements they were making were of their own initiative when in fact they had been initiated by the previous Government. Many of the glowing promises made by the Premier and Labor Party spokesmen during the State election campaign have already been broken or deferred indefinitely, because they are either too costly or too difficult to implement. Some of these have been pushed out of the way by the time-honoured device of engaging in an inquiry in the hope that the public will be lulled into believing that something is being done. All this adds up to the fact that already, after little more than 100 days, the Wran Government has shown that it cannot be trusted. The Premier has shown that his word cannot be accepted, and his Ministers have followed this example. If the people cannot have faith in their Government and cannot believe the word of the members of the Government, then not only is the Government doomed, but also the people themselves must realize that they are in for a difficult time.

Let me take three or four final examples. The first relates to gambling casinos. In his meeting with the Council of Churches of New South Wales on 27th April the Premier carefully skirted round the touchy issues and even went so far as to describe the Labor Party—and I use his own words—as "a very conservative group of people, even more conservative than you gentlemen here." Bear in mind that he, a Protestant, was addressing a group of Protestant clergymen. He was saying to them that the Labor Party was more conservative than they. I wonder how the honourable member for Illawarra and the Attorney-General would react to that remark. I could go round the whole lot of them, but I make particular mention of those members. More important, in a radio interview with the Reverend Campbell Egan, secretary of the Council of Churches, a few days prior to the election, the Premier was asked—again I quote verbatim—this question:

Would you commit yourself to establishing a casino or any other gambling facility?

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Let me quote the Premier's precise reply:

No. My general attitude at the moment is that there is an adequate **proliferation** of gambling outlets. I am not anxious to create more outlets. I think if people want to gamble there are **sufficient** facilities in the race-courses and the TAB and the poker machines. You name it, we seem to have **all** the facilities available in New South Wales, and I am not disposed, as presently advised, and I **don't** think I will be changing my mind very quickly, to create more outlets. Certainly I don't have in mind to establish a casino, a huge legal casino in Sydney.

The Premier gave that answer four days before polling day and it was well publicized. We all know the history of the Premier's subsequent capitulation on this issue. Within a couple of weeks of being sworn in as Premier he announced that he intended to legalize these casinos. The point is not whether there should be legal casinos in New South Wales. We shall debate that at some other time; it is an entirely separate argument. The point I am establishing is that the Premier said one thing before the elections because he wanted votes, and immediately after the elections said the exact opposite. One can validly ask the question, "Did he lie about his intentions before the elections?" I reiterate that it is not a matter of whether the Premier believes there should be legal casinos. The question is, "Did he lie about his intentions?" Those who can read will know the answer.

To guide members to the answer to that question, let us consider another matter, the sacking and down-grading of a number of journalists who had been engaged as press secretaries and publicity officers under the previous Government. The question I canvass again is not whether they should have been sacked, or whether the Government was right in sacking them. I have already expressed my views on that subject. The vital consideration is whether the Premier lied about his intentions. Let us look at the evidence. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 18th May the Premier was reported, in direct quotes—that means he said it—as saying: "The suggestion that people will lose their jobs or be disadvantaged is groundless." Was the Premier lying about his intention? Within days, three people had been sacked, dismissed instantly at the Premier's direction, or at the direction of his hatchet man who usually sits over there, always in a leather jacket—the Premier's *alter* ego, as I call him.

[Interruption]

Sir ERIC WILLIS: This may be a laughing matter for members on the Government benches. The Premier said that these people would not be disadvantaged, they would not be dismissed. He said that was a groundless suggestion. Apparently he considers that losing one's job or being sacked is not a disadvantage. After the Government had dealt with the temporary public servants it got on to the sacking of permanent public servants, but found it was not quite so easy to sack them. So this Government, which so assiduously commits itself to the cause of the working class, engaged in what can only be described as a travesty of the industrial rights of individuals. These people were given jobs they did not want but could not refuse. They were forced to take positions at greatly reduced salaries or, they were told, they would be sacked. This is a fine example to be set by a government that is led by a man who reached pre-eminence in the field of industrial law in this State. Are they the principles he fought for as an advocate for trade unions? The treatment extended beyond press secretaries to private secretaries and others who served Ministers in one way or another. The salaries of some of these officers who were within a couple of years of long-service leave entitlements, were slashed by as much as \$6,000 a year. Now instead of drawing their long-service leave entitlement at the rate of, say, \$16,000 a year, they will draw them at the rate of, say, \$10,000 or \$11,000. Apparently that does not represent an industrial disadvantage, to use the words of the eminent

industrial advocate who is now the Premier. One can imagine the furore if that sort of activity were pursued by a private employer. Probably we would have the Premier offering his legal services free of charge to fight such a move. But the Premier, as an employer, as the head of the Government, actually engages in activity to which he devoted his professional life to fighting through the industrial courts. What hypocrisy! Can workers, particularly public servants, trust such a man and the Government he leads?

In regard to the Botany Bay coal loader, can the humble citizens of New South Wales trust this Premier and his Government? The old saying about fooling some of the people some of the time, and so on, is based on the fact that sooner or later people will find out the truth. That is what will happen in this State. During the election campaign the Premier and his henchmen told precisely opposite stories in places or before groups whose interests were opposed to each other. For example, around Botany Bay they proclaimed that the work on the port development scheme would stop at least until an environmental impact study had been *carried out*, but if **Labor** were elected, in no circumstances would there be a coal loader as part of the port of Botany Bay. At the same time they were telling the coalminers and other good citizens of Lithgow that they had nothing to fear from the proposed Botany Bay environmental impact study, as the coal loader would definitely be built, irrespective of the study's findings. Although we all know that the latter is the true position, I know of a number of people who were fooled by **Labor** assurances. They were fooled last time but will not be next time.

My final example concerns what can only be described as a travesty of justice, and a shocking example of what one can expect from this **Labor** Government in its administration of justice; that is a system under which there is one law for members of the Australian Labor Party and another law for the rest of us. What has happened in past weeks reminds me of an ugly incident that occurred a number of years ago in the Cessnock district when the Attorney-General of the day—incidentally, in a **Labor** Government—filed no bill in a case where a magistrate had committed a young man for trial on a charge of rape or something of that kind. We were led to believe **on** that occasion that it was pure coincidence that the local **Labor** M.L.A. had intervened on behalf of the accused, **who** happened to be the son of a local **Labor** Party official.

Now we have seen the spectacle of a **Labor** M.L.A. being charged before a magistrate with being involved in what amounted to attempted bribery of aldermen. The magistrate found there was strong *prim facie* evidence but, because of a legal technicality and nothing more, said that he was unable to commit the M.L.A. for trial. Subsequently, in exercising his proper powers under our laws, the Solicitor-General—the second highest legal officer in the State—committed the M.L.A. for trial on an *ex officio* indictment. Now the Attorney-General has given instructions that the matter is to be dropped. If my reputation had been questioned in that way—and I am sure I can say the same thing for almost all honourable members—I should want to clear my name. But it seems that in this case the member concerned does not want to go before the court and the Attorney-General does not want to put him to that inconvenience—or is it embarrassment?

I ask this simple, rhetorical question: Would the Attorney-General have acted in this same kindly way if the member of Parliament had been a member of any party other than the **Labor** Party? Honourable members know the answer. It cannot be that the Attorney-General is opposed to the use of the *ex officio* indictment procedure, for he has freely used it himself in other matters in the past couple of weeks. The community, including myself, firmly believes that we have now embarked on a new course in the administration of justice in this State; that is, one set of rules to apply

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to the rest of the community and much more lenient rules to apply to members of the Australian Labor Party—particularly if he happens to be a member of Parliament.

My colleague the honourable member for Northcott, who is much better versed in these matters than I am, will have more to say on this subject when he speaks during the debate. Suffice it here for me to say that we Liberals believe that the law should be administered impartially to all citizens in the community, and that in this instance the Attorney-General—or better still the Premier—owes much more of an explanation to the community than that which has been given already. No explanation has been given; no proper explanation can be given.

In the many and varied ways to which I have referred during this rambling address, I believe I have shown that not only is the Government incapable of governing this great State in the manner that its citizens want but what is much more serious, it has shown that it is a government that cannot be trusted, either in what it says or does or in the high and responsible office to which its members have now been appointed. Though only three and a half months have passed since the Wran Government came to office, it has already been revealed as no longer deserving the confidence of the people of this State. The only pity is that we shall have to put up with it for some time yet before New South Wales can be restored to **efficient**, honest and open government in the interests of all sections of the community.

Mr RAMSAY (Wollongong) [12.361: I commend the Government's policy, which is set out in the Governor's Speech, for I believe that it is progressive and full of merit. Although I congratulate the new honourable members who have made their maiden speeches during this debate, I shall later be seeking to correct some of the statements that were made by the honourable member for Gordon.

I am most concerned with the need to get on with the construction of the coal loader at Port Kembla. The initial environmental impact study, instituted by the previous Government, has proved to be completely abortive. All it has done is to look at the technical details, and has overlooked the need to alleviate the deep concern of the people of Wollongong, who are anxious to protect the environment. The Wollongong City Council, the trade unions and the environmental groups, as well as many other organizations in Wollongong, have condemned this environmental impact study as being completely inadequate so far as it relates to the protection of the people of Wollongong. An off-shore loader to cater for vessels up to 150 000 tonnes is desirable, but there must be a full public inquiry into not only the stockpiling of coal at the coal berth but also road haulage of coal.

The people of Wollongong are gravely concerned about the transport of **coal** by road, and at the moment 1 000 trucks a day bring coal to the Port Kembla loader. This is causing tremendous chaos on the roads. You, Mr Speaker, would be well aware of this because part of the road concerned traverses your electorate. The environmental impact study forecasts that 1 400 trucks a day will be passing through the residential area of Mount Ousley. Indeed, it is intended that these trucks will convey coal even at nighttime. For these reasons, a real need exists for a public inquiry to take place as soon as possible.

I was recently appointed as a member of the Western and Southern Transport **Committee**, and I am really disturbed by the attitude of some of the committee members. In due course I shall be reporting this matter to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. At the most recent meeting of this committee, all that some of the committee members—the public works officers and others—could talk about was road haulage. In fact, one of the members of the committee, who is the owner of a large trucking fleet, asked the committee to **go** to Port Kembla and look at two beautiful, new trucks, which cost \$76,000 to put on the road.

The terms of reference of the environmental impact study are concerned with getting coal-haulage trucks off the road. In spite of that fact, the proceedings are being cluttered up with the sort of rubbish to which I have referred. One has only to look at the trucks being used at Yellow Rock colliery to see that the motors and tailboards are held on by wire and yet that operator is talking about having a proper grade and standard of truck for use in coal haulage. The honourable member for Gordon has commented on this subject, and the honourable member for Lane Cove was in the area on Monday last with officers of the Department of Public Works, though he did not have the courtesy to inform the responsible Minister that he intended going there. We shall have a look at that in due course also.

There is an urgent need to get on with the development of the coal berth and the off-shore loader. The situation has become critical. With regard to the berth, we are running out of time. On the South Coast we have the best coal in Australia, and it is attracting the highest price. However, the indications are that if work on the coal berth does not proceed within the next few months, the South Coast will lose export trade to Queensland or to Canada. At the moment South Coast coal is more than competitive with Queensland coal, which has to be carted something like 700 miles from the open-cut mine to the seaboard. On the South Coast, Coalcliff colliery is paying twice as much as it should have to pay for the transport of its coal to the coal berth. Bellambi Coal Company is paying much less because it is carting coal by road and has to go only half as far. There is a need to see that we get this work done quickly.

Mr Fisher: Why not build a railway line?

Mr RAMSAY: I shall have something to say about the honourable member for Upper Hunter later on. The Leader of the Country Party in his speech in the debate on this motion yesterday afternoon had the audacity to say that the Liberal-Country party Government had done everything possible to cater for shipbuilding and ship repair in New South Wales. What hypocrisy! Here is Port Kembla, a major export outlet, without a power point, a tap, a hose, lifting gear or any other simple facility to enable it to do ship-repair work. That incredible situation has been in existence for the past ten or eleven years. When in government, the Leader of the Country Party received many deputations on this matter, and he made all sorts of promises. He said, for example, the Government would probably make available land on which private companies could build their own installations. That is a stupid suggestion. Who would spend \$500,000 building such an establishment, which a competitive firm down the road could use? The previous Government failed in its responsibility. It did nothing to provide for ship repair at Port Kembla. It showed no initiatives in regard to the export of coal. Initially the collieries made approaches on this matter in 1973, and in 1974 commissioned their own inquiry. However, no consideration has been given to the economic effect of the Botany Bay project.

[Mr Speaker left the chair at 12.45 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]

Mr RAMSAY: I was saying before lunch that the lack of ship-repair facilities at Port Kembla is a cause for concern to workers in the district, to industry, and to those who give any thought to the economy generally. Over the past several years anything up to \$1 million has been lost to the district because ships cannot be repaired there. They have had to be taken to other States. A lot of work has gone to Queensland, and many vessels have gone to Japan and other countries. The situation is serious, and the previous Government did nothing about it, despite undertakings given on a number of occasions.

Members of the Opposition make great play of black bans imposed by unions. I point out, however, that even the independent Liberal members of the Wollongong City Council are now calling for a black ban on the coal loader site until proper environment safeguards are instituted. Despite criticism of unions and their methods, recent figures supplied to me by Australian Iron and Steel Pty Limited at Port Kembla show that in the year ended 30th May, 1976, 4 755 933 tonnes of steel were produced at that establishment—not a bad effort despite criticism about black bans, strikes and so on. A.I. and S. collieries produced something like 4 029 476 tonnes of coal in the same period, and other collieries in the district produced 13 400 000 tonnes. The huge steel mill operated by Australian Iron and Steel Pty Limited requires something like 40 000 tonnes of coal a day to keep the furnaces going.

I refer next to a good decision made by the new Minister for Health a couple of weeks ago. He announced that a hospital will be built at Shellharbour. Although Shellharbour is not in my electorate, a new hospital there will have a considerable impact on the people of Wollongong and Port Kembla. It will relieve the Port Kembla hospital of the tremendous pressure to which it is being subjected. Port Kembla hospital has an acute shortage of beds and a large number of patients are waiting to be admitted. The hospital draws most of its patients from Shellharbour and Warilla. It has been neglected since 1965, for until last year, when a small paediatric ward was added to the establishment, nothing had been done since the coalition Government came to office. This is a matter of considerable concern to the local people. The hospital has the lowest bed-stay of any hospital in New South Wales, but the previous Government, despite many promises, did nothing to alleviate the difficulty. Mr Jago, when Minister for Health, said that he would allocate \$3 million for the development of Port Kembla hospital. One of his successors, Mr Waddy, promised \$3 million, but like so many other promises made by the Liberal-Country party Government, they were not kept.

Though I am loath to criticize a member who makes his maiden speech I think I must say something about the criticism levelled at the Government by the honourable member for Gordon. The honourable member should in future get his facts right and do his homework before making utterances such as those he made in this House yesterday. Apparently he has now found out where Wollongong is. He referred to a trade union ban on a private hospital that was proposed to be built at Warilla. I can assure the honourable member that there has never been any suggestion either from this Government or the previous Government that a hospital of any description might be built at Warilla. In fact, the area has never been considered for this purpose.

The honourable member even had the audacity to criticise the unemployment situation at Newcastle and Wollongong. I too am concerned about unemployment. He said that unemployment was at its highest level ever in the cities of Newcastle and Wollongong. Again the honourable member makes it obvious that he has not done his homework. The real situation as regards unemployment in Newcastle and Wollongong is that the numbers have dropped over the past few months. In December, 1975, 14 288 persons were unemployed in the Newcastle and Wollongong areas. I remind honourable members that this was at a time when the Liberal Country party coalition Government was in office. In January of this year that figure grew to 14 865. In February the number of unemployed totalled 15 161; in March it was 12 688, and in April 12 452. This Government came to office in May, and the unemployment figures for that month in Newcastle and Wollongong were 11 797, for June 11 764 and for July 12 007. Though I am not happy about those figures I know that they do not reflect, as was suggested yesterday, that Newcastle and Wollongong are experiencing their highest unemployment figures ever. The fact is that unemployment in those two industrial cities is lower now than it was when the previous Government was in office.

I should like now to refer to my deep **concern** at the number of shameful broken promises of the previous Government. The former administration promised to take over the running of Greenacres special school for handicapped children. You, Mr Speaker, would be well aware of the situation there, as you are a member of the administration of that organization. The Minister in the previous Government indicated that it would take over the school. However, subsequently he backed off and blamed his federal colleagues. That school would have closed in January were it not for the workers and the unions in the Wollongong area. Each week or fortnight they make regular contributions from their pay packets to keep that school in operation. In fact they were subsidizing the previous Government. All honourable members would agree that that is a serious situation. It is true that problems are encountered in getting money from the federal Government and that things are tight. We hope that in future the Premier and his Ministers will convince the federal Government that money should be made available for this type of enterprise. It is something sorely needed in the Wollongong district.

The new technical college in Wollongong caters for almost 9 000 students and is one of the most modern, up-to-date, technical colleges in the southern hemisphere. However, it has been suffering growing pains and is in urgent need of further development. The former Government sadly neglected the old technical college located in Gladstone Avenue, Wollongong. That technical college was built in 1928; its facilities are poor, with a ratio of one toilet to every fifty women students, and only seven wash basins are available for use by 350 women. The foundry and other buildings have been condemned by the appropriate authorities. The brick section of the building is all right and that is where day secretarial courses are conducted. The most serious problem is with regard to amenities for the 2 000 students who attend that college. On many occasions in the past the college advisory council has called upon the Government to undertake further development. The foundry is a menace to the health of students who are tutored in that section.

Over many years a number of applications have been made to the Government for Saturday racing in Wollongong. I am happy to say that the Minister for Sport and Recreation has agreed to a six-month trial of Saturday racing in Wollongong. Wollongong has never enjoyed Saturday racing, though it has a population exceeding 200 000 people. If people wanted to go to the races they had to attend mid-week meetings and in many cases had to lose a day's pay. The people of Wollongong are delighted that the Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism has facilitated the introduction of Saturday racing in that area.

There is an urgent need for a proper rail system to be developed in Wollongong. Many new collieries have been opened in the area. A line should be built to link **Penrith** with Douglas Park. The people of Wollongong are sick and tired of promises. The three previous Premiers promised that they would get the coal trucks off the highways by developing a bypass road in conjunction with the Masters Road complex. The people of Wollongong are happy that the new Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways has announced that within a fortnight a contract will be let by the council and the Masters Road complex should be completed within twelve months. That is great news for the people of Wollongong and will alleviate a serious traffic problem in that area.

Earlier today the Leader of the Opposition indicated his concern about the **Whitlam** Government creating unemployment. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition should know that one of the major concerns of this Government is that the former coalition Government in this State and the present coalition Government in Canberra

Mr Ramsay]

have created instability in the building industry. The building industry is the yardstick of the Australian economy and in fact, it is Australia's biggest industry. Last year the Leader of the Opposition, in his former capacity as a Minister, had the audacity to criticize Labor's attitude towards apprenticeships in the building industry. In the first four months of 1975, 1 300 apprentices were taken into the building industry. During the first four months of this year only 522 apprentices were accepted by the building industry. That is an indictment of the former Government of New South Wales—not the New South Wales Labor Government.

The situation with regard to apprenticeships in the Public Transport Commission is alarming. Only a few years ago the commission was the employer of the highest number of apprentices in the Commonwealth. However, in January of this year it took on only 1 420 apprentices. On the other hand, one private company in Port Kembla, Australian Iron and Steel Limited, has taken on 1450 apprentices this year and is now the employer of the highest number of apprentices in the Commonwealth of Australia. I do not expect criticism on these matters from the Leader of the Opposition or other members opposite, particularly in view of their abysmal record. They were a tired old government and that is how the people saw it. The question asked by the Leader of the Opposition today indicated that Ministers of this new Labor Government are receiving great credit for legislation and projects that the previous Government had in the pipeline. What a lot of rubbish. The former Premier's speech was wailing of the worst degree; in fact, it was the worst speech I have heard since I have been in this Parliament.

The speech that the Leader of the Opposition made today contained nothing constructive. The Leader of the Opposition should cast his mind back to 1965 when the Government he supported came to office. Though the former Labor Government left a lot of work in the pipeline, the Government that the Leader of the Opposition supported received the credit. The Leader of the Opposition, of all people, should appreciate the fact that any good legislation that is left in the pipeline is part of the spoils of war. I assure the Leader of the Opposition and his supporters that the Labor Government will be in office for a long time.

Mr FISHER (Upper Hunter) [2.30]: First, I join other honourable members in congratulating the honourable member for Parramatta and the honourable member for Blue Mountains, the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I also congratulate the other new members of this House who have contributed to this debate. I take the opportunity, both on my own behalf and on behalf of the constituents of the Upper Hunter electorate, of expressing loyalty to His Excellency the Governor. I propose now to deal with a number of points mentioned in the Governor's Speech. Although the Address was delivered by the Governor, it was prepared by the Government. On the first page one sees an attempt to mislead the people of New South Wales. The passage to which I refer contains improper and fallacious remarks about the so-called drastic cuts imposed by the federal Government. This is another example of the constant Fraser bashing to which we have been subjected by the Premier since his election to office on 1st May. It is also an attempt to indicate that drastic cuts have been imposed by the federal Government and that urgent public works will have to be deferred. These are not the facts, as an examination of the position will establish.

A report published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* last Friday dealt with a speech made by the Hon. E. G. Whitlam in a debate in the federal Parliament. The report indicated that the States would have to increase charges. It is clear from that press report that an additional 14.6 per cent would be added to the sum available to the States from the Commonwealth. In fact, the \$8,000 million paid to the States

is to be increased by a further **\$216** million to cover **Medibank** charges and by a further **\$139** million to deal with unemployment relief. Those sums represent a **14.6** per cent increase in the money paid to the States. At the same time we see a drastic curtailment of public works by this Government, in country areas in particular.

Not one hospital extension, school development or major Housing Commission project has been approved since this Government came to office. This situation is extraordinary and worrying, particularly when considerable progress is occurring in **mining areas**. I propose to deal with those areas later in my remarks. The necessary infrastructure for schools and hospitals and housing for miners and the increased population in these areas is not being dealt with by the Government. In the past couple of days I have been advised that a new extension proposed for the Singleton high school has been dropped from the Government's works programme. I have been advised also that a primary school at Singleton Heights, which had been approved by the previous Government, is to be deferred, and that other works, for instance, the hospital at Merriwa and extensions to the high school at Muswellbrook, are apparently all to be deferred.

The indication in the Governor's Speech that drastic cuts have been imposed by the federal Government is a deliberate attempt to mislead the people of New South Wales and to make them believe that many of the shortcomings of this Government are due to cuts in the money being made available by the federal Government. The Treasurer, who is ~~the~~ Minister at the table, will have **difficulty** in sustaining an argument to support the drastic cuts that have already been imposed, when press statements issued in the past few days indicate that New South Wales has had an increase in the money made available to it by the federal Government.

The Governor's Speech does pay some lip service to the primary industries, but that is about all it does. No hope is given to the rural community and no positive assistance has been promised it. Though the Governor's Speech recognizes the importance of rural industry to the economy and the balanced development of the State, it does nothing to offer assistance to that industry. Appeals have been made to the Government for assistance to the rural industries. Appeals have been made for a slaughter subsidy to assist those primary producers, particularly in the southern part of the State, who are now in a desperate situation, to enable them to recover some **part** of the losses incurred in the slaughter of stock. However, the Government has turned a deaf ear to these appeals.

This morning we heard that water charges, which had been reduced as a deliberate election gimmick in the electorate of Murrumbidgee, are again to be increased. This shows the blatant hypocrisy of the Government, which gained that electorate by a mere **300** votes on a promise that these charges would be reduced by **40** per cent. Within a few months the Government has gone back on its promise. I refer also to the number of works on water storages throughout New South Wales that were commenced by the former Government and have now been slashed from the works programme of this Labor, socialist Government. We have seen action designed to freeze the price of milk. Such action is indeed extraordinary. The new Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries made no attempt to offset the effects of the freezing of the price of milk by way of increased subsidies for assistance to milk producers both inside and beyond the so-called BMQ area. These producers are now being denied any chance of recouping the increased cost of fertilizer, labour and other charges that they are forced to meet. Nor have we seen any indication at all in the Governor's Speech of any increased work on water storages throughout the State.

Mr Fischer]

Another matter I find intriguing is that the Premier, when Leader of the Opposition in 1974, indicated that the Government of the day should consider providing a subsidy in respect of petroleum and kerosene transport from the coast to inland areas. In the halcyon days of being in Opposition, it was no doubt easy for him as Leader of the Opposition to make promises of increased subsidies and assistance to primary industries. Now that he has responsibilities of government we see how quickly his promises dissipate. The assistance that the Government indicated would be given to primary industries has been completely forgotten by the Premier. He has forgotten the promise of assistance that he made at the time.

I applaud the attempt by the Government to attract people back to our public transport system by its reducing fares by 20 per cent. All country people recognize the importance and need to ensure that there is a viable and efficient public transport system. However, I regret that the indications are that the Government's action does not have much chance of success. Recently I examined the revenue figures for the railway centre at Werris Creek. They revealed that the number of passengers travelling on the northern tablelands express, which is the only train serving the Hunter Valley apart from the overnight mail train, had declined when compared with the number of passengers travelling prior to the reduction in fares. If this is to be the pattern, the attempt to win back travellers to the transport system can only be a failure. If incentives are to be provided to encourage passengers to use public transport services, the same sort of incentives should be provided for primary producers by way of reduced freight charges, particularly for those who use the railway for the transport of wheat and coal.

There are a number of matters I wish to raise this afternoon but in the time available I can refer to them only briefly. I wish to mention particularly the announcement in the Speech by His Excellency the Governor that there will be an environmental impact inquiry on the Border Ranges and the Wiangarie state forest. This matter was mentioned by the Premier on 25th May and again today. I wish to make my position clear, as I was the Minister for Lands at the time this question arose. I was concerned particularly with management policies which had been adopted over many years with the Wiangarie state forest and the Border Ranges. A committee of inquiry was appointed by my predecessor in the office of Minister for Lands, now the honourable member for Dubbo. The report that followed the inquiry was made available to me as the Minister responsible and I had an opportunity to look at it in the closing days of the election campaign. I considered that the advice of the Forestry Commission should be followed. It recommended that approval be given for a further road to be constructed into Lever's plateau if the jobs of many of the sawmillers in areas such as Grevillia and Kyogle were to be preserved.

I make no apology for my having signed the approval for the construction of a road into the plateau. I make it clear that I signed the approval before the election while I was Minister for Lands and Minister for Forests. However, I issued a statement dated 4th or 5th May, which was after the elections, intimating quite clearly that if the coalition Government were returned its policy would be to preserve the status *quo*. A few days ago Mr Somerville, who could not be recognized as a strong supporter of the Country Party, in an article which appears in *Habitat* endorsed the terms of the news release referring to the coalition parties' policies if they were returned to office. I intimated also that there should be no change in the projected land usage. In other words, our policy was to continue to log the area under strict management policies of the Forestry Commission. We considered that by doing that and maintaining a 50 per cent canopy cover in that remarkable area the best features would be preserved. At the same time the industry that had developed around the area would also be well preserved.

I believe that the environmental impact inquiry which has now been established ~~on an~~ interdepartmental basis by the Premier is purely a whitewash ~~and some~~ attempt to kow-tow to the Milo Dunphys and other extreme conservationists. Ultimately the Government must grasp the nettle and realize that forestry operations on a properly controlled management basis should continue. If they do not make that decision they know full well that the electorate of Casino could not remain in the hands of the Labor Party. I deplore any decision that is made for political expediency. I am concerned that the natural scenery and eco-systems be preserved. Any decisions I made were made properly on the advice of the officers of the department at that time, and with due consideration of the report produced for my predecessor in the portfolio of Lands and Forests. Further, any announcement made by me was in no way intended to misuse the position that I occupied at the time.

I deplore the attempt by the Premier to denigrate my actions which I took properly, sincerely and honestly as the Minister when I occupied the position of Minister for Lands and Minister for Forests until 14th May, when I handed over to my successor. I draw a parallel by reminding the House of an announcement made by the present Premier in that same period when he said he would dismiss the council of the City of Sydney. That announcement was made before caucus told him who his Ministers were to be. Any statement that I made could be in no different category from the statements made by the Premier.

I wish to cover briefly some of the points raised about local government. The Government has announced that it intends to extend the powers of the Ombudsman to cover local government. The Opposition has no objection to that extension. I remind the House that the office was created by the previous Government which felt that the powers should be limited in the first instance purely to State Government departments. Of course, the proposed extension of powers will mean a considerable increase in the staff attached to the Ombudsman when one considers that there are more than 270 councils throughout the State.

I am concerned by the announcement by His Excellency that the Government intends to peg rates and to introduce compulsory voting at local-government elections. To me it is extraordinary that, on the one hand, the Government is insisting that local-government elections be compulsory—that every person in the community must vote—and on the other hand it is saying that a democratically elected council should not have the right to fix its rates and charges. How would this Parliament respond if its hands were tied by the federal Government's saying that, although its members may be elected by the people, any taxes may be raised by it only with the approval of the federal Government? It is local government authority, duly elected by the entire population of a community, to be told that its rate charges must have the approval of the State Government? That is exactly what the Government is saying. This sort of thing is objectionable in any democratic society.

I am interested that the Government intends to set up an energy authority. This is desirable with the development of power generation, particularly in the electorate of Upper Hunter with the construction in recent years of the Liddell power station, which is a large employer of labour. Industrial relations have been reasonably good at that power station. One of the reasons is that the previous Government allowed employees of the Electricity Commission to purchase homes built by the Commission for use by its employees. Many of them made improvements by adding car ports, laying concrete paving and that sort of thing. The employees are most upset at this Government's decision to prevent the purchase of homes in which they have been living for some time. The previous Government stipulated that an employee had to occupy the house for at least twelve months before buying it. When an employee complied with that

Mr Fisher]

requirement he could purchase the home over a number of years. I appeal to the Government to reconsider its decision on this matter. I am sure that if it is adhered to, it will create a great deal of industrial unrest among power station employees, particularly in Muswellbrook and Singleton.

The Governor's Speech referred to the development of coal resources by the granting of a coal lease in the Singleton—Warkworth area. I am delighted about the **construction** of a rail spur line from **Whittingham** to Mount Thorley. The honourable member for Wollongong has complained about the lack of rail facilities in his area, but I remind the House that when the previous Government was in office and private enterprise wanted to construct a spur line in that district, it was prevented from doing **so** by the actions of the **Labor** Party. Construction of the spur line from Whittingham to Mount Thorley is well advanced and it is likely that next year coal will be **transported** by rail from newly developed coal mines in this area direct to the port of Newcastle. With the construction by private enterprise of a second coal loader at Newcastle, **the** coal handling capacity of that port will be considerably expanded.

Only a few hours ago the railway district superintendent in Newcastle informed me that some coal shipments had been made from that coal loader at Newcastle. It is expected that it will be fully commissioned next year, when it will handle the considerable quantity of additional coal that will be transported from the Singleton—Warkworth area following development of the mines there. As I said before, unless the Government constructs schools and houses and assists councils with local water schemes, the impetus that is so vital to the development of this State will be sadly lacking. Development will not proceed as it should if the Government does not provide adequate assistance. I trust that the Government will reconsider its decision not to proceed with new schools, particularly in my electorate, and that it will provide facilities for the large number of people who will inevitably move into the area with the development of the coal mines.

I shall now touch briefly on the proposed amendments to the Dairy Industry Authority legislation. There is no valid reason why dairyfarmers outside the base market quantity area should not be able to increase their commitments to the Dairy Industry Authority. Although the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries has not spelt out details of the proposal, he has indicated that the Government's policy will be to confiscate some of the quota of the present quota holders and allow that milk to be supplied from outside the base market quantity area. That is the crux of the problem which is facing milk suppliers in this State. I trust the Government will have second thoughts before it proceeds with the policy of confiscation without compensation. That is what I believe is about to happen.

I know it is **Labor** Party policy that in an egalitarian society everyone should be equal. I do not argue with the **policy** of allowing dairyfarmers outside the base market quantity area to increase their supplies to the **authority**, but I object violently to any departure from the rules laid down by a previous **Labor** government in 1956 when Mr Jack Ferguson was president of the Milk Board. In the interests of orderly marketing in this primary industry, it was then decreed that some sort of quota should be earned by the suppliers. There is nothing sinister or objectionable about having a milk quota. If I were in the electorate of Casino and wanted to supply sugar cane, I could not do so; I would not get a quota. If I were in the electorate of Murrumbidgee and wanted to grow rice, I could not do so; I would not be able to get a quota. If I wanted to produce eggs for supply to the Sydney market I could not do so; I would not get a hen quota.

There is nothing different in having an orderly marketing system in the dairy industry. This method was developed by the **Labor** Government in 1956. It was

accepted as proper regulation of the industry, and suppliers were given the responsibility of supplying milk under a quota system. The basis of the system was that suppliers would supply relatively cheap milk to Sydney, and the quantity of supply was regulated by the amount that they could produce in winter. That was the basis upon which the quotas were determined. The Government's new policies will bring about great unrest and divisiveness in the dairy industry. I trust that the Minister will have a second look at this policy. I know he has been described in many places as a person with a disastrous policy—

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr BANNON (Rockdale) [3.0]: I join other honourable members in congratulating the honourable member for Parramatta and the honourable member for Blue Mountains on the distinction accorded them of moving and seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech. For both members these were maiden speeches, and I compliment them on the manner in which they performed their task. The quality of their contributions indicates clearly that they will be of value as members of the Parliament during what I confidently expect to be a long period of service. Several speakers in this debate on both sides of the House have made their initial contributions to our deliberations. I congratulate them. I am sure they appreciate the honour that is theirs of representing various parts of the State, and I wish them every happiness and success in their endeavours.

It is a delight to be addressing the House again from the Treasury benches, particularly when one considers that even though it was clear that the Liberal-Country party Government was headed on a course for defeat and disaster, it could have chosen to delay the day of reckoning for some considerable time yet. In an effort to mitigate the debacle as much as possible the Liberal and Country parties chose to call an early election, and this resulted in Labor taking office much sooner than would have otherwise occurred. That this has been of advantage to the people of New South Wales is clear from the Speech of the Governor, which outlines the record of the Labor Government in its first 100 days in office and lays down a positive approach to the problems of the State for the future. It is clear that the affairs of New South Wales will be managed in the best interests of the people of this State. A number of speeches, including that made by the Leader of the Opposition, struck a note of despair. Honourable members opposite might as well get used to the fact that they are now in their rightful place, on the Opposition benches, and that that is where they will remain.

I wish to take advantage of this opportunity to comment on what I consider to be one of the tragedies of 1976. I refer to a statement made by the federal Minister for Social Security, Senator the Hon. Margaret Guilfoyle, on Friday, 21st May, in Darwin, in which she indicated that the federal Government would phase itself out of involvement in the Australian Assistance Plan. That plan was instituted by a federal Labor government. I intend briefly to examine that plan and, in particular, the record of the Southwest Sydney Regional Social Development Council, which functioned under the Australian Assistance Plan. I do so in order to indicate to the House the importance of the activity, the wealth of assistance it has given many people, and the reason why it should be enabled to survive.

Senator Guilfoyle, having said in a most positive way, with no room for negotiation, that the federal Government would phase itself out of the plan, went on to say that she believed it to be more appropriate to be handled at State government level. Everybody knows that the basis of the plan was the provision of funds for community assistance, community involvement, and that the only place from which funds of the magnitude required to ensure success of the plan could come was the

Australian Government. For Senator Guilfoyle to say that she believed the matter to be one more appropriately handled at State level really meant that the federal Government had totally lost interest in the future of the scheme and in the assistance it was able to extend to so many people. Senator Guilfoyle reacted to the news that the Government intended to phase itself out of the activity by saying that it was not intended to demolish the plan.

I ask again how a scheme of that magnitude could be financed other than by the Australian Government. It is well to remind members of the Opposition parties of the feelings of persons within their own ranks. For instance, Senator Peter Baume said on 1st April last that, personally, he strongly favoured the Australian Assistance Plan, and Mr Chipp had something to say in support of it also. He indicated that in his view the federal Government was morally committed to the continuation of assistance in this area. Despite those expressions of opinion, the federal Government has gone on its way. It has ignored pleas not only from the community generally, including those made by the Labor Party, but indeed has ignored the pleas made by members of the Government parties in Canberra. The scheme is to be phased out within the next twelve months.

I propose to cover now some aspects of the work of the Southwest Sydney Regional Social Development Council. The Minister for Youth and Community Services has indicated that he will urge the Government to do everything possible to ensure the continuation of this plan. The Minister would know only too well the benefits that have been derived from this scheme and the need for it to continue in its present form. However, he would have to acknowledge the lack of funds. Indications have been given that the Government will make every effort to ensure that the plan continues. I propose now to refer to part of the platform of the Australian Labor Party which indicates its philosophy. The Australian Labor Party seeks to secure social justice and economic security for all the community. Also, our principles of action seek the enlargement of human freedom for the consumers of services, for the poor and for oppressed groups. In the field of industrial reform my party advocates the involvement of employees in the management of public enterprises. In regard to environmental planning it advocates that interested groups should be consulted at all stages of the preparation of planning schemes. The Australian Labor Party supports the concept of real community involvement in education. In the field of social welfare it stands for participation.

I propose now to indicate the way in which the social goals of the community can be attained. First, there should be effective participation of poverty groups, consumers and minorities throughout the State in the planning and management of their own welfare systems. I terms of the Government's policy this means ensuring that there is ample scope for local participation in social welfare matters. I shall refer now to the crisis that has arisen in my electorate, for it is symptomatic of the position in every other electorate throughout the State and the nation. Because of recent action taken by the Fraser Government in regard to the Australian Assistance Plan the structure through which participation in social welfare could have taken place in every district throughout the nation is under threat.

The concept of the regional council for social development, as practised under the Australian Assistance Plan, is consistent with existing world standards in the field of welfare. At the Habitat conference held in Vancouver for national action on human settlement it was clearly stated that participation is an integral part of the political decision-making processes. The task is too great for governments alone to accomplish; they must interest people who use their ingenuity and skill and thus harness otherwise untapped resources. It was stated also at the Habitat conference that public

participation is the dynamic incorporation of the people into the economic, social and political life of a country so as to ensure that the beneficiary is an effective participant in collective decisions with regard to the common good. It was stated further that citizens must be provided with opportunities for direct involvement in the decisions that profoundly affect their lives and that such participation can heighten the awareness of citizens to the complexity and inter-relatedness of the problem and the urgent need for concerted action.

The regional council for social development in southwest Sydney was the first pilot programme in New South Wales set up under the Australian Assistance Plan. The council is an autonomous voluntary client group which includes a wide membership of nearly 500 shareholders including nominees from trade unions, credit unions, voluntary welfare organizations, service clubs, and government agencies. The council includes members of the State and federal governments and local government. These, in turn, represent thousands of people throughout the region. In a remarkably short period it has become a highly reputable and responsible body, providing advice to the Government as well as staff to support community groups involved in the locating and solving of social problems.

The Australian Assistance Plan implemented by the Australian Labor Government in 1973 is an instrument of social reform. That Government took it upon itself to revitalize the social welfare system. The Social Welfare Commission set up by that Government introduced a people-participation programme to achieve social reform. One may well ask why we need a people-participation programme. The reasons are many. I have already alluded to the motivational and economic value of involving people in the improving of their own level of living, but another reason is one to which the Government is committed. The 1976 State conference of the Australian Labor Party endorse the principle of ensuring that welfare services are established in an integrated and co-ordinated manner. The fragmented and unco-ordinated provision of welfare and community services in New South Wales must be overcome. There is no doubt that this problem will never be overcome until the Government expands the research and planning arm of State welfare services. I should like to draw attention to Labor's specific policy in this regard. That policy is, first, to study trends of use and need in the area of welfare and community services; and second, to initiate new programmes after consultation with client groups, existing private welfare organisations, other departments which share responsibility, and other levels of government.

The important work that I have mentioned must be carried out in close collaboration with people in the community. We do not want an ivory-tower approach to investigating human need, or a patronizing approach to meeting it. Not only direct service delivery needs to be decentralized; social welfare planning as well should be, and can be, decentralized. The good news is that for the past three years social planning and development has been taking place in particular areas of New South Wales.

It is my duty to draw the attention of the Parliament to the fact that in keeping with Government policy an organization which is studying trends of use and needs in the area of welfare and community services, which is helping the Government to initiate new programmes after consultation with client groups and other agencies, is about to fold. The implementation of a world-wide accepted policy of research and co-ordination in welfare to which this Government ascribes is faced with extinction because of federal cuts. The second reason for sustaining a participatory programme like the Australian Assistance Plan throughout New South Wales has to do with spending money where the people feel it is most needed. High risk areas have been located by the southwest regional council and discussions are currently in progress

Mr Bannon]

between the regional council and the State departments concerning the meeting of evident needs. Co-ordination of services and the creation of social welfare information systems across a wide area have already been of assistance to the Government in the interpretation of its programmes to the public.

Again I refer to decisions taken this year at the conference of the Australian Labor Party when the social services and welfare report was adopted. That report stated that in spite of current economic problems expenditure must continue on carefully ranked priorities in the welfare sector. The Government would appreciate advice on those priorities from the people who benefit from them. Voluntary regional councils set up under the Australian Assistance Plan have developed a system of establishing priorities for advising the Government on welfare expenditure and have themselves been involved in funding, with grants, urgently-needed hostel accommodation for young people who have no satisfactory homes and drop-in centres for youths who have nowhere to go. Also, they have augmented counselling services for the unemployed and assisted with providing funds for women's refuges and in the provision of migrant welfare services in various community languages. Their financial help has been an incentive for handicapped children's organizations, and they have provided assistance in a host of other crisis services that the community sees as important.

The funding of local community-care programmes for children who are deprived of opportunities for advancement in their social, cultural or physical environment has been carried out by regional councils. They have provided the community base through which co-ordination and information has taken place to help government-sponsored programmes. Parents have been helped to participate in these programmes and mothers have been assisted to take part in the activities of the wider community. Through the developmental activities of the staff of the regional council, the children of working parents have benefited from after-school and holiday programmes, children's theatre, and family day-care. The realities of the A.A.P. cuts is that over forty of these programmes will go to the wall by December this year. Disadvantaged groups will be hurt by the sudden discontinuance of the capitation grants.

On 30th June the Southwest Sydney regional council held a public meeting to consider the current position and to protest at the serious cut-backs in the A.A.P. and the abandoning of the programme by the federal Government. The meeting passed a motion of censure on the Liberal Party and urged the Australian Government to accept its social responsibility by resuming full funding of the A.A.P. Members of the regional council of both major political persuasions have come forward with a statement that they regard the A.A.P. cut-backs as an untoward attack on the goodwill and sacrificial efforts of thousands of individuals and groups who have only just begun to learn the participatory procedures essential to the welfare services. The statement asserted also:

The more important crippling effect on the nation is the disillusion. and withdrawal of thousands of socially active residents with respect to their community tasks. These people have begun to learn how to act in response to their concern for others; they have given many hours and a host of skills to social welfare in their regions. Their usefulness and genuine involvement is now turning to cynicism about the Government's apparent disregard for their cause.

I inform the Premier that shortly he will be receiving a copy of a petition from the people of the area expressing their right to contribute to their own well-being through the opportunities created by the Australian Assistance Plan. The petition will call upon the federal Government to make **financial** provision for its continuation and seeks the support of the Government of New South Wales. I endorse their efforts.

They have been to the federal Government, and the federal Government has let them down. The vital question is what can the State Government do to strengthen the resolve of these people.

This afternoon I represent the needs of 27 regional councils for social development. During the past three years ten of those councils have initiated 500 welfare projects, many of them in the electorates of the members sitting opposite. At the national level we are thinking of axing a social development programme including 70 constituted regional councils, involving over 3 000 projects, and 72 000 people in its planning activities. These people have contributed in three years over 600 000 man-hours in voluntary time to their communities.

I appeal to the Government to support in all ways possible the efforts for survival and the continuation of the Australian Assistance Plan and support organizations such as the Southwest Sydney Regional Social Development Council which, over a short period as a pilot scheme, has demonstrated the tremendous value and worth of the scheme. It should be sponsored and fostered by the national Government rather than face the prospect, as foreshadowed by Senator Guilfoyle, of having its days numbered.

Mr CAMERON (Northcott) [3.29]: At the outset I intimate that I propose to move during the course of my remarks an amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply by adding to it a matter which His Excellency's advisers have omitted and which could and properly should have been included. My speech will be directed in part to the issues of governmental policy raised by that omitted matter. Members of the Government may accept my assurance or not as they please that it is my desire to treat as fairly as possible the difficult matter I seek to raise. In bringing it forward I seek to focus attention upon what I regard as a serious dereliction of duty by the Attorney-General.

[Interruption]

Mr CAMERON: If the honourable member for Burrinjuck is in any doubt, I refer to the Labor Attorney-General, the honourable member for Georges River. Let me assure the House that it gives me no pleasure that in raising this matter I must necessarily tend to protract the time upon the rack of an honourable member of this House. I recognize that that honourable member has been called upon to experience a good deal of anxiety already concerning his part in arrangements which, whatever their legal standing, were not of his own immediate devising. His ordeal has been protracted by obscurities in the law that are no fault of his. It is fair to say that he will appear to most people as having been, at most, the hapless agent chosen by his higher-ups to effect a shabby objective. I am willing to concede that he is probably entitled to claim that it was his loyalty to his party rather than any prospect of personal advancement that induced him to associate himself with those arrangements. Nonetheless, the hard fact remains that after hearing voluminous evidence, the learned magistrate came to this conclusion:

We are left with a strong and probable prima facie case flowing principally from the testimony of the four aldermen and Mr Kelly, whose credit is not attacked.

I stress the words "whose credit is not attacked". The magistrate went on to say:

The evidence left it open to a jury to come to the conclusion that the indictable matter had been established.

The charge in question was that the honourable member had sought to bribe those four aldermen. The reason why the magistrate did not call upon the honourable

member to stand trial before a jury turned on a particular view, a much disputed view, that he took not of the facts but of the law. Taking the view as he did of the law, he held himself to be prevented by a technicality from sending the honourable member forward to stand trial. His view was that the old common law misdemeanour of bribery of a public official had been merged in the statutory offence created by section 101 of the Local Government Act.

Mr Stewart: On a point of order. I take the point that the honourable member **for** Northcott, under the guise of speaking to the Address-in-Reply **motion**, is by innuendo making an attack and charge against one and possibly two honourable members of this House. I want to draw your attention, Mr Deputy-Speaker, to the decisions of the Hon. Sir Kevin Ellis, an illustrious former Speaker of this House, who **in** ruling 170 at page 30 of his decisions said:

Imputations, allegations of improper conduct, charges, or innuendoes against another Member may only be made upon a substantive motion framed for the purpose; the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply should not be used for such purposes.

I repeat the last words "shall not be used for such purpose". The honourable member for Northcott should know better than to raise the matter that he has raised in this debate. Certainly he does know better, because he was immaculate in his interpretation of the standing orders during the time he occupied the chair. He is now discussing matters that he is not permitted to discuss in this debate. If he wants to make any charges, **allegations** or imputations against any member of this House—and he is obviously directing them against two members—I submit that he must do so by substantive motion. He is definitely out of order in doing so in the Address-in-Reply debate, and he knows it.

Mr Coleman: On the point of order. The honourable member for Northcott is concerned to make a criticism of the administration of justice in New South Wales by the Attorney-General. He is criticizing the administration of justice. This very point came up in yesterday's debate during the speech by the honourable member for Illawarra. The point was taken in discussing these matters—the administration of justice—that it is perfectly proper to raise the sort of examples that had to be raised to draw attention to the administration by the Attorney-General in this particular case. Further, the honourable member is moving a specific amendment to which, of course, his remarks are directed. I submit that the point taken by the Minister cannot be accepted.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Northcott intimated that he intended to move an **amendment** to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. At the present time there is no such amendment before the Chair, so it would be wrong to base any decision on what that amendment might be. It has been ruled on numerous occasions, and as recently as 1969 by the former Speaker, Sir Kevin Ellis, that debate on the Address in Reply should be limited to matters that have been mentioned in the Governor's Speech, and omissions from that Speech provided they relate to subjects that could properly be included. In another ruling Sir Kevin Ellis said:

Imputations, allegations of improper **conduct**, charges, or innuendoes against another Member may only be made **upon** a substantive motion framed for the **purpose**; the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply should not be used for such purposes.

I feel that the honourable member for Northcott at this stage is outside the scope of this debate in making an attack which I consider to be a personal attack on the Attorney-General. He did correct the Minister when the Minister suggested it might

be an attack on two honourable members. The honourable member for Northcott said it was the Attorney-General. I feel that the honourable member should confine himself to matters that can aptly be included in the Address-in-Reply debate, and not make a personal attack on an individual honourable member. A substantive motion must be moved if he wishes to pursue that particular point.

Mr CAMERON: It is not my intention to raise in this House any matters the subject of a charge against any honourable member that has not been given in evidence on oath in the courts of the land and that it is not a matter of record—already published in most of the newspapers.

Mr F. J. Walker: On a point of order. I am not taking this point for myself. The honourable member has just told you, Mr Deputy-Speaker, that it is not his intention to raise any matter that has not already been raised in the courts of the land. In other words, he intends to canvas the subject-matter that was before the court which dismissed the charge against the honourable member for Heffron. He intends to canvass an allegation against the honourable member for Heffron, and that is a defiance of your ruling, Mr Deputy-Speaker. This is a very serious matter, and one that Sir Kevin Ellis gave much consideration to in his deliberations. I put it to you that the honourable member is not only out of order but is also defying the Chair.

Mr Coleman: On the point of order. Again I repeat that it is plain to anyone who has been paying attention to the honourable member for Northcott, as of course you have, Mr Deputy-Speaker, that he is concerned with the administration of his department by the Attorney-General. He is making a criticism of that administration. He is saying that the Attorney-General is administering his department badly, to say the least. He is not canvassing any of the points alleged; he is merely directing his comments at the administration of the Attorney-General. I submit that the Attorney-General's point of order cannot be sustained.

Mr Cameron: On the point of order. I assure the House that I am not seeking to canvass specific details of evidence that has been given in any case. As the honourable member for Fuller rightly says, I am directing my remarks entirely to the administration by the Attorney-General of his department. My remarks are directed purely and simply at his dereliction of duty, and a reference to any other member of this House—

Mr Stewart: That is an imputation in itself.

Mr Cameron: —will be made with but the lightest touch.

Mr Stewart: Further to the point of order. The honourable member for Northcott stands condemned out of his own mouth, for he says he intends to charge the Attorney-General with dereliction of duty. The honourable member's mouthpiece, the honourable member for Fuller, has indicated his acquiescence in that proposal. So, one must go to the ruling of Sir Kevin Ellis that if an honourable member wishes to make a charge, an allegation or imputation against another honourable member, he should do so by way of substantive motion. The honourable member for Northcott should know the standing orders. He had fun applying them for several years. I submit again that if the honourable member for Northcott wants to continue along the line he has been taking, he should be required to do so by way of a substantive motion, and there is no procedure available by which he can move such a motion in the course of the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I submit that the honourable member for Northcott should be asked to maintain the decorum of the House by resuming his speech as required, and not to proceed as he has been doing in a manner that is out of order.

Mr Cameron: It might assist the Chair——

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! Is this on the same point of order?

Mr Cameron: I was about to suggest that I might at this stage move the appropriate amendment. I am happy to have your ruling on that.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I am pleased that the honourable member for Northcott is happy to have my ruling on the matter, and I hope that he will be pleased by the decision. First, I indicate that the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply has certain limitations. Although honourable members have said that it is a wide-ranging debate, there are certain limitations, which I have indicated earlier. The honourable member for Northcott has said that he wishes to attack the administration by the Attorney-General of his department.

Mr Cameron: Very strongly.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Very strongly. The debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply is not the best debate in which the administration of individual departments can be criticized. They can be discussed in the debate on the Appropriation Bill. If the honourable member for Northcott wishes to pursue the line he has indicated, he should do so by way of a substantive motion.

Mr CAMERON: I shall at this stage move the amendment. I move:

That the Address be amended by the addition of the following words, to stand as paragraph 4:

"We regret that there has not been included in Your Excellency's Speech any reference to the reasons justifying the conduct of the Attorney-General in facilitating the lapse of an *ex officio* indictment against an A.L.P. parliamentary colleague regarding whom 'a strong and probable *prima facie* case' has been established that he sought to bribe aldermen, or to the policy implications arising from that conduct."

Mr Bannon: On a point of order. I refer to the various decisions that you have given in the past couple of minutes. In one of them you said that the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply should be related to issues that are raised in the Speech of His Excellency, the Governor, or to omission of matters that might have been included in that Address. I submit that the amendment proposed by the honourable member for Northcott is totally outside what appropriately could be included in His Excellency's Speech and, therefore, that it should be ruled out of order.

Mr Coleman: On the point of order. The purpose of the amendment, which you asked for, Mr Deputy-Speaker, is to say, in effect, that the House, though supporting His Excellency's Speech, regrets that His Excellency's advisers did include certain observations in it. Many of your predecessors have ruled that it is appropriate to move such an amendment.

Mr Stewart: On the point of order. I submit that the honourable member for Northcott and the honourable member for Fuller are hoist with their own petard, for the standing orders do two things. First, they preclude an attack on any honourable member unless by way of substantive motion, and both of these legal gentlemen, men with long training not only in the law but also in the standing orders of this House, now wish to make an attack on an honourable member under the guise of moving an amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech, seek to make it a substantive motion. There is no chance of the honourable

member for Northcott being able to attack the Attorney-General unless he moves a substantive motion, and there is no chance in the wide world, despite his great eloquence, of his being able to convince anybody that the amendment could be a substantive motion in its own right.

The Government has been tolerant with the honourable member for Northcott, as you, Mr Deputy-Speaker, have been tolerant, in entertaining this deliberate attempt to get around the standing orders. I submit that you should ask the honourable member to comply with the standing orders and not to seek to make an allegation or to attack by way of innuendo the character of any member of this honourable House.

Mr Cameron: On the point of order. As I understand the position, the point of order is directed to a member of the Opposition or to any member of Parliament being prevented from moving an amendment of this sort to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I regard it as extraordinary that I should be called upon to argue such a proposition and to seek to justify my right to criticize the administration of one Minister. I put it to you that that is the only matter before you at the moment. The question is whether the Opposition in this Parliament is entitled to move an amendment to the Governor's Speech in regard to the administration of a Minister. If you are inclined to uphold that point of order, I would feel that free speech in this Parliament had come to an end within four days of the beginning of this session.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I have listened with interest to the various points raised by honourable members, but I feel that the amendment is in conflict with the ruling I have already given regarding the extent of this debate. Because of that conflict I must ask the honourable member for Northcott to move a substantive motion at the appropriate time if he wishes to pursue this line. I rule the amendment out of order.

Mr Cameron: On a point of clarification.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Stewart: There was no clarification when you were Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Cameron: If an honourable member cannot move an amendment in order to criticize the administration of a Minister, what——

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Northcott will resume his seat.

Mr Stewart: It is a case of the tail wagging the dog this afternoon.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I draw the attention of honourable members to rulings by Sir Kevin Ellis in which he said that on occasions when it was necessary for the Speaker to call for order many times and honourable members ignored that request, it was not required that the Speaker name members individually, and that they could be suspended from the service of the House forthwith. I have indicated to the honourable member for Northcott my decision on the amendment. If he wishes to discuss this matter further he will have to move a substantive motion.

Mr CAMERON: Let me digress to point out that the administration of the Government raises three distinct legal matters. One of these matters concerns the

common law misdemeanour of bribery of a public official. Another concerns a statutory offence under section 101 of the Local Government Act. A further offence appertains to a conspiracy to **corrupt** aldermen. A view has been put and entertained which I believe this Legislature ought to move to clarify and reform. Though the view has been put that the common law misdemeanour of bribery of **an** alderman has been merged in the later statutory offence created by section 101 of the Local Government Act, it is a matter of great legal dispute. A magistrate in this State took the view after hearing voluminous evidence that in fact the common law misdemeanour had been merged in the statutory offence. However, notwithstanding that the matter was later sent—upon the initiative of an honourable member of this House—to a justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, seeking a declaration as to whether or not that was the position, Mr Justice Taylor refused to grant the application. The burden and substance of that decision was **to** the effect that the common law misdemeanour was not merged *in* the statutory offence.

That means that if an individual were charged with a common law misdemeanour there would be no relevance in the limitation period of six months, which alone prevented the statutory offence from being dealt with, would be of no relevance. Notwithstanding the fact that more than six months had elapsed since the incident in question, it would still have been proper—and rightly so—for the individual to have been charged in respect of the common law misdemeanour. Of course, the fact is that all the evidence had been given and the magistrate had declared that a strong and probable *prima facie* case existed concerning which it was open to a jury to convict. **It** is upon that basis—and that basis alone—that this House has been moved to consider the controversy regarding this unusual process of *ex officio* indictment, which has so brilliantly illustrated the double standards of the Attorney-General. The plain fact is that at one stage, an *ex officio* indictment having been issued against a member of this Parliament—

Mr F. J. Walker: On a point of order. With the brilliance for which he is renowned, the honourable member for Northcott was tiptoeing along the razor edge until he slipped off the edge and attacked me personally by referring to my double standards. Mr Deputy-Speaker, with the greatest of respect, this is the **fifth** occasion on which the honourable member for Northcott has defied the Chair. I submit that, having defied you on five occasions, he is no longer entitled to have the courtesy of the House extended to him.

Mr Coleman: On the point of order. The subject of the point of order taken by the Attorney-General is the very thing that has been discussed at some length in the newspapers of this city. In fact, it has reached the stage of general discussion in the community at large. If this matter can be discussed in the newspapers of this city and by citizens generally, surely it is proper for a member of this Parliament to discuss it. Otherwise the newspapers of this city have more freedom than do honourable members here.

Mr Cameron: On the point of order—

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I think that I have received sufficient assistance on the point.

Mr Cameron: I seek to address the Chair on the same point of order. I submit strongly—adopting the language of Government supporters when they were in Opposition—that if it is open to the news media of this country to make criticisms which cannot be made by honourable members elected by their own constituencies in this Parliament, everything that responsible parliamentary government has long been associated with has lapsed within this Chamber. Mr Deputy-Speaker, I put it to you

as strongly as I can **and** with the utmost respect that I am able to muster for **the** high position that you occupy, that it is imperative that you enable free debate **and** free discussion of the administration of Ministers of the Crown to take place within this Parliament.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I **thank** all honourable members, particularly the honourable member for Fuller, for their contributions. I sympathize with the honourable member for Fuller. I have been in the same position in Opposition when my colleagues endeavoured to raise some matters and Mr Speaker Ellis ruled them out of order. I have ruled on this matter already. I realized that the honourable member for Northcott was getting close to being in conflict with my ruling, but I am sure that he will comply with it in his future remarks.

Mr CAMERON: I should like now to touch upon another matter. Recently the Attorney-General issued not one but five *ex officio* indictments against a small businessman. He took this action under a section of the Crimes Act that deals with false statements in prospectuses. So it is clear that the Attorney-General has no objection to the process of *ex officio* indictments. It is a matter of interest that is parallel to other matters of concern to this House that the businessman who was the target of those five *ex officio* indictments by the Attorney-General had had the charges against him dismissed by Mr Webb, a magistrate of this State. The clear question is—and it was raised today by the Leader of the Opposition: Is the net that the Attorney-General wields so constructed that the largest fish can escape through its mesh provided that it is a friendly fish—a colleague fish—but that the smallest fish will be caught if it comes from the ordinary business section of the community?

I submit strongly that the Attorney-General is too much of a young man in a hurry; he is approaching his administration like a bull in a china shop. It is extraordinary that only this morning when answering a question in this House he should have criticised, without any evidence, the present Opposition for protecting its friends, when the plain fact is that he facilitated the lapse of an *ex officio* indictment against an Australian Labor Party parliamentary colleague, yet at the same time issued five such *ex officio* indictments against a minor businessman. This is the classic case of double standards.

Mr Stewart: Mr Speaker, during your absence when the House was under the control of Mr Deputy-Speaker, a ruling was given that if the honourable member for Northcott wanted to continue with imputations against the Attorney-General or the honourable member for Heffron, if he wanted to allege improper conduct against them, he should do so by way of a substantive motion. The honourable member for Northcott endeavoured to circumvent that ruling by moving a pseudo amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech. The honourable member for Northcott hopes, Mr Speaker, that you are not aware of the debate that ensued in your absence, and he is now accusing the Attorney-General of improper conduct by virtue of having double standards, by acting in one way against one person and in an entirely different way against another. My original point of order was to the effect that it was not possible for the honourable member to maintain this course without moving a substantive motion. If a substantive motion is not before the House, it is not competent for the honourable member to continue in his present manner. I ask that he be called to order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I listened to a considerable part of the debate that ensued during the speech of the honourable member for Northcott. I believe that the Deputy-Speaker acted in a fit and proper manner in rejecting the amendment and also in ruling that the honourable member for Northcott should refrain from attacking

the Attorney-General under the guise of debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. However, I regret that the time of the honourable member for Northcott has expired.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr O'Connell.

ADJOURNMENT

F6 Expressway

Mr F. J. WALKER (Georges River), Attorney-General [4.0]: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

Mr PETERSEN (Illawarra) [4.0]: I wish to deal with an issue that has arisen in my electorate and causes me a great deal of concern. I should be grateful if the Attorney-General would convey my remarks to the Minister responsible, the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. It concerns certain work carried out by officers of the Department of Main Roads for the extension of the F6 expressway south from Northcliffe Drive, Berkeley. The next part of the expressway to be completed——

Mr Griffith: On a point of order. It is clear that the honourable member for Illawarra is defying a ruling that you, Mr Speaker, gave last night. The honourable member for Illawarra had every opportunity to speak on this matter during his speech on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. The particular matter to which he refers concerns the Department of Main Roads and could not have arisen overnight. He had every opportunity to raise the matter yesterday but chose to attack others rather than to look after his constituents.

Mr PETERSEN: On the point of order. I intended to raise this matter during my speech on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply but Opposition members took frivolous points of order to prevent me speaking and representing my constituents in this Chamber.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Bligh to order for the first time.

Mr Barraclough: He lives in my electorate.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PETERSEN: I ask you, Mr Speaker, to give me the opportunity——

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I inform the honourable member for Bligh that I shall have no hesitation in having him removed from the Chamber until next Tuesday if he continues his disorderly behaviour.

Mr PETERSEN: I seek the opportunity to present an issue that is of great concern to my constituents. I could not raise it yesterday.

Mr Jackson: On a point of order. The honourable member for Illawarra is doing no more than the honourable member for Gordon did last night on the adjournment of the House. In fact he is improving on that because he is not telling lies.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Griffith: On a point of order. I submit that the honourable member for Illawarra is prevented from raising this matter on the adjournment by his admission that he intended to raise the matter in the House yesterday during his speech on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply but his time ran out.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! It has been the practice that members cannot speak on the adjournment while the Address-in-Reply debate is current. However, it has happened that members who have spoken during that debate have used the adjournment to raise a matter concerning their electorates. The question of how urgent it is and of what public interest it is are matters for the honourable member himself. The honourable member for Illawarra has spoken during the debate on the Address in Reply and I accept that this is the first opportunity that he has had to speak on the particular matter he wishes to raise, and I allow him to continue.

Mr PETERSEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Moore: I ask, Mr Speaker, that you request the Minister for Youth and **Community** Services to withdraw the words that he used about me.

Mr SPEAKER: Were they offensive to you?

Mr Moore: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Gordon claims that the Minister for Youth and Community Services made an unparliamentary remark about him. I ask the Minister to withdraw it.

Mr Jackson: If I made at any stage an unparliamentary remark, I withdraw it.

Mr PETERSEN: Obviously I shall have to abbreviate what I intended to say. Where the F6 expressway will cross Mullet Creek there is a property owned by a Mr Howard Wilson who owns, breeds, trains and drives trotting horses. On this block of land Mr Wilson had constructed a crude trotting track which was obviously covered by only a few inches of metal dust. It was purely and simply a training track. The new expressway where it crosses his property will take off part of his trotting track. The area which has been resumed by the Department of Main Roads cost the department about \$140,000. However, Mr Wilson demanded not only that he be given compensation for the land taken from him but also that a trotting track should be constructed for him—a track far superior to his old crude track. I am informed that the standard of the new trotting track is roughly equivalent to the trotting tracks at Fairfield or Bankstown.

Work on the new track started in August, 1975, was nearly completed by December, 1975, and is now in the final stages of completion by the Department of Main Roads. The whole track is raised off the ground with 3 feet to 5 feet of slag, 1 foot of gravel, 2 feet of clay and 4 inches of metal dust. It has a total circumference of about seven-eighths of a mile. I am told that the work of constructing the track would cost between \$250,000 and \$500,000.

I should like the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways to investigate the circumstances under which approval was given for the work. I have had complaints from other constituents who own property about having compensation payments considerably delayed after their property has been resumed by the Department of Main Roads. I should like to know why there is discrimination in the treatment of a wealthy racehorse owner and small property-owners. I should like to know, also, why it is necessary for so much to be spent on this particularly luxurious job. Why were workers

put on this job at the expense of such urgent work as fixing up the Mt Ousley Road, the Mt Keira Road and other vital work of the Department of Main Roads? I should appreciate it if the Attorney-General would take up this matter with the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways to ascertain why there has been sheer incompetence by the previous Liberal-Country party Government. Its caring for the interests of wealthy property-owners smacks of the typical corruption that exists in the **Liberal** Party.

Mr Healey: On a point of order. A few moments ago the Deputy-Speaker ruled that **any** attack in this House on an administrator cannot be allowed—that the administration of a Minister cannot be criticized in any way unless it is done by way of substantive motion. Nevertheless, the honourable member for Illawarra makes the wildest allegations and accuses the previous Government of corruption and, by inference, the honourable member who was at that time the Minister responsible for the administration of the Department of Main Roads. I submit that if it is not competent for a member of the Opposition to criticize the administration of a Minister and to make allegations of any kind without a substantive motion, equally no member of the Government should be allowed to make allegations of corruption and pass similar remarks. If the honourable member chooses to do this he should do it by way of substantive motion, **as** the Minister for Health and other Government supporters have suggested. If we cannot in this House at any time criticize the administration of a Minister or a department, free speech will have gone from this Chamber and we will be unable to fulfil our responsibilities **as** members. I suggest that anything that applies to the Government, as has been alleged in the last discussion, must apply equally to the Opposition and Opposition members who fulfilled government roles only a few months ago.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! It is difficult for me to rule on points taken in **the** earlier debate. **I** think it is in order that Ministers can be attacked by members on **both** sides. I am talking of the actions of a Minister in his ministerial position. That is not the question before the Chair at the moment. I am only being fair in replying to **the** honourable member for Davidson who has raised a point in respect of something else. The honourable member for Illawarra has exhausted **his** time. I call the Minister for Youth and Community Services.

Mr Healey: With respect, I point out that when you came into the Chamber the debate was continuing and the honourable member for Northcott was **speaking** in exactly the same manner as he had been when Mr Deputy-Speaker was in the chair. The **Minister** for Health, who was then seated at the table, raised a point of order with you on the very same matter.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order in referring to a debate that is now concluded. The matter before the Chair at the moment is the adjournment debate. The question is whether the House will adjourn. The honourable member for Illawarra has exhausted his time and I have called upon the Minister for Youth and Community Services to reply.

[Debate interrupted.]

PRINTING COMMITTEE

First Report

Mr Jones, as Chairman, brought up the First Report from the Printing Committee.

[Debate resumed.]

Sir **Eric Willis**: On a point of order. For quite a **part** of the afternoon some procedures have been moving on according to **Rafferty's rules** but surely we are not going to have a report from a committee tabled in the middle of a debate on a completely different motion. Mr Speaker, you said a moment ago that the question before the Chair was whether or not the House should adjourn—not whether a report should be tabled.

Mr **SPEAKER**: Order! The standing orders provide that the adjournment debate may be interrupted at any time to receive a report. That has just taken place. I shall now call on the Minister for Youth and Community Services to reply.

Mr **JACKSON** (Heathcote), Minister for Youth and Community Services [4.13]: I commend the honourable member for Illawarra for reminding the House and the people of New South Wales of the favoured treatment that was given to wealthy property-owners by the former Government when it resumed land for extensions to the F6 expressway south of **Northcliffe Drive** to the detriment of humble people who **have** owned other property in the area that has been resumed. I shall be pleased to refer the details provided by the honourable member to my colleague the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways, who no doubt will take appropriate action. I am sure that he will inform the honourable member and the House **as** soon as possible of any action that will be taken by the Government. I assure the House that the policy **of** the new Government is to treat all people in the community alike. We do not intend to continue the policy of the previous Government, which favoured a select few in the wmmunity against the great majority of the humble people, who have suffered severely as the honourable member for Illawarra has pointed out. I assure him that my colleague will investigate this matter and advise him and the House as soon as possible of any action that will be taken.

Mr **SPEAKER**: Order! The debate having proceeded for fifteen minutes, pursuant to Standing Order 40A the House stands adjourned until Tuesday next at 2.15 o'clock, **p.m.**

House adjourned at 4.15 p.m.
